



ARCHIVED - Archiving Content

Archived Content

Information identified as archived is provided for reference, research or recordkeeping purposes. It is not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards and has not been altered or updated since it was archived. Please contact us to request a format other than those available.

ARCHIVÉE - Contenu archivé

Contenu archivé

L'information dont il est indiqué qu'elle est archivée est fournie à des fins de référence, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Elle n'est pas assujettie aux normes Web du gouvernement du Canada et elle n'a pas été modifiée ou mise à jour depuis son archivage. Pour obtenir cette information dans un autre format, veuillez communiquer avec nous.

This document is archival in nature and is intended for those who wish to consult archival documents made available from the collection of Public Safety Canada.

Some of these documents are available in only one official language. Translation, to be provided by Public Safety Canada, is available upon request.

Le présent document a une valeur archivistique et fait partie des documents d'archives rendus disponibles par Sécurité publique Canada à ceux qui souhaitent consulter ces documents issus de sa collection.

Certains de ces documents ne sont disponibles que dans une langue officielle. Sécurité publique Canada fournira une traduction sur demande.



Coalition on Community Safety, Health and Well-being
Coalition pour la sécurité, la santé et le bien-être des communautés



A Dialogue on Family Violence in Culturally Diverse Communities: Practical Approaches to Prevention and Response

Conference Report

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP), in association with the Coalition on Community Safety, Health and Well-being, entered into a contribution agreement with Justice Canada on 29 November 2010 to hold a national conference on family violence: “A Dialogue on Family Violence in Culturally Diverse Communities” Practical Approaches to Prevention and Response”. Six Coalition partners – the Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Pensioners Concerned, the Child Welfare League of Canada, the Halton Regional Police Service, The Salvation Army and YWCA Canada – and the Institute for the Prevention of Crime at the University of Ottawa contributed time and expertise to the planning and delivery of the conference. This multi-disciplinary national consultation took place at the Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel and Conference Centre on 6-8 March 2011.

The Coalition on Community Safety, Health and Well-being was formed in 2005 when the CACCP invited dozens of national non-governmental organizations to join in a collective effort to promote to policy makers, practitioners and the public the importance of social development as the basis of safe, healthy and inclusive communities. Since 2006, the Coalition has held seven national consultations on various aspects of crime prevention through social development. The 2010-11 Coalition membership list can be found in the conference program.

The Coalition Steering Committee identified family violence as a subject that, while receiving considerable attention from practitioners in the form of conferences and workshops, remains a significant personal safety and security threat. The decision to focus the conference on family violence in culturally diverse communities came in response to a request from the CACCP Crime Prevention Committee. The police leaders on that committee pointed to the complex challenges their services face in responding to family violence in their increasingly diverse communities.

The conference addressed new and emerging manifestations of family violence with the objective of:

- exploring current response challenges and highlighting how some community agencies and police are reaching out to culturally diverse communities;
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of sectors such as justice, public health, immigration and education in family violence prevention, intervention and response;
- identifying policy and program changes that would support more effective family violence prevention, intervention and response; and
- sharing information, including promising practices, on community-based approaches to family violence prevention, intervention and response in culturally diverse communities.

This national consultation concentrated on family violence across the lifespan in culturally diverse communities, including immigrants, refugees and other established ethno-racial communities as well as First Nations and Inuit.

The family violence conference was funded by Justice Canada (\$121,240 over two fiscal years) through the Justice Canada Partnership and Innovation Program and the Family Violence Initiative Victims Fund. Public Safety Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada contributed \$30,000 and \$15,000 respectively to the Justice funding. In addition, the Public Health Agency of Canada provided \$13,980 for a facilitated workshop on the development of the conference program.

PARTICIPANTS

As with all Coalition events, care was taken to ensure that a broad range of perspectives would be heard. Although the participation target had been 200 delegates, because of funding issues

It was fantastic to have presenters from across Canada. It's encouraging to know so many different agencies are working together. Great to be able to hear what's working elsewhere. So many new contacts.

*Carolyn Freilink Hurd
Upper Canada District School Board*

and limits on travel by many government institutions and community-based organizations, in the end, 144 individuals attended the conference. As always, great support was provided by the policing community with 61 representatives of 28 police services participating. Other sectors represented at the conference included emergency shelters, victim services, settlement agencies, schools, public health nursing, child welfare organizations, faith communities, agencies supporting seniors and youth, corrections, federal, provincial and municipal governments and provincial courts.

The detailed conference program, including "Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Snapshot", is included at TAB 1. Most of the speakers' presentations are available on the CACP website at www.cacp.ca under the Coalition icon.

Conference participants were assigned to tables to ensure broad professional and geographic distribution. Every table included at least one police representative. Members of the Coalition and the CACP Crime Prevention Committee served as hosts and moderators. A participant contact list can be found at TAB 2.

In addition to the very interesting presenters, the conference provided excellent networking and contacts with the domestic violence field from coast to coast.

*Richard Ciszek
Niagara Regional Police Service*

While delegates' evaluations of the conference are summarized in this report, the more detailed compilation of their views can be found at TAB 3.

SUNDAY 6 MARCH 2011

WELCOMING REMARKS

Louise Hanvey, a representative of the Canadian Nurses Association and co-chair of the Coalition Steering Committee, welcomed delegates. She described briefly the origin of the Coalition and pointed out that its current membership includes twenty national or regional non-governmental organizations and professional associations from several sectors as well as ten police services. The Canadian Nurses Association has supported the Coalition as one of its strategies to work collaboratively to address the determinants of health. Nurses working in culturally diverse communities across Canada face challenges in effectively supporting individuals and families facing violence – both within the health care system and when working

with police and other sectors. Ms. Harvey encouraged delegates to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the conference design to raise issues and question speakers.

Chief Gary Crowell of the Halton Regional Police Service welcomed the delegates on behalf of the CACP and in particular, the Crime Prevention Committee which he co-chairs. He noted that the CACP is solidly behind the Coalition's focus on addressing the root causes of crime and victimization. The Crime Prevention Committee, in backing the conference, asked that there be consideration of the need for better understanding of various cultures, for greater awareness on the part of culturally diverse communities of the justice system, for more reporting of family violence, for an end to the myths regarding family violence in culturally diverse communities and for adequate resources for prevention and response.

I will investigate my files with a better understanding of how different cultures have different perceptions of police. The role of police plays out differently for different cultures. I have a better understanding of the victim after this conference.

*Tim Phinney
RCMP Moncton*

Gillian Blackell, Senior Counsel with the Children's Law and Family Violence Policy Unit of Justice Canada, provided delegates with an overview of the Canadian justice system's approach to family violence. She noted that family violence presents challenges at the best of times, but cultural diversity and marginalization increase the complexity of response. Canada's population will continue to grow more culturally diverse. According to the 2006 Census, Canadians reported having over 200 ethnic origins – including Aboriginal Canadians and newcomers to Canada. Among Western immigrant-receiving countries, Canada's proportion of foreign-born population was exceeded only by Australia. Fully 98% of immigrants applied only to Canada and most indicate that their primary reason for coming was to provide a better life for their children. As well, Aboriginal peoples make up a growing share of Canada's population, representing 3.8% in 2006. Clearly, pressure on the justice system to respond effectively to culturally diverse communities will continue.

Preventing and responding to family violence involves multiple sectors of society as well as various levels of government. Under the Canadian constitution, the responsibility for responding to significant social and criminal justice issues like family violence is divided. While the federal government is responsible for the criminal law and procedure – and the *Criminal Code* applies across Canada – provincial governments have primary responsibility for the administration of civil and criminal justice, including policing and prosecuting *Criminal Code* offences. Provincial governments are also responsible for providing services and assistance to victims of crime.

Over the past several decades, community groups and different levels of government have undertaken myriad measures to prevent and respond to family violence. For instance, the disproportionate impact that family violence can have on victims and witnesses is recognized and multiple procedural protections have been introduced in the *Criminal Code* to mitigate the impact of testifying on young and vulnerable witnesses, including victims of family violence. With regard to the application of the *Criminal Code*, all provinces and territories have policies for police and Crown prosecutors to ensure that spousal abuse cases are treated with the same rigour as stranger violence cases.

Application of law must remain consistent across communities. In those situations where cultural issues [are] identified, permit accused at time of plea or finding of guilt to provide written statement outlining cultural challenges. This would not be used to mitigate sentence, but rather to assist in culturally reflective PAR (Partner Assault Response) program.

*Rick Hawes
Peel Regional Police Service*

There are now specialized domestic violence courts in Yukon, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Newfoundland & Labrador. These courts provide mechanisms designed to respond to the unique nature of family violence; facilitate early intervention and prosecution of family violence; provide support to victims; increase offender accountability; expedite court processing time; provide a focal point for programs and services for victims and offenders; and in some cases, have specialized police, Crown prosecutors and judges. Some models take a more therapeutic approach as we will see to-morrow.

The provincial and territorial civil domestic or family violence Acts, designed to complement the criminal justice system response, are another example of innovative and diverse responses. These civil remedies may include: emergency protection orders granting the victim temporary exclusive occupation of the home; provisions directing removal of the abuser from the home; no contact/communication orders; temporary possession of personal property; temporary care and custody of the children to the victim; and specific prohibitions against selling, converting, or damaging property. Currently, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador have family violence legislation. The remedies vary between jurisdictions; for example, Nunavut's legislation introduced "community intervention orders" and community justice workers.

The diversity of the country means that there are opportunities for many innovative approaches to the prevention of and response to family violence. Canada has a plethora of diverse and inspiring models of action plans and interagency committees. By way of example, Québec has a "Government Action Plan on Domestic Violence" and an active Interagency Committee on Domestic Violence at the provincial and regional levels. Ontario has a "Domestic Violence Action Plan" which includes a public education campaign and the Aboriginal adaptation of the campaign. The Northwest Territories' "Family Violence Action Plan: Phase II (2007-2012)" builds on the successes of the first action plan. Prince Edward Island has its Premier's Action Committee on Family Violence Prevention and Alberta has a Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Initiative. Finally, at the federal level, the Public Health Agency of Canada coordinates the Family Violence Initiative (FVI) on behalf of fifteen partner departments, including Justice.

