



Annual Report 2005/06

Thank you to our

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New Voices Research Project)

JOAN WRIGHT (Facilitator,
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MARNIE THORP (Project
Manager, New Voices Project)

MIRIAM McCLELLAN (Facilitator,
Single Mothers Support Group)

SURJEET SIDHU (Coordinator,
New Voices Research Project)

PRO-BONO LAWYERS:

Assunta De Ciantis, Karen Mirsky
and Phyllis Kenney

The North Shore Women's
Centre would like to
acknowledge the Squamish
and Tseil-Waututh Nations on
whose territory the Centre is
located. We would also like to
acknowledge the Musqueam
Nation.



Quick Facts about the North Shore Women's

Centre 

- Last year, over 2,000 women accessed our programs and services. During the first half of 2006 over 1200 women have accessed the Centre through calls, e-mail or drop in. This signals a significant increase in women using the Centre.
- The average wait time to get an appointment in our pro-bono Women's Legal Clinic is one month. In 2005, over 100 women utilized this unique program offering 9 one-hour appointments a month with a female family law lawyer. The most common issues women bring to the clinic include separation and divorce, child custody, child support and spousal maintenance.
- In 2005, almost 100 women took part in our Support Groups. We provide a Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Support Group and a Single Mother's Support Group in cooperation with the North Shore Neighbourhood House. Our Support Groups provide a way for women to connect to resources on the North Shore, to share their experiences and to support each other in the challenges they face.
- Last year 89 women gained crucial employment skills through our individual computer training program. This program matches a volunteer computer trainer with a woman seeking basic computer skills for 6 one-hour appointments. It is offered in several different languages and provides training in Internet use, email and word processing.
- During the last year, over 130 women contacted the Centre looking for support and referrals because either themselves or a friend/sister/daughter had experienced violence and abuse or feared for their safety due to stalking or harassment. The numbers of women accessing the Centre around issues of poverty are almost identical, although as poverty is difficult to quantify it is suspected that the actual numbers are higher. This means that an average of one woman reports issues related to violence and poverty every day that the Centre is open. Other issues women commonly contact us about include employment, parenting, housing, and health.
- In 2005, over 80 women received training and gained knowledge and skills when they volunteered their time to support the Centre's programs and services.
- In 2005, over 100 women attended one of our Women's Health in Women's Hands workshops. Topics have included stress management, chemical toxins, sexual health, body awareness, menopause and perimenopause, and self-esteem for young women.
- The North Shore Women's Centre was formed in 1973. We have over 30 years of working with women across the North Shore. On March 31st, 2004, the Centre received a 100% cut to our Provincial core operational funding. A donation of space from the City of North Vancouver allowed the Centre to keep its doors open to women, but our funding situation is still precarious.

2005-2006 Year in Review: Reflections and Developments

The past year at the North Shore Women's Centre has been a time to reflect on the direction of the organization and to initiate developments to meet both the Centre's own internal structure as well as the growing needs of women in the community.

One pressing need that we have identified is more awareness and service directed to women's health. Most women's lives are so busy, stressful and full of responsibility yet they often do not receive enough support or recognition. Added factors such as increasing poverty, homelessness, and unpaid work as well as violence, abuse, and discrimination of all kinds negatively affect women's health and our ability to take control of our own lives.

A new workshop series at the Centre called *Women's Health in Women's Hands* strived to address these realities and provide information, skills, and resources for women to ask questions and explore our health beyond the mainstream medical model. Recently funded by the North Shore Community Foundation, the series offered workshops on issues diverging from holistic stress management and healthy nutrition, to environmental toxins, energy healing, and patient's rights. In the Centre, we also tried to create a healthier environment by using toxin-free cleaning products, requesting a scent-free space for all and, thanks to many generous donors, attempting to provide basic supplies to women in need, such as toiletries, emergency food, clothing, and household items.

In addition to these basic necessities, our other programs and services also worked to improve women's lives by providing support, options, skills, and resources. Our women's legal clinic program continued to be extremely successful and to it we welcomed the addition of local criminal lawyer Karen Mirsky. Our lesbian and bisexual women's drop-in group expanded to include a 9-week coming out program offered 3 times during the year. Our information, referral, and support service was accessed more than ever before as women sought assistance in navigating cutback social services and the justice system.

