

**ALBERTA COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS**

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2000-2001



**Mission Statement:**

**“To provide a collective and unified voice to support and strengthen shelters for abused women and families.”**

**April 1, 2000 – March 31, 2001**

## *PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT by Lana M. Wells*

Dear ACWS members:

It is hard to believe a year has gone by as President of ACWS. This past year has seen big changes with the organization. Arlene Chapman, ACWS Provincial Co-ordinator for seven years, left us to take the exciting position of Executive Director for the Edmonton Social Planning Council. In her place, on February 12, we welcomed our new Provincial Co-ordinator, Jan Reimer who has brought a wealth of experience and skills to the position. Jan has a deep knowledge and interest in women's issues and has been extraordinary at championing shelter issues and supporting ACWS in the restructuring process.

Over the last year, ACWS has worked hard to implement the recommendations from our November 2000 restructuring meeting. These recommendations were implemented with the principles you developed that included: Valuing Diversity, Enhancing Accountability, Respecting the Mission, Mandate, and History of ACWS, Maintain Networking and Services, Maintaining a Unified Voice and Continuing to be a Shelter-Driven Organization. I truly believe the fantastic work that has been accomplished in the last year was because we worked on the changes together, as a team. I would like to thank the Muttart organization for funding this initiative and Toni Lashbrook for her time and expertise in supporting us to meet our vision.

I believe the change in how ACWS operates will benefit our members because it will see a much smaller board (from 37 to 11) thus giving us more time to concentrate on shelter needs. I would encourage the membership to contact myself and/or the ACWS office for continued support, networking opportunities and to continue our open dialogue on the activities of the organization.

I would like to congratulate ACWS and all the shelters on their hard work in the past year to address the inadequate level of income support the province provides to women leaving abusive situations. Our report, "Supports for Independence (SFI) and the Cost of Living in Alberta: Regional Differences" was well received in government and the community. In addition, during the income support review, we challenged the MLA's to an "SFI Survivor Challenge", where we asked them to live on SFI and gave them real life situations that women face daily in this province. The kit brought about much debate among government officials and bureaucrats. ACWS will continue its work on this issue until women have better access to this program and higher income rates to live on.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the provincial co-ordinator, Jan Reimer for all her hard work. In just seven short months, Jan has become a leader in the shelter movement and has proven to be a strong advocate for the shelter movement. I would also like to thank Flavia Bourne for all her hard work and dedication to the organization. Flavia has been with ACWS for five years and has been a pillar of strength and support for the organization. I would also like to thank the restructuring committee and the executive who have worked hard in the last year to shape ACWS into new ways of working; where we will be more efficient and effective. Lastly, I would like to thank the membership for your vision (and patience) for making this organization a strong voice

for women and children.

*PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT by Jan Reimer*

In February of this year I was delighted to join the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) as their new Provincial Co-ordinator. It is a privilege to be part of organization that is so dedicated to the issues surrounding family violence and breaking the cycle of inter-generational violence.

Annual reports give us an opportunity to reflect on ACWS' accomplishments and challenges. In the last year ACWS has been a powerful voice in Alberta with respect to gun control, women's issues and social supports.

On a daily basis, front-line shelter workers see the devastating effects of firearms in the context of domestic violence. ACWS successfully intervened in the Supreme Court Challenge on the gun control legislation. It was ironic that the province of Alberta led the legal challenge against the law, when Alberta has one of the highest rates of gun death and injury in Canada.

The report on Supports for Independence: Regional Differences was prepared by ACWS, assessing the difficulties of low income people in areas where the cost of living is higher than the provincial income support programs. The study showed that this held true for every region in the province. This makes it particularly difficult for women leaving abusive situations, whose financial resources are so limited.

ACWS is growing as well, welcoming four new members in this fiscal year. With an increasing membership, one of our challenges is to look at effective governance of the organization, while maintaining the networking and linkages that are so valuable to ACWS members. ACWS members got a good start on this challenge with their restructuring meeting last November.

I would like to acknowledge ACWS' dedicated staff: Flavia Bourne for her enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment. She was a great help with the transition to a new provincial co-ordinator. Her efforts also need to be singled out for ACWS' successful casino!

