

June 2005



Monarch Place

*Offering shelter and support
to women and children
fleeing violence*

Like one in four Canadian women, Jane (not her real name) lived in an environment of fear and bewilderment. She had begun to realize that the marriage she believed would provide her with love and stability had somehow become frightening and unrecognizable. When her husband began to call her names and criticize everything she said or did, she believed that he was just angry and that she could change enough things to accommodate his moods and meet his expectations. When her efforts were met with accusations, withholding of financial support, subtle threats, and things being thrown around the house, she recognized that his behaviour directed toward her was transforming her into an anxious, isolated woman. After a particularly volatile exchange of words, Jane phoned the crisis line for support. She came to Monarch Place to try to make sense of what was happening in her marriage, evaluate her situation, and make decisions about the future.

**Jane was our 1000th
woman resident.**

Although she only stayed with us for one week and made a decision to return home, she left with a good understanding of the dynamics involved in the relationship, ideas for coping techniques, and a carefully thought out safety plan. Regretfully, we believe we might see her return to us again...

Although Jane's story is unique to her, there are several themes that we find recurring in many abusive relationships:

- A destructive belief that there are rights and privileges that exclusively belong to one person in the relationship resulting in unrealistic expectations and beliefs about the other; and
- Escalating behaviours by the abuser designed to establish and maintain power and control in the relationship and keep the other person in a constant state of fear, anxiety, and focused on the abuser's wants, needs, moods and demands.

Quotable Quote:

*"Experiencing abuse in
an intimate relationship
is like connecting
a fire hydrant to your
drinking straw."*

Dr. Henry Cloud

On an average day in New Westminster, the Domestic Violence Response Team of the New Westminster Police Service responds to 3.13 calls related to domestic abuse (1142 calls between April 1, 2004 - March 31, 2005). 1.37 of these calls involve reported criminal code offences.

By identifying domestic violence as a priority focus, Amnesty International has sought to bring attention to this issue and lift the veil of secrecy and shame that hinders candid discussion and pursuit of solutions. It can't happen soon enough...

Monarch Place News

We increased our capacity from 10 - 12 beds as of April 1st. Even so, we continue to turn away 3 times as many women as we can take.

We were successful in getting funding from HRSDC for a part time outreach worker. This has been a great addition to the services we are able to provide.

Our community support group program W.I.S.H.E.S. (Women In Safe, Healthy, Empowering Support) has supported over 150 women. One woman commented:

"This group has had a huge impact on my healing and recovery. I not only gained knowledge and understanding about the nature and impact of abuse, but I also gained invaluable support, encouragement and understanding."

We have now successfully graduated 18 women from our extensive one year program at Chrysalis Place Second Stage. We are proud of each one and their accomplishments.

We are passionate about what we do! You know you are in the right place at the right time doing the right things when someone says,

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you did. Thank you for being there for me as I have never experienced that before".

Your support for Monarch Place means that women and children continue to find safety and shelter under our roof and hope for a safer future.

Best wishes for a great summer!