DIALOGUE PANEL 1: UNDERSTANDING FAMILY VIOLENCE IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Chief John Domm of the Rama Police Service introduced a dialogue on the first of four over-arching themes: understanding family violence in culturally diverse communities. What are the factors that can contribute to family violence in culturally diverse communities and what is the impact of such violence at the individual, community and system level?

Given that it has been said that NO culture allows for family violence, I think we need to evaluate what each culture considers violence and family violence. If there is no culture/ethnicity that accepts family violence, then we need to look at the underlying, systemic issues and personal encounters that encompass all clients and their situations which lead to abuse.

*Kerri Kitson
John Howard Society of Simcoe and Muskoka*

Wanda Gabriel of Kanienke'ha:ke (Mohawk Nation) in Kanehsatake described the impact of colonization on Aboriginal peoples: fear, mistrust, suicide, poor parenting skills, substance abuse, incest, homophobia, isolation, code of silence, destruction of women's roles and child placement, etc. The lessons from the past continue to influence First Nations communities and are at the heart of family violence. Cultural safety is essential: there must be acceptance that everyone has a culture and that all interactions are affected by that fact.

Ms. Gabriel pointed out that Aboriginal people were able to withstand the trauma of colonization because they were resilient. In recent years, the truth and reconciliation process in response to the impact of residential schools has been an acknowledgement of past injustices and harms and the need for healing; this process is helping to create relationships founded on mutual respect. Traditional Aboriginal knowledge teaches that individuals all have a place and are interconnected. Everyone has rights and responsibilities to maintain harmony and everyone, whether man or woman, is a warrior whose job is to protect people and ensure their safety.

The full text of this presentation is available upon request to Wanda Gabriel at wandagabriel@sympatico.ca.

Baldev Mutta, CEO of the Punjabi Community Health Service (PCHS) in Peel Region, started by raising three specific points for consideration: whether Canadian police can be mediators; whether all faith leaders should have mandatory family violence training; and whether students at all levels should have mandatory training in healthy relationships. He then described the difference between Eastern and Western cultures. For example, Eastern cultures are role-oriented and stress conflict mediation, whereas in the West, the emphasis is on rights and resolution of conflict. Similarly, there are distinct differences between East and West when it comes to family violence, since in the West most abuse is between individual partners, while in the East it tends to have a family component. The expectations of the community in which the violence is experienced and the service providers, including the police, are also quite different and as a result, there tend to be misunderstandings. At the root of the problem is the fact that the customary Western approach to family violence cannot be applied successfully to the Eastern psyche.

Mr. Mutta described PCHS' programs, including those for families which have experienced domestic violence, for young women who want to know how to deal with their mothers-in-law and for abusive men. The aim of these programs is healing rather than merely delivering counseling services. Collaboration is crucial and PCHS works closely with service providers, both ethno-specific and mainstream, the justice sector, including police, and community groups, including faith leaders and the media.

The full text of this presentation can be found in the Coalition section of the CACP website at www.cacp.ca.

Delegate Participation:

The following points were made during the conversation between delegates and panelists:

- Rather than relying on office visits for client interventions, it is worthwhile taking programs out into the community and involving all generations.
- The focus should always be on face-to-face communications, since information flyers have no impact for many culturally diverse communities.
- Service providers' facilities should be welcoming and open to all, whether community members are attending programs or not.
- Community gardens can help newcomers overcome culture shock and provide a therapeutic effect which can pave the way to interventions.

- The issue of family violence can be presented in the context of community programming (e.g., general parenting classes permit discussion of the impact of violence on children).
- “Lateral violence” is an important factor in family violence; victims who internalize oppression and cannot deal with their oppressors often do violence against each other.
- Immigrants who want to ally themselves with Aboriginal people can work to build authentic relationships based on the concept of cultural safety: everyone has a culture and that culture influences all interactions.

MONDAY 7 MARCH 2011

DIALOGUE PANEL 2: MYTH AND REALITY: THE LAW AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Chief Gary Crowell of the Halton Regional Police Service introduced the second over-arching theme: myth and reality - the law and culturally diverse communities. How does the Canadian justice system impact on culturally diverse communities? How does lack of understanding and awareness on the part of these communities present significant challenges to law enforcement and the courts?

Tony Mackinnon, the former Lead Domestic Violence Crown Attorney for the Judicial District of Halton, stressed that family violence knows no boundaries, but is found across all cultural groups. He observed that the challenges facing prosecutors in dealing with family violence

*Re-visit mandatory charge.
Many want the violence to
end not the relationship.
Phil Fleming
Hamilton Police Service*

cases are the same experienced by the other professions in the room. In some communities, violence has been normalized and intervention is resisted. Victims may not call the police and if they do, they may not cooperate with the investigating officer. The conditions set by the justice system may not be effective in a relationship based on control. Victims are often socially isolated

and want to stay in their marriages, because of their cultural traditions, their economic dependency or their fear of losing their children. These challenges can, however, be met effectively through collaboration among professionals.

The approach taken by criminal courts to family violence cases has evolved on many fronts: at the investigation stage, police now take statements from witnesses, abusers and victims with the latter often videotaped under oath; specialized domestic violence courts assist people to provide evidence; and during the sentencing process, the victim now has the right to present an impact statement and can choose not to be contacted by the abuser who may be required to accept spousal abuse counseling. To contend with family violence in culturally diverse communities in the criminal justice system, however, it is necessary to ensure that there are adequate

From the point after the arrest, more attention needs to be given to the court system. Sureties need to be held accountable when they are signing for bail for accused parties – stricter selection/approval of sureties as well as proceeding with ... hearings or charges on the sureties as most know the courts won't go after them so they don't take the promise to court seriously as there are no consequences.

*Jennifer Jacobson
Chatham-Kent Police Service*

resources, viable alternatives for victims and appreciation of language and cultural knowledge at all stages. The Waterloo Family Justice Centre, where all services are under one roof, is an approach that should be followed.

Chief Stan Grier of the Tsuu T'ina Nation Police Service in Alberta noted that there is a disconnect between how First Nations communities view the law and courts and the Canadian justice system. He observed that their high degree of mistrust and skepticism is a result of the factors which Wanda Gabriel had described. The Aboriginal justice system is horizontal rather than hierarchical and this difference makes gaining the confidence of the victims, abusers and witnesses in family violence cases a challenge for police.

There is no tolerance for family violence in Aboriginal communities, but they have a different way of dealing with it. Chief Grier described the traditional approach to justice where family connections are more important than laws in controlling anti-social actions and the focus is more on right behaviour, not sanctions. Elders play an important role: their oral traditions constitute the unwritten basis for Aboriginal customary law and the means for its interpretation and application. The Aboriginal theory of justice is closely linked to social, political and spiritual life; treaties acknowledge and protect Aboriginal communities' right to maintain peace and order in their communities. Aboriginal customary law has had an influence on the Canadian justice system by providing new ways to deal with people (e.g., healing and sentencing circles, community justice and restorative justice).

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Angie Barrados, Director of Social Policy at Citizenship and Immigration, addressed the relationship between family violence and the Canadian immigration system by focusing on the spousal sponsorship process, its potential breakdown in cases of domestic abuse and how settlement programming addresses family violence. A sponsored spouse who has permanent resident status cannot be deported if she is the victim of domestic abuse. If an individual who is in Canada awaiting a decision on permanent resident status leaves a marriage, then the spouse could terminate sponsorship and once the period of temporary residence expired, the individual would have to leave Canada unless she qualified to stay under other programs or was permitted to apply for permanent status on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. If the individual was eligible to remain in Canada as a temporary resident and her sponsor refused to support her, then she could apply for social assistance.

*Clearer understanding of
Citizenship and Immigration
Canada terminology – permanent
vs. temporary residence. Better
appreciation of experiences of
clients – will require more detailed
explanation of agencies' roles/responsibilities in process
(educational component for
organization). Issues in far North
put our challenges into perspective.*

*Rick Hawes
Peel Regional Police Service*

The Citizenship and Immigration Canada Settlement Program helps newcomers learn about Canada before and after arrival. Information is provided on rights and responsibilities under Canadian law and services that are available. Newcomers are told emphatically that domestic and family violence are not tolerated in Canada. Funding is provided to community partners working on family violence prevention and response.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Joanna Matthews, Executive Director of the Halton Multicultural Council, described the programs offered by her organization, including interpretation services, language instruction, job search workshops and transitional housing. In the community served by the Council,

between 2001 and 2006, the number of people first speaking neither English nor French or categorizing themselves as people of colour has grown exponentially. With regard to family violence, she noted that while no ethnic group condones sexual or physical abuse of children, the definition of “physical abuse” varies from family to family, culture to culture. Some see it as a corrective measure, as a means of controlling children’s behaviour or as an approach which they assume is as acceptable in Canada as in their countries of origin. Members of some culturally diverse communities refuse to report abuse because they fear the Children’s Aid Society will take their children away or because in their tradition, the issue of abuse is handled within the family.

Mandatory cultural competency training to be included in the training for police officers, social workers and other service providing professions. Creating and improving on opportunities for professionals such as police, settlement workers, transition house workers, etc. to learn about each other’s roles and services in order to provide comprehensive services to victims of family violence. Create incentives for service providing organizations to offer inclusive work environments. Service providers across the country have to reflect populations that they serve.

*Ljiljana Kalaba
Multicultural Association of Fredericton*

Ms. Matthews observed that the same stresses are faced by the rest of society, but in the case of culturally diverse communities there are also value clashes. Information readily available to Canadian-born parents often does not reach immigrants who are, in addition, unaware that programs exist to help with parenting and family problems. Sponsored immigrants and refugee women are particularly vulnerable to abusive relationships and fear to access programs for a number of reasons, including concern about their immigration status and possible loss of children, language barriers, social isolation, fear of loss of income and mistrust of the police.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Delegate Participation:

The following points were made during the conversation between delegates and panelists:

- The federal government provides information to prospective immigrants via publications and its website as well as employment services; a current pilot project is looking at providing direct services overseas.
- Interpersonal relationships are very important in ensuring that people receive and believe information about family violence.
- Social education is very important and all sectors, not just the government, have to keep repeating that family violence is not acceptable.
- Culturally diverse communities need to be involved in delivering the message that family violence is wrong; because many people come from collectivist communities, the education process should include family members.
- In the case of family breakdown due to abuse, if the sponsor withdraws support, then the victim can be waiting for a decision on permanent status for a very long time; the only choices are likely applying on humanitarian or compassionate grounds or reapplying for permanent resident status which entails a significant fee.

