

PCVI News – Winter 2012



Welcome

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The Policy Centre for Victim Issues works with a variety of organizations that offer a wide array of services to meet the needs of victims of crime. This edition of PCVI News focuses on projects that bring awareness to victim issues in innovative and exciting new ways. The Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada, METRAC and the BC Lions have all made unique efforts to raise awareness of services available to victims of crime. PCVI encourages these projects and the promise that through new, as well as traditional approaches, more victims of crime will be reached and the level of public awareness of victim issues will be raised.

If you have any comments on this edition of PCVI news, or would like to suggest future topics we would love to hear from you.

Ghosts of Violence – Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada

The Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada had its world premiere of *Ghosts of Violence* at Canada's National Arts Centre in February 2011. This landmark production, conceived and choreographed by Igor Dobrovolskiy, is a ground-breaking multi-media initiative which brings the issue of domestic violence against women into the spotlight.

Ghosts of Violence is an emotionally charged work inspired by women who have lost their lives at the hands of an intimate partner. Through evocative lighting, theatre, music and multi-media, the ballet captures the memory of these silent victims and tells stories of their struggles, their hopes, their joys and our loss. It is a call for awareness, understanding and action.

The theatre production is the anchor for the Atlantic Ballet Theatre's "Celebrate Courage" project designed to reach 12,000 high school students across the country. Celebrate Courage provides youth with the opportunity to view *Ghosts of Violence* followed by direct access to information on how to recognize abuse and how to get help if they need it. Groups of youth will be able to discuss issues concerning domestic and dating violence with social workers, nurses, police officers and members of the RCMP all of whom will be at the performance and leading discussions. The Department of Justice is pleased to be a sponsor of Celebrate Courage.

A national tour is scheduled for the 2011-2012 season. If *Ghosts of Violence* comes to a city near you, you won't want to miss the opportunity to see it.

For more information, visit the Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada website at <http://atlanticballet.ca/>.

For performance excerpts from the World Premiere at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, on February 15th 2011, watch the YouTube video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LPPrBWfx4vg>.

Raising awareness through “What It Is” – METRAC

The Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) of Toronto, funded by TELUS and Department of Justice Canada, has launched a Canada-wide digital game in English and French called “What It Is”. The game raises awareness about sexual violence and educates young people aged 12 to 25 on how to respond to sexual violence.

The multiple-choice quiz and key messages game is available online and on java-enabled mobile phones. The game was guided through the design stage by young people, including a Youth Advisory Team. It explores what sexual assault, sexual abuse and consent are and the common myths and realities about sexual violence. Further themes include the needs, rights and common concerns of victims of sexual violence; healthy and unhealthy relationships; how youth can support their peers going through sexual violence; and resources, community services and supports available to youth victims of sexual violence.

It utilizes the popular medium of digital gaming to build youth knowledge and awareness of sexual assault issues. Research on digital gaming has indicated that games are a fertile medium for learning amongst youth, particularly when it comes to poignant social issues that impact their lives.

For more information on METRAC, visit www.metrac.org and the game at: <http://www.challengesexualviolence.org/>

Be More Than a Bystander – BC Lions

Funded by the Status of Women Canada, the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) and the BC Lions launched a three-year initiative on July 7, 2011. This unique partnership is aimed at substantially increasing awareness and understanding about the impact of men’s violence against women.

The program, guided by an advisory group of women experts from throughout the province of British Columbia, will collaborate with sports icons from the BC Lions Football Club to “Break the Silence on Violence Against Women.” The program provides tools, language and practical ideas about how to be more than a bystander and how to communicate that violence and abuse are not acceptable.

As part of the Be More Than a Bystander initiative, BC Lions players will also be going into schools throughout BC to talk to students in Grades 8 to 12 about how their individual choices and actions can create positive social change. Program materials for this initiative will also be used to train coaches of amateur football teams in BC on how to talk to youth about violence, respectful relationships and speaking up. The program will create a legacy film that will be distributed to communities throughout BC. In its third year, a symposium will be held on public education related to violence against women.

For more information, visit the EVA BC website at www.endingviolence.org.

Mark your calendars for the week of April 22 to 28, 2012 for this year’s
[National Victims of Crime Awareness Week](#).

This year’s theme is “Moving Forward.”

Community events across the country will aim to raise awareness about the issues facing victims of crime and about the services, assistance and laws in place to help victims and their families. Events taking place during the Week also acknowledge the work of victim service providers and their dedication to assisting victims of crime and their families.