



SAVIS OF HALTON

SAVIS In Your Community

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2010

SAVIS WELCOMES...



New crisis line volunteers...

- ★ Natalia Woodall
- ★ Elsie Obeng-Kingsley



Join us for 'The Dinner Party' to celebrate

International Women's Day 2010

"Women's Empowerment:
Is Canada's Glass Ceiling Made of Cement?"



Thursday March 4th 2010
Oakville Convention Centre

5:30pm Cash Bar, Silent Auction
6:45pm Dinner & Keynote Speaker
Tickets \$45

For more information please contact SAVIS:
905-825-3622

- Keynote Speaker Sheila Capps
- Entertainment
- Door Prizes
- Silent Auction
- 50/50 Draw

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

CRISIS LINE VOLUNTEERS:

- ★ Are you a college or university student looking for crisis intervention and peer support counselling experience?

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- ★ At least nineteen (19) years of age.
- ★ A resident, employed in or attends school in Halton.
- ★ Committed to working on behalf of survivors of sexual assault.
- ★ An understanding of sexual violence and a commitment to working within a feminist, anti-racist, anti-oppressive framework.
- ★ Knowledge and skills in one or more of the following areas of Board Governance: policy, finance, programs, and/or personnel.
- ★ Must be able to demonstrate community-based knowledge.
- ★ Excellent communication, leadership, organizational, time management, networking and interpersonal skills.

Please send your resume to:
savis@savisofhalton.org or call our
volunteer coordinator, Ingrid, at
905-825-3622 for more information.





Youth and Sexual Assault Disclosure: Effective Intervention Practices for School & Community Professionals

Thursday February 25, 2010

Registration 8:30am, Workshop 9:00am-1:00pm
Halton Regional Building, Auditorium, 1151 Bronte Road, Oakville

**This workshop is free and open to teachers, support staff and
community professionals.**

Continental Breakfast & Light Refreshments Provided

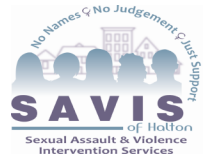
Topics will include:

- Sexual Assault Dynamics & Impact
- Medical & Legal Implications of Sexual Assault
- Management of Sexual Assault & Disclosure
- Panel Discussion with Community Professionals



For more information please call Nina's Place at (905) 632-3737 x5708

(nina's place)



PUBLIC EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS

SAVIS of Halton offers free educational programs to professionals and community members.

Topics include:

- ★ Bullying
- ★ Racism
- ★ Healthy Relationships
- ★ Sexual Assault
- ★ Sexual Harassment
- ★ Drug Induced Sexual Assault
- ★ Safety Planning
- ★ Media
- ★ Dealing with Disclosures
- ★ Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- ★ Working With Women Who Experience Violence
- ★ Dealing with Stress & Self-Care
- ★ Create your own!



Cost: FREE

We encourage you to book as soon as possible as our time slots are filled up quickly. For more information or to book a workshop, please contact Janel Harris, Education Coordinator, at 905-825-3622, or email her at education@savisofhalton.org



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: JOAN GRAHAM

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Submitted by Ingrid Zollikofer

With this edition of the SAVIS newsletter we want to launch a new series profiling our numerous committed and dedicated volunteers. Women from all walks of life donate their time as well as their skills, expertise and talents in many different ways and areas. Volunteers make a difference not only to the organization but the community at large by actively getting involved in the prevention of sexual violence. Between April 2008 and March 2009, volunteers gave generously of their time, a total of 5764 hours. SAVIS volunteers contribute in various roles and capacities, such as Directors of the Board, crisis line workers, office support, outreach and staffing the SAVIS booth, co-facilitation at Volunteer Training sessions, accompaniments to police and hospital, and providing practical assistance. Oftentimes volunteer work is invisible work that is done “behind the scenes”. This new series aims to recognize our many volunteers publicly and bring them out into the spotlight.

Our first volunteer profile acknowledges the continued dedication of **Joan Graham**, a long time supporter of the SAVIS **Outreach Program**. For the last ten years, Joan Graham has been a most dedicated and outstanding volunteer to SAVIS’s Outreach Program. SAVIS recognizes that violence and oppression has many faces and forms, such as isolation and poverty among marginalized groups and community members. In response to the ever-growing diverse population in Halton, the Outreach Program is geared to break isolation and barriers many Immigrant and refugee women are struggling with. The Outreach Program offers two weekly drop-in groups: a Hispanic Women’s group and a multi-cultural drop-in. Women from diverse communities can meet in a safe, supportive space, share experiences and receive information on community resources.

