

La Coalition de
Prescott-Russell pour
ÉLIMINER
LA VIOLENCE
faite aux **FEMMES**



Prescott-Russell
Coalition to
END VIOLENCE
TOWARDS
WOMEN



A REALITY THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED:

*Regional Profile of Violence Towards Women in
the Counties of Prescott-Russell
and the Community Resources that are available
to the Women and Families*

Executive Summary

June 2014

*In memory of Francine Mailly and
her children Jessica, Brandon and
Kevin murdered in 2006 by the spouse
and the children's father.*

*In memory of Barbara Teske murdered
in 1998 by her husband in Plantagenet.*

The work of art on the cover page, a collective project, was prepared by women through their participation at events held on March 8th, 2012 in Rockland. Guylaine Gagnier conducted the project by inviting women and girls of Prescott-Russell to bring forward a message of "empowerment" to promote International Women's Day.

A REALITY THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED:

**Regional Profile of Violence Towards Women in
the Counties of Prescott-Russell
and the Community Resources that are available
to the Women and Families**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the leadership of the Research Steering Committee

Anne Jutras
Rachel Lamoureux
Céline Pelletier
Renée Proulx-Lamarche
Chantale Tremblay

Report prepared and written under the supervision and coordination of Cécile Coderre
with the collaboration of Julie Delorme

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women
is funded by the
Ministry of Community and Social Services

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document may be reproduced, in whole or in part, provided that the source is cited.
This document is available on our website or by contacting us.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to various individuals and organizations who contributed, directly or indirectly, in the success of this regional profile. Special thanks to:

- the **representatives of community agencies and organizations** of Prescott-Russell who have kindly agreed to participate in several research orientation meetings;
- the **workers of community agencies and organizations** who participated in the group interviews;
- the **women of the community of Prescott-Russell** who completed an anonymous and confidential survey relating to the different types of violence they experienced;
- the **research steering team** who were determinedly engaged to reach this successful outcome, by gathering various data within their respective organization and who spared their time reading this report:

Anne Jutras, Executive Director, Centre Novas – CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell

Rachel Lamoureux, Coordinator, Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women

Céline Pelletier, Executive Director, Interlude House

Renée Proulx-Lamarche, Psychotherapist and Lead in Sexual Assault and Violence, Royal-Comtois Centre, Hawkesbury General Hospital

Chantale Tremblay, Director, Hawkesbury Service Centre, Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women is sincerely grateful to **Cécile Coderre**, Professor, School of Social Work, University of Ottawa for her invaluable contribution. She spent countless hours creating this research. We extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Cécile for her leadership and enthusiasm throughout this project.

Thank you also to

Julie Delorme, Coordinator, Awareness and Prevention Program, Centre Novas, and Contributing Editor for the preparation of the report

Alexis Truong, Doctoral student, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Ottawa, codification and SPSS data processing for the snapshot survey

Aline Parent - Traduction Unik, Document proofreading, formatting and translation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
PRESCOTT-RUSSELL COALITION TO END VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN	7
Mission	7
Vision.....	7
Values.....	7
Mandate.....	8
BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT AND METHODOLOGY	9
Objectives of the Study	9
Definitions and Terminology.....	10
Methodology of the Research Project.....	12
Limitations of the Study.....	13
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DOMESTIC RELATIONSHIPS	15
Domestic Violence in Rural Communities: Research Highlights.....	15
Domestic Violence: Analysis of the Situation of Women in Prescott-Russell and the Point of Views of the Interveners.....	16
Judicial Intervention.....	20
Police Intervention.....	20
Ontario Provincial Police Services (OPP)	
Hawkesbury Detachment (County of Prescott).....	20
Data for 2011 and 2012: Hawkesbury (OPP)	20
Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)	
Russell Detachment (County of Russell).....	22
Data for 2011 and 2012: Russell (OPP)	22
Why are women so hesitant to report abuse to the police?.....	23
The Victim/Witness Assistance Program	24
Services	24
Data	25

Prescott-Russell Victim Services	25
Services	25
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.....	26
Interlude House	26
Services	27
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.....	27
Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell.....	30
Services	30
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.....	30
Partner Assault Response Program: FOCUS men/women	32
Additional Community Resources	34
Social Services of the United Counties of Prescott-Russell	35
Ontario Works.....	35
Housing Services	37
Clinique juridique populaire de Prescott et Russell Inc.....	38
Services	39
Data.....	39
York Centre of Prescott-Russell: Supervised Visits	39
Services	39
Data for 2012-2013	40
Centre de santé communautaire de l'Estrie	40
Services	40
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.....	40
The Prevention of Domestic Violence	41
Neighbours, Friends and Families Campaign in Prescott-Russell	41
Services	41
The 10-day Activities for the Elimination of Violence	42
VIOLENCE ABUSE IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COUNTIES	43
Definition	43
The Point of Views of the Interveners concerning Violence	
Experienced by Young Girls	43
Services	44
Bullying Hurts... A Nightmare for Teenagers	45
Community Awareness Campaign within the context of the	
National Bullying Prevention Week	46
SEXUAL VIOLENCE	48
An Overview on the Highlights concerning Sexual Violence	
Against Women and Girls	48
Sexual Exploitation.....	49
Regional Profile on the Resources and Statistics concerning	
Sexual Violence in Prescott-Russell	50

The Police and the Courts	50
Le Centre Novas – CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell	50
Services	51
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013: Counseling Services, Awareness and Education for the community at large	52
Sexual Violence Against Children.....	53
Highlights in Canada	53
Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs.....	53
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013: CAP preschool, CAP elementary, COURAGE, INSTINCTS	54
Prevention Programs offered to High School Students.....	55
Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013: Workshop Sexy Inc.....	55
Awareness Programs and Human Rights Movements for the Women and Girls	56
The Ontario Campaign: Draw-the-line.....	56
The Men’s March	57
History of the Men’s March: “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®”	57
The Women’s Walk: “Take back the Night”	58
History of the Women’s Walk: Take back the Night.....	58
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE	59
Hawkesbury General Hospital	59
General Services.....	59
Data for 2011-2012	59
Royal-Comtois Center	60
Services	60
Data for 2011-2012	60
Prescott-Russell Addiction Services	61
Services	61
Data for 2011-2012	62
Canadian Mental Health Association (East Champlain branch)	63
Services	63
Data.....	63
Telephone Help Lines.....	63
Fem’aide Telephone Help Line for Francophone Women.....	63
Services	63
Data for 2011-2012	64
Assaulted Women’s Helpline for Anglophone and Allophone Women	64
Services	64
Data for 2011-2012	64

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: REALITIES AND DIFFERENT CONTEXTS	65
Violence against Older Persons	66
Highlights on the Research and the Point of View of the Interveners of Prescott-Russell	66
Resources and Programs	67
Women with Disabilities and Violence	68
Highlights on the Research	68
Services	69
Le Phénix	69
SNAPSHOT	70
Sociodemographic Data	72
Types of Violence Experienced	79
Resources Accessed	87
RECOMMENDATIONS	91
LIST OF ANNEXES	94
Annex 1: Member Organizations of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women	95
Annex 2: Presentation letter to the organizations – Call for participation.....	96
Annex 3: Snapshot – Consent Form and Data Collection Form	98

PRESCOTT-RUSSELL COALITION TO END VIOLENCE TOWARDS WOMEN

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women is a non-profit, incorporated network of organizations in the Prescott-Russell region. Since 2007, the Coalition has been mandated by the Ministry of Community and Social Services to raise awareness and to educate the public about violence towards women (VAW) and to promote a partnership and coordination between community organizations.

Mission

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women brings together organizations that work to eliminate conditions perpetuating violence towards women and support women and their children who are victims of all types of violence.

Vision

The Coalition helps create a future where:

- women and children in our community will not fear for their safety or well-being;
- all members of the community will feel responsible for creating safe environments and combine their efforts to put an end to violence against women and their children;
- quality services will be offered to victims and access to services will be simplified thanks to the partnership between agencies and organizations.

Values

- a) respect and dignity,
- b) equality,
- c) feminist analysis,
- d) inclusion and diversity,
- e) social justice,
- f) accountability and responsibility.

Mandate

- a) Strengthen partnerships and mutual assistance between organizations by exchanging information, resources and expertise;
- b) Identify gaps in the administering and coordination of services and take concerted action to improve access to services and meet the needs of the community;
- c) Educate on the problem of violence towards women, on best practices, and on recent researches;
- d) Initiate activities of prevention, education and awareness about violence towards women.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT AND METHODOLOGY

Since 2009, the Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women published two reports *Hidden from Sight*, Volume I (2009)¹ and Volume II (2011)² for “a more accurate overview of the prevalence of violence against women (VAW) in Ottawa” (2011 : p. 5)³.

This emerging concern for a regional profile was also shared by all members of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women. As a result, in the fall 2012, the Coalition initiated this project through data collection. Several research tools presented in this report were developed by the Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women but adapted in accordance with regional realities. Others are original and the main purpose of this project is to inform and provide a more comprehensive and global picture to the community on the prevalence of violence towards women and girls in the Counties of Prescott-Russell.

The Prescott-Russell Coalition also intended, through this report, to present an overview on the existing regional resources that provide services specifically dedicated to support women and girls, as well as young boys and men. Furthermore, the report aims at identifying the barriers faced by women who seek help in their journey towards a life free from violence.

Objectives of the Study

This study marks the first regional report that provides a collection of data related to violence against women.

We prepared two different versions of this report. A comprehensive version of the report was first prepared to reflect the context of violence perpetrated against women both in Canada, and Ontario, as well as presenting an analysis of various data that we conducted. This version is available on the website of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women at <http://coalitionviolencepr.ca/en/>. This version also

¹ OTTAWA COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (2009). *Hidden from Sight: A Look at the Prevalence of Violence Against Women in Ottawa*. Volume I, 35p.

http://www.octevaw-cocvff.ca/sites/all/files/pdf/reports/Hidden_from_Sight.pdf

² OTTAWA COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (2011). *Hidden from Sight: A Profile of Violence Against Women in Ottawa*. Volume II, 54p.

http://www.octevaw-cocvff.ca/sites/all/files/pdf/reports/hiddenfromsight_en_2013-08-13_revised.pdf

³ OTTAWA COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (2011). *Hidden from Sight: A Profile of Violence Against Women in Ottawa*. Volume II, p.5

provides all the various resources that are accessible to help women and girls faced with situations of violence.

We also prepared a shortened version of this report which we entitled *Executive Summary*. This version mostly focuses on the original research data that has been collected. The *Executive Summary* has been translated and is also available on the website of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women.

The first section of the *Executive Summary* gives an overview of the vision and mandate of the Prescott-Russell Coalition, followed by a brief methodological section in which the different phases of the research are outlined.

Subsequently, we present an analysis of various data that we have collected on different issues, presented succinctly in the same order as set forth hereinafter: violence against women in domestic relationships, violence in dating relationships and bullying, sexual violence, a brief overview on additional services accessible to women victims of violence, such as the Hawkesbury General Hospital, and the diversity of situations and status that may affect violence against women, for example, the age, and finally an analysis of the original regional survey conducted with women in the United Counties of Prescott-Russell in the fall-winter 2012 in order to better understand specific realities.

Definitions and Terminology

Violence Against Women (VAW)

For the purposes of this research project, the term **violence against women** adopted by the Declaration of the United Nations (1993) is used. Consequently, the term "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life⁴. (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104 adopted December 20, 1993).

Furthermore, Health Canada ratified this international definition to be included in all their subsequent Canadian public laws and policies.

The term "violence against women" has been chosen over the term "domestic violence" as it portrays a better understanding of its factual reality. Nevertheless, the most recent statistics reveal that, most often, women and girls, as well as men, are more likely to be victims of domestic violence. However, violence against women is most common, and includes many different forms of violence that occur within the family context.

⁴ RESOLUTION 48/104. UN General Assembly adopted December 20, 1993.

Highlights in Canada

- Regardless of the type of family violence, victims were predominantly female.
- Overall, nearly 7 in 10 victims (69%) of family violence were female.
- This disproportionate representation was most pronounced for spousal violence, as 80% of victims were female⁵.

For this reason, when the Canadian government uses a comparative analysis between genders, research shows that the forms of violence are different and more serious when the victims are women and girls. Consequently, in the most current report of Statistics Canada on violence against women (2013), researcher Maire Sinha concludes that the women are more likely to experience the most severe forms of victimization. Thus,

Previous research has consistently shown that violence against women differs in important ways from violence against men, notably who is most often the perpetrator (e.g., family, acquaintance, or stranger), where this victimization occurs (within or outside the home), and the types of offences (Johnson, 2006, Johnson and Dawson, 2011).

Other key gender differences include the severity of the violence and consequences of victimization (Vaillancourt, 2010, Johnson and Dawson, 2011)⁶.

Domestic violence is defined as a particular form of violence against women. The chosen definition was developed by the Canadian Panel on violence against women (1993). Domestic violence is therefore defined in the following terms:

Domestic violence refers to physical, sexual and psychological violence or financial exploitation within a past or present marital union or common law relationship including relationships with a spouse of the same sex.

Sexual violence usually refers to violent sexual behaviors. However, the *Criminal Code* of Canada defines sexual assault as a sexual act imposed on another person without their consent.

⁵ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2011* by Maire SINHA. p.3 and p.7

⁶ STATISTICS CANADA (2013a). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, Juristat, Ottawa, edited by Maire SINHA. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

Methodology of the Research Project

The Coalition created a work schedule in early September 2012. All the steps and research tools were validated by every member of the Coalition. Furthermore, the Project Research Committee was established at the beginning of the project to support the Coalition Coordinator, Rachel Lamoureux between meetings. The members of the Committee are: Anne Jutras, Céline Pelletier, Renée Proulx-Lamarche and Chantale Tremblay. The supervision and coordination of the report were assumed by Cécile Coderre. The report was prepared by Cécile Coderre with the collaboration of Julie Delorme and the members of the Project Research Committee.