I would also like to thank the Board members and shelter staff who support ACWS, sometimes on a daily basis. It is their voices that make our organization strong!

## MEETING THE OBJECTS OF ACWS:

### 1) *To act as a liaison between women's shelters and all levels of government.*

- responded to requests for information on issues relating to the gun control legislation and the gun registry
- worked with shelters and CFSA's on regional issues
- assembled provincial data to prepare the annual "Alberta Provincial Accommodation Statistics" Report
- worked with the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence to develop shelter standards

### 2) *To encourage community groups desiring to form a women's shelters and to assist wherever possible.*

We welcomed the following shelters between April 1, 2000 – March 31, 2001:

- (a) Brooks & District Women's Safe Shelter Society
- (b) Eagle Women's Shelter
- (c) Mikisew Cree First Nation – Paspew House
- (d) Sonshine Community Services

### 3) *To initiate and/or participate in research relating to issues affecting battered women.*

- participated in both the Transitions Project which looks at housing issues and PVAC which is assessing the impact of regionalization

### 4) *To make recommendations relating to remedies for the problems of battered women.*

- commissioned a report on Supports for Independence (SFI) which made recommendations which would help women to leave abusive situations by ensuring adequate financial support

### 5) *To initiate and/or participate in public awareness programs relating to battered women and act as an information resource.*

- launched the Violet project, which provides legal information to women in abusive situations via the internet ([www.violetnet.org](http://www.violetnet.org))
- provided educational programs for shelter workers

## Executive Committee:

### Members:

#### *Chair*

Lana Wells, President

Robin Krause, Vice-President

Pat Carter, Treasurer

Lise Blanchette, Secretary

Jean Langdon, Past President

### Purpose:

The Executive Committee oversees the development, implementation, and coordination of ACWS policies, goals and objectives.

## Social Issues Committee:

### Members:

#### *Chair*

Lise Blanchette, YWCA Sheriff King Home

Bonita Bourlon, Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter

Gerry Carter, Phoenix Safe House

Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place

Carolyn Goard, YWCA Sheriff King Home

Kathleen Nakagawa, Crossroads Resource Centre

Kathy Sheppard, Odyssey House

### Purpose:

To research, propose policy, educate and recommend on social issues.

### Highlights:

Worked on the following issues:

- Supports for Independence (SFI) Issue
- Unified Family Court

## Personnel & Policy Procedures Committee:

### Members:

#### *Chair*

Robin Krause, Phoenix Safe House

Lise Blanchette, YWCA Sheriff King Home

Nadine Casey French, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter

Jean Langdon, Discovery House

Sister Lucinda May Patterson, Lurana Shelter

### Purpose:

To ensure current and appropriate policies with respect to ACWS operations and human resources.

### Highlights:

- Updated the position description for the Provincial Coordinator
- Began a review of the "Conflict of Interest" & "Code of Conduct" for Board Members
- Initiated Bylaw review

## Aboriginal Issues Committee:

### Members:

#### *Chair*

Bonita Bourlon, Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter

Brenda Brochu, Peace River Regional Women's Centre

Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place

Heike DeGraff, Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter

Lisa Dorazio, Awo Taan Native Women's Emergency Shelter

Sandra Ermineskin, Ermineskin Women's Shelter

Janet Gladue, Bigstone Cree Nation Women's Emergency Shelter

Doreen McCaw, Lloydminster Interval Home

Kathleen Nakagawa, Crossroads Resource Centre

Bernice Wright, Sucker Creek Women's Emergency Shelter

### Highlights:

- Began project to address needs of aboriginal women entering shelters

## Finance Committee:

### Members:

#### *Chair*

Pat Carter, A Safe Place

Moriah Boyd, Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter

Joie Dery, Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre

Brenda Hill, Kerby Shelter

Pat Kulscar, Safe Home High Level

### Purpose:

To coordinate financial resource management of ACWS and address funding issues for member shelters.