- Most family violence offenders do not receive custodial sentences, but rather probation and counseling which is mandatory in some jurisdictions; if offenders serve jail sentences of two years or less, they can receive up to three years probation as a follow-up.
- Service providers need to get referrals as soon as possible for victims of family violence so that they can bring aid to the abused (e.g., sexual abuse counseling, help with getting documentation for immigration status).
- Humanitarian or compassionate grounds are used in exceptional circumstances where no other residency class is appropriate; family violence is an important consideration in deciding whether those grounds apply.
- There are 30,000 brides in India who were married, had their dowries taken, were promised sponsorship, then abandoned and can neither marry again nor come to Canada because they have no money; although it tries to catch fraudulent marriages, the federal government has no role in this matter, since entry and exit are not tracked by the immigration service in Canada.

PROMISING PRACTICE I: IMPROVING THE JUSTICE RESPONSE TO FIRST NATIONS

Holly Johnson, from the Institute for the Prevention of Crime, University of Ottawa, in introducing this session noted that First Nations are often reluctant to get involved in the justice system. The Government of Saskatchewan has, however, established a domestic violence court that encourages collaboration with the Aboriginal population.

Judge Violet Meekma described the Battlefords Domestic Violence Treatment Options Court established in 2003 as a collaboration of court and community agencies. Policy direction is set by the Planning and Steering Committee which includes judges, the Crown and legal aid, RCMP, victims services, community services, domestic violence counselors and the Battlefords Tribal Council. The key advisory body, a small Working Committee which discusses each offender and reports to the court, consists of the Crown attorney, defence counsel, victim, probation and addiction services and domestic violence counselors. Anyone on bail can attend the court. All offenders are released on “no contact” conditions and must take part in a special counselling or addiction program. Risk assessments are prepared for each offender. Each victim is directed to victim services and notified if the offender leaves the counselling program. The “no contact” order can only be removed at the request of the victim, on the recommendation of the Working Committee and after the offender has completed one-third of the program.

Justice Saskatchewan found in a five-year evaluation that 66% of the offenders pled guilty and 68% finished the full court program. With regard to recidivism, about 50% were charged, tried and found guilty. (*Note:* the number of offenders was five times higher for those not completing the program.) Many clients completing the court-required counselling program ask if family members can also take it. Offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and learning disabilities follow programs tailored to their specific needs.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

James Verhaeghe of the Kanaweyimik Child and Family Services outlined their twelve-week counseling program for family violence abusers and victims. The program which is based on traditional Aboriginal healing is led by elders and is offered to men and women in separate sessions. Men and women referred by the Battlefords Domestic Violence Treatment Options Court have the highest rate of success.

Several challenges must be faced in delivering this program: low literacy levels; English as the participants' second language; gambling addiction; acceptance of violence as a good coping skill; and lack of transportation from the First Nations communities served by the program. The results of this program are no different from those of other mental health programs. While most of the participants are Cree or Dene, all ethnicities are accepted; LGBT individuals are also welcomed into the program.

Systemic change? A better knowledge of isolated Aboriginal communities by government.
Peggy Shaughnessy
Whitepath Consulting

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

PROMISING PRACTICE II: INCREASING AWARENESS OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

Ann Decter, Director of Advocacy and Public Policy at YWCA Canada, introduced two speakers from a community health centre in Ottawa and a multicultural association in Fredericton, who discussed how to increase newcomers' understanding of their rights and responsibilities in their new country.

Mohamoud Hagi-Aden, Coordinator of the "Community Connections Program" at the South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre, noted that while family violence crosses all racial, class and cultural lines, it is more pronounced in racialized communities which face many risk factors: linguistic barriers, social isolation, lack of meaningful employment and loss of status because professional credentials are not recognized in Canada and lack of understanding of rights, responsibilities and what constitutes family violence. To reduce the impact of these risk factors, newcomers need the assistance of cultural brokers who can facilitate access to systems and services, formal and informal support networks, access to education, better job possibilities, including recognition of credentials, and mentorship and leadership development.

The key to confronting family violence in culturally diverse communities is educating newcomers on their rights and responsibilities. "Community Connections" works to make immigrants and refugees aware of their *Charter* rights and impress upon them that in return, they must take

I learned a lot about the cultural factors that influence/contribute to FV, but also that FV should not be stereotyped with specific cultures/ethnicities. I will bring this info back and integrate it into my current programming.

Sandy Andrews
RCMP Ottawa

responsibility for being a good citizen (e.g., obey the law, respect freedom of speech, volunteer in their community, try to eliminate discrimination, vote, etc.) The program develops culturally competent strategies to educate racialized communities about family violence, promotes close relationships between those communities and the police, trains front-line workers to recognize and address family violence and responds to family violence by supporting the victims and working to rehabilitate the

abusers. Trained volunteers are sent out into the communities. Multicultural forums are held where issues can be discussed and services requested. Crisis intervention support workers collaborate with other community-based organizations supporting immigrants and refugees.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Ljiljana Kalaba, Settlement Coordinator from the Multicultural Association of Fredericton, observed that settlement agencies are usually involved only in the initial period when culture shock is most prevalent; in her case, it took fifteen years after coming from Bosnia to feel secure and integrated. Not only newcomers, but also the host communities, have to make adjustments. Federally funded initiatives have helped to integrate immigrants and refugees. The “National Working Group on Small Centre Strategies” (2005) provided advice on attracting and retaining immigrants and refugees; the “Health and Well-being for Immigrant Women Project” funded meetings, workshops and courses where immigrant women found out about programs and services and were encouraged to get involved in their community. Cultural competency training was provided for the staff of eighteen organizations, including all officers in the Fredericton Police Service, and employment opportunities were secured for several immigrant women. In 2010, the “Immigrant Men’s Program” encouraged men to discuss the challenges of integration into Canadian society and increase their leadership and involvement in the wider community.

The Association offers parenting workshops, Leadership in Training courses for youth and support groups for newcomers experiencing difficulties. Communication between police and culturally diverse communities has been encouraged. A Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee, created in 2009, promotes closer links between the Fredericton Police Service and culturally diverse communities; police are involved in organizing cultural festivals and have developed programs for children and youth from diverse communities.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

DIALOGUE PANEL 3: CREATING ROADMAPS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS: ENCOURAGING INTERSECTORAL COLLABORATION

Dave Farthing, Executive Director of YOUCAN, introduced a panel discussion on the third over-arching theme: how greater intersectoral collaboration might improve family violence prevention and response.

Inspector Barry Zehr of the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) described an example of cross-sectoral collaboration where the police, mosque, school, agencies like the YMCA, housing authority, Social Planning Council and municipal government worked together to improve safety and well-being in a Muslim community experiencing youth violence. This intersectoral collaboration enhanced prevention of violence, built trust among the police, service providers and the community, helped to overcome barriers and improved information-sharing.

I will push the concept of centres of excellence which see police, social workers, Crown, corrections, children’s protection, etc. co-located in one spot to aid in service delivery.

*Mike Chadwick
Saanich Police Department*

Through communication with the community and other services, the police learned about victimization, negative perceptions and mistrust of the police, employment barriers and difficulties in education and credentials being recognized, language barriers and racial tensions in neighbourhoods. The police service met with Muslims at their mosque, held recruiting sessions at the Islamic community centre, participated in Muslim cultural festivals and provided a resource officer for an Islamic school. Community meetings led to the identification of community strengths as well as barriers; the action plans developed collaboratively to overcome each identified barrier went beyond safety issues to quality of life. A new “Mobilization and

Engagement Model for Community Policing” was developed and the YMCA, one of WRPS’ partners, prepared a three-year “Cultural Diversity Program”.

The full text of this presentation is available upon request to Inspector Zehr at Barry.Zehr@wrps.on.ca.

Mary Huffman, a public health nurse with the Middlesex-London Health Unit, observed that collaboration requires understanding of everyone’s roles, mutual respect, commitment to a common goal, shared decision-making, effective communication and accountability for the goals as well as to the partners. Multi-sectoral collaboration was used effectively in the “Community Plan to Protect Infants Living in High Risk Environments”. Under this plan, infants were screened and a community plan developed for those deemed to need support and services. Between 2003 and 2006, 26% of the 1,920 infants screened required follow-up and for 23%, community plans were developed. No new resources were required – instead, existing resources in the health, child welfare, social services, violence against women, legal, immigration/settlement, education, financial, First Nations and religious sectors were applied to this new collaborative process.

Through the planning process, risks to infants and areas where systemic change was needed were identified. Interagency communication to support infants and their parents was improved. The “Community Plan” is now considered for families with children under the age of six who deal with two or more agencies. A “Community Safety Planning Protocol”, developed with the child welfare, violence against women, police, probation and parole and social services sectors, will coordinate service delivery for women and children at risk due to domestic violence.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Linda Richards, a teacher at Nutana Collegiate Institute in Saskatoon, described a program developed in collaboration with the Saskatoon Health Unit, Family Service Saskatoon, mental health and addictions, Nutana’s Integrated School Link Services and the school psychologist. The 700 students participating in the program each quarter are in danger of not completing high school. Many are First Nations or Métis, others are child soldiers from Sudan and other war-torn countries. Many have attended unsuccessfully two or more high schools, are clients of social services, have drug or alcohol addiction or have been in contact two or more times with the criminal justice system. Several are parents. The students’ major problems include poverty, homelessness, molestation, FASD, abusive partners, mental illness, self-destructive behaviour and post-traumatic stress.

Education of young people is key to prevention in the future. Youth need to be educated about what a healthy relationship is. Changing attitudes needs to start with our young.