Member organizations of the Prescott-Russell Coalition contributed available data along three major themes: characteristics of clients served, number of clients served, and the services/programs offered. All the information concerning the methodological tools is presented in appendix to this report.

The data collected by the agencies for the years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 are derived directly from the organizations themselves, whether they are community services, police services or crisis lines. Therefore, the format may vary depending on the organization, as the data are pre-existing data collected within these organizations. The publication of all data in this report was authorized by the organizations having provided them. However, each member of the Coalition was responsible for obtaining the necessary consents specific to their organization.

We also wanted to identify a more global understanding on the services accessed by women experiencing situations of violence but also to promote the various regional initiatives. To that end, we organized group interviews at various times throughout the research.

As a result, we created three different group interview sessions with interveners directly involved with women and girls. The detailed content of these group interviews are included solely in the comprehensive version of the report which is available on the website of the Coalition.

All agencies and member organizations of the Coalition were invited to participate in this final stage of the data collection. The Coalition launched a special invitation for specific group interviews, such as for the meeting in April, during which the theme was related to violence against girls and young women. Representatives of both the Public and Catholic school boards were mobilized and involved in this group interview.

Participation of member organizations has been truly exemplary. We recognize that the collection of all this data is additional work for the resource persons in each agency. Their commitment has been steadfast. The participation of members differed based on the types of data to be collected, nevertheless the participation was exceptional. The interest for this project has been unswerving throughout the course of the research despite everyone's busy schedules, the complexity of the cases within the agencies, along with the additional work resulting from this research.

Finally, within the context of this project, we also developed a snapshot survey which would allow us to have, at a specific time in the year, the number of women aged 16 and over, who were experiencing or who had experienced in the past, any form of violence. The specific methodology for this project, as well as the data collected, is presented in section eight of this report.

Every organization participating in the snapshot survey authorized the contents of the questionnaire, the consent form and for their employees to administer the questionnaire to women aged 18 and over accessing their services. The questionnaires will be kept for a period of two years in the offices of the Coalition and then will be securely destroyed. Strict confidentiality was also guaranteed to each participant who completed the survey.

This survey is unique but should not be considered an exhaustive or inclusive representation of the realities of violence experienced by women in the Counties of Prescott-Russell.

Limitations of the Study

This report captures a more realistic and comprehensive look at the number of women and girls victims of violence who access resources in the counties. It also provides us with a more accurate profile. However, it is not possible to know the exact number of women and girls who are victims of violence, if they did not access services from any agency in the counties of Prescott-Russell. Therefore, women who have come forward to agencies not included in this report or women who did not seek assistance from any agency will not be reflected in this report.

As such, this data can not answer questions such as: How many women experience situations of domestic or sexual violence in the counties of Prescott-Russell?, Is there more violence against women in our rural or semi-rural communities? In fact, no research tool could address these specific issues for one simple reason: women are reluctant to talk about what they are experiencing. Despite all the public awareness campaigns in Canada since the 1990's, violence against women and girls remains a taboo subject, due to the shame and stigma experienced by survivors. However, this report will highlight a more comprehensive regional overview both in terms of women

and girls who access the services, the services offered, the needs of women and girls as well as the regional priorities focused on violence against women.

Furthermore, it is also very important to bear in mind that the data provided in this report, especially those that provide the number of persons who access the services, which realistically show the number of contacts that the women have had with services and not the number of women affected. Thus, women can access several services provided by different agencies. Consequently, for reasons of confidentiality and security, it is not possible to identify the women; as a result, a woman could be counted more than once.

Notwithstanding these methodological limits, this report marks the first regional profile in the Counties of Prescott-Russell.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DOMESTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Domestic Violence in Rural Communities: Research Highlights

Research Highlights
<i>Issues for women living in a rural community in Ontario</i>
The most frequently endorsed needs were around transportation, lack of resources, and isolation.
<i>Firearms: A harmful weapon that threatens women in rural communities</i>
<p>“Here in Ontario, we found that in each region, a sizeable portion of women were assaulted by men using either a knife or a gun before separation. As anticipated, knife or gun use before separation was reported by women living in <i>northern and rural parts of Ontario</i>.”</p> <p>Some researchers even contend that the use of guns during abusive incidents is probably more common in rural than in urban communities (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2009). Websdale (1998, p.10) argues that:</p> <p>“Rural culture, with its acceptance of firearms for hunting and self-protection, may include a code among certain men that accepts the casual use of firearms to intimidate wives and intimate partners. In urban areas, it is more difficult for abusers to discharge their weapons and go undetected. People in the country are more familiar with the sound of gunshots and often attribute the sound to legitimate uses such as hunting⁷.” (Dragiewicz and DeKeseredy 2008, p.49-50)</p>

⁷ DRAGIEWICZ, Molly and Walter DEKESEREDY (2008). *Study on the Experiences of Abused Women in the Family Courts in Eight Regions in Ontario*, Toronto, Queen's Printer, p.49-50.

http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/owd/english/resources/publications/dvac/study_exp_abused_courts_8regions.html

Domestic Violence: Analysis of the Situation of Women in Prescott-Russell and the Point of Views of the Interveners

We organized a group interview with eight interveners from various agencies and community services, specifically relating to domestic violence and sexual violence in rural areas, to better understand the dynamics regarding domestic violence in rural areas and, at the same time, to identify the challenges that are faced by women in the counties of Prescott-Russell throughout their transition towards a life free of violence for themselves and their children's.

The interveners who were engaged in this group interview came from main organizations that provide direct services to women victims of domestic violence. The results presented herein reflect their analysis of the situation, and the findings arise from their work experience on a daily basis with these women.

This analysis gives us a better understanding on the **dynamics of violence in intimate relationships for the women of Prescott-Russell**.

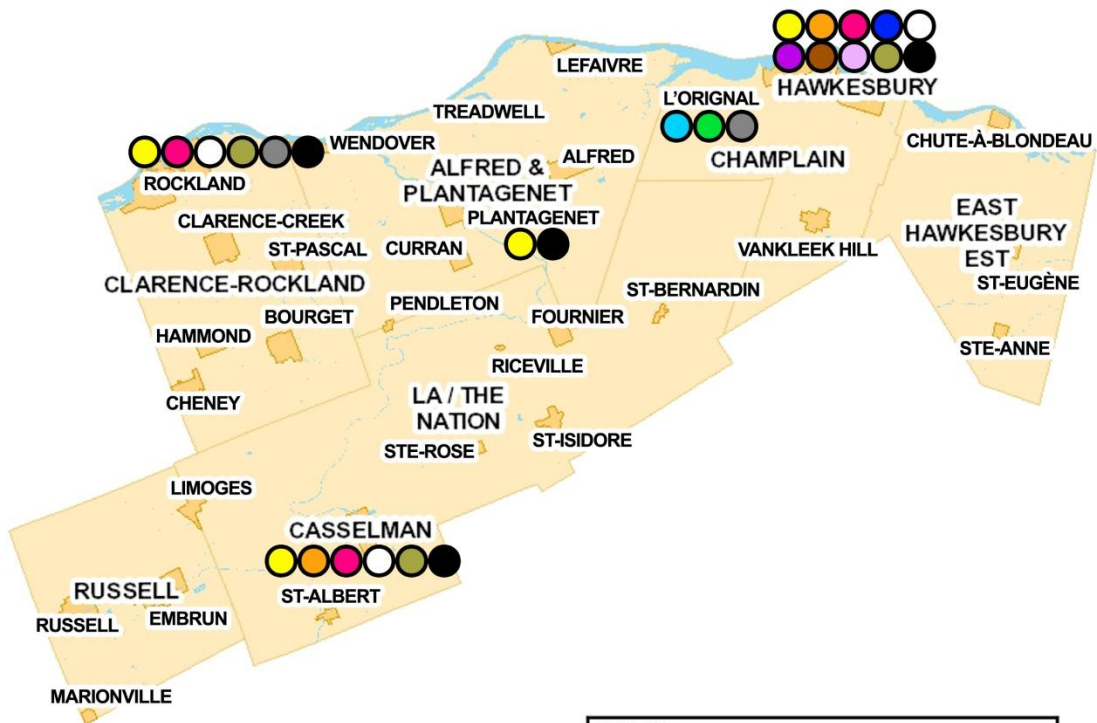
Domestic violence is still a taboo subject. It is considered a private matter. That is why, most often, women in Prescott-Russell feel they are more isolated, as if no one is listening to them. Two different factors are often associated with this isolation such as geographical isolation, for example, longer distances between homes, or social isolation, the lack of people to confide in outside the family network who may disapprove her for breaking "the law of silence". And when a family business is at stake, the risks are even more complex. Most often, the key elements that prevent women to move forward in a life without violence are the family financial security, physical and psychological safety of the spouse and her children, and even the love of the land.

In the counties of Prescott-Russell, the lack of transportation is also a factor that increases the risk of social isolation, but it also keeps the secret behind closed doors and therefore, the women are prisoners of abusive situations. Moreover, the deficiency in transportation reduces the possibility of accessing services that are available for them to leave these situations.

In the counties of Prescott-Russell, the interveners directly and daily involved with women in situations of domestic violence have noted that, in fact, it was very difficult to live in safety without having to leave everything behind, such as her home, her job and her community, including the children's school and sports activities.

And without any means of transportation, how could they access training that would assist them in finding a better job, how could they get a job in another city or even affordable housing? The reality of job opportunities in the United Counties is such that it is difficult to leave a job without knowing if they would find another one. Where? For some women, leaving an abusive situation would be to be sentenced to exile or deracinated.

Finally, the last element that emerged from the group interview; the interveners also noted that women victims of domestic violence live permanently in fear, not only during their relationship, but also after the separation.



LEGEND	
	Canadian Mental Health Association
	Centre Novas - CALACS
	Royal-Comtois Center
	L'Original Court House
	Hawkesbury General Hospital
	Maison Interlude House – Outreach Services
	Maison Interlude House - Shelter
	Victim/Witness Assistance Program
	ODSP
	Prescott-Russell Victim Services
	Addiction Services of Eastern Ontario
	Social Services
	Valoris for Children and Adults

Table 1 : Round trip distances between various services and municipalities

	Hawkesbury	Casselman	Clarence-Rockland	Embrun
Court House (L'Orignal)	16	126	110	158
Centre Novas Casselman	122	0	70-90	40
Centre Novas Hawkesbury	0	122	120	162
Royal-Comtois Center	0	122	120	162
Victim/Witness Assistance Program (L'Orignal)	16	126	110	158
Valoris Service Centre Plantagenet	70	74	60	100
Valoris Service Centre Hawkesbury	0	122	120	162

The previous map and the summary table that demonstrates round-trip distances between various services and municipalities clearly reveal that distance is an issue that restricts access to resources.

To cope with these geographical barriers, many organizations offer services through satellite offices.

Judicial Intervention

Violence against women and their children, once condoned or ignored by law, and long been considered a private family matter, is now criminalized.

Police Intervention

In the early 1990's, mandatory charging and pro-arrest policies were introduced in Ontario. However, the police services do not treat all cases of domestic violence issues. Many women are hesitant to report domestic violence.

Ontario Provincial Police Services (OPP)

Hawkesbury Detachment (County of Prescott)

Data for 2011 and 2012: Hawkesbury (OPP)

Highlights
In 2011, the Hawkesbury Detachment responded to 192 domestic violence occurrences, where charges were laid or warrants sought.
In 2012, the Hawkesbury Detachment responded to 172 domestic violence occurrences, where charges were laid or warrants sought.
In many cases, domestic violence does not represent a single charge but a combination of charges that reflect the severity and complexity of the issue.
Limitation of the data
These findings represent only a few of the commonly violence and abuse occurrences, those that the police services responded to. However, these do not reflect violence and abuse that goes unreported. Many women seek out support from various regional agencies or from friends and family or social services and health agencies but never report to the police.

Charges laid against men – Domestic violence	2011	2012
Assault		
Common assault	79	76
Assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm	17	18
Aggravated assault	1	1
Sexual Assault – Domestic Violence		
Sexual assault	5	7
Sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm	0	0
Aggravated sexual assault	0	0
Breaches		
Breach of peace bond	0	0
Breach of probation/parole	37	18
Breach of restraining order	0	0
All other breaches	76	60
Other charges		
Uttering threats	48	35
Criminal harassment	39	29
Mischief	27	31
Homicide manslaughter and murder	1	0
Attempted murder	1	0
Choking	0	0
Forcible confinement	1	2
Firearms	0	0
Total number of charges	332	277

Crime Reduction Initiative

During the last two years, the Hawkesbury Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police and the Prescott-Russell Victim Services developed a unique program focused on supporting victims of criminal acts.

This partnership was launched as part of a broader crime reduction strategy. In this context, the aim is to target the underlying causes of the problems of violence and crimes such as those related to health, including mental health and substance abuse, as well as assistance to victims of crime by providing unprecedented level of integrated support.

It is vital that victims be provided with support as soon as possible. In this project, the police agents from the Detachment will be matched (paired) with staff members of the Victim Services and, through constant communication throughout their involvement in the judicial process, victims will receive continuous and faster services.

Ontario Provincial Police Services (OPP)
Russell Detachment (County of Russell)

Data for 2011 and 2012: Russell (OPP)

Highlights
In 2011, the Russell Detachment responded to 125 domestic violence occurrences, where charges were laid or warrants sought. In 271 cases, there were no allegations or accusations laid.
In 2012, the Russell Detachment responded to 142 domestic violence occurrences, where charges were laid or warrants sought. In 299 cases, there were no allegations or accusations laid.
In many cases, domestic violence does not represent a single charge but a combination of charges that reflect the severity and complexity of the issue.
Overall, men accounted for 467 criminal charges against woman abuse cases while 107 women were charged for domestic violence against men.
Overall, in 267 cases reported in 2011 and 2012, there have been a total of 570 charges laid against men and women.
Limitation of the data
These findings represent only a few of the commonly violence and abuse occurrences, those that the police services responded to. However, these do not reflect violence and abuse that goes unreported. Many women seek out support from various regional agencies or from friends and family or social services and health agencies but never report to the police.