### Highlights:

- Ethical fundraising guidelines adopted by ACWS
- Daughter's of the Eastern Star fundraiser for ACWS
- Casino fundraiser generated record return

## Adhoc Committees:

### Crisis Intervention Worker's Workshop Committee

#### Members:

Flavia Bourne, ACWS  
Ione Challborn, Edmonton Women's Shelter  
Arlene Chapman, ACWS  
Jill Chesley, Brigantia Place  
Pat Garrett, Wings of Providence  
Karen Pease, Wheatland Communities Crisis Society  
Kathy Sheppard, Odyssey House

#### Highlights:

- 81 Crisis Support Workers in attendance
- Topics covered included:
  - i) Aboriginal Issues
  - ii) Boundaries
  - iii) Diversity
  - iv) Group Facilitation
  - v) Research & Resources
  - vi) Resistance
  - vii) Self Care
  - viii) Solution Focused Counselling
  - ix) Vicarious Traumatization
  - x) Working with Abusive Partners
  - xi) Women and HIV

### IODE Child Support Worker's Workshop Committee

#### Members:

Flavia Bourne, ACWS  
Brenda Bruchal, A Safe Place  
Debbie Doyle, Edmonton Women's Shelter  
Sylvia Fleury, Lurana Shelter  
Kate Hynes, Edmonton Women's Shelter  
Velma Laverty, IODE  
Maija Mullen, A Safe Place

#### Highlights:

- 30 Child Support Workers in attendance
- Topics covered included:
  - i) Battered Woman as Mother
  - ii) Attention Deficit Disorder
  - ii) Care for the Care Giver
  - iv) Validating the Resilience of the Aboriginal Family

**Board of Directors** (As of March 31, 2001)

<b>Lana Wells</b> , President	<b>B</b> renda Strafford Centre
<b>Robin Krause</b> , Vice-President	<b>P</b> hoenix Safe House
<b>Pat Carter</b> , Treasurer	<b>A</b> Safe Place
<b>Lise Blanchette</b> , Secretary	<b>Y</b> WCA Family Support Centre & Sheriff King Home
<b>Jean Langdon</b> , Past President	<b>D</b> iscovery House
<b>Joyce Badger</b>	<b>S</b> ucker Creek Women's Emergency Shelter
<b>Bonita Bourlon</b>	<b>P</b> incher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter
<b>Nadia Clarke</b>	<b>P</b> eace River Regional Women's Shelter
<b>Sister Rita Coulombe</b>	<b>Y</b> ouville Women's Residence
<b>Jim Cregan</b>	<b>W</b> ings of Providence
<b>Mike Dickinson</b>	<b>S</b> ope Haven Society
<b>Jeannie Dumont</b>	<b>B</b> rigantia Place
<b>Nadine Casey French</b>	<b>C</b> algary Women's Emergency Shelter
<b>Betty Gamblin</b>	<b>K</b> erby Centre
<b>Donna Hallett</b>	<b>W</b> heatland Communities Crisis Society
<b>Karen Hoover</b>	<b>Y</b> WCA Harbour House
<b>Marlene Iverson</b>	<b>O</b> dyssey House
<b>Carol Kaip</b>	<b>C</b> rossroads Resource Centre
<b>Pat Kulscar</b>	<b>S</b> afe Home, A Project of Northwest Alberta Resource Society
<b>Cecile Lavoie</b>	<b>C</b> olumbus House of Hope
<b>Annette Lee</b>	<b>E</b> rmineskin Women's Shelter
<b>June Lerner</b>	<b>L</b> a Salle Residence
<b>Bonita Levie</b>	<b>B</b> rooks & District Women's Safe Shelter Society
<b>Barb McLeod</b>	<b>C</b> entral Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter
<b>Farrel Palmer</b>	<b>L</b> loydminster Interval Home
<b>Lori Phillips</b>	<b>Y</b> ellowhead Emergency Shelter
<b>Lesley Regelous</b>	<b>E</b> dmonton Women's Shelter Ltd.
<b>Mariella Sneddon</b>	<b>W</b> ellspring Family Resource & Crisis Centre
<b>Sister Mary Helena Sproul</b>	<b>L</b> urana Shelter
<b>Kim Taylor</b>	<b>D</b> r. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre
<b>Adele Thomson</b>	<b>U</b> nity House
<b>Solomon Yellowknee</b>	<b>B</b> igstone Cree Nation Women's Emergency Shelter