*Chris Kelly
Anishinabek Police Service*

The integrated approach in this program permits students to develop contacts with external services that provide resources, encourages collaboration among community partners and is cost-effective because the specialists participating in the program are already being paid by other agencies. School attendance is improving, more students are passing, parenting skills are better and students are developing trust with other students, the teacher and the facilitator.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Colette Prevost, Executive Director of the Sudbury-Manitoulin Children’s Aid Society, reflected on the challenge in getting cross-sectoral collaboration. Because in Ontario, the government does not manage the child welfare system, a variety of approaches exists. There is clearly an important connection between child safety and domestic violence, but since 2002, efforts to get

the child welfare and violence against women sectors to work collaboratively have met with varying degrees of success given the systems' different histories and organizational cultures. External voices such as the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee, the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee and coroners' inquests have added to the sense of urgency regarding collaboration.

Experts from various sectors have come together to find common ground to deal with the safety of women and children. Local communities had links already. Ethno-cultural partners were brought in and efforts were made to understand the First Nations historical context. Care was taken to analyse and decide on appropriate language. Agencies working in mental health and addictions were brought into the discussions along with the police. The result was a safety net for women and children where communications and collaboration were improved, diverse voices were heard and systemic barriers were identified as challenges that could be overcome.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Delegate Participation:

The following points were made during the conversation between delegates and panelists:

- Putting a face on the issues, as was done in Sudbury where provincial Domestic Violence Death Review Committee reports are presented to the community, helps bring local sectors together to discuss what changes can and should be made at their level.
- Intersectoral collaboration must take place not only at the level of management, but also among front-line staff.
- Privacy is often raised in intersectoral collaboration as a reason why information cannot be shared, but if a life is at risk, "confidentiality be damned".
- The Nutana model, where a warm, safe, "no gangs" place is created for troubled students and relationship building and wellness programs are incorporated into other subjects, has now been introduced into schools in Regina and North Battleford.
- Establishing Crime Prevention Councils where sectors sit around a table and struggling organizations can get help securing resources can make a significant difference in communities.
- The child welfare interface with other sectors can sometimes be less effective because questions are not asked at the right time; for example, many women are more likely to reveal abuse in a hospital emergency room where they feel safe and trust the confidentiality of the medical profession.
- Police services in Waterloo, Toronto and Ottawa have had some success in attracting recruits from culturally diverse communities; for recruiting to be successful, culturally diverse communities have to be involved and selection criteria may require tweaking.

PROMISING PRACTICE III: QUÉBEC'S COMMUNITY COLLABORATION MODEL

Gillian Blackell, Senior Counsel, Children's Law and Family Violence Policy Unit at Justice Canada, moderated this session which outlined the approach taken in Québec to ensure collaboration by organizations involved in preventing and responding to family violence.

Manon Monastesse, Director of the Fédération de ressources d'hébergement pour femmes violentées et en difficulté du Québec, described the policy on domestic violence introduced by the Government of Québec in 1995. Based on nine clear principles (e.g., society must not only refuse to tolerate but also denounce violence, domestic violence is a criminal offense, domestic violence is a means of dominating and demonstrating power over another person, the impact of domestic violence on children must be taken into account and mitigated, etc.), the policy led to the preparation of action plans in various sectors.

One challenge was to adapt the approach to domestic violence to meet the needs of immigrant women in order that they might have the same access to services as the general population in Québec. The "Government Action Plan on Domestic Violence" for 2004-09 focused on awareness and prevention and included: information sessions on domestic and family violence for individuals being integrated into Québec; funding for agencies providing intervention services to diverse groups; and updating the Government's immigration action plan (e.g., documenting the extent of domestic violence among immigrant and ethno-cultural communities). The Fédération partnered with other service providers and academic researchers to produce a guide on how to adapt services for domestic violence to the needs of immigrant and ethno-cultural women, including specialized services for refugees from war-torn countries.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Commandant Vincent Richer of the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal described SPVM's 2010-12 family violence action plan which promotes intervention through improved understanding. Every police district is linked closely to its own community and has on staff an officer whose focus is domestic and family violence. He noted that immigrants make up 31% of the population of Montréal with visible minorities, primarily black and North African, 25% of the city's population. On average, SPVM deals with 15,500 911 calls about domestic and family violence annually; in 2009, 32% of crimes against persons and 35% of homicides involved domestic violence. One complicating factor is that in the 2006 Quebec policy, while police in a domestic violence investigation must act if there is reasonable doubt and a plaintiff is not needed for a charge, there is no similar legal framework with regard to family violence. Most incidents among black and Arab populations are family, not domestic, violence.

Commandant Richer outlined some of the improvements to SPVM procedures for officers investigating domestic and family violence cases; considerable attention is being devoted to raising officers' awareness of specific issues (e.g., post-separation violence; domestic violence involving older persons; police intervention in cases of arranged marriage, etc.) Partnerships have been formed with organizations such as the Fédération de ressources d'hébergement pour femmes violentées et en difficulté du Québec, the Shield of Athena Family Services and the Centre de recherche interdisciplinaire sur la violence familiale et la violence faite aux femmes (CRI-VIFF). Confidentiality is a priority since the disclosure of personal information could re-victimize victims of domestic or family violence; however, the need for confidentiality is trumped if a life is in danger, whether from violent acts or in the case of suicide.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca

Constable Evens Guercy of the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal described how the domestic violence protocol is applied on the front-line in a part of Montréal which has a significant Haitian and North African population. Language is key. Many culturally diverse communities must be addressed not in the French or English found on Citizenship and Immigration Canada websites, but in their own language of origin.

Community engagement from the beginning. Let each diverse community help police to develop and implement domestic violence education pieces.

*Roger Wilkie
Halton Regional Police Service*

Meeting community members before calls for service occur is important to building trust, particularly since many people come from countries where police are corrupt and oppressive. Since in some communities domestic violence has never been considered a crime, rather than focusing on right and wrong, it is more effective to concentrate on explaining the *Criminal Code*. Since many women from diverse communities do not feel comfortable speaking to the police, information can be provided to staff at relevant community centres for dissemination. Information sessions on violence for youth can be helpful, not only by making them more aware of victimization, but also because they will often take that information back to their families. Intervention can be complicated by pre-migration trauma and efforts must be made to identify the source of problems that may result in violence.

PROMISING PRACTICE IV: COLLABORATION RESPONSE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Chief Constable Michael Chadwick of the Saanich Police Department and three co-presenters described how the Community Coordination for Women's Safety Program (CCWS) has brought a variety of sectors together to increase the safety of women, including immigrants and refugees, in British Columbia.

The Vancouver Police Department, the RCMP and the two associations of chiefs of police in British Columbia have been members of CCWS since 2002. Several changes have been made to how police services deal with family violence as a result of this collaboration: policies have been harmonized and training now emphasizes best practices in investigating domestic violence and in particular, its impact on immigrant and refugee women. Information flows through CCWS to partners in the policing, victim services, advocacy, government, courts and corrections sectors.

Tracy Porteous, Executive Director of the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC), explained that her not-for-profit agency supports over 240 community-based anti-violence programs in BC by providing training, information, resource development, access to legal information, etc. CCWS, EVA BC's largest program, enhances at the local level cross-sectoral response to violence against women, identifies and recommends ways to close gaps in response, brings emerging issues to the Provincial Working Group which includes all relevant sectors, and promotes cross-sectoral partnerships to increase the safety of abused women. Its focus is marginalized women: racialized women, immigrant and refugee women, Aboriginal women, women with disabilities, sex workers, etc.

The "Safety of Immigrant and Refugee Women Initiative", a partnership of EVA BC, MOSAIC and the Vancouver Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services, addresses policy gaps that compromise the safety of immigrant and refugee women and those without legal status in Canada. Going forward, a systemic approach will be taken to ensure that employment

competencies and guidelines exist for ESL services, anti-violence services and immigration and border guards.

Kamaljit Lehal, a lawyer specializing in immigration issues, described the challenges facing immigrants and refugees: social isolation, lack of material in their language, lack of interpreters, myths about deportation and the re-victimization of non-status women, sponsored women and women trying to deal with immigration, family law and criminal justice systems that operate in isolation. The safety of these women must be of paramount importance, their needs should be dealt with in a multisectoral, coordinated manner and care has to be taken to ensure that response does not end up re-victimizing them.

Conference increased understanding of impact immigration policies have on addressing domestic violence and increasing victimization. Also increased understanding of some of the grass roots responses in communities.

*Jennifer Jimenez
Aiding Dramatic Change in Development*

Ninu Kang, Director of Family Programs at MOSAIC, provided an overview of two projects in Vancouver that are helping to break down cultural and systemic barriers. “Legal Education and Violence Prevention” uses local media to provide information on the legal system. The “Empowerment of Immigrant and Refugee Women Research Project” looks at what works in the justice system and what does not. Women need comprehensive, coordinated, caring service with an emphasis on overcoming language barriers, addressing sponsorship and immigration issues, breaking social isolation, providing access and advocacy and meeting material needs.

The full text of this joint presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

DINNER: CHANGE CAN HAPPEN

The Honourable Mr. Justice Alfred O’Marra, Judge of the Superior Court of Justice, spoke eloquently about his experience as a Crown Attorney prosecuting domestic violence cases, as Chief Counsel for the Chief Coroner of Ontario and as Chair of the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. As part of his responsibilities in the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, he conducted the May/Isles and Hadley inquests which enquired extensively into the issues of domestic violence and the criminal justice system. In 2002, he helped establish the first Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC) in Canada; this multi-disciplinary group of experts investigates systematically and reports annually on all domestic violence homicides occurring in Ontario. From 2002-2007, as Chair of the DVDRC, he travelled and spoke extensively about the lessons learned from the case reviews of these tragic deaths.

Justice O’Marra reinforced the importance of marrying policy and practice. The death review process which he described demonstrates the outstanding work that can be done inter-professionally when the commonalities among various mandates are emphasized. The interface between law enforcement and social services is crucial to protecting victims from ongoing abuse and ensuring effective, multidisciplinary interventions.

TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2011

DIALOGUE PANEL 4: PREVENTING FAMILY VIOLENCE BY ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN CAPACITY-BUILDING

Peter Dudding, CEO of the Child Welfare League of Canada, welcomed delegates to the fourth and final dialogue panel on the relationship between community capacity-building and family violence prevention. He noted that it was International Women's Day and went on to emphasize the importance of the rights of children, observing that children witnessing violence is the second largest category of unsubstantiated child maltreatment in Canada. Mr. Dudding stated that he was proud of the Coalition on Community Safety, Health and Well-being and the CACP whose strong advocacy and leadership continue to push crime prevention as a key agenda in Canada.