Charges laid against men – Domestic violence	2011	2012
Assault		
Common assault	85	91
Assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm	11	11
Aggravated assault	0	0
Sexual Assault – Domestic Violence		
Sexual assault	0	4
Sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm	0	0
Aggravated sexual assault	0	0
Breaches		
Breach of peace bond	1	0
Breach of probation/parole	17	37
Breach of restraining order	0	0
All other breaches	14	1
Other charges		
Uttering threats	33	28
Criminal harassment	10	20
Mischief	27	45
Homicide manslaughter and murder	0	0
Attempted murder	0	0
Choking	1	3
Forcible confinement	1	1
Firearms	2	2
Total number of charges	246	294

Why are women so hesitant to report the abuse to the police?

Highlights in Canada
<i>Few women in shelters report the abuse to police</i>
For most abused women (6 in 10) residing in shelters on April 15, 2010, the incident which brought them there was not reported to police ⁸ .

⁸ STATISTICS CANADA (2011a). *Shelters for abused women in Canada*, by Marta BURCZYCKA and Adam COTTER. 2010, p.15.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11495-eng.pdf>

The point of views of the workers of Prescott-Russell
<i>Many women of domestic violence do not report the abuse to the police</i>
<i>Why?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of harming the spouse • Fear of retaliatory violence • Fear that he will lose his job • Fear for the family reputation • Fear that he will be sent to jail
<i>Presently, are they more reluctant?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are even more reluctant now that the double indictment is increasing and it is known in the community. • Also, due to the fact that the automatic protection services reporting are mandatory by the police services when there are children on the premises.
<i>When do they report it?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially not at the beginning • After numerous incidents • As a last resort • When they cannot cope with the situation themselves • When they feel they have run out of support from the family
<i>What is the trigger element to call the police?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When their life is in danger or that they are afraid to die • or their children's • Fear of losing custody of their children when protection services are involved

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program

Services

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (V/WAP) is offered in 54 criminal court districts in Ontario, including Prescott-Russell. Their role is to support victims and witnesses (adults and children), and to help them receive the information and services they need throughout the criminal court process. Services begin once police have laid charges and will continue until the court case is over.

The VWAP acts as a liaison between the victim/witness and the police, and also between the victim/witness and the Crown Attorney's Office. The VWAP provides the following services:

- Answers the questions about the criminal justice system, courtroom procedures and the role of the victim/witness in court
- Helps them understand what to expect at each court date and helps them prepare for their appearance in court
- Offers ongoing emotional support throughout the court process

- Refers them to appropriate community agencies
- Helps the victim understand and complete a Victim Impact Statement⁹.

Services are provided on a priority basis to vulnerable victims and witnesses of violent crimes, such as domestic violence, sexual assault and family violence.

Data

NO DATA IS AVAILABLE ON THE NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO USES THE SERVICES OFFERED IN PRESCOTT-RUSSELL.

Prescott-Russell Victim Services

Services

Police services refer victims of criminal acts or tragic circumstances to the Prescott-Russell Victim Services (SVPRVS). Individuals that are victims of violence can benefit immediate support through SVPRVS in order to lessen the impact of crime and trauma. This service is offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The VCARS Program

The *Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services (VCARS)* is a community response program who calls upon a team of volunteer responders. Police officers request on-scene assistance for victims. This program has been established to offer immediate crisis intervention, orientation and information services to the victims of violent crimes and tragic circumstances. More precisely, the assistance includes emotional support, practical assistance, safety planning, and provides information and referrals to other community agencies.

The VQRP Program

The *Victim Quick Response Program (VQRP)* has been established to provide immediate financial assistance to victims of the most violent crimes (homicide, serious physical assault, domestic violence, sexual assault and hate crimes) that are not available through other sources (personal/home insurance, low income, etc.).

Since 2012, the Prescott-Russell Victim Services cooperate with the police services in the *Crime Reduction Program* to ensure that, in the weeks following an incident, the victims of crime or tragic circumstances receive a follow-up call to answer any questions the

⁹ Pamphlet on the services offered.

victims might have, offer support and provide information and referrals to appropriate community services.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

The following data do not necessarily reflect victims of feminine or masculine gender.

<i>Types of violence experienced by victims who accessed their services</i>	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of victims of criminal acts or tragic circumstances	275	428
Sexual assault	17	58
Domestic violence	57	115
Assault (all other types)	–	23
Violence against senior citizens	2	4
Aggravated criminal harassment	2	13

Interlude House

A transition home/shelter is a resource referred to as a first-stage emergency housing that offers secure housing for abused women with and without children. The shelters offer various services such as emergency housing and support.

Interlude House is one of the first shelters in Ontario. Moreover, it is one of the first to offer services in French in Ontario.

The shelter is a first-stage housing, offering housing that accommodate the particular needs of each woman, on average for a period between 3 to 4 weeks.

In Prescott-Russell, there is no second-stage housing¹⁰. Subsequently, after a short stay in a shelter, the women discharged cannot deal with their transition to move forward in rebuilding their lives. They are faced with multifaceted barriers: insufficient accessible resources, poverty awaits them, few job opportunities, among others.

¹⁰ **Second-stage housing:** Facility offering long-term (3 to 12 months) secure housing with support and referral services designed to assist women while they search for permanent housing.

Services

Interlude House is a multi-services organization established since 1983 and provides a transition shelter for abused women including ten beds that are available for clients.

Since 2003, two distinct programs provide a variety of services to women of the community through satellite offices in Casselman and Rockland, in addition to their office in Hawkesbury.

The Outreach Program provides support and accompaniment to women through legal procedures (family and criminal court), works with them to reduce obstacles in the defence of their rights and interests, and refers them to appropriate services according to their specific needs.

The Transitional and Housing Support Program (THSP) assists women in their journey towards a life free from violence after leaving abusive situations: financial assistance, housing, budget, back to school, employment, etc.

These two programs are also available for women housed in the shelter; when staying at the shelter, during which the length of time is not predetermined, another program is also provided for children and teens in the shelter to offer them support as well as recreational activities.

When the women leave the shelter, a follow-up of five house visits is offered in order to assist them in their transition towards their new life.

Interlude House also offers support groups that are available in both French and English and the number of registrations determines where the session will be held.

The support groups are offered free of charge and funds are available to cover transportation and childcare costs.

A crisis line is available 24/7 to all the residents of Prescott-Russell.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013¹¹

In 2011, Interlude House housed 45 women and approximately the same amount of women in 2012. However, in 2012, over 28 children were also housed compared to 17 children in 2011.

¹¹The data has been collected through the WISH program for the fiscal years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 for the Interlude House Shelter Program.

In 2012, 6 women could not be admitted at Interlude House, a dangerous situation for women who seek refuge in a safe house.

Women who access shelters come from diverse backgrounds. Women from all ages seek refuge. Almost half of the women are under 35 years old and the most common age bracket is between the ages of 18 and 20 in 2011. Approximately one third of the women are 46 years old and over. Domestic violence affects women of all ages whether they are 18 or over 65.

The preferred language of the women and children in 2011 was French being the most prevailing language, although both French and English were equally used in 2012. Interlude House offers all their services in both languages.

After their stay at Interlude House, the women housed at the shelter found housing accommodations through the Transitional and Housing Support Program (THSP).

Table 2 : Number of clients served

Number of clients served	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of women housed	45	42
Number of children housed	17	28
Number of calls	693	1 026
Number of applications received	45	48
Number of applicants turned away	0	6

Table 3 : Specific breakdown data

Age categories of clients housed		
Women by age group		
Age	2011-2012	2012-2013
18 to 20 years old	11	3
21 to 25 years old	–	4
26 to 30 years old	5	6
31 to 35 years old	2	6
36 to 40 years old	4	6
41 to 45 years old	5	4
46 to 50 years old	3	5
51 to 55 years old	8	3
56 to 60 years old	5	2
61 to 65 years old	1	2
65 years old and over	–	1

Table 4: Preferred spoken language (women and children)

Language	2011-2012	2012-2013
French	40	33
English	22	35
Other	–	2

Table 5 : Type of violence

Type of violence	2011-2012	2012-2013
Emotional	25	30
Power and control	13	19
Financial	13	14
Harassment	2	13
Physical	16	17
Psychological	22	26
Spiritual	–	1
Sexual	6	6
Verbal	23	30
Stalking	–	4

Table 6 : Number of woman registered in the THSP program that found housing

Prescott-Russell	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of women registered in the THSP program that found housing	44	39

**Table 7 : Victim or witness of domestic violence assistance
Outreach Program - Women**

Prescott-Russell	2011-2012	2012-2013
Prescott	78	89
Russell	36	56

Table 8 : Transitional Housing and Support Program

Prescott-Russell	2011-2012	2012-2013
Prescott	74	77
Russell	24	50

Table 9 : Group “Pattern Changing”

Prescott-Russell	2011-2012	2012-2013
Prescott-Russell	2 groups: 13 participants	2 groups: 16 participants

Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell

Services

Valoris is a multiservice agency mainly financed by the Ministry of Social and Community Services, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, and the Ministry of the Attorney General. Valoris offers services under 5 mandates integrated in the service centers:

- 1) Children's Aid Society
- 2) Agency for mental health services for children and youth
- 3) Agency for developmentally delayed children and youth
- 4) Community Living Association for adults with developmentally disabilities
- 5) Agency for victims and witnesses of family violence

As per its mandate in family violence, Valoris helps adults victims of violence, witnesses of violence (women, mothers and children) and violent spouses to better manage conflict situations and improve their relational abilities, and to eliminate violence in their environment and promote healthy relations.

Services provided under this mandate include:

- support for victims, witnesses and violent partners;
- distributing information;
- individual and group interventions.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

2011-2012 (April 1st, 2011 to March 31st, 2012) and 2012-2013 (April 1st, 2012 to March 31st, 2013)

Number of opened files in domestic violence	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of women with an opened file in domestic violence	194	278

Between 2011 and 2012, we observe an increase of 44% in the number of women with an opened file in domestic violence¹². This increase is partly justified on the basis that, in 2012, Valoris put in place several presentations in the community to promote their services as well as to encourage the duty to report.

¹² Valoris implemented a system for categorizing files according to various issues. As for domestic violence cases, these files are listed according to the eligibility of the codification tool Spectrum. The records include primary and secondary dimensions of various forms of violence ranging from extreme gravity to minimal gravity, which includes a service for mothers and their children.

In 2011-2012, Valoris served 194 family cases, including 196 investigations/evaluations, 31 references for voluntary services and 56 cases of continued protection services.

In 2012-2013, 278 families were served, including 123 investigations/evaluations, 17 references for voluntary services and 138 continued protection services.

Support groups for victims or witnesses of domestic violence

Because domestic violence affects all members of the family, Valoris offers support to victims as well as children who might be witnesses of such violence.

Family intervention is one of many interventions offered, but other types of group interventions also exist that create a positive impact.

For Women is a program created to help women who feel isolated, controlled, threatened and physically, verbally or emotionally abused by their partners. This group provides support, information and advice to help women take control of their lives and an opportunity to build a support network.

The **Between Us** program offers support groups for witnesses of domestic violence. This group is for children, teens and mothers offered in a warm and friendly setting. The program is a three-group sessions offered over a 10-week period: a group for children between the ages of 6 and 11; a group for youths between 12 and 15; and a group for the mothers. The program offers a safe environment for children to share their experiences while providing mothers with the necessary tools to actively support their child/children. This group is offered in partnership with Interlude House (MIH). Financial assistance can be provided for transportation and childcare fees.

The objectives of this program are as follows:

- provide a safe environment where children can share their experience;
- allow children to understand that they are not responsible for the violent behaviour of others;
- provide tools for the mothers to support their child/children;
- encourage children and teenagers to solve their conflicts in a positive manner and to promote appropriate behaviours.

Table 10 : Groups offered related to domestic violence

Groups offered related to domestic violence according to the number of participants and groups	2011-2012	2012-2013
Group	Number of participants	Number of participants
For Woman	32	14
Between Us (Group mothers)	24	25
Between Us (Group children/teens)	25	23
Total	81	62

Between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, we observe a decrease in the total number of participants. This decrease is a result of speculative elements, such as the fact that several women in 2012-2013 indicated they were not ready for a group session. Their apprehension to share their experience in a group session limits their participation, and holds them back.

However, the testimonies of the women who completed this session are very positive. They expressed their satisfaction, and also said that they have benefited from the help and support they have received throughout this group session.

The groups vary between 5 and 10 participants for the group of women although the number of children by group varies a lot more.

Partner Assault Response Program: FOCUS men/women

FOCUS also known as Partner Assault Response Program (PAR) is funded through the Ministry of the Attorney General, Ontario Victim Services Secretariat. FOCUS is a specialized educational/group counseling program for men and women who have been physically violent, emotionally abusive or controlling towards a spouse or intimate partner. This program is offered both in French and in English. This program should not be mistaken with the anger management group. In fact, FOCUS aims to enhance victim safety and hold offenders accountable for their behaviour. In Ontario, this program is also offered to persons who recognized their violent behaviours and wish to participate on a voluntary basis.

Table 11 : FOCUS men/women

FOCUS Program, number of persons who started and completed the program	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of men referred ¹³ to FOCUS	108	80
Number of men who started the program	58	62
Number of men who completed the program	45	48
Number of women who completed the program	11	2

Several observations emerge from the findings of the above table.

- First, it should be noted that there is a significant decline in referrals, representing 35% fewer men-referred-cases. It is currently impossible to grasp the full complexity of this disparity. A study is currently underway to understand the various issues involved. The Ministry is aware of this fluctuation. Valoris, the Victim Assistance Program and the probation officers as well as the court system must join their efforts to try to understand this significant decline, and the best possible ways to solve this dilemma.
- On the other hand, the decrease in the number of referees concerns Valoris, especially since, at the same time, there is a significant increase in the number of opened domestic violence cases.

