

FINAL REPORT FOR PRAIRIEACTION FOUNDATION CARE GRANT

Submitted by: Lorraine Radtke on behalf of Jan Reimer

Grant awarded in 2006

End date of project: December 31, 2007

Background

Our application of April 27, 2006 requested funds to supplement the Alberta component of The Healing Journey project undertaken by a partnership of community agencies serving women who have experienced intimate partner violence, academic researchers, and the three RESOLVE Centres. This is a very ambitious longitudinal study with a panel of 233 participants in Alberta (and more than 600 across the three prairie provinces). Our aim is to follow this panel for a 3.5 year period, assessing their general functioning, service utilization, re-victimization, health and parenting. At the end of the project, we will have a unique and substantial data-set providing invaluable information to service providers, policy makers, women who experience intimate partner violence, and the broader community. The stated outcome of our project is to provide information about the factors that facilitate women's pursuit of a violence free life for themselves and their children in order to shape program and policy development related to intimate partner violence. We began setting up the project in 2004, will complete the data collection by December 2009, and anticipate continuing with data dissemination work until at least December 2011.

The team in Alberta is large, consisting of six individuals representing the service provider community, six academics located at the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge and representing five disciplines (community medicine, nursing, psychology, social work, and sociology) and two senior doctoral students, one from the University of Calgary and one from the University of Alberta. Our model is equal participation and consensus decision-making by all team members in all aspects of the project. We meet regularly by teleconference to consult on various aspects of the project. We have an incredible team of interviewers, of whom some are graduate students while others are employed full-time by various organizations. All have work experience and knowledge related to intimate partner violence.

We require substantial funds to adequately cover the project costs for a number of reasons. First, we aimed for a broad sample of women to include those who are often overlooked in research, i.e., Aboriginal women, rural women, seniors, women with disabilities, lesbians, and immigrant women. As well, we sought women from all parts of the province. Consequently, some of our interviewers travel to cities and towns away from where they live. Second, because we are asking a lot of participants and the resources available to them often do not meet their basic needs, we committed to providing them with a substantial honorarium each time they participate. Third, partly for ethical reasons (we ask questions

about painful and difficult experiences) and partly to build relationships between our interviewers and participants that would maintain participation throughout the course of the study, our interviewers do the interviews in person, asking the questions, and recording the participants' responses (In rare cases where it is impossible to arrange an in person interview, telephone interviews are used, but this must be agreeable to the participant.).

Our initial funding came from SSHRC (Jane Ussel, University of Manitoba, is the Principle Investigator). As we began to set up the project, however, it became clear that they would be insufficient to meet our objectives. In Alberta, we have been fortunate to receive additional support from *Prairieaction* Foundation, TransCanada Pipelines, the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, the Alberta Centre for Child, Family, and Community Research, and in-kind support from the University of Calgary, the University of Lethbridge, the Alberta Council for Women's Shelters, the YWCA Calgary, the YWCA Lethbridge, WINGS of Providence, and the Peace River Regional Community Shelter.

The 2006 CARE grant funds were requested to allow us to recruit a full panel of participants and complete the interviews planned to the end of December 31, 2007.

Work Completed

Recruitment of our sample took much longer than anticipated, i.e., 1.5 years. As of December 31, 2007, however, we had successfully recruited 233 women and completed two waves of interviews. In Wave 1, which occurred at the time of recruitment, the participants were interviewed about their history of abuse and demographic background, general functioning, and service utilization. In Wave 2, which occurred at most six months later, they were interviewed about their health and experiences of parenting in the context of intimate partner violence. Prior to December 31, 2007, we also started Wave 3 (there must be at least 9 months between the Wave 1 and Wave 3 interviews), in which participants are interviewed about any re-victimization experiences, their general functioning, and service utilization in the time since Wave 1. As well, we started Wave 4 (there must be at least 9 months between Wave 2 and Wave 4 interviews), in which participants are interviewed again about their health and parenting experiences.

During the funding period, we also entered all of the data from Waves 1 and 2 and began our analysis. The Alberta team contributed to a panel of speakers from the three provinces collaborating on the Healing Journey project at the RESOLVE Research Day in November 2007. There, one of our community team members, one of our academic team members, and a student presented some of the data describing the background of our participants and talked about dissemination of knowledge to the community. We also developed codes for many of the open-ended questions in our questionnaires, a first step before we

can begin their analysis. In addition, we completed some preliminary analysis of data related to reproductive health.

Our team is currently developing a strategy to disseminate this knowledge in a manner that is useful to service providers and the broader community (including women who have experienced intimate partner violence) and will potentially effect change.

Utilization of CARE Funds

The 2006 CARE funds were used as follows:

1. Honoraria for 30 interviews	\$1,500.00
2. Interviewer salaries	\$ 3,500.00
3. Research assistant for data entry and cleaning	\$ 1,724.96
4. Materials and supplies (questionnaires, courier charges to send questionnaires to data entry site)	\$ 275.04
5. Project administration	\$ 500.00
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