



## **VOICES FOR NON-VIOLENCE**

Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba

302 – 1200 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0T5 [vnv@mennonitecc.ca](mailto:vnv@mennonitecc.ca), 925-1917

Program Coordinator: Jane Woelk

*Voices for Non-Violence* is a program of Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba which addresses issues of abuse within the Province of Manitoba, mostly occurring among the eight Mennonite ethnic groups. It is open to all persons of any ethnic/religious/ economic/ socioeconomic background. Due to its limited resources (one ¾ time staff person), it cannot possibly address the needs of all abuse victims in Manitoba. Its focus is to provide support groups for victims of abuse, equip churches to address incidences of abuse in their congregations, and present abuse prevention workshops, sermons/classes throughout Manitoba for various organizations, educational institutions, and churches. We also have a lending library of videos and books which address the issue of abuse.

## **WORKSHOP FOR MENNO SIMONS COLLEGE**

### **“RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO ABUSE”**

#### **Indicators of Abuse to Watch For:**

- Unexplained bruising on a regular basis
- Personal items going missing on a regular basis
- Body odour (poor hygiene)
- Unexplained fear (phobia)
- Socialization issues.
- Lying as a pattern of behaviour
- An exhibition of abusive behaviour to others or to pets
- Fatigue
- Complaints of constant stomach aches or headaches
- Weight loss/gain

## **BULLYING AWARENESS:**

Research sponsored by the National Crime Prevention Strategy:

1. 41% of Canadian students are either victims or bullies each month.
2. 32% of those cases involves physical bullying.
3. 18% of bullying is racial taunting.
4. 16% of bullying is sexual in nature.
5. 13% of bullying is cyber bullying.
6. 10% of bullying is homophobic harassment.
7. 60% of identified schoolyard bullies have a criminal conviction by age 24.
8. Manitoba passed a law requiring schools to have codes of conduct to address bullying (2004).

[www.gov.mb.ca/stopbullying/manitoba](http://www.gov.mb.ca/stopbullying/manitoba)

[www.safeschoolsmanitoba.ca](http://www.safeschoolsmanitoba.ca)

[www.winnipeg.ca/police/TakeAction/internetsafety.stm](http://www.winnipeg.ca/police/TakeAction/internetsafety.stm)

[www.bullybeware.com](http://www.bullybeware.com)

## **Abuse Prevention:**

- Develop “Safe Place Policies” for your work place, which include child abuse and police checks for all staff and volunteers. Train all staff on the contents of these policies.  
(The police checks would be for staff/volunteers working with vulnerable clientele).
- Provide victim’s awareness workshops.
- “0” tolerance for abuse of any kind.
- All criminal offences of children must be reported to Child and Family Services.
- Assure all staff/volunteers that they do not deserve to be abused.

## **Responding to Disclosures of Abuse**

- Listen to victim's story and be prepared to stand with that person. (It is for CFS to investigate incidences of child abuse, not your organization.)
- Determine safety/danger situation.
- Report child abuse to CFS.
- Watch for signs of depression/suicide/eating disorders/self-mutilation.
- Patience is required, as the healing process is long and arduous.

## **Responding to the Person Who Has Behaved Abusively**

- Indicate to the person who has behaved abusively that the abusive behaviour can change; there is hope.
- Allow **no** excuses for the abusive actions.
- Be clear that the abusive behaviour must stop.
- Work with this person towards confession, repentance, restitution, remorse and a change in behaviour.
- Do not force forgiveness on anyone, as it is a process.
- Do not place yourself in danger.
- Do not take the abusive person's word that the abuse has stopped.
- Do not accept blame at the victim for the abuse.
- Know your limits.
- Reiterate that the abuse is the responsibility of the person who has behaved abusively.

## **After Effects of Abuse on Children**

- May develop gender identity issues.
- Evidence of lack of development of problem-solving and communication skills.
- May develop a lack of trust of adults.
- Feelings of confusion, anxiety, (anxiety attacks), fear, or anger.
- May feel rejected, unworthy, unlovable.
- May lack self-control.
- May feel like failures.
- May feel like throw-away or used property.
- May feel powerless to keep themselves safe
- May feel as though they are "bad."

...cont'd next page ➡

- Most child survivors of abuse feel that they have to force people to listen to them.
- They may “act out” in frustration.
- Some children may have difficulty taking on new responsibilities.
- May become self-absorbed.
- May develop an eating disorder.
- May become withdrawn, moody, sad or wary.
- May become depressed or even suicidal.
- Some child victims become sexually-active at a very young age.

### **After Effects of Abuse of Adults:**

- Loss of self-esteem.
- May develop post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Depression.
- Loss of trust in others.
- Anger/guilt/shame.
- Physical illnesses/headaches, stomach aches.
- Anxiety.
- Suicidal thoughts.
- Loss of concentration.