Imam Abdul Hai Patel of the Canadian Council of Imams stressed that while family violence is not confined to faith or cultural groups, the perception is that certain religions condone it; unfortunately, a few incidents give the perception that the whole community tolerates family violence. In recent years, immigration from patriarchal cultures in Asia and Africa has resulted in increasing examples of men using their faith to justify authority over women, children and the elderly. Large numbers of Muslims from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds have also come to Canada. He quoted from the Qur'an to underline that Islam, like other religions, does not tolerate violence against women and children. In his opinion, family violence is never accidental, but always consciously committed, commonly because of cultural traditions from the country of origin.

Our community needs to meet the minority groups, partner with them and share information.

Have forums in their community centres targeting specific groups (women, youth, men, etc.)

Knowledge is power – enables understanding, then healing can happen.

*Alma Donovan
Cape Breton Regional Police Service*

To deal with family violence, a holistic approach must be taken in order to increase the capacity of individuals and families; the core issues of poverty, unemployment and homelessness must be addressed and the capacity of service providers developed and/or increased so that the dignity, economic status and feeling of belonging of various ethnic communities can be bolstered. Prevention of family violence depends on collaboration with interests outside the ethnic community and consistent communication that stresses that family violence is wrong. While community and faith leaders have a role to play, Citizenship and Immigration Canada should make it

mandatory for all new Immigrants to attend an orientation session that informs them about family law and other aspects of Canadian life and values.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Deputy Chief Kim Derry of the Toronto Police Service (TPS) commented that while there has been a reduction in domestic violence homicides in the past five years, it is estimated that 75% of victims never call police or social services; others experience many incidents of family violence before asking for help. Often witnesses fail to appear in court. It is estimated that two to six children in every school class live with family violence and thus, many grow up knowing how abuse, legal power and control are used as weapons. Building trust takes time, energy and leadership. Culturally diverse communities play a significant role in family violence prevention, so overcoming immigration and language issues is essential. Faith communities are key and TPS collaborates regularly with the Muslim Consultative Committee. An interpreter service permits TPS to offer 120 languages on its telephone system. A series of pamphlets in various languages explains services, help lines and violence programs. Toronto Police Service believes

that education is prevention and that every occurrence must be investigated, with prompt referrals to other community services.

Police work closely with community partners. The External Domestic Violence Committee lets TPS know what is happening on the street, what is working and where there are problems. Seneca College is designing public service material for domestic and family violence prevention. The Multilingual Community Interpretation Service provides assistance on a 24/7 basis. "Project TEAR (Teens Ending Abusive Relationships)" has been introduced to high schools. The development of a Family Justice Centre where services would be co-located is being considered.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Angela Robertson, Director, Equity and Community Engagement at Women's College Hospital in Toronto, emphasized that family violence happens in all communities, regardless of culture, race, faith, education, income, sexuality and nationality. This fact must be remembered if stereotypes about specific communities being more prone to violence are not to be reinforced.

The things I heard at the conference let me know that I have many colleagues fighting for the same cause. So I feel that I have found allies in my work and will consult many people I have met here in the future.

*Sabrina Atwal
Indo-Canadian Women's Association
Edmonton*

Ms. Robertson pointed out that when considering strategies to engage communities and build capacity to prevent family violence, it is essential to advocate for and include poverty reduction and income support, homelessness and housing, mental health and addictions, immigration and settlement and reform of the justice system. To build community capacity, it is necessary to be clear about the costs of the services needed by victimized women and their children, the costs of police, courts and corrections and the costs of not providing the necessary infrastructure in First Nations and Inuit communities.

To engage communities in building capacity to prevent family violence and violence against women, it is necessary to: acknowledge the racism and discrimination that causes mistrust and fear of authorities; make supports portable and integrated and take them to where people are in the community; ensure inclusion by providing multi-lingual interpretation and translation strategies; and involve community leaders even if they do not share values. Attention must also be paid to the needs of homeless women and sex-trade workers for whom assistance requires entering into partnerships with shelters, food banks, street outreach programs, mental health providers, etc.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Charlene Avalos, Director of Support Services at the Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, provided current and historical context to explain the issues facing Aboriginal families. Aboriginal people are the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population, with 48% between the ages of 16 and 24, and they are increasingly urban. While Aboriginal people make up only 5% of the total population, 40% of the children in care are Aboriginal. To understand family violence in Aboriginal communities, it is necessary to acknowledge the impact of colonization, residential schools where so many children died, provincial child welfare societies taking children into care (i.e., the 1960's scoop) and intergenerational trauma made worse because there has been no time for healing between generations.

The Native Child and Family Services started in 1989, not as a traditional child welfare society, but rather as a healing, treatment and support agency whose services were rooted in Aboriginal culture. When NCFS was mandated in 2007, child welfare was added as a responsibility. With regard to family violence, NCFS believes that, if possible, the best alternative is to leave children in their family. Thus, a holistic approach is taken whereby the spiritual, psychological, physical and emotional well-being of the whole family is considered, with a focus on healing, not prosecution. A current concern is how to deal with families where reunification – what most women and children want – is taking place. A restorative justice approach is fundamental. NCFS operates a number of prevention programs: Head Start for children; Youth on the Land where young people learn the roles and responsibilities of healthy, equal relationships; and women’s healing circles. The lack of core funding is a major issue.

Systemic change? Seeing how an “individual” centred system intersects with collective cultures.

*Karen Hoeft
The Salvation Army*

Delegate Participation:

The following points were made during the conversation between delegates and panelists:

- A change in reporting by police services contributes to the published statistic that shows an increased number of children witnessing family violence.
- The Toronto Police Service has not received any complaints regarding disclosure of personal information by interpreters who work closely with victims, accompanying them to court and to shelters.
- Much family violence goes unreported in culturally diverse communities because some cultures will stigmatize whole families if abuse is made public.
- Women often will not report family violence until they feel their children are threatened.
- Interpreters who are called on to help women who are victims of violence should receive training about family violence.
- Attention has to be paid to the perpetrators as well as the victims of family violence; the Partner Assault Response Program offered by Native Child and Family Services is a sixteen-week program that starts the healing process for men for whom family violence has been normalized.
- Having a dialogue in the mosque about family harmony, domestic violence and women’s rights would help to increase awareness of what is not tolerated; however, it should be remembered that only 30-40% of Muslims are estimated to attend the mosque regularly.

PROMISING PRACTICE V: BRIDGING THE GAP: DIVERSE COMMUNITIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Major Karen Hoeft of The Salvation Army introduced the speakers in this session which described collaborative efforts to prevent and respond to violence against children in a family setting.

Mohammed Baobaid, Executive Director of the Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration in London ON, described the situation in 2003 when West Asian communities were struggling: children had trouble being accepted at school; Muslim women couldn't access services; fathers and daughters were in conflict in the home; there was tension in the workplace and reports of racism in the larger community; and there were no culturally appropriate foster homes for Muslim children. In 2004, the "Muslim Family Safety Program", a collaborative initiative involving local Muslim communities and the London Coordinating Committee to End Women Abuse, was established. The imam was asked to work with the Program to help women and children and raise awareness of family violence. Consultations between the Muslim community and mainstream organizations were encouraged and a CAS/Muslim Advisory Committee set up.

I'm encouraged to take our ESL teachers out to our mosques and temples to be accessible to parents. We've struggled to get parents to come into our schools. We need to go to them!

*Carolyn Frielink Hurd
Upper Grand District School Board*

The Children's Aid Society of London-Middlesex invited the mosque and the Islamic Centre to help them engage families, in particular those who had experienced the traumatic effects of war in their countries of origin. Muslim traditions were explained to foster families, training programs for staff working with Arabic and Muslim families were developed with input from the Islamic community and Muslim women volunteered at the CAS as mentors, tutors and cultural advisors.

The relationship between the Muslim community and child welfare was formalized as the Muslim Resource Centre/Children's Aid Society Integrative Service which raises awareness of the risk factors associated with children's safety and encourages Muslim leaders and community members to address child protection issues. Early intervention in collaboration with the CAS is emphasized, especially if signs that could lead to honour-based homicide are detected.

Eugene Tremblay, a recently retired social worker from the CAS, outlined the "Safe Integration Project", a new initiative at the MRCSSI. This pilot project focuses on pre-migration trauma, particularly in children, and healing the family. Newcomers are dealt with individually in order to understand their journeys. A social worker deals with children on an individual basis, taking them to the mosque where they are matched with mentors and to school. This pilot does not provide therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, but rather focuses on preventing family violence during migration and integration.

The full text of this joint presentation and MRCSSI's recently published manual, *Addressing Domestic Violence in Canadian Muslim Communities*, can be found at www.cacp.ca.

PROMISING PRACTICE VI: TAILORING COMMUNITY OUTREACH: HOW TO REACH THE UNREACHABLES

Gordon Phaneuf, Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Child Welfare League of Canada and host for this session, commented that he had spent four months leading a review of social services in the North and had seen first-hand the serious challenges to providing services to victims of violence.

Sandra Tucker, Manager, Abuse Prevention Policy and Programs, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, noted that the Inuit population is very young (39% less than fifteen) with a life expectancy ten years less than southern Canada and high rates of teen pregnancy and youth suicide. The "National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities" calls for abusers to be

held accountable and for both victims and abusers to be supported in the healing process. Flowing from the Strategy, "Making Our Shelters Strong: Training for Front Line Shelter Workers" provides training modules which are also made available to nursing students, members of shelters' boards and justice personnel. Participants are helped to develop better communication networks, including use of the internet, and gain the knowledge and skills needed to work with victims of violence. "Somebody's Daughter: A Healing Model", is a secure, on-the-land program for marginalized Inuit women (i.e., at-risk, abused, single mothers, battered women) which takes a holistic approach to developing self-esteem, enhancing cultural identity and pride and promoting healing. The focus is on developing healthy relationships and the program starts the dialogue on sexual and child abuse, subjects not normally discussed openly in Inuit culture. This program could be adapted for any cultural group and offered to men as well as women.

Presentation on Inuit shelter was very enlightening. Sad that we have these issues in Canada when our country is supposed to be a role model and advanced. This was an eye-opener!