**ACWS Staff**

**Jan Reimer**  
**Flavia Bourne**

**Provincial Co-ordinator**  
**Special Projects & Office Manager**

## Member Shelters

A Safe Place	Sherwood Park, Alberta
Awo Taan Native Women's Shelter Society	Calgary, Alberta
Bigstone Cree Nation Women's Emergency Shelter	Desmarais, Alberta
Brenda Strafford Centre	Calgary, Alberta
Brigantia Place	Camrose, Alberta
Brooks & District Women's Safe Shelter Society	Brooks, Alberta
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter	Calgary, Alberta
Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter	Red Deer, Alberta
Columbus House of Hope	St. Paul, Alberta
Crossroads Resource Centre	Fairview, Alberta
Discovery House	Calgary, Alberta
Dr. Margaret Savage Crisis Centre	Cold Lake, Alberta
Eagle Women's Emergency Shelter	Black Diamond, Alberta
Edmonton Women's Shelter Ltd.	Edmonton, Alberta
Ermineskin Women's Shelter	Hobbema, Alberta
Hope Haven Society	Lac La Biche, Alberta
Kerby Centre	Calgary, Alberta
La Salle Residence	Edmonton, Alberta
Lloydminster Interval Home	Lloydminster, Alberta
Lurana Shelter	Edmonton, Alberta
Mikisew Cree First Nation - Paspew House	Fort Chipewan, Alberta
Odyssey House	Grande Prairie, Alberta
Peace River Regional Women's Shelter	Peace River, Alberta
Phoenix Safe House	Medicine Hat, Alberta
Pincher Creek Women's Emergency Shelter	Pincher Creek, Alberta
Safe Home, A Project of Northwest Alberta Resource Society	High Level, Alberta
Sonshine Community Services	Calgary, Alberta
Sucker Creek Women's Emergency Shelter	Sucker Creek, Alberta
Unity House	Fort McMurray, Alberta
Wellspring Family Resource & Crisis Centre	Whitecourt, Alberta
Wheatland Community Crisis Society	Strathmore, Alberta
Wings of Providence	Edmonton, Alberta
Yellowhead Emergency Shelter	Hinton, Alberta
Youville Women's Residence	Calgary, Alberta
YWCA Harbour House	Lethbridge, Alberta
YWCA Family Support Centre & Sheriff King Home	Calgary, Alberta

**Associate Member**

**m**ountain Rose Women's Shelter Association

Rocky Mountain House,  
AB

*We would like to extend a special "Thank You" and recognition to our Donours who partner with ACWS.*

**Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission**

Supported our Aboriginal Liaison Project

**Clifford E. Lee Foundation**

Supported National Organization for Victim's Assistance Conference

**Edmonton Community Foundation**

Supported Crisis Intervention Worker's Workshop & the National Organization for Victim's Assistance Conference

**Independent Order of the Daughters of the Empire**

Sponsor for IODE Child Support Worker's Workshop

**Muttart Foundation**

Supported ACWS Restructuring Process and Provincial Voices for Action & Change Project

**Office for the Prevention of Family Violence**

Supported ACWS to continue our work in partnership with OPFV

**Status of Women Canada**

Supported ACWS to continue our work

*We would like to recognize the efforts and support received from our Volunteers. Your support is sincerely appreciated.*

**Henry Baldt**

**Art Beliveau**

**Casey Boodt**

**Dave Bourne**

**Arlene Chapman**

**Linda Churchill**

**Anita Cochrane**

**Jim Cregan**

**Peggy Dick**

**Dora Francis**

**Don Goldie**

**Pat Garrett**

**Carla Hanf**

**Corey Hanf**

**Catherine Hedlin**

**Kevin Hendricks**

**Emrich Hladky**

**Mike Jacobs**

**Connie McBride**

**RoseMarie McCarthy**

**Myrna Peets**

**Marjorie Rous**

**Darlene Saunders**

**Rob Squire**

**Mary Anne Warren**