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Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre

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Stop Bullying Before it Starts: A community-wide approach to bullying prevention

By Angela Lorusso, Children's Community Developer, WOCRC

Bullying is a serious and complex issue with devastating effects for victims, bystanders and those who bully. Research demonstrates that community and school based interventions can reduce the level of peer-to-peer bullying. At WOCRC we strive to make a difference and continue to educate people of all ages on the effects of bullying.

How Bullying Impacts our Community

Bullying can be devastating. We often hear about children killing children or children who bullycide as a direct result of chronic victimization. We know this is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. But what can we do?

Bullying is a complex social issue and it requires a range of strategies and interventions. As adults, we need to realize that much of bullying occurs without our knowledge. We are relatively unaware of the extent of bullying that exists because children don't tell and they especially don't tell adults. We need to break that code of secrecy and encourage our children to tell. Therefore, we need to create a culture that makes it safe to tell. This climate is created when we take children's concerns seriously, intervene and follow through appropriately.

Our own behaviour has tremendous power. If we reinforce or model aggressive behaviour we increase the probability that our children will model what they see. We

also need to improve how we supervise our children. We should know what they are doing, who they are, and what their friends endorse.

WOCRC is attempting to help achieve this with a comprehensive integrated community approach. The Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC) has a Bullying Prevention Program that brings together the entire community, including school personnel, parents, police, resource centers, business leaders, and most importantly, young people.



WOCRC's Bullying Prevention Program

The goal of this program is to reduce the level of physical and emotional aggression within our communities by working in partnership with school and community to increase knowledge, skills and resources. The key components include a committee that engages teachers, parents,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

community.' This province-wide celebration highlights innovative programs which improve the well-being of individuals, families and communities as a whole.

In keeping with our guiding beliefs of empowerment, equity, innovation and partnership, WOCRC celebrated Community Health Week in Carp with an informative Health Expo. This dynamic event highlighted WOCRC services that are readily accessible to our community, along with other integral programs and services offered by other organizations within the Ottawa region.

The Health Expo not only highlighted the excellent work being done within our community, but it also stressed the critical nature of integrated services. It is essential that, for any person, family or community in need, a connection can be made to one service, which will then link them to the most appropriate program or service to address their concerns or attend to their individual needs. The stronger the links are between services, the better access community members will have to the supports they need.

Community Health Week, organized by the Association of Ontario Health Centres in partnership with the Canadian Association of Community Health Centres, promotes the Community Health Centre model of care, which is a high-quality, cost-effective method for delivering primary health care and improving health outcomes. Which means that you can have access to all of your health care needs under one roof; the primary health care provided by a nurse practitioner may have an office right above the

Ontario Early Years Centre or Adult Day Programs, for example.

Community Resource Centres, like the WOCRC, provide similar services to our community to that of a Health Centre, lacking only the primary health care services (physician, nurse, etc.). Both centres focus on the social determinants of health, which are the economic and social conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age and that have an impact on our individual and collective health.

In a 2010 report entitled "Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts, a Public Health Primer", Juha Mikkonen and Dennis Raphael suggested that "[t]he primary factors that shape the health of Canadians are not medical treatments or lifestyle choices but rather the living conditions they experience...in most cases these living conditions are - for better or worse - imposed upon us by the quality of the communities, housing situations , work settings, health and social service agencies, and educational institutions with which we interact."

The WOCRC is dedicated to serving our community and participating in Community Health Week gives us an opportunity to connect directly with community members and strengthen our ties to other Ottawa community health and resource centres.

By continuing to have an open dialogue between community members, health professionals and like-minded organizations, we are able to provide the community with hubs of integrated services that promote the best possible health and well-being for everyone, including you.



The ZONE

By Jessie Cornford

A tree fort in a field, a friends' basement down the road, the neighbourhood streets after a ball hockey game and just before the lights come on at night...Some of the best memories are being made in the neighbourhoods across western Ottawa. Nestled amongst the houses, shops and schools is a little space called The ZONE and it is helping local youth continue to build on those memories.

The ZONE is a hub that can be found in the neighbourhood of Glen Cairn and is a youth only space that caters to teens between the ages of 12 and 17 years old; with the exception of the staff of course! The space is used to hang out, play games, go on-line, get help with homework or simply talk about what's happening. It is a great place to meet new friends, try exciting activities and more recently, gain new skills, in a safe and accepting environment.

"Lately more new kids have been wanting to go to The ZONE. These kids will arrive and meet new people...making it easier for kids to build a friendship, in an environment where no bullying is allowed and acceptance is encouraged. In my experience, being at The ZONE, strangers turned into best friends then even into family."