An important restructuring of the program in 2014

- The PAR program will be modified from the 16-week program to a standardized 12-session long program consistent throughout the province, as the attendance requirements currently designed are applied unevenly.
- The transition to a 12-session long program will permit over 2,200 additional offenders and their victims or current partners to participate in the program each year.
- The standards of the program will be revised to clearly reflect the requirements of the services provided and the expectations of the Ministry.
- Performance measures focused on outcomes and customer surveys will be implemented to help assess the program effectiveness.
- The amount of the budgetary envelope for the PAR program will remain the same, but the funding allocations awarded to organizations will be adjusted according to the 12-session program as well as to the demand of local communities.

One important aspect of the PAR Program is the “outreach” services that are offered to victims and/or current partner of the abuser. At this time, there will be no changes to

¹³ It should be noted that the above data includes exclusively the numbers of men mandated by the court to follow, pay and complete the PAR Program (FOCUS).

the requirements and funding of the Program which aims at providing victims and current partner abusers, with services intervention, safety planning, support and referrals.

Concerns of the interveners regarding the important changes relating to the length of the program

Most agencies that offer this service criticize the amendment and consider that the changes will have a negative impact on the service. For its part, the Ministry explained that the decision resulted following a general audit. The lack of uniformity and consistency between agencies are significant variables that have led to these changes.

Additional Community Resources

Financial security is a key element for women who want to escape an abusive situation. Women who flee abusive relationships and turn to welfare seeking refuge and support frequently find neither. For many of them, more frequently, they encountered difficulties¹⁴.

In 2004, a research conducted by Janet Mosher and her collaborators have shown that the experience of women who wanted to flee an abusive relationship from a spouse and who had turned to welfare, had been re-victimized. Somehow, their experience of the welfare system is like another abusive relationship, a relationship they wanted to escape from, first and foremost. Disturbingly, the decision to return to an abusive relationship “is often the 'best' decision for a woman, in a social context of horrendously constrained options”. (p. 79)

At the time of this research, the lack of knowledge of the dynamics of domestic violence was involved and, its impact of abuse on women, because of the many different systems in welfare. In this regard, women were reluctant to disclose their abusive situations to workers and welfare workers. And they were even more reluctant when they had children for fear that the CAS would be contacted and remove their children and they would lose custody of their children (p. 66). Others feared that they would not be believed, or be blamed of the situation or ridiculed.

In rural areas, the challenges are further alleviated. Their isolation and lack of services are often silent and systemic allies to abusers. The researchers consider that the power of control of the abusers “is often exacerbated” when the couple live in a rural area (p. 77). Because there rarely is public transportation in rural communities, abused

¹⁴ MOSHER, Janet, Patricia EVANS, Margaret LITTLE, Eileen MORROW, Jo-Anne BOULDING and Nancy VANDERPLAATS (2004). Walking on Eggshells: Abused Women's Experiences of Ontario's Welfare System. Mimeo. document. 129p. http://www.yorku.ca/yorkweb/special/Welfare_Report_walking_on_eggshells_final_report.pdf

women often have to rely upon their abuser “to go to the doctor, to buy groceries, to pick up the children, and to socialize” (p. 77). Rural women also experienced less access to services and information about services (p. 77). The lack of services is exacerbated by the lack of confidentiality in rural communities (p. 78). Undeniably, one of the perverse effects of this lack of confidentiality would be the lack of requests for services by women in situations of violence and abuse.

Participants in this research held in 2004, encountered several common challenges that are frequent to the women who had used the services of the welfare system. Furthermore, the fact that several workers were not sensitive to their specific problems, such as transportation issues even to go to their appointments at the welfare, or administrative requirements that could endanger the safety of women or finally, the lack of privacy in the community simply by going to the welfare office or the shelter.

Since that research, several policies pertaining to welfare assistance have been modified accordingly to support women towards a life free from violence.

Therefore, in 2006, the Government of Ontario established the *Employment Training for Abused/At-Risk Women Program* to assist women in finding jobs and increasing their employment potential.¹⁵

Accordingly, the Social Services Department of the United Counties of Prescott-Russell is responsible for most of the services related to applications for social assistance, employment services and social housing.

Social Services of the United Counties of Prescott-Russell

Ontario Works

The Ontario Works program provides financial assistance and employment support for people with temporary financial difficulties. It is also the gateway to initiate a request from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

Eligible persons are entitled to a monthly amount to help them pay for basic expenses such as food, rent and hydro. They also are entitled to prescribed drugs, diabetic supplies, reimbursement for medical transportation, dental care for children and other benefits with certain limits.

¹⁵ According to the Domestic Violence Action Plan Progress Report 2012, this program has served more than 1,800 women and over 80 per cent of participants have found jobs or pursued additional training within six months of graduation.

Source: Government of Ontario (2012).

http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd_new/english/resources/publications/dvap2012/report.shtml

They will help them achieve personal goals to finish high school or help them improve skills to become an office clerk, a personal support or welder, while paying for their tuition and books as well as to cover expenses related to their job search, such as clothing, uniforms, work boots, tools, and also pay a portion of their transportation or babysitting costs.

All persons victims of domestic violence who are fleeing their abusive situation can apply in person, by phone or online. These persons will be provided with support, emergency fund (if applicable), as well as referrals to other appropriate resources.

- In 2012, 20 women reported being victims of domestic violence on the phone application.

The persons aged 16 and 17 who are abused by their parents may also receive benefits from Ontario Works in special circumstances, as well as mothers between the ages of 16 and 25 who are victims of violence, in the context of "*Learning, Earning and Parenting Program*" to help them finish high school, improve parenting skills and find work.

An income support can also be an important source of temporary assistance for women fleeing abusive situations.

Social assistance regulations have been amended to allow women living in interval or transitional housing to continue to receive a shelter allowance beyond the three months usually allowed. This change provides support beyond basic personal needs and helps a woman maintain her principal residence while ensuring her safety in a shelter.

Acknowledging that it can take a number of attempts to leave an abusive situation, Ontario Works introduced policies revisions to provide better support to abused women in emergency situations. Before the policy revisions, emergency could not be provided more than once in a six-month period. Now, women fleeing domestic violence can access emergency assistance more frequently¹⁶.

In the event that a participant of Ontario Works is temporarily housed in a transition house or shelter for victims of domestic violence, for example Interlude House and keeps her residence, she is eligible for basic needs and housing during the first three months of her stay. However, if she does not maintain her principal residence, she will be eligible to a monthly allowance (\$136 as of November 2013) per person (herself and her children), in addition to a drug card and other mandatory services.

¹⁶ ONTARIO WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE (2012). *Domestic Violence Action Plan – Progress Report 2012*, p.5.
http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd_new/english/resources/publications/dvap2012/report.shtml

Furthermore, for the women and their children who are fleeing violence and who have no identification document (e.g. birth certificate), financial assistance is available in such situations. In addition, she may be granted a temporary waiver of further support allowance for herself and her children from her ex-spouse for a period up to 12 months.

Funds are also available for over 3,000 families receiving benefits from the Ontario Works program and ODSP, as well as for low-income residents of Prescott-Russell. These funds can help pay arrears of rent and energy (electricity and heating), the last month's rent to secure the housing and moving expenses to flee from an abusive situation. For eligibility criteria and maximum amounts, the persons should contact their case manager (Ontario Works and ODSP) and the Ontario Works office for low-income individuals.

Housing Services

The Housing Services Division under the United Counties of Prescott and Russell Social Services Department (UCPR) owns and manages 311 family, senior, and single adult units within its service area. These units are a mix of semi-detached houses and apartments, ranging from 1 to 5 bedrooms.

Any person 16 and older can apply for subsidized housing. The names will be added to the centralized waiting list.

Women and children fleeing violence are amongst those given special consideration as a result of provincially mandated policies established in Ontario.

The *Housing Services Act* provides that persons who are subject to domestic violence or abuse are considered as a special priority household category on the waiting list.

In 2011, 21 families in Prescott-Russell have applied for this program and, of those who were deemed eligible, 9 of them have received priority housing.

The housing issue is a priority in the process to attain a life free from violence for women and their children.

However, in the United Counties of Prescott-Russell, the situation for affordable housing is a major concern. To this end, the workers from various community resources in the counties (21 agencies/organizations in attendance) have recognized that it is exceedingly difficult to find affordable, quality housing for vulnerable persons in the counties; **the situation was even described as critical**¹⁷.

¹⁷ That meeting, in the afternoon of April 11, 2013 in L'Orignal, in the Council Chambers of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, was being held for the purpose of identifying the needs of the community (an inventory of housing needs experienced by vulnerable persons).

Financial Constraints¹⁸

- The high rental cost (particularly in the western counties) is pointed out
- The first and last months' rent are often required which compels vulnerable individuals to find the money to pay for a "double" rent
- It is impossible to find a rent at \$ 150. per month with income support
- The "ex" are sometimes forced to remain together, to put up with each other, exacerbating the risk of violence; women end up having few resources for them to leave
- Vulnerable people often do not have fire insurance, and housing in slums increases the risk of fire and the possibility of losing everything
- In general, people are proud and want to avoid, at almost any cost, having to apply for income support (Ontario Works)
- A person must sell everything they own before being eligible for income support
- Adequate/proper accommodation requires a lot of money
- Vulnerable people do not have sufficient financial resources to afford adequate housing
- The bills, in addition to rent, are difficult to deal with; vulnerable people often end up in debt (electricity, heating, cable, telephone, etc.)
- Vulnerable people have to rely on renting substandard housing

Resource deficiencies

- The waiting list is too long
- Public transportation is deficient and non-existent outside the context of "commuting"

Temporary assistance is too often the norm that prevails.

Clinique juridique populaire de Prescott et Russell Inc.

The Clinique juridique populaire de Prescott et Russell Inc. does not provide services that directly address the issue of domestic violence. The Clinique does not offer services in family law or criminal law, and when assistance is requested for such services, they are required to refer people to appropriate services or agencies. To enable these women to obtain the services they need as soon as possible, the Clinique provides a list of agencies and organizations that can meet their needs, including their coordinates¹⁹.

¹⁸ "Un logement pour tous. Le logement abordable et la lutte à l'itinérance". Mimeo. document. 2003, p.9-10. [in French only]

¹⁹ Source: Email communication with the Clinique juridique.

Services

Due to their areas of practice, the Clinique may provide information to women victims of domestic violence of their rights. For example, if a woman victim of domestic violence must leave her house, she may use their services in order to understand her rights and obligations as a tenant. This is how the issue of violence is indirectly dealt with in some situations.

Data

The Clinique does not record data on violence, whether domestic or sexual, or if it involves women or men. However, in their daily work, the Clinique represents a vast number of individuals who have a history of sexual abuse.

York Centre of Prescott-Russell: Supervised Visits

York Centre (CYC) is a supervised access centre which offers families experiencing difficulties a safe setting where visits and exchanges can take place without the children witnessing conflicts between parties.

Services

Families can participate in the supervised visits program of the York Centre if they have received an order of the court, minutes of settlement, a mediation agreement, a mutual agreement reached between the two parties or an approval to this effect. Lawyers, mediators and the courts may refer clients to the York Centre. Voluntary arrangements are also accepted.

Supervised visits

Supervised visit takes place at the York Centre under the constant supervision of access workers.

Monitored exchanges

A monitored exchange is when the child(ren) is/are dropped off by one party and picked up by the other party. The York Centre provides a place where the child(ren) can go from one parent to the other safely.

Data for 2012-2013

The services of supervised visits are directly related to the issue of domestic violence. Consequently, it is usually the mothers that use the services of York Centre following physical abuse or abuse of any form.

- In 2012-2013, the York Center, in their service center in Hawkesbury, offered services to a total of 300 families. Of these families, 200 women reported using their services because of domestic violence.

Centre de santé communautaire de l'Estrie

Services

The mental health sector's mission is to promote the psychological well-being of Francophones in Eastern Ontario. This mission is accomplished by means of psychotherapeutic techniques, prevention through awareness and education, advocacy of rights for those suffering from mental health problems, and taking part in planning and coordinating integrated healthcare services.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

Number of clients who received services and reported issues related to domestic violence	2011-2012	2012-2013
Sex		
Women	2	24
Men	1	3
Language		
Francophone	3	27
Anglophone	0	0
Other	–	–
Unknown	–	–
Number of clients who received services and reported issues related to sexual abuse	2011-2012	2012-2013
Sex		
Women	6	10
Men	0	0
Language		
Francophone	4	6
Anglophone	2	4

However, these data are partial as, at the present time, the statistical system does not seem to capture all the information and the same also happened in 2012 when the data did not seem to reflect the reality of the number of persons.

The Prevention of Domestic Violence

Neighbours, Friends and Families Campaign in Prescott-Russell

Services

Prevention Programs on Domestic Violence
<p>Neighbours, Friends and Families Campaign</p> <p>Neighbours, Friends and Families is a public education campaign that aims to end violence against women through public awareness about the warning signs, risk factors and resources so that those close to an at-risk woman or an abusive man can help.</p> <p>http://www.neighboursfriendsandfamilies.ca/</p>
<p>... and closer to home</p> <p>A heart-breaking story... Francine... of Cumberland, and her children, murdered by her spouse and the children's father is a time to stop and think about the warning signs of domestic violence, with a documentary, at family gatherings, at the daycare and in the workplace.</p>
Several community organizations are involved
<p>Interlude House hired an agent in 2013 for the Neighbours, Friends and Families (NFF) campaign for Prescott-Russell and Ottawa offering services in French only. Interlude House participates in all the community awareness events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ the Walk for Women, ➤ the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, ➤ the campaign “16 days to end violence against women” (November 25 to December 10) organized by MIH, ➤ the International Men’s March – Walk a Mile in her Shoes (organized by Novas) and ➤ presentations may also be offered to working teams.
<p>In 2012, in the context of this campaign, the Centre Novas organized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ presentations at the Samuel Genest High School (400 participants) ➤ in the community of Cornwall (40 participants) ➤ and in the “coffee hours” sessions at the Centre Novas (20 participants)

The 10-day Activities for the Elimination of Violence

Raising awareness to end violence against women is the cornerstone to find solutions to the problem, according to experts. During this period punctuated by *Days of action against violence towards women*, the community of Prescott-Russell is invited to participate in numerous activities.