Every week, **Joan** donates her time and baking talents to the delight of women attending the multicultural drop-in. Group members look forward in anticipation to the ever changing varieties of pies and cookies. As poverty and limited financial supports are common experiences among women accessing SAVIS services, **Joan** continues to assist the Outreach Program practically and financially.

Every year, **Joan**:

- ★ Buys gifts for a family in need and supports the SAVIS Holiday Drive;
- ★ Donates gifts, money, and food to the Holiday Party for drop-in group members;
- ★ Purchases the park license and food to host the Summer Picnic for Women and Children;
- ★ Sponsors the Mother’s Day project;
- ★ Donates grocery store gift cards to be distributed to women in need;
- ★ Makes vital contributions to the Back To School project;
- ★ Coordinates donations from parishioners at Munn’s United Church.

In the past ten years, **Joan** has continuously demonstrated her passion for helping others and making a difference in people’s lives. Throughout the years, **Joan** has been an extraordinary member of SAVIS whose caring heart and spirit truly has touched many lives.





By: Liz Okai

- ★ For me, I am perpetually pleased to be part of SAVIS, an organization that is dedicated to ensuring women in the Halton Region and often times beyond, feel safe and feel supported in their many struggles without feeling judged or blamed for their circumstances. Further, I feel blessed to be part of a service that is really available 24/7 to women who need a listening ear, support, information, and encouragement regarding sexual abuse, violence and/or domestic violence.
- ★ In delivering the actual service, I feel rewarded just by hearing the voice on the other line say “thank you” and knowing that their feelings have been validated and that they have not been judged or blamed, and that they have been listened to and hopefully they have received some simple coping tools and strategies to deal with their situations.
- ★ And finally, as a crisis line worker, I feel supported in my role through the discussions at the monthly crisis line meetings, as well as the educational and informative presentations provided by various community agencies at these meetings.

By: Natalie Cathcart

- ★ It's not always having the right answer but just being a presence on the phone, where a caller knows that you are giving them your full undivided attention and that you are there to listen. I know how important that is to any human being who is under stress or in crisis that if someone just listens to you, without telling you what to do and tries to see the perspective you are coming from, can make the biggest difference in terms of support.

By: Tasleem Rasool

- ★ That I am a part of supporting the healing journey of countless women who have survived sexual violence.
- ★ It means that I have a great responsibility to uphold the greatest standards of care, compassion and empathy to the many survivors who are fighting to LIVE.
- ★ It means I respect the callers feelings and opinions, and treat them in a non-judgmental, warm and genuine manner.
- ★ It means that I constantly strive to create a feeling of safety between myself and the caller so that they feel comfortable enough to trust me with their secrets and deepest pain.
- ★ It means I listen more than I speak, and help women explore their options so that they can make informed decisions that will protect their safety and empower them.
- ★ It means I name the oppressive socio-political-economic structures that contribute to violence against women so that callers can use that knowledge to empower themselves and those around them.
- ★ It means I work from an anti-oppressive framework and I recognize my own areas of power and privilege which allows me to minimize the power differential that exists between the caller and I, and that recognizes callers may be facing multiple intersecting oppressive forces that contribute to their disempowerment and ultimately their pain and suffering.
- ★ It means I work hard to demystify sexual violence and do not contribute to any myths surrounding violence against women because they cause re-traumatization.
- ★ It means I try my best always to ensure that when every caller hangs up the phone with me they feel listened to, understood, accepted, valued and cared for.
- ★ It means above all that I care deeply for the well-being, safety and ultimately the healing of the many women that reach out to SAVIS for help and I am honoured to serve such a worthy cause.





SAVIS would like to **congratulate** Board Member Irene Harmgardt who won first prize in the Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) poetry contest!

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Circle of Violence
By Irene Harmgardt

A voracious evil disease, eating at my people's soul,
Men mistreating women - finding a cure must be our goal.
The anger in his eyes, the way he pursues his lips,
Degradation, fear and loathing deep into me rips.

Ravaged by his hurtful words, it's just like getting hit,
Their viciousness surrounds me, I die slowly bit by bit.
Thorns of misplaced anger, sticking deep into my heart,
His accusatory syllables, tearing me apart.
Your eyes cannot see it, but I'm bleeding from the outside in,
Downtrodden for just existing, this battle I will win.

Even in my slumber, I'm never truly free,
From the heinous monster sleeping next to me.
Drunken hands that grab me, in the middle of the night,
Unwelcome advances - no point to putting up a fight.
Crying with his manhood roughly filling me,
To him an empty vessel, is all I'll ever be.

The bruises on my arm, the scar upon my face,
How can I feel safe?... in this dark and scary place.
Nothing I do or say, ever seems quite right,
Creeping in the shadows, staying out of sight.
An innocent gesture misconstrued, instantly incurs his wrath,
Time to end this circle of violence, time to find a different path.