*Amber, age 17, The ZONE participant

This year, The ZONE will be offering a more comprehensive program within the first hour of drop-in, which will incorporate skills development and firsthand learning opportunities. Youth will have the chance to interact with knowledgeable staff and fellow peers in a truly beneficial way. They will learn how to:

- Promote their own physical, emotional and mental health and well-being
- Gain valuable skills in dealing with conflict resolution
- Establish healthy relationships and boundaries
- Manage anger and anxiety
- Reduce stress
- Set goals
- Positively contribute to the community
- Prepare for transitions such as leaving school and/or entering the workforce

The ZONE is also looking forward to ongoing participation in community events such as Cleaning the Capital, Bullying Prevention Week, Winterlude, The Tulip Festival, and The Amazing Race for Youth. Other outings planned for 2012/2013 is a trip to Saunders Farm, the Canadian War Museum, Mount Pakenham and a night at the movies.

There's always room for one more!

Interested in dropping by and seeing what The ZONE is all about? Stop by at 170 Castlefrank Rd., Kanata. We encourage you to come to The ZONE during drop in hours (Friday evening between 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) to receive an enrolment form, or contact Jessie Cornford at cornford@wocrc.ca or 613-591-3686 x 277.

Some facts about bullying:

- A high risk of suicidal ideation (having thoughts of suicide) is found among children who are bullied, who bully others, and who are involved in both roles (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 1999).
- Both victimized children and children who bully are at risk for poor school functioning, in terms of poor attitudes towards school, low grades, and absenteeism (Rigby, 2003; Tremblay, 1999).
- 20-25% of frequently victimized children report bullying as the reason for missing school (Rigby, 2003).
- Youth who bully others are more likely to use alcohol and drugs (Pepler et al., 2002), and are at risk for later criminality. For example, 60% of boys who bully others in elementary school have criminal records by age 24 (Olweus, 1991).
- On the recent World Health Organization (WHO) Health Behaviours in school-aged children (HSBC) survey, Canada ranked a dismal 26th and 27th out of 35 countries on measures of bullying and victimization, respectively (Craig & Harel, 2004).

Bullying ctdn.

administration, students, and the community, extensive training and workshops on the topic of bullying and victimization and ongoing support and evaluation.

This integrated comprehensive community approach involves being preventive and proactive. It involves sharing ownership and responsibility with the entire community.



The WOCRC Bully Prevention Program has been the recipient of The Phi Delta Kappa Award for Excellence in Education from the University of Ottawa and has been a two-time finalist for the Donnor Foundation Award. It is also included on the Ministry of Education registry for Bullying Prevention Programs.

National Bullying Awareness Week

November 12 to November 16, 2012

WOCRC is excited to announce its third annual community-wide event being held in collaboration with elementary and secondary schools throughout Kanata, West Carleton and Goulbourn to acknowledge National Bullying Awareness Week, starting November 12 to November 16, 2012. School communities will be selected to participate based on their previous involvement with the Bullying Prevention Program. Each school community will receive a package including a menu of activities, facts about bullying, posters and bookmarks with our four key strategies and hot pink pencils for every student with our key message. The goal is to reach as many teachers, parents, children and community members as possible. To date, we have reached over 24,000 teachers, students and parents.

We will also be hosting a community education evening where parents, community members, and youth are invited to join us as we talk about the issue of bullying. Ottawa City Councillor Allan Hubley will be our key note speaker. We will also feature the highly acclaimed movie '*Bully*' followed by panel discussion of experts in the field along with youth who have experienced bullying episodes. This exciting event will take place on **Monday, December 10 from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Email us at info@wocrc.ca to get more details and to reserve your spot!



Chrysalis House is currently accepting holiday gifts for women and children staying at the shelter. Items can be delivered to Chrysalis House, Mondays to Fridays, between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To ensure the proper distribution of these items, please drop them off by December 17.

Please call ahead at 613-591-9991 to confirm the time of your drop-off and to receive the location.

Not sure what to get? A wish list of items can be found on our website.

You can also make someone's Christmas brighter by sponsoring a family who has recently moved out of Chrysalis House and into the community.

Contact us at 613-591-5991 ext. 221



Minoo A WOCRC Success Story

Minoo's journey with the WOCRC has encompassed the role of client, volunteer and employee. Her association with the Centre has spanned 13 years of dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to the clients, staff and volunteer stakeholders. The following WOCRC Success Story embodies the attributes of advocacy and the true meaning of giving back to the community.