NEWS

editionap.ca



On the Night Watch against violence

GREGG CHAMBERLAIN
gregg.chamberlain@eap.on.ca

Rockland | On a dark and cold Tuesday evening at the end of November candles flickered outside of the Rockland YMCA to offer the light of hope that in the future women and children will no longer need to fear violence.

Members of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to End Violence Towards Women (PRCEVW) held a series of candlelight vigils throughout the region to mark both International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on Nov. 25 and to commemorate the December 6 anniversary of the Montréal Massacre in 1989 when a psychotic gunman murdered 14 women at the École polytechnique de Montréal.

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to Eliminate Violence Against Women is a collection of various organizations within the region, created in 2009 with the goal of creating public awareness about the abusive situations many women and children face in their communities and to work towards eliminating those conditions.

The PRCEVW's three-point platform states that no woman or child should live in fear of violence and that it is the responsibility of the entire community to create a safe and secure environment for women and children. The community, through various agencies, must also provide victims of violence with programs that meet their needs for protection and future security.

The coalition held candlelight vigils in Rockland, Casselman and Hawkesbury between Nov. 27 and Dec. 6.



Vision Prescott-Russell 6 décembre 2012 – 7

And, in this context, on December 6th, 2013, the Council of the Corporation of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell adopted a resolution that designates December 6th as "a NON VIOLENCE day for Prescott and Russell"²⁰.

²⁰ Source: http://www.maisoninterludehouse.ca/images/Press_conference_announcing_the_declaration_of_a_NON-VIOLENCE_DAY_for_Prescott-Russell.pdf

VIOLENCE ABUSE IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COUNTIES

This section deals with violence abuse in dating relationships with a small incursion on bullying. Then, we will emphasize on the dynamics of violence abuse in dating relationships and the most important challenges faced by young girls. Subsequently, we present resources that are available for women in the counties of Prescott-Russell as well as the clients served. In the third part, we then provide a brief description on bullying.

Definition

[Dating violence is defined as] any behaviour that hinders the development of the other person by compromising their physical, emotional or sexual integrity [...]. An abusive exercise of power whereby one individual in a position of strength attempts to control another person, by different means, to keep that other person in a position of inferiority or force him or her to adopt certain behaviours.

(Hamel, Lavoie and Rondeau, 2002, p.1)²¹.

The Point of Views of the Interveners of Prescott-Russell concerning Violence Experienced by Young Girls

We organized a group interview, specifically focused on violence in dating relationships in rural areas. Sixteen interveners from various agencies and community services were in attendance. We wanted to better understand the dynamics of violence in dating relationships for young girls in the counties, particularly in rural areas. We also wanted to identify the challenges that are faced by young girls and women of the counties of Prescott-Russell.

The interveners who were engaged in this group interview came from main organizations that provide direct services to women victims of domestic violence. The results presented herein reflect their analysis of the situation, and the findings arise from their work experience on a daily basis with these women.

²¹HAMEL, Chantal, Francine LAVOIE and Lorraine RONDEAU (2002). *Promoting Informed Action, Subject : Youth Dating Relationship*, by le Centre québécois de ressources en promotion de la sécurité et en prévention de la criminalité, 12p. http://www.crpspc.qc.ca/Mieux_connaître_youthdatingrel_dec05_anglais.pdf

They observed that, although verbal violence in youth dating relationships is very present, young people tolerate the acts without even realizing it. They also discerned that it is very difficult for young girls to recognize the different situations of control of the abuser boyfriend because they are experiencing their first romantic/love relationship. Frequently, they experience confused feelings; jealousy as well as the control over the friends she can socialize with, is interpreted as a proof of love. Control is often linked with the comings and goings of young girls as well as in all areas of their lives including their network of friends.

The interveners recognize that the peers, especially boys, have an important role to play in the normalization and continuity of the violence in dating relationships.

Another source in the violence context towards young girls is the factor linked to social media and technology, and their importance and impact in the lives of young people. It gave the impression to the interveners that social media now appear to be the only source of sex education for teenagers. According to the interveners, the Internet and television supersede important conversations between young people and their parents, as the teens find the information they are looking for through these new technologies.

The participants in the group interview also mentioned the lack of information/education as a risk factor for violence. In fact, according to them, initiatives geared towards the prevention and education on the different forms of violence and its consequences in dating relationships should be integrated in order to keep the violence from setting in and compromising their relationships in the short and long term.

The interveners also associate this difficulty in raising prevention due to the lack of follow-up for awareness programs in the area. It is crucial that a continuity of services for prevention activities be carried out to observe long-term results. Through awareness, further victimization is prevented, and the collaboration of the community is also an important factor to reflect on the importance of its impact and play a social role to make significant changes. Awareness initiatives have a great influence on the success of eliminating violence in dating relationship²².

Services

Le Centre Novas – CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell has developed, over the years, prevention programs that are available for youths aged 14 to 18. Two specific prevention programs *ViRAJ* and *PASSAJ*, the first program aimed for teenagers aged 14 to 16 and the second intended for youths aged 16 to 18.

²² WEINTRAUD (2001), extracted from COPA, 2006. p.8-10. CENTRE ONTARIEN DE PRÉVENTION DES AGRESSIONS, Le (COPA) (2006). *Prevention: A feminist analysis "Tools not rules"*, Toronto.

Interlude House also offers a prevention program for girls (9-10th grade) in French only *Fille seulement*. <http://filleseulement.ca/>

Bullying Hurts... A Nightmare for Teenagers

During the group interview with the interveners working with teenagers of Prescott-Russell, a particular topic affecting the lives of young people came up several times. It's bullying²³.

In many situations of bullying, girls tend to use relationally aggressive behaviour, even violent. According to the interveners, the girls would rather use indirect means of verbal bullying, such as name-calling, gossiping or spreading rumors, to hurt or just to fit in to become part of a group.

In a recent study of the Centre ontarien de prévention de la violence (COPA), they suggest possible explanations to explain these behaviors:

- In this regard, *“girls with aggressive and violent behavior were harshly disciplined and have suffered more abuse than girls with no violent behavior [...].”*
- *They often have aggressive behaviors to ensure their social dominance or to avoid being controlled by others or become their victim.”* (Artz, 2005, cited in COPA, 2006, p.12)

This could be attributed to the fact that these girls considered as violent, often did not have a positive and egalitarian model of the man-woman relationship:

- *What if bullying has some secret to hide?* The violent behaviour can be a key that unlocks the door to many unhappy and difficult secrets.

²³ CENTRE ONTARIEN DE PRÉVENTION DES AGRESSIONS, Le (COPA) (2006). *“Les comportements agressifs chez les filles : Mieux comprendre l'intimidation”*, Toronto. [in French only]
http://www.infocopa.com/ressources/Les_comportements_agressifs_chez_les_filles_mieux_comprendre_l'intimidation.pdf

Community Awareness Campaign within the context of the National Bullying Prevention Week

Do you dare take action? Together, let's put a stop to bullying in Prescott-Russell!



Following a conference held by Jasmin Roy on November 15, 2012, the Coalition of Prescott-Russell to end violence towards women, in partnership with several community resources, launched a new awareness initiative.

Since 2012, a regional initiative is in place to address and prevent bullying in Prescott-Russell. An action plan was developed following community consultation with over 40 partners from various sectors of services that interact regularly with people that experience bullying; in particular, the organizations that provide services to children and youth, health care providers, educational institutions and schools, legal system programs, sports associations and several private companies for school transportation. The Coalition of Prescott-Russell to end violence towards women was at the table. This plan is aimed at the improvement of collectively working together to develop strategies focused on the prevention of bullying.

The coalition responsible for the implementation of the action plan chose, among its priorities for the year 2013-2014, to organize a community awareness campaign within the context of the National Bullying Prevention Week. In order to do so, they used the works of art of Janik Bastien to create a poster and a video entitled “La peur de l’école” (The fear of school) created by a group of students from Le Sommet School in Hawkesbury: Émilie Lacelle, Trisha Potvin, Gabrielle Ouimet, Angelica Bisson, Florence LaCourse, Samuel Lamothe and Amélie Durocher-Bourgon. The poster and video are aimed more directly to the teenagers and allow us to refer these young people to specific resources and agencies in order for them to obtain help and support. The winners were selected following a competition launched in the Francophone schools in 2012.

Based on these findings, the Coalition of Prescott-Russell elaborated the development of a second tool intended for the general public. The objective is to inform the community that bullying is not only a social issue that is solely focused on the younger generation. Victimization takes place elsewhere than in schools, subsequently it is important to clearly convey that message in our prevention strategies. If we deliver to the children, youth and adults of Prescott-Russell, the same message, the same answer and the same good example on bullying awareness, and diligently in all spheres of activities, we will contribute in providing our population with a fundamental learning concept necessary to prevent and address this issue. Mrs. Oya Anzan, photographer, has generously given her time by offering her services for free to create a mural/photo of citizens of Prescott-Russell.

The purpose of this community awareness program is to ensure that the posters are prominently visible in all public and private institutions in the counties. The video will be available on the Valoris website at www.valorispr.ca and on several websites of participating partners as well as the social media networks.

The next step of the Coalition of Prescott-Russell is to identify the gaps in the service system in our region in order to identify avenues of action that will sustain and support the integration and the collaboration between sectors.

The fear of rape affects all women.
It inhibits their actions and limits their freedom influencing
the way they dress, the hours they keep, the routes they walk.
The fear is well founded, because no woman is immune from rape²⁴.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

An Overview on the Highlights concerning Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls

Highlights in Canada

- Rates of sexual assault are higher among females²⁵.
- The 2009 General Social Survey (GSS) found that Canadians reported 460,000 cases of sexual assault perpetrated by persons other than marital spouses in the preceding 12 months.
- This represents a rate of 33 acts per 1,000 women, a figure that has not changed since the early 1990s²⁶.
- Based on police-reported data, 92% of the victims of sexual offences were women²⁷.
- In 2011, women knew their sexual attacker in three-quarters of incidents: 45% as a casual acquaintance or friend, 17% as an intimate partner and 13% as a non-spousal family member (Table 1.12). Exactly one-quarter of sexual assaults against women were committed by a stranger²⁸.
- When types of sexual violence were recorded in two categories, 20% of all incidents were found to be sexual attacks involving the use of threats or physical violence, with the remainder (80%) involving unwanted sexual touching. In over half of these sexual assaults, the perpetrator was a friend, acquaintance or neighbour of the victim²⁹.

²⁴ CLARK, Lorene, 1983 : 23.

²⁵ PERRAULT, S., & S. BRENNAN, (2010). *Criminal victimization in Canada, 2009*. Juristat, 30(2), Catalogue No. 85-002-X.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11340-eng.pdf>

²⁶ CRIAW/ICREF (2013). *Violence Against Women in Canada*. Fact Sheet. Ottawa.
Researched and written by Holly JOHNSON and Emily COLPITTS. p.7.
http://www.criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/VAW_ENG_longFinal.pdf

²⁷ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, released on June 18, 2013,
Edited by Maire SINHA. p.8 p.19. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

²⁸ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, released on June 18, 2013,
Edited by Maire SINHA. p.32. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

²⁹ CRIAW/ICREF (2013). *Violence Against Women in Canada*. Fact Sheet. Ottawa.
Researched and written by Holly JOHNSON and Emily COLPITTS. p.7.
http://www.criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/VAW_ENG_longFinal.pdf

- Overall, younger Canadians were more likely than older Canadians to indicate that they had been violently victimized within the previous 12 month period. More specifically, people between the ages of 15 and 24 years were almost 15 times more likely than those aged 65 and older to report being a victim of a violent victimization ([Table 4](#))³⁰.
- The severity of assaults reported is often minimized.
- “According to independent research, many sexual assaults that involve injury and weapons and thus meet the criteria for levels II or III are classified by police³¹ as level I. As a result, when these statistics are reported by Statistics Canada or by the police, they give a false impression of the seriousness of sexual violence”. (CRIAW 2013 : p.6)

Sexual Exploitation

Highlights in Ontario

- Sexual exploitation is very present in Ontario. We located close to 200 prostitution sites that are easily accessible, where the bodies of women and girls are bought and sold in these three locations in Ontario (Hawkesbury, Sudbury and downtown Toronto).
- The explanatory study also highlights other significant issues including abuse of women in vulnerable situations, difficulties faced by women who wish to get out of prostitution and finally, the close relationship between prostitution and human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation in Ontario³².

Highlights in Hawkesbury³³

- Sexual exploitation occurs in a discreet manner.
- Factors that contribute to the integration of women in the sexual exploitation system are mainly for reasons of survival, for example to pay for rent and food.
- Substance use or reimbursements of debts are sometimes factors that lead to prostitution, factors that are often linked to the exploitation of vulnerable women and girls.
- Sexual exploitation is closely linked to the drug trade and organized crime.
- The security issues remain a major obstacle for women who wish to get out of prostitution. It is very difficult for them to report pimps out of fear of reprisals. However, women’s shelters are available to call on for assistance.