The impact of this era of slashed-back social supports and erosion of legislation to improve women's equality has taken a tremendous toll on women's lives and on women's non-profit organizations and programs across the North Shore and around the province. Many of these impacts were documented over the course of the year through surveys, interviews, and focus groups held as part of our Status of Women Canada funded research project, *New Voices Joining the Table*. A telling and comprehensive report from this project will be launched in the next few months with a host of recommendations for all levels of government.

In helping women in other ways to make informed decisions about voting and to have a voice and representation in government, the Centre produced a survey prior to this year's federal election that was distributed to all candidates. The survey posed questions on issues of significance to women, such as childcare, housing, women's economic security, funding for women's centres and women's organizations, Aboriginal women's human rights, and women's reproductive rights. It received a positive response from candidates and women in the community who felt that they were more informed on matters affecting their everyday lives.

Last year's December 6th ceremony to remember and take action on violence against women had particular significance, as it took place after the completion of (in)Visible, the NSWC's Public art project housed at the John Braithwaite Community Centre. Held in the courtyard beneath the etched window that symbolizes women's potential and strength in moving

from isolation to empowerment, the candlelight ceremony acknowledged the many kinds of violence experienced by women, and remembered and honoured women who had suffered from, struggled with, and survived violence. It was a powerful and poignant event that drew participants from across the community and provided a model for future December 6th ceremonies.

Our other initiatives to end violence against women during this past year were no less impacting. The Centre's second annual production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* was an overwhelming success with new cast members, new monologues, two performances, and a range of public education events such as screenings of the internationally themed film *Until the Violence Stops*, healthy sexually workshops, and vagina arts and crafts. Once again, the production raised a significant amount of money to help support the Centre's programs and services as well as the V-Day 2006 spotlight group. Last year, the spotlight was focused on seeking justice and redress for the "Comfort Women" forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Military during World War II.

Hope in ending violence against women was also continued with both a local and international focus through a blossoming partnership between the Centre and the North Shore chapter of Amnesty International. The beginning stages of a *Hope Garden* have been set, wherein spring bulbs will be purchased by the community and planted in personal gardens or donated back for planting in large flower boxes that will be located outside of the North Shore Women's Centre. Each of the 1,000 flowers that we anticipate blooming next spring will symbolize the possibilities of moving from despair to hope in ending the violence.

In further developments over the last year, we were pleased to once again welcome summer students to the Centre through Service Canada's Summer Career Placement program. After a one-year hiatus from the program, we were fortunate to attract two talented women who took on the respective roles of Policy Development Assistant and Fundraising Assistant. As the functions and perspectives of the Centre changed over the years, we felt it essential to ensure that our organizational policies and protocols reflected these shifts. Additionally, fundraising for core operations has become an on-going necessity for the organization, particularly since the elimination of this funding by the Provincial government in 2004.

The struggle to get funding restored to women's centres and women's groups across BC and throughout Canada continued last year too. To help make our position on the need for restored funding loud and clear, the Centre was pleased to be able to send two representatives to *Making Our Voices Heard*, the BC Federation of Labour's Women's Conference and Lobby in Victoria in early May. Joining with other women activists, we met with BC MLAs across party lines to stress the need for stronger policy on issues of childcare, women's economic equality, and social services funding.

Having some space to reflect on where the Centre has been over the years and in which ways we need to precede to achieve our goals has ultimately allowed us to further connect with people across the North Shore. The Centre is, after all, a grassroots group that continues to draw its greatest strengths and passions from the remarkable women of this community. As the Centre develops and evolves in the years to come, this foundational premise will undoubtedly remain true to our work.

Michelle Dodds, Executive Director

NSWC Programs and Services 2005-2006

Information, Referrals and Support: Women's issues and concerns are listened to by phone or in-person. Confidential support, help finding information and resources, and referrals to other community organizations are provided.

Multi-Media Resource Library: Women's issues books, journals, articles, reports and video/audio materials are available for use in the Centre or to be borrowed.

Public Access Computer Terminals: Computers are available on a drop-in basis for writing letters and resumes, checking email, doing Internet searches and much more. Support is provided. The Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing Program was recently added to our drop in computers.

Basic Computer Training: A personalized introduction to computers, word processing and the Internet. 6 one-hour lessons are provided. Registration is required. During 2005/06 basic computer training was offered in a range of languages, including English, Farsi, Tagalog, Punjabi and Spanish.

