

METRAC

ANNUAL
REPORT
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Safer for **women**
and **children**
Safer *for everyone*



Metropolitan Action Committee on
Violence Against Women and Children

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - KIMBERLY MORRIS

I welcome you with enthusiasm to METRAC's first Annual Report. I assumed the position of President of the Board in September 2001, and am continuing in that position for 2002. I encourage you to read this Report carefully to see the exciting and growing work of METRAC. We have undergone some positive changes in 2001 that have left us feeling energized to continue with our work in the area of violence against women and children.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all our Board members, both those leaving and those remaining or joining our work this year. All Board members contribute a great deal to METRAC — their time, expertise and passion — without which we would not be the vibrant organization that we are. In particular, I would like to thank past chair and founding board member Dr. Gail Robinson for her many years of dedication to METRAC.

I would like to thank the City of Toronto, Community Services Grants Program for its ongoing support. The funding received through this Grant supports all of METRAC's programs. I would also like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the Royal Bank; in particular Charles S. Coffey, Executive Vice-President of Government and Community Affairs, and his staff, and J. Anne Lamont, Vice-President of External and Government Affairs, and Ashima Sura. The Bank's annual luncheon for METRAC, chaired by Charles Coffey, allows us to showcase our work to community leaders, donors and funders. This year, as a result of Anne's and Ashima's efforts, the Royal Bank's support has extended to providing the salary for a full-time intern. I would like to thank all our donors - individuals, foundations, unions and corporations. Without your ongoing support, our work would not be possible.

We always welcome your input. If you would like to become a member, join a committee or volunteer in some other capacity, please get in touch with us.

Last but not least, I want to ask for your financial support. Like most not-for-profit organizations, our public funding falls far short of our budgetary needs. Please consider making a financial contribution, large or small, to METRAC. You can specify the program area you would like to support or leave it to us to put your money where it will be most helpful. I can assure you that any money received will be put to good use.

Thanks for your interest in METRAC — and, please, let us know how you think we are doing.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PAMELA CROSS

I am very pleased to present to you METRAC's first Annual Report. Over the past year, we have increased our efforts at outreach and communication, and this Report, which provides you with an overview of our activities in the past year, is one such effort. I hope you will be as excited about our work as we are.

METRAC has seen significant change in 2001. We have returned to an Executive Director management model, and I am honoured to hold this position until August 2002. We have expanded our Board in both numbers and diversity. Our programs, as you will see from the reports, continue to grow and reflect our commitment to ending violence against women and children in the diverse communities of Toronto and beyond.

As always, this work would not be possible without the dedication of our staff. Everyone who works here gives her all. I would like to thank the staff for their dedication and perseverance as we work through our structural changes — the quality and quantity of our work has never faltered despite the time all staff have contributed to internal matters.

As we move into the second half of 2002, we continue to work towards the day when we have become obsolete because we have helped to bring an end to violence against women and children. In the meantime, we welcome your input, suggestions, support and involvement in whatever way is possible for you.

JUSTICE FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Our work in 2001 continued to focus on making legal information easily accessible to the women who need it. We worked in partnership with Native Child and Family Services and the Native Women's Resource Centre to present a series of workshops on family and criminal law topics of interest to women experiencing violence. This series, our third, was the best attended yet. We are redesigning this program for 2002 into a series of train the trainer workshops so we can increase the numbers of women able to present these workshops in the Toronto community.

We also continued to expand our Legal Information Workshop kits project, with the financial support of the Law Foundation of Ontario. These kits provide women's service organizations with easy to understand legal information available to support the work they do with their clients. Rural agencies, in particular, have found the kits an essential resource enabling them to better serve their clients. This project is part of the Ontario Women's Justice Network, a legal information website run by our justice program

(www.owjn.org). The website continues to grow and is used by thousands of women each month who need legal information and have no other source for it.

With financial support from the North Toronto Business and Professional Women's Association, we have been able to continue our work in producing material on sexual assault - the second in our series of guidebooks entitled "Sexual Assault: A Guide to the Criminal System" will be published in June 2002.

2001 saw our third sell-out Stalking Conference, cohosted with the Toronto Police Service and Court Support and Counselling Services, at which frontline workers, police, Crowns, social service workers, union members and others were able to spend two days learning and talking about this important topic.



We have remained active, as well, in a number of local and provincial coalitions that maintain a watchful eye on provincial and federal legislation that has a particular impact on women experiencing violence.

SAFETY FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN



In the fall of 2000, METRAC initiated the first Annual Women's Safety Audit Night on October 24. This event was a resounding success, with 25 groups and approximately 200 participants holding audits in their neighbourhoods. On October 24, 2001, our Second Annual Women's Safety Audit Night saw more than 35 groups hold audits with more than 300 participants. The lead up work included outreach to community and neighbourhood organizations and promotion of the event to City Councillors. The Women's Safety Audit Kit was given a new look, incorporating a change in colour and logo and major revisions to the checklist and background material. The 2001 event was sponsored by CN and the City of Toronto, Task Force on Community Safety.

