

**Roundtable on violence in Oakville**  
**June , 16 2006**

*By Michael Howie – Oakville Today*

Several community groups convened at Oakville's Central Library last week, to meet with Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn to discuss what is becoming an all too common practice of sexual assault and violence against woman in Halton.

The roundtable discussion, led by SAVIS (Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services) of Halton, heard from various keynote groups including Elder Services from the Halton Regional Police, Transitions for Youth, the North Halton Cultural Awareness Council and the Halton Violence Prevention Council.

Though each group operates differently, often with different objectives, the audience of service providers was surprised to discover how often their services intertwine.

"Sometimes we're sort of stuck in our own work," says Zehra Haffajee, Education Coordinator for SAVIS of Halton. "We don't think that someone who is working for Community Living or a youth organization will deal with violence against women the way we do... but it's all inter-related."

"What I've learned is that there's a good understanding of the state of violence in our community," says Flynn, adding. "But these groups need some extra funding and better coordination amongst themselves. It's an issue that needs the government's attention at all levels."

Haffajee, used to politicians nodding assent then doing nothing, trusts that Flynn will be as good as his word. "Kevin has asked us to make him accountable and we're really happy. We hope it will be an ongoing process because at the levels decisions are made, it's important to have that community connection."

"Community organizations are always competing for limited funding around the province," says Flynn. "I'll be championing our community in that regard. I'm going to bat for them."

To learn more about SAVIS of Halton visit [www.savisofhalton.org](http://www.savisofhalton.org), call 905-825-3622 or if you have an emergency, the crisis line at 905-875-1555.