Don't forsake me sisters - keep fighting each and every day,
Help me to tap my inner strength, no longer can I stay.
Women let us walk united - for a new day has begun,
Until Violence Against Women ends, our work is never done!





COUNSELLING IN NORTH HALTON

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Thanks to the United Way of Milton, SAVIS is able to provide **individual counselling for women and youth** who have experienced sexual, dating or family violence in Milton.

“We’re grateful for the United Way of Milton’s recognition of the needs of survivors right here in our community,” said Nicole Pietsch, SAVIS Counsellor. “Demand for SAVIS counselling services continues to increase in Milton. Now we can make our services more accessible to the women and girls who need it. These funds will go directly toward supporting survivors of sexual violence living in Milton.”

WHAT?

Free, confidential one-to-one counselling available to women and female youth survivors of relationship, sexual and/or family violence. here is no fee.

WHERE?

123 Main St. East (St. Paul’s United Church) and 400 Bronte St. South (Halton Multicultural Council) in Milton. We provide bus tickets to women traveling by bus!

WHO?

The Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Services of Halton (SAVIS) provides free, confidential and non-judgmental 24-hour support to all survivors of sexual violence. We advocate against violence in the community at large and promote prevention through community education.

HOW?

For more information or to book an appointment, please contact SAVIS (905) 825-3622.



NEW GROUPS!

In partnership with EC Drury School for the Deaf and Trillium School, SAVIS is running two youth groups for female girls between the ages of 14 and 19. Thanks to the United Way of Milton for supporting these groups!

Two groups are running throughout February and March: one for Deaf and hard of hearing girls at EC Drury, and another for girls attending the Trillium School for students with learning differences.

The Relationship Skills for Violence Prevention (RSVP) group program incorporates educational and recreational activities to explore topics such as sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and abuse in dating relationships. Art activities and group discussions create a supportive environment for girls where it is safe to talk about violence and its impacts.

The goals of the RSVP group are for participants to:

- ★ Learn to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships
- ★ Acquire skills to assist in the development of healthy relationships
- ★ Develop a strong sense of self and empowerment
- ★ Develop a sense of personal safety
- ★ Learn to recognize how exterior factors -- such as media, culture and gender stereotypes -- influence our ideas about healthy relationships





Senior Sharing Circles

SAVIS is pleased to announce the launching of ‘Senior Sharing Circles’, funded in part by the Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors program. The “Senior Sharing Circles” project is taking place across the Region of Halton and aims to encourage peer support between seniors.

“Senior Leaders” will coordinate and facilitate discussion about issues that affect seniors, such as:

- elder abuse
- sexual and interfamilial violence
- social isolation
- intergenerational conflicts.

The aim of the sharing circle is to raise awareness about these important issues and encourage peer support between seniors, allowing them to learn from each other’s experiences, coping strategies and support network/service access.

Senior Sharing Circles will promote the ongoing involvement of seniors in their communities to reduce social isolation and marginalization experienced by seniors.

Circles will also create a dedicated time and social opportunity to connect with peers and a safe space for seniors to share experiences and get support information and resources.

What is a “Senior Leader”?

A “Senior Leader” is a female volunteer 55 or older that leads group discussions in the community on issues that affect other seniors.

Senior Leaders will...

- Lead discussion circles with seniors
- Raise awareness about issues affecting seniors such as elder abuse and social isolation
- Facilitate the sharing of experiences, peer support and disseminate community support information
- Outreach to the community, raising awareness about elder abuse and outreach to volunteers to encourage them to volunteer and support the project in particular. •Volunteers will outreach to isolated and marginalized seniors and encourage them to participate in the circles.

For more information contact SAVIS of Halton: (905) 825-3622 or seniors@savisofhalton.org

SAVIS is actively recruiting Senior Leaders of all races, cultures, religions, classes, abilities, sexual orientations and sexual identities



This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors program.





SAVIS OF HALTON

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TTY: 905-825-3743
E-mail: savis@savisofhalton.org

HOLIDAY DRIVE

This years HOLIDAY DRIVE was a huge success!
With the help of our sponsors, SAVIS was able to support 58 families in the Halton Region by providing clothing, food vouchers, gift certificates, toys and books.
A special THANK YOU to everyone who made this possible!

WORDS OF WISDOM

Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage.

Maya Angelou



Support SAVIS of Halton to help end violence.
SATURDAY, May 1, 2010
2pm to 5pm @ Burlington Bowl

Early Bird Registration Deadline: March 12th
Register your team at www.savisofhalton.org
905-825-3622 • incredibowl@savisofhalton.org

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