³⁰ PERRAULT, S. & S. BRENNAN, (2010). *Criminal victimization in Canada, 2009*. Juristat, 30(2), Catalogue No. 85-002-X. Table 4. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11340-eng.pdf>

³¹ JOHNSON, H. (2012). *Limits Criminal Justice*, 640; DU MONT, J. (2003). *Charging and sentencing in sexual assault cases: An exploratory examination*. *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, 15(2), 305-341. CRIAW/ICREF (2013). *Violence against women in Canada*, Fact sheet. Ottawa. Researched and written by Holly JOHNSON and Emily COLPITTS. p.7. http://www.criaw-icref.ca/sites/criaw/files/VAW_ENG_longFinal.pdf

³² ACTION ONTARIENNE CONTRE LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES (2013). *Opposing sexual exploitation of women: an overview of access of three Ontario cities to sites for the sexual exploitation of women*, by Caroline MONTPETIT in collaboration with Ghislaine SIROIS and Marie-Luce GARCEAU. p.1. http://aocvf.ca/documents/Report_Sexual_Exploitation_in_Ontario_VF-2013.pdf

³³ Ibid. p.25.

Regional Profile on the Resources and Statistics concerning Sexual Violence in Prescott-Russell

The Police and the Courts

Unlike the statistics provided by the Ottawa Police Services (OPS) in *Hidden from Sight, Volume II: A Profile of Violence Against Women in Ottawa*, the data in the counties are not currently available.

Le Centre Novas – CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell

Le Centre Novas opened its doors in 2006 and observes that sexual assault is still a taboo subject in the counties of Prescott-Russell.

Le Centre Novas collaborates with community agencies in order to implement better communications to provide more efficient services to women. However, it still remains a challenge in terms of the existing intervention approach and the perspective of women's empowerment.

Usually, in individual intervention, Le Centre Novas provides services mainly to women of the age groups from 16 to 24 years old and over 60. The most common forms of violence reported are incest and rape in dating relationships. Le Centre Novas served 22 clients in 2007-2008 in their first full year of operation to slightly over 80 clients seen in individual counseling in 2012-2013. And during that first year, 3 awareness workshops were offered compared to more than 125 awareness workshops being offered in various sectors reaching over 1,200 persons in 2012-2013.

The women often resort to survival mechanisms impregnated with various addictions (such as prescription drugs; alcohol; drugs; food; sex). The situations are more and more complex. Women are often struggling with mental health issues associated with other invasive-related difficulties. Community resources that are available are unprepared on how to deal with their problems and refer the women from one agency to another. In many cases, the women do not find the necessary help when it is needed. Thus, when they finally arrive at Le Centre Novas, the women have circled around various community services beforehand and, as a result, are on medication.

Transportation is one of the most difficult barriers to overcome. Rural areas provide limited alternative transportation for the women who are either dependent on a spouse for transportation, whether they are living in an isolated environment or, because of the lack of resources to pay for transport. There is no public transportation in Prescott-

Russell and the women who are provided financial assistance for that specific issue are often exploited by persons who take advantage of their position as drivers. And although transportation services exist (e.g. the *Hand in Hand* project of Interlude House), the capacity of this program exceeds the current needs.

The greatest challenge for Le Centre Novas still remains financial support. The funding from the Ministry of the Attorney General, allocated as part of the core funding has not been adjusted since the creation of Le Centre. Prevention and awareness campaigns are largely funded by fundraising events. Fortunately, donor partners such as the Trillium Foundation, United Way of Prescott-Russell, the Office of Francophone Affairs and a few others recognize the importance of prevention and awareness in sexual assault. But still, this type of funding does not allow consolidation of the supply of services conveyed. The employees work at wages well below the market standard.

Despite potential difficulties and challenges, Le Centre Novas is progressively more well-known, and the participation of the community is more and more present in awareness activities. The women who are accessing their services and participating in their activities are even more numerous and, the veil of taboo will be lifted and shattered in Prescott-Russell.

Services

Various services are offered to the Francophone women aged 16 and over in Prescott-Russell.

Counseling Services: individual personal meetings, phone support or accompaniment assistance, transportation or advocacy.

Coffee Hour Sessions

An opportunity to meet other people and discuss about various issues and enjoy a light lunch. The sessions are held during the third week of the month, on Wednesday in Casselman and on Friday in Hawkesbury.

Workshops and Information Sessions

Self-esteem, Assertiveness, Stress Management, Laughter Yoga, Improving Communications, Anger Management, Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships, Hypersexuality, presentation of services...

All of the above services are offered to the community, businesses and organizations in the counties of Prescott-Russell, in order to promote the services that are offered by Le Centre Novas, what are the impacts of sexual assault, what is the law of consent and how you can help someone who experiences a situation of sexual violence.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

Table 12 : Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013: Counseling Services, Awareness and Education for the community at large

	Data for 2011-2012	Data for 2012-2013
<i>Counseling Services:</i>		
New women and total of women met during the year	36 new women for a total of 157 women met during the year	44 new women for a total of 80 women met during the year
Meetings held in person and number of intervention hours	555 meetings 745 hours	579 meetings 736 hours
Support calls answered at Le Centre Novas	185 calls	242 calls
Accompaniments	7 (total of 20 hours)	4 (total of 10.25 hours)
Practical assistance (transportation)	30	37
Number of calls answered on the Fem'aide crisis line for Prescott-Russell	1,438 calls	1,175 calls
<i>Education and Awareness for the community at large:</i>		
Coffee-hour sessions (Casselman and Hawkesbury)	20 coffee-hour sessions 101 participants	16 coffee-hour sessions 116 participants
Picnic (Casselman)	37 participants	30 participants
Christmas gala (Casselman)	42 participants	40 participants
Workshops in schools and number of participants	28 workshops 506 participants	95 workshops 1,430 participants
Group workshops for women aged 60 and over	2 groups 15 participants (Bourget and Hawkesbury)	1 group 12 participants
Training workshops and presentations of our services to the public	14 training workshops 358 participants	26 training workshops and presentations of our services 297 participants
INSTINCTS sessions for women	–	2 sessions 15 participants

Sexual Violence Against Children

Highlights in Canada

In Canada, young girls were most often the victims of sexual violence.

Highlights in Canada

In fact, girls were four times more likely than boys to be a victim of police-reported sexual assault or other type of sexual offence at the hands of a family member (129 per 100,000 versus 30 per 100,000)³⁴.

Sexual crimes were by far the most common offence against girls. In particular, 47% of all violent crimes against girls under 12 reported to police were sexual in nature, much higher than the corresponding share of violent crimes against women (7%)³⁵.

Statistics for Ontario

Provincially, police-reported rates of violence against girls under the age of 12 in Ontario were 301 for 100,000 girls³⁶.

Sexual Abuse Prevention Programs

Several prevention programs against violence towards children are offered at Le Centre Novas. These prevention and awareness programs are intended for all ages. The **CHILD ASSAULT PREVENTION (CAP)** project (or le projet ESPACE in French) (kindergarten-6th grade) advocates the rights of children to remain “safe, strong and free”, by developing assertiveness strategies and building a good support network around them. Continuity to this program is also available for students in grades 7 and 8. This is the **COURAGE** program.

In addition, these programs are offered in collaboration with partners such as the public and catholic elementary and secondary schools of the region, the Centre de santé communautaire de l’Estrie and the Early Years Centre of Glengarry Prescott and Russell.

³⁴ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2011*, Juristat, Section 4: Family violence against children and youth, by Maire SINHA, 2011, p.72.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11805-eng.pdf>

³⁵ STATISTICS CANADA (2013a). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, released on June 18, 2013, Edited by Maire SINHA. p.16.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

³⁶ Ibid.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

**Table 13 : Prevention Programs offered by COPA
(CAP preschool, CAP elementary, COURAGE, INSTINCTS)**

Program	Data for 2011-2012			Data for 2012-2013		
	School	Number of workshops	Number of students	School	Number of workshops	Number of students
CAP preschool	St-Isidore Elementary School, St-Isidore	4	40	Garderie l'Arche des Amis	4	80
	St-Mathieu Elementary School, Hammond	2	40	Circle of Friends	6	100
	St-Félicité Elementary School, Clarence	2	40			
	Nouvel-Horizon Elementary School, Hawkesbury	6	118			
CAP elementary				Académie de la Seigneurie	6	130
				Limoges	4	94
				Clarence-Creek	4	80
CAP kindergarten and elementary				L'Original	12	120
				Bourget	12	200
				St-Jean	17	220
				La Croisée	15	120
COURAGE	Gisèle Lalonde, Orleans	5	110	Gisèle Lalonde, Orleans	2	36
INSTINCTS*	Plantagenet Catholic High School	1	15			
	Embrun Catholic High School	1	15			

*Program available only in 2011-2012

Prevention Programs offered to High School Students

Le Centre Novas with the collaboration of their partners offer each year various programs intended to young people in secondary schools.

Le Centre Novas offers “*Oser être soi-même*”³⁷, (Dare to be yourselves!), an educational tool for sex education aimed at counteracting the hypersexuality and precocious sexualisation of 12 to 17 years old youths. This tool was developed in Quebec and is now available in many French regions in Ontario.

Data for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013

Table 14 : Workshop Sexy Inc. Nos enfants sous influence.

Program	School	2011-2012		2012-2013	
		Number of workshops	Number of students	Number of workshops	Number of students
Hypersexuality (Sexy Inc.)	Académie de la Seigneurie	1	10	1	50

The fight against homophobia

Le Centre Novas also offers a workshop on sexual diversity and fight against homophobia and transphobia.

I am who I am! (Sexual orientation)

“The main goal of the kit “I am who I am” deals with the subject of homosexuality and sexual orientation of adolescents. [...] “I am who I am” also aims at developing a better awareness and promotes a better understanding of the reality of young homosexuals among their peers. The objective is also to break the isolation and help the adolescents who are dealing with their sexual orientation”³⁸ “.

³⁷ DUQUET, Francine, Geneviève GAGNON and Mylène FAUCHER (2010). “*Oser être soi-même*”: Project Empowering young people against hypersexualisation, Québec, Université du Québec in Montréal, 428p.

³⁸ LIZOTTE-DUGAY, Janice (2004). Awareness kit: *I am who I am! Sexual orientation*, Canada, Production la différence, p.6.

Awareness Programs and Human Rights Movements for Women and Girls

The Ontario Campaign: Draw-the-Line

The provincial campaign to end sexual violence in Ontario: *Draw-the-line*³⁹

Launched in May 2012, *Draw-the-line* is a campaign that aims to engage Ontarians to actively participate in eradicating sexual violence.

This interactive multimedia campaign uses concrete examples on consent, sexual harassment and sexual assault in order to encourage the public to determine how to “draw the line” to prevent any manifestation of sexual violence.

It encourages to promote understanding and prevention of sexual assault through public education and to foster more responsive and supportive environments for survivors⁴⁰.

Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes developed a video and an animated guide to help increase awareness of sexual violence in Francophone communities.

The resources take into account the special needs of Francophone women in different population groups, including ethnic communities, women living in remote communities, women living in the North, women with physical or intellectual disabilities, Aboriginal women and older women.

With the help of the awareness campaign *Draw-the-line*, Le Centre Novas made presentations in various sectors, such as:

- 4 discussion sessions at the Casselman Catholic High School (95 participants)

³⁹ DRAW-THE-LINE (2012). *User guide May 2012 - Campaign: Draw-the-line*, Ontario, 45 p.

<http://www.draw-the-line.ca/files/resources/DTL-UserGuide.pdf>

⁴⁰ GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO (2011). *Changing attitudes, changing lives: Ontario's Sexual Violence Action Plan*, March 2011, Ontario. p.5.

<http://www.women.gov.on.ca/english/resources/publications/svap2011.pdf>

The Men's March

History of the Men's March "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®"



"Frank Baird created Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® in 2001. What started out as a small group of men daring to totter around a park has grown to become a world-wide movement with tens of thousands of men raising millions of dollars for local rape crisis centers, domestic violence shelters and other sexualized violence education, prevention and remediation programs" (Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®, 2013)⁴¹.

Within this scope of engaging men in reporting violence against women, every year since 2010, Le Centre Novas organizes this activity. In 2013, the march was held in Casselman on May 4. The number of participants is steadily increasing since its inception.

In 2011-2012, 64 men, women and their families joined the Men's March, and in 2012-2013, the participants who joined the event almost doubled: 125 persons.

Each year, the march is held on the first Saturday of May to promote the Sexual Violence Awareness Month.

⁴¹ (Walk a Mile in Her Shoes®, 2013). Source: <http://www.walkamileinershoes.org/>

The Women's Walk: "Take back the Night"

History of the Women's Walk: Take back the Night



"Take back the night", commonly known under this motto, originated in 1978 when American women protested against pornography on the streets of San Francisco and at the same time launched the slogan "Take back the night!" (Reprenons la nuit!). However, an event of this type was held, at night, in Brussels, Belgium in March 1976 by the women attending the 1st International Tribunal on Crimes against Women.

In 1980, was the first time the event took place in three cities in Quebec and a dozen cities across Canada. In 1981, at the initiative of the *Regroupement québécois des Centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel (CALACS)*, the Canadian and American Rape Centres Associations, the third Friday of September became officially the annual event where women all across the continent protest against sexual violence. The following year, the event crossed the Atlantic; women took over the streets in Toulouse, France.

Then in 1985, the *Regroupement québécois des CALACS* proposes to give more flexibility to the event, to better illustrate and expand the type of activities developed regionally and to focus on the response of women rather than solely on the allegations. **"Take back the night"** becomes the day of action against violence towards women. That day is an ideal opportunity to denounce and take concrete action against violence towards women.

The third Friday of the month becomes the annual event against violence towards thousands of women in Canada, the U.S. and even Europe. However, for a greater number of participants, the walk takes place the third Wednesday of September in the counties of Prescott and Russell.

In 2013, 95 women gathered for the walk in Vankleek Hill. On September 16, 2011, the women's walk involved 200 participants in Alfred and on September 19, 2012, 125 participants in Embrun.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Hawkesbury General Hospital

General Services

The Hawkesbury General Hospital (HGH) is a 69-bed hospital that offers a vast array of inpatients and outpatients services to the community of Prescott-Russell. During 2011-2012, 36,549 persons received medical services at the HGH, 53% of those were women.