Women's Legal Clinic: Women family law lawyers provide private legal information and advice for one hour about issues such as separation, divorce and child custody and access. This year, criminal law was also added to this program with one monthly clinic of four half-hour appointments.

Single Mom's Support Group: A weekly, facilitated support group for North Shore single mothers includes discussions, information, and social networking. On-site childcare is provided.

Lesbian and Bisexual Women's Drop-In and Coming Out Groups: Regular drop-in sessions and a 9 week coming out group for lesbians, bisexual women and women questioning their sexual identity. Discussion, information and social networking opportunities provided. Coming out groups are scheduled several times a year and registration is required. Trans inclusive.

Volunteer Opportunities: Volunteer positions, with training are available to support Centre programs and services.

Forums and Workshops: Educational information sessions on women's issues and concerns are scheduled whenever possible. Visit our website or call for upcoming sessions.

Community Organizing: Speakers available for groups or events. Special community events organized to recognize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, International Women's Day, and other occasions. Representatives sit on community committees and coalitions to represent issues of concern to North Shore women. The Centre hosts the North Shore Coordinating Committee to End Violence Against Women in Relationships and the North Shore Women's Forum Coalition.



Workshops 2005-2006

- October:** Chemical Trespass: Toxins, Your Health and the Environment
November: Navigating Our Well-Being: A Walk Through the Health Care System in BC
February: Sexual Health and Empowerment and Self Defense
May: Self Defense, Financial Awareness for Women and Healthy Nutrition on a Budget
June: Moving Toward Life: Introduction to Movement Therapy
July: Holistic Pregnancy: Alternative Choices for Pre-Natal, Birthing and Post-Partum Care
August: The Art of Affirmations: How to Increase Your Self Esteem and Personal Power
September: MindBodySpirit Medicine: Boosting Your Immunity Through Energy Healing Techniques

Thank you to all the workshop facilitators for their time, energy and enthusiasm:

Sarah McMillan and Lisa Marie Whitaker, Lisa Moore, Miriam McClellan, Cherie Devisser, Phyllis Kenney, Anna Kemble, Mae Burrows, Dr. Anne-Marie Evers, Christine Buckham, Patty Donnahee, Holly Townsend, Anna Stauffer, Diane Jacobs



Events

December 6th Candlelighting Ceremony
 To see articles that appeared in the North Shore News and North Shore Outlook about this event, please see:

<http://www.northshorewomen.ca/media.html>

Website

Thanks to Melissa Garcia and Katrina Gayday, interns with the Community Access Program, the NSWC website has a new look.

www.northshorewomen.ca

V-Day North Vancouver 2006



The North Shore Women's Centre's second benefit production of Eve Ensler's award-winning play *The Vagina Monologues* was a huge success, raising over \$14,000 for the Centre's programs and services! We were pleased to again be part of the V-Day Global Movement to End Violence Against Women and Girls, which is growing every year. This year's V-Day spotlight campaign was on

Comfort Women, civilians forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese military during World War II, to whose cause some of the money raised by this year's North Vancouver event will also go.

We want to thank our wonderful cast, directors, and stage manager, organizing committee, volunteers, sponsors, donors and audience. Thank you for your support!

For more information about the V-Day Global Movement:
www.vday.org

For more information about V-Day North Vancouver 2006:
www.northshorewomen.ca/V-Day.html

The Hope Garden

The North Shore Women's Centre and Amnesty International Are Working Together to End Violence Against Women

Violence against women is a pervasive and complex issue that affects everyone and creates challenges in both our local and global communities. This is why the North Shore Women's Centre and Amnesty International are working together on a significant new project called "The Hope Garden."

The Hope Garden will be a beautiful and symbolic spring bulb garden, in which 1,000 flowers-in full bloom-will represent our collective hope that together we can end the violence experienced by one in three women in our communities and around the world.

The Hope Garden will raise awareness and funds for local and international anti-violence work, and will include public events during planting and blooming times: Fall 2006 and Spring 2007.

For more information:

<http://www.northshorewomen.ca/fundraising.html#hope>



Merchandise

North Shore Women Centre T-Shirts and hot shorts are now on sale, featuring woman-positive designs.