*Jennifer Jacobson
Chatham-Kent Police Service*

There are only fourteen shelters in the 53 fly-in Inuit communities spread across four time zones in the North; thus, many Inuit women have no access to shelters. In most cases, women who get in can only stay for five days; only one shelter keeps women in safety for six weeks. Many shelters have only three or four beds and there may be no physical separation from the abuser. Inuit shelters get less funding than those for First Nations and the CMHC program to build and expand shelters is seriously underfunded.

Bessie Hagen, Executive Director of the Aimayunga Shelter in Tuktoyaktuk, explained that this shelter which opened in 1984 is funded by the Government of the North-West Territories; since proposals must be submitted annually for support for shelters and child and youth development programs, the provision of services is halted if these requests are not approved. Aimayunga Shelter's fifty-year-old building is overcrowded, often with three women to a room. Although the shelter's priority is victims of family violence, it also responds to the needs of foster children, elder abuse emergency calls and homeless women. Few programs are offered due to limited resources and space; the only program this year was "Understanding Youth and Elder Generations". The resource uncertainty means that there is a high staff turnover.

Funding is paramount to provide options. Skilled dedicated staff who will stay long term, take pressure off from searching for funding to provide innovative projects.

*Stacy Walker
John Howard Society of Simcoe and Muskoka*

There are serious family violence problems in many Inuit communities. Housing is a major issue since substandard, overcrowded homes can lead to addictions, incest, molestation and other forms of family violence. Poor communications infrastructure means that it is difficult to get governmental approvals; frequently, women in shelters return to their homes because it takes days for authorizations to come through. Emergency protection orders are not effective in fly-in communities where it can take days to get the EPO served since the RCMP are overworked like everyone else. Delegates agreed that a national family violence strategy is overdue. Governments should offer multi-year funding and, from the perspective of safety planning, it may be reasonable to reduce the emphasis on accountability provisions.

The full text of this joint presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS

Four workshops, held concurrently, permitted participants to explore in more detail issues related to family violence in culturally diverse communities.

A. ELDER ABUSE POLICY AND CASE STUDY

Gerda Kaegi of Canadian Pensioners Concerned stressed that it is important to know and understand the law dealing with elder abuse. It is critical that police and the community network around elder abuse. Finally, older people have the right to make decisions for themselves. This right should be recognized – older people are not children.

Judith Wahl, Executive Director, Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE), noted that elder abuse is a complex crime that does not need a special law enacted. Abuse is not just criminal behaviour or civil matters; it happens where the law is not followed or where there is misinformation about rights/responsibilities and it may occur within care systems. It involves abuse of power – coercion, threats and psychological and economic exploitation – and loss of control by the older person. The response of family members is often of crucial importance because of the value older people place on family. Older people frequently feel shame for accessing services to help deal with abuse.

ACE, as a legal clinic focused on the law as it affects older persons, is opposed to mandatory reporting. Emphasis must be put on prevention, including the education of older people and those providing services to them – from police to personal support workers to long-term care providers – so that the law and the rights of older persons are understood. Intervention must recognize the right of older persons to make decisions for themselves; if older persons lack capacity, the Office of the Public Guardian will act on their behalf. Older persons should be consulted where they live and their wants and needs considered. Complexity is added when dealing with family members.

Monita Persaud, Regional Elder Abuse Consultant, Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ONPEA), provided an overview of the role and work of her organization and the network of community relationships it has built across the province.

Elder abuse is complex and can range from refusing to provide dentures so a person can eat properly and effectively to the failure to deal with depression to the misuse of medications to isolation to issues around immigration status. Culture has an impact on the understanding of and response to abuse. Immigrants, in particular, may not understand the standards pertaining to elder abuse in Canada. Many, coming from countries that lack the social infrastructure found in Canada, do not look for support in the community. The sense of shame may prevent an older person from seeking help. Family relationships can be so critical to the older person that terminating those relationships in cases of abuse is not an option. Furthermore, immigrants' behavior in response to abuse will be based on their past and not on Canadian law or the services that are available to them.

Because of these and many other factors, the response to elder abuse in diverse communities is multi-faceted and time-consuming and requires sensitivity to cultural and traditional beliefs and practices. The creation of networks and partnerships between police and service providers is essential.

Edward Lum, a retired police officer and Regional Elder Abuse Consultant, Ontario Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (ONPEA), provided an overview of his work with the Hamilton Police Service and his growing interest, in the last seven years of his policing career, in the issues of elder abuse. He explained how he educated himself about the problems that may affect people as they age, the issues of power or its loss, the importance of self-determination and the need for community protection.

I know how important it is to slow down the pace and seek more background information from the victim and how important it is to do a follow-up visit with the victim to offer any assistance.

*Larry Martin
Rama Police Service*

He provided a case study involving the issue of crime prevention and the importance of building community networks that can be used to deal with the complex challenges arising from family dynamics and potential elder abuse. He stressed the need to take the time to ensure that the older person understands his/her options, to alert the community support services to work with the older person and to help ensure that the decisions and actions that follow reflect the ultimate wishes of the older

person. The case study highlighted the difficulties many older people have in asking for and accepting help, especially when family members are involved. The successful outcome was due to the availability of a community support network that could work with the police and the older person to help her determine the course of action that needed to be taken to protect herself.

This presentation led to a discussion on the role of police officers and the importance of building community networks that can help police deal with the complex issues arising from cases of elder abuse.

Katherine Mortimer, Policy Analyst, Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, Government of Ontario, outlined the development of the "Prevention of Elder Abuse Program, Policy and Practice Lens", prepared with the support of the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat and officially endorsed by the Government of Ontario. Copies of the "Lens" were distributed and a brief overview presented that dealt with its creation, the groups involved and the key objectives for its use. Ms. Mortimer explained that the "Lens" is to be used by both policy makers and program and practice decision-makers to ensure that their work reflects the complexity and diversity of the older population they are trying to serve. She emphasized that, while the "Lens" perhaps looks intimidating, it really isn't. It is a very useful tool that can help to ensure the appropriateness of the policies and programs targeted to meet the needs of those facing abuse in the older population.

Copies of the "Prevention of Elder Abuse Program, Policy and Practice Lens", in both French and English, are available from the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat website at www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/elderabuse/index.php.

Presentations from Judith Wahl, Monita Persaud and Edward Lum can be found at www.cacp.ca.

B. WORKING SUCCESSFULLY WITH ABORIGINAL, IMMIGRANT AND RACIALIZED WOMEN

In this workshop, moderated by Paulette Senior, CEO of YWCA Canada, four sectors described how they respond to the needs of women in their communities.

Melba Kamateros, Executive Director of Shield of Athena Family Services in Montréal, explained that her agency was founded in 1991 to provide information on domestic and family violence to the Greek community. The Shield offers education, professional support, intervention and prevention services that are culturally and linguistically adapted to meet the needs of women, their children and ethno-cultural communities. It provides multicultural

Systemic change? Greater public awareness. Settlement services should include a mandatory session on the criminal justice system – police – services – rights of all people including women and children. There are foster services for children, what about having family foster services for women and children in need once they leave the shelter.

*Andrea Dow
Correctional Service Canada*

community outreach through ethnic media, information in nineteen languages on domestic violence, sexual aggression, laws and police procedure and cultural intermediaries who offer interpretation services in seventeen languages. The clients are women from ethno-cultural communities, many of whom speak neither English nor French.

The Shield's multicultural community outreach has resulted in the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal using its videos to raise awareness in various communities on family violence and police procedure as well as major research collaboration with the Université de Québec à Montréal. More victimized women are calling police, there is more use of shelters and the ethnic media in Montréal have become their SOS line. La Maison d'Athéna which opened in 2004 provides emergency housing and other culturally sensitive services to women and their children. A recent program, "Do you have a secret?", provides information in fifteen languages on sexual aggression.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Terry Swan, Manager of Healing and Wellness Programs for the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC), noted the importance of Aboriginal people being aware of their past. Traditional Aboriginal communities placed much emphasis on spirituality and everyone had specific roles and responsibilities. There was violence in these communities before colonization and residential schools, but there were strict protocols on how to deal with it; the communities worked to heal themselves and women – grandmothers, aunties and clan leaders – had important leadership roles. Mainstream society has not been kind to Aboriginal communities. The influence of the Christian church in Aboriginal communities has not been uniformly positive; for example, the strong Pentecostal movement was firmly opposed to Aboriginal culture. Residential schools resulted in 375,000 Aboriginal people experiencing intergenerational trauma. In the "60s scoop", she and her sister were taken from their family and put into foster homes until the age of sixteen. To-day, there are serious questions about matrimonial real property rights since under federal legislation, there are no provisions for an equal sharing of property and other assets when a marriage on a reserve ends.

In Ontario, the twenty-nine Indian Friendship Centres all have family violence programs and maintain a dialogue with Children's Aid Societies on important issues. The Centres offer more and more sophisticated services for men, women and children. A new "Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women" has been developed by OFIFC and the Ontario Native Women's Association; the Métis Nation of Ontario and independent First Nations support the framework which has now been shared with thirteen ministries. Two culture-based initiatives, "Kanawayhitowin (Taking Care of Each Other's Spirit)" and "Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I Am a Kind Man)", are holistic approaches that educate on the root causes of Aboriginal violence and on the prevention of various types of violence in different settings. Ms. Swan identified several areas still requiring change and noted the legal and public policy supports to this ongoing development.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Eman Ahmed of the Toronto office of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW) made a presentation on behalf of Alia Hogben. She began by emphasizing that Muslim women come from a variety of cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds and while they share a religion, Islam, they adhere to a variety of interpretations, understandings and practices. Muslim women, by and large, are horrified by violence and the killings of innocents based on religious practices or politics. The variety of traditions among Muslim women adds complexity to attempts by mainstream service providers, including the police, to understand culturally diverse communities. It must not be forgotten, however, that Canadian values, principles and constitutional and legal provisions apply as much to Muslim women as to other women.

To respond appropriately to the abuse of Muslim women, service providers need to build trust with communities; this will require that the service providers look at their own beliefs and

Every day we talk to and interact with people from diverse cultures. Cultural safety and sensitivity are required to help clients feel comfortable and provide them with the services and care they need.

