

THE GREY BRUCE
COMMUNITY
RESPONSE
TO DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE

A project of the Grey Bruce Domestic Violence
Coordinating Committee and the Report Card
Sub Committee.

Report prepared by
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Report
Card 2004

INTRODUCTION

This is the third Report Card on the Community Response to Domestic Violence in Grey and Bruce Counties based upon four community benchmarks for service provision: coordination, consistency, capacity and prevention.

In 2003 the Report Card Sub Committee of the GBDVCC began an ambitious overhaul of the tools and processes used in the previous Report Card processes with help from a 2 year grant from the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General Victim Services Division. The objectives were to:

1. Increase the number of responses received from women and men who had used services as a result of domestic violence.
2. Involve a broader range of service providers beyond members of the Grey Bruce Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee.

WHY DO A REPORT CARD ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

- To promote a comprehensive community response
- To strengthen the voices of service users and bring their knowledge and perspectives forward
- To evaluate the effectiveness of our current system and improve the community response
- To measure our community's overall progress towards ending domestic violence
- To gather data that may lead new or improved funding and/or capacity to address domestic violence in Grey and Bruce

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Service Users

A total of 100 service users completed surveys. (compared to 11 from 2002)

- Sixty-six (66%) female victims of domestic violence.
- 34 respondents (34%) were male perpetrators of domestic violence.

Service Providers

A total of 200 surveys were completed by service providers (compared to 26 in 2002).

- 32 organizations participated in the Report Card process (compared to 21 in 2002).
- 9 new community sectors participated in the Report Card process for the first time. (Education, Native Child Welfare, Legal Aid, Community Mental Health, First Nations Shelter Services, Family Y Alternative Justice, Early Years, Community Day Care, Ontario Works).
- 14 departments within organizations were new to the report card process.
- Surveys were completed by Senior or Middle Managers (22%), Staff (75%) Volunteers (3%).

WHICH SERVICES WERE USED IN 2003?

Police were the most used service (62% of service users reported) followed by the gender-specific abuse services (Women's Shelter services 45% and Men's Program 36%). Family physicians were used by 36% of respondents and 21% used private counselling services.

Women use support services more than men, and have a higher use of hospital emergency services, mental health services, Ontario Works and Ontario Housing.

Men appear to be most often involved with non-voluntary services. Promoting help seeking behaviour in men may be a positive strategy for decreasing and eliminating domestic violence.

Child protection services were involved with 36% of respondents indicating that concerns for children witnessing domestic violence are being monitored.

Only five percent of respondents received assistance for their children through the children's mental health service.



STARS & RED FLAGS

Coordination

How well do organizations work together to provide a seamless system response to domestic violence in Grey Bruce?

- ★ Organizations in Grey Bruce appear to work together when responding to domestic violence situations.
- ★ People working in organizations seem to be aware of domestic violence services offered by other organizations.
- ★ Men and women who need services because of domestic violence are usually directed to the help and services they needed.
- 🚩 Victims and perpetrators were asked to provide the same information about the abuse to different people as they moved from one service to another.
- 🚩 Some women and men still report problems with services not working together.
- 🚩 Front line staff report "not knowing" about the existence of interagency protocols on domestic violence.
- ★ Referrals for victims to community services appear to be high.
- 🚩 The referral rate for perpetrators to community services continues to be much lower, a finding from all three report cards.

Consistency

Is there is a common understanding among service providers regarding domestic violence and is it communicated to men and women?

- ★ Service users reported a high level of consistency in the system (what they were

told about what domestic violence is, being treated with respect, receiving a consistent response and receiving a helpful response).

- ★ Perpetrators indicated that they were held responsible for their behaviour and were supported in making changes.
- 🚩 More domestic violence training for service providers is required to respond effectively in areas of interagency collaboration, victim response and perpetrator response.
- ★ The Report Card generated data on community training needs for follow up action.

Capacity

Does our community have the capacity to respond effectively and pro-actively to domestic violence in Grey Bruce?

- ★ Most service users said services they needed were available and they received the information and referrals they needed.
- 🚩 Women experienced barriers to service more often than men (poverty, transportation, childcare, disabilities and lack of available housing).
- 🚩 Mental health issues and poverty were identified as the major barriers to service by service providers.
- 🚩 Abuse specific services (women's shelter services, men's program) are most effective in meeting DV needs but have the greatest burden to raise funds in our community.

Prevention

Does our community work proactively to prevent domestic violence in order to ultimately end it?

- ★ Information on domestic violence, community resources, and the impact of violence on children was not difficult to get and print materials are helpful.
- 🚩 Service users said their children did not get the support they needed to help them deal with the violence.
- 🚩 Service users and providers stressed that the community needs much more education on domestic violence and what can be done to prevent it.

NEXT STEPS

The Report Card Committee generated the following summary for Grey Bruce Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee and community partners. In addition, recommendations from the Community Workshop on April 21, 2004 "From Findings to Action" will be used by the Grey Bruce Domestic Violence Coordination Committee to plan activities, seek resources and build capacity to improve our community response to domestic violence.

- ✔ improve the survey design
- ✔ address barriers to service, especially due to poverty and mental health
- ✔ involve family physicians and private therapists in the next report card
- ✔ investigate what can be done to decrease the number of times service users are required to "tell their story"
- ✔ increase the referrals of perpetrators in the police and mental health counselling sectors
- ✔ identify the barriers to interagency training and explore opportunities to address training needs that were identified
- ✔ increase the knowledge front line staff have of interagency protocols
- ✔ advocate for full funding of domestic abuse specific organizations, for increased public education on domestic violence and for increased support services for child witnesses.

THANKS!

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For more information or copies of the full report contact; Grey Bruce Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee and the Community Report Card Sub Committee.

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