To see photos and ordering information please see: www.northshorewomen.ca/merchandise.html



3rd Annual Summer Garage Sale, BBQ and Craft Fair Fundraiser

The North Shore Women's Centre's 3rd annual Garage Sale and BBQ fundraiser took place on Saturday September 16th. This year's sale also included a craft sale of local women selling pottery, knitting, artwork, cards and jewelry. This year's sale raised over \$1,100 for the NSWC's programs and services.

5 WAYS THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT THE NORTH SHORE WOMEN'S CENTRE

- 1) Become an active participant in the continuation of our programs and services by donating monthly through a pre-authorized plan.
- 2) Hold a fundraising event at your home or work, and donate the proceeds to the NSWC. For example, host a potluck and ask your guests to contribute a designated amount—put the fun back in fundraising!
- 3) Check the donations page of our website at <http://www.northshorewomen.ca/donations.html> and donate something off of our current wish list.
- 4) Name the NSWC as a beneficiary in your Registered Plans—RRSP's and RRIF's— or in your will.
- 5) Take advantage of our volunteer opportunities—training is provided and it's a great life experience.

Thank You To Our Dedicated Volunteers

Amanda Oliver * Amy Rhead* Andrea Lai * Atoossa Bakhshaei * Ayumi Konnai * Brenda Dennis * Candy Lui * Carolyn O'Byrne * Chelsea Keays * Chloe Delany * Christine O'Byrne * Claudia Zuniga-Blaney * Cinnamon Schreinert * Diana Bang * Elaine Carter * Elly Stonebrink * Eran Norton * Erica Claire Bearss * Erin O'Byrne * Farideh Kamali * Fran Nelson * Jinny Rodrigo * Ingrid Hartloff * Helen Mole * Gloria Larocque * Kate Lelane * Kelly Knott * Khoal Marks * Kim Stubbs-Law * Laura Fordyce * Lauren Schutte * Laurie Sluchinski * Leigh Green * Leila Karjalainen * Leyla Dadashzadeh * Libya Taylor * Liliana Lopez-Ruiz * Linda Boyd * Lisa Stuble * , Lisa Sowden * Lori Payne * Marcia Moulton * Marni Westerman * Mary-Jean Chorzepa * Menka Sull * Myriam Segovia * Nadia Grutter * Naomi Thomas * Natalie Hoskins * Natalie Weiser * Noa Anatot * Petra Long * Robyn Carson * Rosalyn Winther * Rosanna Ng * Sara Jones * Shannon Kostrzewski * Surjeet Sidhu * Suzette Lema * Tina Parbhakar * Tina Powell * Weronika Lewczuk * Younghee Lee * Ziba Pouladin * We apologize to anyone we have missed...

This year's **Courage of Her Convictions** award goes to Mary Jean Chorpeza for her dedication to volunteering, the warmth she brings into the Centre, and for her kind, bright and generous spirit. You are an inspiration to us all.

We offer many volunteer positions at the Centre such as:

- * Resource centre assistant
- * Library assistant
- * Computer trainer
- * Workshop facilitator
- * Special events helper