*Aynsley Young
St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto*

prejudices first. Service providers should work to increase cultural competency, but in trying to learn more about culturally diverse communities, they should be aware that some religious community leaders can actually prevent good communication by acting as "gate-keepers". There are community resources, models and practices that can help to prevent and respond to violence against women, but it must be remembered that much of the violence against women

and girls is based on tribal, patriarchal traditions that focus on power and control over females; recognition of this fact is behind the CCMW opposition to the introduction of sharia law in Ontario. Finally, service providers need to work to understand the challenges facing Muslim women and their families, challenges which have been complicated by the racism and stereotyping following 9/11 and the recent controversy over reasonable accommodation.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Staff Sergeant Ronald Khan of the Toronto Police Service commented that traditional police work depends on information based on statistics. But, what is essential in dealing with family violence in culturally diverse communities is making connections with those communities so that partnerships can develop.

He explained Ontario's mobilization and engagement model of community policing and recounted how it was applied in 2009 to respond to domestic violence incidents in one Toronto community. When women chose not to attend information workshops, because of their fear and general mistrust of police and social agencies, another approach had to be taken: the Toronto Police Service used a police-community basketball tournament to set up information booths where material on domestic violence was made available. Following presentations on domestic violence by Community Mobilization officers at Seneca College, students created graphic arts materials on domestic violence in culturally diverse communities which are widely displayed around Toronto.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

In the conversation following the four presentations, a number of issues were discussed. With regard to children in shelters, Melpa Kamateros noted that her program includes a range of free services: art therapy, puppet and drama therapy, video development, children's groups and day care services for children who have witnessed violence. On the matter of confidentiality, she noted that most of the referrals received come from government agencies and the Shield of

Athena works closely with the police services in Montréal and Laval; a multi-sectoral protocol for the release of information has been developed.

One police delegate commented that success can be found by going into communities about other issues (e.g., pedestrian safety); once the initial contacts are made, police are invited to come back to talk about other issues, including domestic violence. Eman Ahmed underlined the importance of using words that distance the violence issue from religion, ethnicity and politics; for example, instead of “honour killing” which is a loaded term, “custom-based killing” or “customary violence” should be used. While violence against women may look different in some communities, the results are the same. The need to communicate and increase public awareness about family violence is a priority. Newcomers have to be informed about the *Charter*, the *Criminal Code*, etc. in their language of origin. Strong relationships with local media are essential to getting messages out to the community.

The availability of housing is crucial, especially with regard to young men who may only be permitted to stay in shelters with their mothers until they are seventeen; there is a need for “second step shelters” and affordable housing. Programs to help young people understand what makes a healthy relationship are important to preventing family violence. Better coordination of services in the community would help; if children can be treated, then the cycle of violence may be broken. It is important to work with the community – that is where the responsibility to end family violence lies. Partnerships with mainstream agencies and service providers would increase advocacy for justice for Aboriginal women. Education is fundamental and care should be taken not to slip into “cultural relativism” since all women and girls need protection. Finally, a better way to measure police activity is needed, since efforts to work collaboratively to build community partnerships to fight violence against women do not lend themselves to statistical reporting.

C. COMMUNITY HEALING: HOLLOW WATER, MANITOBA

The workshop commenced with participants moving their chairs into a circle so that they could see each other and work together. **Major Karen Hoefft** of The Salvation Army introduced Mandy Wesley, Senior Advisor Public Engagement from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and Corporal Gabriel Boulette from the Powerview RCMP detachment 120 kilometres north of Winnipeg. Consideration of the community healing being pursued in the Hollow Water First Nation began with the showing of a National Film Board (NFB) documentary on that process.

As described by the NFB, *Hollow Water* is a candid and touching documentary which takes the viewer into the isolated Ojibway village of Hollow Water, located in Northern Manitoba. The community has had a history of violence, suicide, addiction problems and sexual abuse, but the residents of Hollow Water have taken healing into their own hands and launched a profoundly transformative process of restorative justice. *Hollow Water* shows that by using traditional Aboriginal approaches – such as healing and sentencing circles – the community has found a way to deal with its painful past. A stunning 90% of all offenders who participate admit guilt and take responsibility for their actions. *Hollow Water* follows the journey of one family which participates in the healing circle to confront their past. Their story of hope is a testament to one community's ability to change and heal. (Taken from the NFB of Canada website <http://www.onf-nfb.gc.ca/eng/collection/film/?id=50027>)

After viewing about 35 minutes of this 48-minute documentary, Corporal Gabriel Boulette, who grew up in Hollow Water, Manitoba, shared with the group his experience in that community. Gabriel talked about the community healing process and the role of the RCMP in it. His

comments were fascinating because he knew the people in the film personally, yet as an RCMP officer, he was tasked with keeping the peace.

Next, Mandy Wesley spoke about the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (see www.trc.ca) and the role of community and public engagement in this process. The impact of Indian residential schools and the breakdown of family and community play a significant role in the violent events visible in many aboriginal communities today. Mandy also shared her experiences working in a Gladue Court as a staff lawyer with Aboriginal Legal Services Toronto.

The workshop then became a very interactive dialogue between the participants and the presenters. There was a good discussion about how to make restorative justice practices work and how to sustain them over time. Since both of the presenters had participated in practices that are currently available within the criminal justice system, the focus was not on what is wanted in the future, but on how to learn from what already exists. The Hollow Water Community Healing Model has been in existence for many years and continues to be effective. It was emphasized that such healing processes are not restricted to non-violent offences; for example, the Hollow Water example was looking at a case of incest and sexual abuse of children. The model highlights the idea that the whole community needs to be engaged in the healing and justice process.

During the workshop, participants noted that they were looking at scheduling a Truth and Reconciliation Commission event in their community, thinking about how they could begin the dialogue to establish community healing circles and reaffirming that they were “on the right track” when it came to a community policing model in their area. The workshop showed that community healing is a viable option when dealing with family violence in a collective culture. It is a long-term process and results do not happen quickly; however, when those results start to become visible, then the depth of healing is very powerful and life-changing for all who have been affected by violence.

D. CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING FOR THE FRONT-LINE

Detective Stephanie Miloknay from the Halton Regional Police Service hosted this workshop which touched on the importance of cultural competency and how it is encouraged in various sectors.

Aruna Papp shared her story of family violence and social isolation, a story that underlined the complexity of cross-cultural understanding. Her experience of breaking a relationship with an abusive partner, fear for her daughters’ safety, abandonment by her family and ostracism by her community is unfortunately not unique among South Asians in Canada. While domestic

Systemic change? Creating culturally specific/context specific awareness campaigns. Investing in youth – educating about family violence and resources. Consulting with and partnering with faith-based groups to prevent family violence.

*Sabrina Atwal
Indo-Canadian Women’s Association, Edmonton*

violence and intimate partner violence happen in every cultural group, regardless of ethnic background and socio-economic status, honour-based violence occurs in traditional patriarchal communities where violence against women is culturally acceptable. These communities’ leaders must be held accountable and required to take a stand against harmful traditional values which are not acceptable in Canada.

As a result of her personal experience with family violence, Ms. Papp developed cultural competency training to help front-line professionals understand that culture is a barrier to the services they are providing and to give them a better sense of what is culturally appropriate and

what is racist. Her program in North York is focused on working with women, families and professionals to understand and deal with the multiple factors of culture, role of women, education, and social and economic pressures that are behind conflict and violence within families. The understanding of these multiple experiences is extremely important for front-line professionals who are working with new immigrant communities; for example, Ms. Papp has provided cultural competency training to the York Regional Police Service for three years. There have been significant advances with more sensitivity in the justice system towards victimized women and children and general acceptance that cultural competency training for front-line service providers is essential.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Sergeant Susan Biggs of the Halton Regional Police Service's Diversity Unit spoke to the development of a well-designed program for community consultation and participation in training and policy development. Halton Regional Police Service has a dedicated team of 100 Diversity

Systemic change? Police need to stop working independently when responding to domestic violence incidents and work with other agencies. The agencies need to open their doors to police and knock down that wall of secrecy.

*Larry Martin
Rama Police Service*

officers, 60% of whom are front-line, whose responsibility is to reach out to the diverse cultural and religious groups in the community, to find out how better to serve every community member, without exception. The advice and participation of various cultural communities are sought in the development of policing services, including active community participation in cross-cultural training of police officers with regard to culture, values and customs

regarding family, relationship, conflict and violence. As well as seeking community involvement in the way the police serve the community, the Diversity Unit facilitates training for Diversity officers and the whole police service by bringing in guest speakers, organizing self-awareness exercises and leading site visits to holy and cultural places. Diversity officers are able to share this information with their platoon and team mates so that the whole service has the information and education to become more inclusive.

The impact of this community involvement and police training is positive on both sides: police officers feel more comfortable and confident as they serve all community members, and community members feel more secure and confident in their rights and their police service. Relationships between the police and community members can only be enhanced by the work of the Diversity Unit and the willingness of officers, from the Chief down, to endeavour to know the public they serve.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Diane Sasson, Executive Director of the Auberge Shalom pour femmes, Montréal, noted that there are cultural challenges which are peculiar to Québec, namely increased secularism, bans on the wearing of religious garb, debate over "reasonable accommodation" and attempts to amend the *Quebec Charter of Human Rights* to ensure equality of men and women over religious rights. The Auberge Shalom pour femmes takes women of all cultural and religious backgrounds and works with them, on a one-on-one basis, to help them explore their options. Over 50% of the clients are immigrants or refugees with varying status. Ms. Sasson remarked that providing appropriate services presents challenges to the

I will take more care to fit programs into the lives of others rather than try and squeeze people into Caucasian programming.

*Stacy Walker
John Howard Society of Simcoe and Muskoka*

counsellors who may not understand the women's language, immigration status and culture or appreciate their religious beliefs; counsellors may have certain prejudices, have to work through an interpreter or lack operational support.