Minoo's introduction to the WOCRC began as a client. Diagnosed

with cancer and requiring radiation treatments, a counsellor at the Ottawa General Hospital advised Minoo to contact the WOCRC's Community Support Services (CSS) transportation services to receive help in attending her medical appointments.

"When I was given the contact information I called CSS. They provided the transportation with volunteers picking me up and driving me to appointments," said Minoo.

Sharing her thoughts about this time in her life, she added, "The person who picked me up asked me what I would like to do when I got better. She told me that she would introduce me to other people, and I could start building relationships. They took care of me, and supported me."

As a former client of the WOCRC, Minoo expressed her appreciation stating, "The help that I received assisted me in getting my self-esteem back. They did not ask for anything, but wanted to help me. Before that I had isolated myself as a new Canadian."

After completing treatment and on

the road to recovery, Minoo went to the Centre to express her appreciation for the valuable assistance she received from the CSS. The rest is history. Minoo enthusiastically jumped into service as a volunteer.

"I learned a lot of things. My life started from there. Keeping busy, I forgot about my cancer," said Minoo.

Her belief in giving back to the community has facilitated a variety of volunteer functions. Throughout the years, she has helped out in the Ontario Early Years Centre-Carleton, the CSS Adult Day Program, and the Violence Against Women (VAW) program. Since the beginning, one of her mainstays has been the continued involvement as a VAW Peer Supporter, and volunteering at the Centre's Chrysalis House, a shelter for women and children who have experienced violence and abuse in the home. As a peer supporter, Minoo contributes in the organisation of campaigns and events, such as the December 6 Vigil, the Clothesline Project, and the Neighbour, Friends and Family Campaigns. With other peer supporters, she has planted a memorial garden for abused women. At Chrysalis House, she helps with the cooking and cleaning, and coordinating tea time for the clients.

"The best thing I have done at the shelter is to organize tea time with five other peer supporters," said Minoo.

She has also organized movie nights for women at the shelter, and has done Christmas gift wrapping for the clients. On an annual basis, Minoo lends her talents and creativity to assisting staff with the VAW Art Exhibit held in November.



With a warm personality and a helpful spirit, Minoo became part of the WOCRC family, and in time was encouraged to apply for the position as evening receptionist.

"I was asked if I wanted to work at the Centre. The staff knew me, and so I said yes and was hired to work two nights during the week and Saturday mornings."

Minoo's value system is best exemplified by her comment, "Whatever they ask me to do I want to do. Whatever I do for the Centre is not enough. It is my home! I received help, and I help them too."

In 2002, Minoo was the recipient of the Eva James Award in recognition of her commitment and dedication to the WOCRC, its programs and services.

Keeping You Connected

Let's Connect is published a minimum of four times a year – spring, summer, fall & winter – to keep you informed of news and activities at the WOCRC. If you would like to read more about a specific topic or have a story idea, please email info@wocrc.ca and we'll try to cover it in an upcoming issue!

What Our Clients Are Saying ...

“A fun place to bring my grandson where he can learn to share toys and sing songs.”
OEYC, Carp location

“The counsellor has been very helpful and supportive to me. Without them, I would have had a breakdown. I appreciate the work done by the VAW team. They help support and assist where necessary. Help is just a phone call away.”

“(CSS – Transportation Service) is wonderful in that it has allowed us to try to remain independent and not need to rely on anyone else for transportation to needed appointment. The drivers are just great!”

“Your services (Adult Day Program) are essential and mean so much to my wife and myself. Without your help it would be much more difficult than it already is. Thank you so much!”

Pay it Forward!

- Do you enjoy working with people?
- Do you have time to spare now that you are retired?
- Are you looking for a fulfilling and flexible volunteer opportunity in the area?

The CSS transportation program needs your help in providing transportation to seniors and adults with physical disabilities so they can attend medical appointments, engage in social activities and join programs.

Benefits of being a CSS volunteer include:

- Flexible volunteer hours
- Assisting a senior or adult with a physical disability
- Meeting new people in your community
- Short-term, long-term or seasonal commitments
- Mileage compensation

You can make a difference in the lives of seniors and adults with physical disabilities by joining the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre's (WOCRC) Community Support Services (CSS) transportation volunteer program.

Contact us today

Laine Johnson
Volunteer Resources Coordinator
T: 613-591-3686 x 280
TTY: 613-591-0484
johnson@wocrc.ca

Bringing Care & Community Together!