*Thank You To Our Generous Donors*

32 Books (Edgemont Village), AG Hair Cosmetics, Andrea Gauthier, Angela Stuart, Anne Davis, Anne Junkin, Art Express, Art of Loving, Arvilla Read, Barbara Livingstone, Bernadette Bryan, Body Harmony Yoga, Canadian Outback Adventure, Candice Asconi, Capers Community Market, Capilano College Womyn's Collective, Capilano Suspension Bridge, Carol McQuarrie, Carol Slight, Carol's Costume Corner, Carolyn Anglin, Cenen Bagon, Centennial Theatre, Chara Designs, Cheers Restaurant, Chris O'Byrne Graphics, Christine Designs Ltd., CIBC Park Royal, Cinnamon's Chocolates, Darlene Hilden et al., Darlene Jacobi, Darrell Mussatto, Deep Cove Kayak, Deep Cove Market and Grill, Denny Boyd, Donna Stewart, Erin O'Byrne, Fairmont Chateau Whistler, Falcon International, Fitness World, Gold's Gym, Health E Now, Holly Salons and Schools, Inessence Skin Synergies, International Arts Initiative, J. Frances McLeod, Jane Langton, Janet Appleton, Janine Cross, Jo Hinchliffe, John Braithewaite Community Centre, Joy Smith, June Thompson, Katherine Newman, Latin Organics, Lee Grills, Leslie Smith, Linda Mann, Lisa Stuble, Lonsdale Rentals, Lorraine Douglas, Lunabar, Maple Leaf, Margaret Morgan, Margaret Ramsay, Margaret Roy, Marian Shipley, Megahair Family, Menka Sull, Merle Todd, Miriam McClellan, National Action Committee on the Status of Women BC, North Shore Neighbourhood House, North Shore Outlook, North Shore Unitarian Church, North Vancouver Amnesty International Action Group, Northlands Golf Course, Opus Framing and Art Supplies, Orquieda, Pat Heal, Patricia Mitchell, Phyllis Kenney, Power of Affirmation, Purple Orange Arts, Raincoast Books, Rhonda Spence, Rill Sutherland Clarke, Roberta Clark, Robyn Palliardi, Safeway Lonsdale, Safeway Westview, Sally Sutherland, Sandro Papile, Save-On Foods Park and Tillford, Save-On Foods Pemberton, Seymour Art Gallery, Shandon Sims, Shannon Krostrzewski, Shirley Freund, Silk Purse Arts Centre, Sky Spirit Studios, Soroptomist International (North and West Vancouver Branch), Susan Stout, Sweet Cravings, The Body Shop, The Love Nest (North Vancouver), The Love Nest Home Parties, Tina Parbhakar, True Colours, Van City (West Vancouver Community Branch), West Coast Mystic Arts, Whole Foods Market, Women in Film, Woodstop, www.vashomestay.com, Yvonne Perreault.

**Thank you also to all of our anonymous and event donors!
We apologize to anyone we have missed.**

We would like to thank Miriam McClellan, the previous facilitator of the NSWC Single Mother's Support Group, for her dedication to the Centre. We would also like to welcome Kerri Wall, who has recently accepted the position.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the North Shore Women’s Centre is to improve the social, economic and political status of women and to encourage and support self-empowerment by acting as a resource and a catalyst for change from a feminist perspective.

Philosophy

We believe that women have the right to:

- Self-determination in all aspects of our lives
- Equal access to society’s resources
- Safety and security of our person
- Fairness in the administration of justice
- Freedom from all forms of discrimination

Goals

- To provide women with access to resources (information, referral, advocacy) to assist with life choices.
- To actively address violence against women at all levels of the community.
- To challenge sexism and all other forms of discrimination against women at all levels of the community.
- To work towards the elimination of the feminization of poverty.

The NSWC is a non-profit registered charity. Income tax receipts will be issued for donations.

Membership in the North Shore Women’s Centre offers: Opportunities to be a part of a diverse network of women, a subscription to the *Nellie E-News* and our print newsletter *the Nellie*, library borrowing privileges and voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting.

NSWC 131 East 2nd Street, BC V7L 1C2
604.984.6009 info@northshorewomen.ca

North Shore Women’s Centre

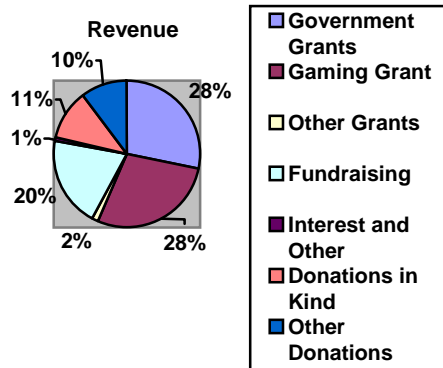
131 East 2nd Street
 North Vancouver, BC V7L 1C2

Hours of Operation
Monday - Thursday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

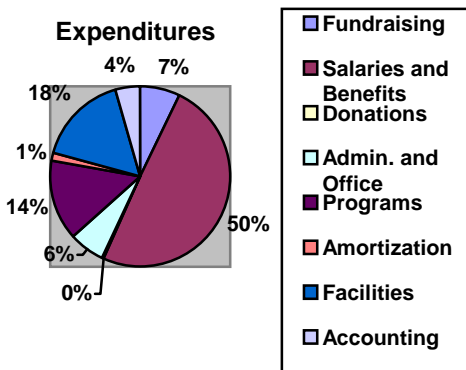
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www.northshorewomen.ca

Summary of Financial Statement



Total Revenue:
 \$153,099



Total Expenditures:
 \$165,695