Cultural competency or sensitivity requires that access to services is facilitated, a safe environment respecting and valuing beliefs is created, rules and procedures are flexible, counselors know their biases and care is taken not to stereotype clients. With those criteria in mind, Ms. Sasson explained how information is gathered on clients and culturally appropriate referrals made during the assessment period, advocacy measures, use of appropriate language including interpreters, how the adaptation period is managed and how life skills and language training are provided.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

Peggy Shaughnessy, President of Whitepath Consulting, observed that culture can affect the type of service needed, the best way to deliver that service and how positive the process is for both the recipient and the provider. Among Aboriginal people in Canada, there is a wide variety of languages and dialects – understanding this diversity is essential when providing services to Aboriginal offenders in correctional institutions.

Ms. Shaughnessy described her work with Aboriginal inmates and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), in particular the process followed in the "Aboriginal Needs Assessment" which was carried out for two maximum security federal institutions in Ontario. The assessment was in response to complaints from correctional staff about Aboriginal behaviour and from Aboriginal inmates about their inability to access elders and spiritual services. The survey results showed considerable difference when inmates and staff were asked the same questions and revealed both societal and personal biases. Her model has developed understanding for both Aboriginal men and CSC staff regarding issues of racism, marginalization and violence. This model developed with CSC is now being used in the federal corrections system across Canada.

The full text of this presentation can be found at www.cacp.ca.

CLOSING REMARKS

Louise Hanvey and **John Domm** closed the conference, noting the richness of the discussions and the active participation of so many different sectors and professions.

Ms. Hanvey pointed out that one of the strengths of the conference was the opportunity to hear and learn from culturally diverse voices. If we are to understand each other, then it is important to acknowledge different world views and lived experiences. Speakers made it clear that family violence happens in all communities and across the lifespan. Families have to be at the centre of any programs developed to confront violence and men and perpetrators have to be engaged as well as the women and children who are victimized. Members of culturally diverse communities face particularly challenging inequalities and disparities. Culturally effective programs must be developed and they must use the language of origin of those who are threatened and victimized. Collaboration, integration and coordination are fundamental if trust is to be built, myths dispelled and communities engaged. Despite the real progress made in the past few decades, there are still substantial numbers of victims of domestic and family violence who have fallen through the cracks. Only with systemic change will there be sustainable change.

John Domm concluded by noting that the conference report and presentations would be posted on the Coalition section of the website of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police in the near future. He encouraged organizations to take a look at the information on that website about the Coalition on Community Safety, Health and Well-being. Finally, he thanked the speakers, the federal funders (Justice Canada, Public Safety Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada), the staff of the CACP National Office who were responsible for logistics, the members of the CACP Crime Prevention Committee who hosted and moderated sessions, the Coalition Office and planning team who put the program together, and last but not least, the delegates whose participation made the conference such a success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) One recommendation came through clearly during the conference sessions and in the participants' evaluations: Canada needs a national strategy on family violence. Some of the features of that strategy would be:

- a multi-sectoral approach, involving all levels of government (federal, provincial, territorial and municipal) as well as community organizations, including police, and representatives of culturally diverse communities, and focusing on the underlying issues influencing family violence (i.e., poverty, housing, employment, access to services, literacy, etc.);
- a focus on violence prevention that takes into account the impact of social and community development measures;
- sustainable, multi-year funding, especially with regard to the safety of victims of family violence;
- a review of the justice system (e.g., mandatory charging policy, accountability of sureties, provision of written statements regarding cultural challenges to be used in post-sentencing programs, acknowledgement of the challenges presented by collectivist as opposed to individualistic communities, broader use of healing circles and restorative justice, etc.);
- development of community safety plans;
- mandatory cultural competency training for front-line professionals;
- mandatory education and awareness programs on Canadian values, rights and responsibilities for all immigrants and refugees; and
- mandatory healthy relationship courses in all schools.

2) While the development of a national strategy is a goal for the medium-term, in the more immediate future, attention should be paid to producing a compilation of the many community-based initiatives related to family violence prevention and response. This sharing of knowledge, experience and capacity across communities, a key feature of the Coalition's mandate, would be particularly valuable to front-line practitioners across Canada.

3) Finally, attention should be paid to how recommendations from the conference participants might be incorporated into the policy-making process of Coalition partners, including the CACP.

CONFERENCE EVALUATION

The 144 conference participants represented police, emergency shelters, victim services, settlement agencies, teachers, public health nurses, child welfare organizations, faith communities, agencies supporting seniors and youth, provincial courts, corrections, Aboriginal and Inuit communities, and federal, provincial and municipal governments. Following the conference, 73 evaluation forms were collected from the 123 participants who attended most of the conference, a response rate of 59%.

Following are synopses of the responses to each question on the evaluation form:

Question 1: Using a scale of 1(little value) to 4 (high value), how worthwhile did you find this conference?

Participants responded that this was a valuable consultation, with no one rating it below level 2. Three participants or 4% did not provide a numerical score, although their subsequent comments were positive, another 4% rated it at 2, 8% judged it to be 2.5, 34% pegged it at 3, 8% assigned it 3.5, 41% ranked it at 4 and one particularly enthusiastic delegate assessed it at 8.

What would have made the conference better?

While the overall rating of the conference was excellent, with three respondents going so far as to say that it couldn't have been improved, 60 participants (82% of the evaluations received) shared ideas on how it could have been even better. Responses to this question related to the planning and organization of the conference as well as content.

Two general responses stand out: the planning team was very ambitious and tried to cover too much ground in a short period of time; and it would have been better to schedule more breakouts and small group discussions so that delegates more familiar with family violence could share their experiences and encourage deeper reflection on the speakers' presentations. Several of the delegates who gave lower ratings were from police services with well developed diversity or domestic violence units; they noted that they would have preferred more solutions or case studies and less general discussion about family violence. Other participants from police services regretted that there had not been more emphasis on having speakers from various cultures, especially women, describe their beliefs and how they impact on their life in Canada. Some delegates observed that the conference was a good step and should be followed by a second meeting which could evaluate the recommendations and identify action steps. A number of participants remarked that while the conference logistics were excellent, the plenary room would have benefited from some heat – a problem which the hotel was unable to solve.

Not [so] many speakers. Speakers should have some more time to speak. Information overload. There was a good cross-section of speakers: academics, judges, bureaucrats and NGOs were represented.

*Jagjeet Bhardwaj
Indo-Canadian Women's Association, Edmonton*

Question 2 : How has participation in this conference increased your understanding of family violence in culturally diverse communities?

The conference objectives included clarifying roles and responsibilities of various sectors in addressing family violence and sharing information on community-based approaches to family violence prevention and response. The evaluation would appear to demonstrate that the conference met those objectives. Sixty-five respondents (89%) shared how the conference had

increased their understanding of family violence in culturally diverse communities. Four of the participants did not answer this question while another six, primarily from police services, indicated that the conference had either made no real difference or had reaffirmed their understanding of family violence.

“Canada is a multicultural country, so is the violence” – [a] good summarizing sentence. I learned more about how important is meaningful partnership with faith communities’ leaders in reducing family violence in culturally diverse communities.

*Ljiljana Kalaba
Multicultural Association of Fredericton*

Several participants noted that they had learned valuable information on programs and services from the speakers and other delegates with whom they had networked. Others commented that their understanding of the impact on immigrants and refugees of immigration policy and law would make them more sensitive. Presentations on family violence in Aboriginal communities and, in particular, the impact of colonization, residential schools and geographical

isolation increased delegates’ understanding of the challenges facing First Nations and Inuit families and service providers. Finally, many participants remarked that they valued the new contacts they had made from across the country.

Question 3: Will what you heard at the conference influence how you do your job?

Of the 72 evaluations received for this question, 92% of the responses indicated that job performance would be enhanced due to what had been heard at the conference. The responses indicating no influence came from police officers who work in domestic violence investigation and diversity units.

Increased awareness of efforts of Punjabi community in Peel re domestic violence education. Some very interesting concepts to adopt in Halton region.

*Roger Wilkie
Halton Regional Police Service*

Many of the respondents pointed to an increased understanding of various cultures with Baldev Mutta’s presentation on the Punjabi community mentioned several times. On the prevention side, this new understanding is exemplified by such simple suggestions as not relying on flyers which are not effective in some cultural communities, but rather focusing on personal outreach and ensuring a tangible presence. On the response side, it became clear that more time may have to be spent with victims from different cultures if an investigator is to collect sufficient information. Several participants noted that they now have many new contacts among service providers and cultural communities to follow up with since a holistic approach is essential for effective prevention and response to family violence in culturally diverse communities. Many respondents noted that they would share information from the conference with their colleagues, their managers and other organizations in their communities. Finally, since support for the victimized is key, it was suggested that perhaps there might be resources in many communities that could be made accessible to small, remote communities.

Question 4: What key systemic changes do you think are required in responding to family violence in culturally diverse communities?

One of the conference objectives was to identify policy and program changes to support more

Systemic change? Victim empowerment and interprofessional collaboration.

*Gordon Phaneuf
Child Welfare League of Canada*

effective family violence prevention and response. Five respondents did not offer suggestions. Of the other 68 evaluations received (93%), the most common recommendations included increasing cultural competency training for various professionals to enhance understanding of culturally diverse communities (21%), addressing the need for

sustainable core funding (16%), focusing more on education and awareness of newcomers as well as Canadian society (16%) and forming partnerships among sectors to permit collaborative responses to family violence prevention and response (15%). A variety of other suggestions included protocols for sharing of information, national policy development, better housing, changes to the criminal justice system (e.g., mandatory charging policy, sureties) and encouraging influential community members, including faith leaders, to work to prevent family violence.

Question 5: Do you have any further comments?

I really enjoyed the conference. As a nurse working with clients who are abused, knowledge of the legal/immigration aspects is vital to providing the best care possible.

*Aynsley Young
St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto*

Fifty-five (70%) of the respondents still had comments to make. Several reiterated that this well-organized consultation had been an excellent experience with much new information received, good dialogues with the panels, great networking possibilities and exposure to new organizations and agencies. Participants noted that they would pursue new contacts made with organizations and agencies in an effort to enhance their programs. Five respondents (7%) commented that the conference program was too ambitious: the days were too long; there was repetition in several presentations; presenters had to speak too quickly to get their points across; there should have been more opportunity for case studies; and more breaks would have been helpful. Moving forward, participants noted that the conference had given them an opportunity to reflect on systemic changes that should be made to reduce the number of family violence incidents which are the most numerous and volatile calls for service to police services across the country.