

Alternatives to Violence (ATV) Program

A Brief Overview

Introductions

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History

- Began as a Provincial Initiative
- SCHR has had the Alternatives to Violence Program since the early 1990's
- ATV program is part of Adult Community Services in Mental Health
- Rod Watson has run this program since 1996

Definitions

- The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Definitions Cont'd

- **Intimate partner violence** refers to behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviours.

Intimate Partner Violence

How big is the problem in Canada?

Findings from 2013 Statistics Canada reports on family violence and violence against women:

- Intimate partner violence refers to violence against current or former spouses or dating partners (whether or not the individuals live together).
- Of the more than 90,300 victims of police-reported violence [in 2013] by an intimate partner, 53% had been victimized by a dating partner and 47% by a spouse.
- Overall, the rate of police-reported intimate partner victimization was higher for females than for males, regardless of age, with women accounting for nearly 80% of all intimate partner victims reported to police.
- Charges were laid or recommended in the majority of intimate partner violence incidents brought to the attention of police.
- It is estimated that in 2012 family violence costs the people of Canada : **\$7.4 billion/year**

Intimate Partner Violence and Aboriginal Women

- Victimization of Aboriginal women is close to triple that of non-Aboriginal women
- Nearly 60% of Aboriginal women who reported spousal abuse also reported being physically injured as a result of it versus 41% of non-Aboriginal women
- Almost half of these women reported the most severe forms of violence: being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a gun or a knife

How are we doing in this Province?

- **Saskatchewan recorded the highest rate of intimate partner violence among the provinces in 2013**
- In 2013, seven provinces recorded a rate of intimate partner violence that was above the national rate of 310.3 victims per 100,000 population
- Saskatchewan (635.0 victims per 100,000 population) recorded the highest rate, at more than twice the national rate
- Manitoba and Alberta had the next highest rates
- Ontario and PEI had the lowest

How has the Province responded?

- Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services (PATHS) has emerged. One of the member associations is Envision Counselling.
- Public education initiatives by men i.e. Regina's 'Man Up Against Violence'.
- White Ribbon Campaign - global movement of men and boys working to end male violence against women and girls.
- Victim Services available in many locations
- Provincial associations specific to intimate partner violence – SK Abuse Intervention Network (SKAIN)
- Domestic Violence Courts in Regina and Saskatoon.

What Services are Offered in SCHR?

- We began to offer services to perpetrators of intimate partner violence as well as sexual offenders in the early 1990's
- Rod took over those efforts in the mid'1990's
- Alternative to Violence groups were offered weekly or every other week in Weyburn, Estevan, and Carlyle and on occasion on the White Bear First Nations
- Those groups were often co-facilitated by probation officers
- Occasionally, Mental Health staff also co-facilitated

SCHR Services cont'd

- A group for women who perpetrated abuse was also offered at one time on White Bear.
- With the demands of the oil boom it was found that clients were reluctant to miss work and to attend group sessions, so individual sessions were offered instead. There was also a sense of greater privacy and greater client centred focus not available within a group setting.
- Considerations are being given to offer educational groups in the future which would complement individual sessions.
- The vast majority of clients are men.
- More clients tend to come from the Estevan and Weyburn areas.

SCHR Services cont'd

ATV counselling explores and addresses:

- Social history and contributing factors
- Barriers to the development of healthy relationships
- Alternatives to current unhealthy behaviours
- Healthy communication
- Positive self esteem, self care

Parameters of the ATV Program

- Work with men (primarily) and women who are perpetrators of intimate partner violence
- Clients must be 18 years of age and older
- Clients who are seen are both voluntary and mandated.
- Mandated clients usually are referred for the most part by Adult Probation Services followed by Social Services and Envision.

What ATV does not treat



And....



Conclusion

Thank you for your time!

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