The Emergency Department is often the gateway into the medical system for the victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Throughout Ontario, these women have access to medicolegal care in 35 health centers specializing in violence. Unfortunately, the community of Prescott-Russell does not benefit from these services. Since 2010, the HGH works with community partners to empower the staff in the Emergency Department to meet the medical needs of women victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Since 2013, a clear and consistent procedure, called an algorithm, supports the physicians and nursing staff in providing medical care and referrals directed to specialized regional care centers for women and children who wish to obtain medicolegal specialist care. The persons must go to Cornwall or Ottawa to access such services.

Data for 2011-2012

In 2011-2012, 72 assaults were identified by the medical personnel. Unfortunately, the medical coding as it is currently designed, does not allow us to identify the number of victims who came to the emergency, a person could have been assaulted more than one way.

Royal-Comtois Center

Services

The Royal-Comtois Center (CRCC) represents one of the five community mental health and addiction services offered by the Hawkesbury General Hospital (HGH). At the CRCC, mental health and concomitant disorders services are offered in both languages to persons aged 16 and over residing in the counties of Prescott-Russell. There are 3 service centers, being Hawkesbury, Casselman and Rockland. The team is composed of occupational therapists, psychiatric nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists and social workers.

After applying for services, the clients participate in an assessment of needs and are referred to the appropriate department at the CRCC, or are either referred to another mental health service or addiction service offered by the HGH or to an agency in the community. The options of the CRCC are as follows: individual and group psychotherapy, psychiatric consultations and monitoring, psychopharmacology, coordination of complex cases, the Counselling Services of Prescott Russell for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault, the Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse program (since 2011), the Evaluation and Rapid Stabilization Program (since 2010) and the Youth Transition Improvement Program (since 2012). The challenges addressed include various issues such as depression, bipolar disorders, anxiety, trauma, sexual abuse, personality disorders, chronic diseases with mental health, concomitant disorders, grief, and interpersonal or related difficulties through the stages of life, and many others.

The Counselling Services of Prescott Russell for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault is a joint initiative during the 1980s funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care of Ontario and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide women of Prescott-Russell a specialized service in sexual assault. For several years, this service was the only one to serve women victims of sexual abuse until Le Centre Novas was founded. The program provides individual and group psychotherapy and participates in numerous collaborative and awareness projects within the community.

Data for 2011-2012

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the CRCC has served 1,332 persons experiencing mental health issues and/or concomitant disorders. Of these clients, 284 persons reported having problems related to domestic violence and/or sexual assault, which represents 21% of all the clients. We note that 73% of those affected by the violence are women and 70% are Francophones. During that same period, the Counselling Services

of Prescott Russell for Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault met 85 women and 6 men. Their preferred language is French at 67% and English at 33%.

Table 15 : Number of persons served in 2011-2012

Characteristics	Number
Clients who received services in mental health or concomitant disorders	1,332
Number of clients who reported having problems related to violence (domestic violence and sexual assault)	284
Sex	
Women	207
Men	77
Preferred language for services	
French	200
English	82
Other	1
Unknown	1
Number of clients who received specialized services related to sexual violence	91
Sex	
Women	85
Men	6
Preferred language for services	
French	61
English	30

Prescott-Russell Addictions Services

Services

Since 2013, the Prescott-Russell Addictions Services is part of the five community mental health and addiction services offered by the Hawkesbury General Hospital (HGH). The residents of Prescott-Russell, aged 12 years old and over, struggling with addictions or gambling problems, can receive addiction-specific treatments. Services are offered in three satellite offices: Hawkesbury, Casselman and Rockland. The team, composed of addiction therapists, supports assessment programs, referrals and intervention such as New Start, Rapid Stabilization Program, Early Childhood Development, the Supportive Housing Program, the Youth Transition Improvement Project, and the Specialized for Opiate Addiction Program, etc.

Data for 2011-2012

The PRAS served 178 people experiencing problems with addiction during the 2011-2012 fiscal year, 40% of them were women. The clientele was predominantly Francophone, being 71%.

The statistical program of the agency does not permit us to identify clients dealing specifically with problems related to violence; however, we prepared a chart showing the demographic profile of the women who accessed addiction services in 2011.

Women aged 24 and under represented a quarter of the clients of the agency. The proportion is the same for the 25-34. Women aged 35-44 years old accounted for 18% and women 45-54 years old accounted for 26%. Finally, women aged 55 and over accounted for 6% of our clients. Thirty-eight percent of the women were in an intimate relationship while 29% were single and the same percentage separated or divorced. Only 19% of the women reported having an income from employment while more than half of them were receiving government benefits. Finally, 12% reported having no income.

Table 16 : Number of persons served in 2011-2012

Characteristics	Number
Clients who received services in addiction services	178
Sex	
Women	72
Men	106
Preferred language for services	
French	126
English	52
Status	
Married	27
Single	21
Separated or divorced	21
Unknown	3
Source of income	
Employment	14
Government benefits	40
None	9
Other or unknown	6
Age (percentage)	
12-24 year	24 %
25-34 years	25 %
35-44 years	18 %
45-54 years	26 %
55 years and +	6 %

Canadian Mental Health Association (East Champlain branch)

The Canadian Mental Health Association is a voluntary nation-wide organization that promotes the mental health for all and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness. The CMHA accomplishes this mission through advocacy, education, research and service.

Services

The CMHA programs include various aspects including employment, housing, early intervention for youth, peer support, recreation services, stress reduction workshops and public education campaigns.

In addition, the CMHA acts as an advocate to encourage the public to take the necessary measures to improve mental health community services as well as the laws and policies that impact on these services. All our mental health projects are based on the principles of autonomy, peer and family support, involvement in the decision-making process, citizenship and inclusion in community life.

Data

No data is available for this research.

Telephone Help Lines

Fem'aide Telephone Help Line for Francophone Women

Services

Fem'aide is a 24-hour crisis line for Francophone women seeking support, active listening, and intervention. Fem'Aide is a local and provincial line and it is operated by the Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre, Maison d'amitié and with service centers in Toronto (Oasis) and Sudbury.

Data for 2011-2012

The data shown in Table 17 indicates the reasons of the calls from the women of the counties of Prescott-Russell.

**Table 17 : Statistics data on the number of calls on the crisis line in regards to sexual abuse
Fem'aide Crisis Line: Counties of Prescott-Russell (April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012)**

Type of abuse experienced	Total number for the counties
Sexual abuse	644
The person didn't want to talk about it	34
Other violence issues	421
Several situations of violence	55
Gender violence (domestic, dating)	21
Total number of calls	1,175

Assaulted Women's Helpline for Anglophone and Allophone Women

The Assaulted Women's Helpline (Toronto) is a provincial emergency crisis line that assists Anglophone and Allophone women. <http://www.awhl.org/>

Services

This crisis line offers services 7 days a week, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year in 154 languages.

Data for 2011-2012

Each year, this crisis line responds to 49,000 calls in Ontario. Since its creation in 1985, 729,000 calls have been received.

The statistics for the fiscal year ends on March 31, 2012 for the AWHL, but they do not clearly show the number of calls by specific region, or the reasons for these calls.

Table 18 : Calls received according to the area code

30 %	905 (toll free line)
26 %	519
23 %	613
15 %	705
5 %	807
1 %	Out of province

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: REALITIES AND DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Different studies on domestic violence and sexual assault demonstrate that all women are at risk of becoming victims of various types of violence. Thus, violence affects all women regardless of their age, their ethnic origin, their language, their culture, their race, their national origin, their religious beliefs, their sexual orientation, their economic status or even their place of residence.

However, we must take into account that the situation of women differs depending of the area where they live and according to the resources that are available to them.

In this report, it is not possible from the data provided to assess the status of violence against women in all its diversity. Certain groups of women experience multiple barriers and intersecting oppressions may not have been thoroughly accounted for in this report. Thus, the realities of older women, women with disabilities, immigrant women, women of colour, lesbian or transgender women and Aboriginal women are less documented.

Moreover, it appears that certain groups of women are under-reported in the United Counties, with regards to the numbers or the percentage; as is the case for immigrant and refugee women (1,565 women in 2006 or 4% of the female population in Prescott-Russell) and Aboriginal women (665 women in 2006 or 1.7% of the female population in Prescott-Russell). More precisely, for Aboriginal women, few of them identify themselves as such in the organizations. As for immigrant women, they do not seem to access the resources in great numbers.

Furthermore, the cases of older women and women living with limitations are hereafter documented.

The point of view of the interveners of Prescott-Russell
Specific groups of women are 2 or even 3 times more vulnerable
<i>Particular groups, older women, women with disabilities, lesbians and transgender women are more affected in rural communities, whether they live in a context of domestic violence or sexual violence. They are victimized 2 or even 3 times more often.</i>
The challenges
<i>The challenges are the same with regards to transportation, access, security, confidentiality, but as they are two and even three times more victimized, they are very visible. They become the center of attention which in itself, further victimizes what they are experiencing.</i>

Less women in rural areas... less services

<i>In urban areas, as the number of women going through the same difficulties or situations is greater, specific groups can be created, but in rural areas, it is not quite possible.</i>

Violence Against Older Persons

Highlights on the Research and the Point of Views of the Interveners of Prescott-Russell

Violence against older persons is a particular reality if one refers to the researcher Lise Montmigny (2009)⁴². They are faced with particular difficulties and are reluctant in seeking help. This could be the reason why they are not well documented in the data that we have collected even though they constitute a significant portion of the population in the counties.

It is also difficult to recognize violence against older women whether in a domestic or a sexual situation, because

- People may associate the behavior of the spouse to all kinds of problems related to aging (the woman's loss of physical autonomy, for example).
- These women are often embarrassed to talk about violence, because they may give importance to the institution of marriage, loyalty to the spouse, the family and the religious context.

Sexual violence against older women: A hidden reality
--

In 2009, <i>Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes</i> conducted a study related to the realities of sexual violence experienced by women aged 60 and over ⁴³ .

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ "18% of women raped each year are sixty years of age or older". (p.13);➤ "Approximately 12.2% of elder sexual abuse victims were assaulted within their own home; 2.4% in a nursing home; 70.7% in a long-term care facility; and 14.6% in the sexual offender home". (p.13);➤ "A study involving 94 women in shelters for abused women in Quebec reported that 26.6% of them were also sexually abused by their spouses". (p.13) |
|---|

Older women with limitations are even more vulnerable
--

"According to the study conducted by <i>Action ontarienne</i> (2009), older women who have functional limitations of language, cognition or other, are extremely vulnerable to such victimization". (p.13)
--

⁴² CENTRE DE RECHERCHE INTERDISCIPLINAIRE SUR LA VIOLENCE FAMILIALE ET LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES (CRI-VIFF), *La violence en contexte conjugal chez les personnes âgées : une réalité particulière. [in French only]*
http://www.criviff.qc.ca/upload/publications/pub_24102012_131115.pdf

⁴³ ACTION ONTARIENNE CONTRE LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMME (2009). *La violence faite aux femmes âgées francophones. Une problématique à cerner, des services en français à offrir.* Report prepared by Françoise CHARRON with the collaboration of Marie-Luce GARCEAU and Johanne OUIMETTE. [in French only]
http://aocvf.ca/documents/Une_problematique_a_cerner_web.pdf

Resources and Programs

Promising initiatives:

Since 2012, Le Centre Novas offers a program of eight sessions for Francophone women aged 65 years and over (available in homes or in a community setting).

Le Centre Novas is working towards developing self-defense sessions (personal safety) for women aged 60 and over, including women with disabilities.

Education and Awareness Group for Women of 65 years old and over

This initiative was developed by *Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes* (Johanne Ouimette) resulting from a request by several organizations focussing on women's needs. Services are increasingly in demand by women over 60 years old, which reflects the social phenomenon of the aging population. With this purpose in mind, we wanted to offer services that met the specific needs of these persons.

This group has been a useful tool with a huge successful outcome with regard to prevention and awareness. In 2014, Le Centre Novas intends to offer this program at least twice a year in different geographical communities.

INSTINCTS POUR TOUTES

The objective of this program is to “create a society of women without fear, confident and able to defend themselves and the right to live free from violence and the threat of any type of violence.”

With the assistance of a personal safety program tested and designed specifically to their needs, Le Centre Novas will offer sessions to the community of Prescott-Russell, to educate different groups of women, often forgotten, how to avoid an assault and give them techniques to defend themselves in countless ways.

The targeted groups are for women aged 60 years and over and women with disabilities. These women are even more vulnerable because they often have to rely on others for health care or assistance.

The program will enable them to identify situations of potential violence, to acquire knowledge and to assert their rights in a simple yet powerful accessible way to fight back.

Women with Disabilities and Violence

Highlights on the Research

Highlights in Canada
<i>A Profile of Victimization Among Persons with Activity Limitations or Other Health Problems in Canada</i> ⁴⁴
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ In 2004, rate of violent victimization, including sexual assault, robbery and physical assault, was 2 times higher for persons with activity limitations than for persons without limitations. (p.6)➤ Persons with activity limitations were 2 to 3 times more likely to be victims of the most severe forms of spousal violence, such as being sexually assaulted, beaten, struck or threatened with a weapon. (p.6)
<i>Persons with activity limitations are more vulnerable in numerous situations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ “In general, persons with disabilities are poor and have limited access to basic necessities such as food, acceptable and affordable housing. Living with a disability results in additional costs in terms of physical accessibility and health care”. (AOcVF 2007, p.13)⁴⁵
<i>Women with activity limitations makes them the most vulnerable women in Canada exposed to greater risks</i>
<p>The organization DAWN-RAFH⁴⁶, an organization that works towards the advancement and inclusion of women and girls with disabilities, prepared a factsheet on the key research findings regarding the many aspects of the vulnerability of women with disabilities. The following conclusions emerged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ “A DAWN-RAFH Canada study found that although 1 out of 5 of all Canadian women lives with a disability, 40% of respondents had experienced some form of violence in their lives.➤ Another study indicated that 60% of women with disabilities are likely to experience some form of violence in the course of their adult lives.➤ Considering all violent crimes, including those committed by spouses, a Canadian study shows 51% of women with activity limitations had been victims of more than one violent crime during the 12 preceding months compared to 36% of women without limitation.➤ Disabled women are at risk of violence in many forms – neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse and financial exploitation”. (p. 2)

⁴⁴ STATISTICS CANADA (2009). Criminal Victimization and Health: A Profile of Victimization Among Persons with Activity Limitations or Other Health Problems by Samuel PERREAULT.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85f0033m/85f0033m2009021-eng.pdf>

⁴⁵ ACTION ONTARIENNE CONTRE LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES (2007). *L'intégration des femmes d'expression française ayant un handicap : les meilleures pratiques*. Research Report by Johanne OUIMETTE and Nicole SOUCY.