Over the past two years, we consulted with a number of large institutions. We developed a Personal Safety Needs Assessment for George Brown College. We also reviewed architectural drawings for the proposed new campus for Centennial College in Scarborough, looking at women's personal

safety needs and concerns.

As a member of the Task Force on Community Safety and two working groups under it (City Watch and Safety Audits), METRAC continues to work closely with Toronto City Councillors, staff and other community members to ensure that the City is safer for women and children, safer for everyone.

We have collaborated with many organizations including St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, Toronto Police Service, St. James Town Safety Committee, South Asian Women's Centre, Tropicana Community Services, and the Canadian Paralegic Association.

In 2001, we continued our work on the Young Black Women's Safety Project with the financial support of the Canadian Women's Foundation and The Toronto Star. We gathered information through focus groups and workshops about their needs with respect to safety. We have developed two brochures as a result of this work, which remain in the production stage but which we anticipate completing in 2002.

INFORMATION SERVICES

The past two years have been exciting ones for this program. We have worked very hard to develop a new and innovative image for METRAC's public education materials and website. We would like to thank Martha Newbigging of Flip Pix who has designed all our public education materials including bookmarks, guidebooks, posters and website graphics. METRAC's bookmark listing emergency and non-emergency numbers for women in the City is dis-

tributed by hospitals, schools, libraries, professional organizations and many community-based agencies.

We developed a series of statistics flyers on Sexual Assault, Stalking/Criminal Harassment and Violence Against Women Partners and frequently asked questions flyers on Stalking, Sexual Assault and Violence and Young Women which are available in print format or via our website. We also produced our first newsletter and a brochure promot-

ing special libraries for women in Toronto. Our newly designed website is proving to be very popular and widely used, and we have received positive feedback about it. Funding from the Canadian Library Association (Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions) for a summer student has allowed us to reorganize our resource centre, expand our outreach and develop a new library database.

With financial support from the Ontario Women's Directorate, METRAC is working with organizations from around the province to reproduce a wide range of violence prevention materials. These public education brochures, flyers and fact sheets will be used by victims, schools, community groups, victim-serving organizations and private sector businesses across the province. We would like to thank the Project Advisory Committee made up of representatives of sexual assault centres, shelters and women's centres from around the province. Our most significant new initiative is our Young Women's Anti-Violence Speakers Bureau.

The Young Women's Anti-Violence Speakers Bureau provides workshops on violence-related issues to Toronto high school students and community youth in the same age bracket (14-19). This is a unique program in Toronto, as there are no violence education/prevention programs run by young women for young women. The workshop participants are youth who are both survivors and perpetrators of violence, as well as youth who may not have experienced violence personally. A critical component of this project is



the training we provide to 12 young women leaders so that they will be effective anti-violence workshop facilitators. These young women bring strong anti-oppression and impressive backgrounds in community organizing and activism. We have presented the workshops to more than 1,500 young people over the past 8 months and are working with two volunteers to develop a Teachers' Resource Package.

Workshops topics are: Dating Violence, Sexual Assault/Date Rape and Emotional Abuse. This project has been a tremendous success and we would like to thank the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board for all their support and encouragement. We acknowledge the financial support received from the United Way, Freedom from Violence Grants program.



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**short-term contract*

Our sincere thanks to:

Connie Guberman,
Director, Safety for Women and Children

Jan Divok,
Fund Development Coordinator
who left METRAC in 2001

VOLUNTEERS

Sheila Gibb
Amy Appelle

Young Women's Anti-Violence

Speakers Bureau Facilitators:

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Catherine MacKinnon | Ruth Chun |
| Deb Singh | Ruthan Lee |
| Deborah Mandell | Saroja Coelho |
| Farrah Byckalo-Khan | Vinita Puri |
| Michelle Bourgeois | Cheyenne Loon |
| Patricia Lee | Melonie Plunkett |
| Rowena Rivera | |

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Deborah Niles

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Mazeena Rafi

Wendy Saba

Janice Shaw

Thank you to Board Members who have left the Board in 2000 and 2001

Negar Mahdavian

Gail Robinson

Karen Schucher

Liz Stimpson

Barbara Williams

Betty Wu Lawrence

Kay Sigurjonsson

Marilou McPhedran

Debra Smith

Note: Financial statements can be provided, upon request.

METRAC would like to thank all those donors – individual, corporate, foundation and union – who support our work with their generous contributions. Without your support, we simply could not do this work.



**Metropolitan Action Committee on
Violence Against Women and Children**

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