[in French only] http://aocvf.ca/documents/Rapport_final_femmes_handicapees_2007_sec.pdf

⁴⁶ DAWN-RAFH CANADA. *Women with disabilities and Violence*. Accessed on January 13, 2014.

<http://www.dawncanada.net/main/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/English-Violence-January-2014.pdf>

Barriers to reporting abuse

According to a study prepared in 2007 by *Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes*, it is stated that there are various barriers that specifically affect women with disabilities to reporting abuse they are experiencing. Violence against women with disabilities shares common characteristics with violence against women in general. However, there are various barriers that specifically affect women with disabilities such as:

- The fear that they might not be believed;
- If she is a member of a Deaf or religious community, she may be afraid of being expelled from the group and thus lose the main source of support. (p. 19-20)
- “Threats from the abuser may prevent women from reporting the violence”. (p. 20)
- “The difficulty in claiming their rights or even recognizing their rights”. (p. 20)

Services

Le Phénix

The organization **Le Phénix** located in Alfred has a provincial mandate to represent Francophone persons with disabilities and, more broadly, is “the representative of the disabled person in regard to accessibility, integration, training and elimination of barriers”.⁴⁷

Le Phénix, in a pamphlet regarding violence against persons with disabilities, entitled “**C’est assez!**”⁴⁸ (It’s enough!), offers courses of action for both the handicapped women victims of violence, and for the organizations that provide services.

And specifically for the women, Le Phénix proposes:

Facing your fears

- Fear of losing custody of the children, breaking up the family
- Fear of losing financial support
- Fear of losing specific services
- Fear of being considered demanding, to contribute to social prejudices
- Fear of not being believed
- Fear of being humiliated, ashamed
- Fear of the unknown

And for the organizations

- Be accessible with regards to the infrastructures
- Prepare preventive courses while bearing in mind the needs of handicapped persons
- Establish an intervention procedure adapted to the needs of the women according to their different types of limitation
- Believe the persons with disabilities and take their word

⁴⁷ LE PHÉNIX : <http://www.lephenix.on.ca/>

⁴⁸ LE PHÉNIX. *La violence envers les personnes handicapées. C’est assez !* Le Phénix. Alfred (Ontario) 2009. [in French only]

SNAPSHOT

For this phase of the project, we designed a questionnaire to be completed by the women who accessed the resources of different member organizations of the Coalition.

The main tool for this research was adapted from the Snapshot Research Project (*Snapshot*) created by the Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women which ran from September/October 2010⁴⁹. The initial tool was used for a period of five consecutive days, from Monday, September 27 to Friday, October 1, 2010. The questionnaires were used in eight agencies in Ottawa, participating member agencies of the Coalition. A total of 128 persons⁵⁰ completed the questionnaire.

The goals of the Snapshot data collection project were to:

- Provide a more comprehensive profile of the women being served by member organizations of the Coalition;
- Better understand how the women of Prescott-Russell respond to violent incidents and the services they contact for support;
- Identify the demographic profile of women being served to highlight potential barriers some women face in obtaining services and supports.⁵¹

The Coalition of Prescott-Russell to end violence towards women asked member organizations to complete a questionnaire for each client they served during the data collection period. This questionnaire was completed by an intervener duly trained by the Coalition. But unlike the data collected in Ottawa, the timeframe was adapted to the realities of each of the participating agencies. Thus, the length of time for the data collection was a week for Interlude House, but a 24-hour period for the Hawkesbury General Hospital, or three days for Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell or for Ontario Works.

The questionnaire created by the members of the Coalition is attached hereto as Annex 3.

⁴⁹ OTTAWA COALITION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (2011). *Hidden from Sight, Volume II: A Profile of Violence Against Women in Ottawa*. OCTEVAW.

⁵⁰ In the research project in Ottawa, women, children and men participated in the data collection since the *New Directions* program was a selected program.

⁵¹ COALITION 2011, p.31

In addition, we wanted to better understand the situation of women who have experienced situations of violence in the counties of Prescott-Russell. Therefore, the survey was undertaken by all the member organizations of the Coalition. Thus, the mental health services, such as the Royal Comtois Centre, the Hawkesbury General Hospital or the welfare offices participated in this survey. And undeniably, the participants reported present or past violence abuse in all member organizations of the Coalition.

The profile presented herein is a description of women who, at one time or another in their lives, experienced violence. Some of them asked for help and found it; others made no request for assistance, because resources may not have been available at that time or they feared not to be believed. Without any doubt, domestic violence and sexual violence outside the marital context are frequent forms of violence for the women who access health and social services in the counties of Prescott-Russell.

However, this profile was measured in one point in time, with an interesting instrument, a pilot project, but similar to any other findings, any generalization or extrapolation is impossible.

The original sample consisted of 120 participants. Out of these 120 participants, 100 (82.6%) reported having experienced one or more forms of violence. The statistics presented herein were produced solely according to the information provided by these 100 participants who identified having experienced one or more forms of violence.

In the first part, we presented the sociodemographic profile of the findings, with the usual characteristics, such as the age, the family and economic situation as well as housing and education. When data collection was available, we compared this profile with the 2011 Census of Canada for the communities of Prescott-Russell.

In the second part, we documented on the many types of violence that women experienced. And when it was possible, we made parallel comparison with the statistics from the Canadian Community Surveys regarding violence against women.

Finally, we analyzed the third part of the questionnaire, such as the last incident of violence, the relationship with the abuser and the assistance/support sought during their latest episode of violence, in a more thorough and detailed method.

Sociodemographic Data

Age

The participants ranged from 16-74 years of age. The group of 25-34 years old and the group of 35-44 years old represent approximately one-third or slightly less of the total (Table 19).

Attention should be given to a particular age group, the 25-34 years old. In 2011, in the counties of Prescott-Russell, the percentage of women in this age group is 10.5%, but herein is reported at 29.6%, a significant overrepresentation. This is a very vulnerable group, but also a group that access more services.

This vulnerability is also documented in the 2009 Statistics Canada survey. Thus, according to this survey “Canadians aged 25 to 34 were three times more likely than those aged 45 and over to say they were abused physically or sexually abused by their partner during the previous 12 months”.⁵²

Table 19 : Number of women served by age category

Age Group	Number of women	%
17-24	10	10.2
25-29	8	8.2
30-34	21	21.4
35-39	11	11.2
40-44	14	14.3
45-49	13	13.3
50-54	12	12.2
55-59	5	5.1
60-64	0	0.0
65-69	3	3.1
70-74	1	1.0
Total	98	100.0

⁵² Women aged 25 to 34 were most at risk (Chart 2.2).

Chart 2.2. Victims of police-reported violent crime, by sex and age group of victim, Statistics Canada, 2011.
Measuring Violence Against Women, (2013b) Table [1.6](#)

Language

The majority of participants spoke French (73.7%). And if we include those who reported their mother tongue as both French and English (8.1%), then the result indicates that 81.8% of the survey participants have French as their mother tongue (Table 20).

Less than 20% of the respondents report English as their mother tongue, but this number increases to 24.3% when we take into consideration those that indicated French and English.

Respondents who reported French as their mother tongue are slightly more present than other women in the region. Thus, 66% of women in Prescott-Russell report French as their mother tongue.

Table 20 : Mother tongue

Mother tongue	Number of persons	%
French	73	73.7
English	18	18.2
French and English	8	8.1
Total	99	100.0

Moreover, considering the respondents' preferred language to obtain services, a variation is seen between the mother tongue and the preferred language. In fact, more respondents indicated a preference to receive services in English than the percentage of women who reported French as their mother tongue. This number estimates that a number of Francophones prefer to receive services in English (Table 21).

One can also note that no mother tongue has been reported by the survey respondents other than French and English.

However, in Prescott-Russell in 2011, it is estimated that 1,210 women, nearly 3% have a non-official native language in Canada. Moreover, these data also indicate that fewer than 30 women do not speak neither French nor English.

Table 21 : Preferred language for the services

Language	Number of persons	%
French	53	53.0
English	37	37.0
French and English	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

Origin

The vast majority of participants (97.9%) were Canadian citizens. All of the participants except one person reported being Canadian citizens (99/100).

Among the participants, less than 10% (8.1%) reported belonging to a visible minority group, and 3% reported being Aboriginal.

Location of Residence

Almost half of the respondents reside in Hawkesbury and slightly less than a quarter in L'Orignal and surrounding area. Others are almost evenly distributed in rural areas and Rockland (Table 22).

Table 22 : Distribution of clients served by first three digits of home postal code

Postal code	Approximate area	Number of persons	%
K6A	Hawkesbury and surrounding area	43	43.0
K0B	L'Orignal and surrounding area	22	22.0
K0A	Rural - Region of the National Capital	17	17.0
K4K	Rockland	10	10.0
Others		8	8.0
Total		100	100.0

Marital and Family Characteristics

Among the respondents, slightly more than 40% are single. This is a significant proportion⁵³. And 24.2% of the women are either married or common law spouse (Table 23).

These findings also indicate that nearly one third of the responders are separated or divorced (29.3%).

And predominantly, respondents identified to be heterosexuals (93%).

⁵³ It is not really possible to compare this data with the official data from Statistics Canada as the definitions of the terms vary greatly from one census to another and even with the definitions of individuals. For Statistics Canada, the term single means, never legally married nor cohabiting in common-law by default, while for many individuals, it can be a temporary status.

Table 23 : Marital status

Marital status	Number of persons	%
Single	42	42.4
Separated/Divorced	29	29.3
Married	12	12.1
Common-law	12	12.1
Widowed	4	4.0
Total	99	100.0

However, this does not mean that women live alone. In fact, 40% of them live alone with children and 23% are couples with or without children (Table 24).

Table 24 : Living arrangements

Living arrangements	Number of persons	%
With parents	7	7.0
Alone (self)	30	30.0
Alone with child or children	40	40.0
Couple with child or children	15	15.0
Couple without children	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

The classification of the family conditions are very different in comparison to the family structure in the regional data that indicate that the majority of family structure consists of couples (86.8%).

In fact, data from the 2011 Census of Population in Prescott-Russell counted 25,535 census families, including 2,485 female lone-parent families or 9.7%. Thus, the predominant family structure in Prescott-Russell in 2011 consists of couples, either married couples (66.9%) or common-law couples (19.9%)⁵⁴.

These data also indicate that female lone-parent families are a minority in the county, which can be a potential source of social marginalization in a fairly homogeneous medium on the family structure.

Among women who have children living with them, about a third of them have one, but more than half of them have two children and 12% have three or more (Table 25).

⁵⁴ Data 2011 - 17075/25535 and 5080/25535.

Table 25 : Number of children residing with participants

Number of children	Number of persons	%
0	44	44.9
1	20	20.4
2	22	22.4
3	7	7.1
4	5	5.1
Total	98	100.0

Current Living Arrangements

The majority of respondents are tenants (79%) and 21% are homeowners. Rental housing are varied, mainly dwellings or social housing. Some are renting, others live with their parents (especially the fact that the girls are under 18 years) or are renting with others (Table 26).

We may consider that this is a complete reversal of the general trend in the counties of Prescott-Russell. In fact, in 2006, in the United Counties, residents lived in a house they owned in a proportion of 79%⁵⁵.

Table 26 : Current living arrangements

Living arrangements	Number of persons	%
Owner	21	21,0
Rent	57	57,0
With parents	7	7,0
Social housing	6	6,0
Rent (with others)	5	5,0
Other	3	3,0
Room	1	1,0
Total	100	100,0

Income

Slightly over 40% of women work outside the home, but more than half of the women did not work (Table 27). Women work equally full-time and part-time.

⁵⁵ 23750/30090 occupied dwellings – 2006 Census.

Table 27 : Employment outside the home

Employment outside the home	Number of persons	%
No	57	57.0
Yes	43	43.0
Total	100	100.0

The main source of income for these respondents is government transfers, such as employment insurance benefits, pensions, social assistance or student loans (Table 28).

Table 28 : Main source of income

Main source of income	Number of persons	%
Government transfers	47	50.0
Paid employment	30	31.9
Other	17	18.1
Total	94	100.0

For a great number of the respondents, their incomes are considered low or very low. Thirty percent of them have \$ 10,000 or less per year and 35% between \$ 10,000 and \$ 22,000 annually (Table 29).

Table 29 : Income

Breakdown of income	Number of persons	%
Less than \$9,999/per year	28	29.5
Between \$10,000\$ and \$21,999/ per year	33	34.7
Between \$22,000 and \$44,999/ per year	14	14.7
Greater than \$45,000/per year	15	15.8
Refuses to answer	5	5.3
Total	95	100.0

The situation of single mothers is rather critical since 28% of them have less than \$ 10,000 per year and 38% between \$ 10,000 and \$ 22,000.

The situation of single women is also critical since a third of them have less than \$ 10,000 (Table 30).

Table 30 : Income revenues by female lone-single parent

Breakdown of income	Alone Number of persons	Alone with child or children Number of persons	Total
Less than \$9,999/per year	10	11	21
Between \$10, 000 and \$21,999/per year	11	15	26
Between \$22,000 and \$44,999/per year	3	4	7
Greater than \$45,000/per year	4	8	12
Refuses to answer	2	2	4
Total	30	40	70

It is difficult to compare these incomes with the after-tax low income cut-offs since a component of personal data is missing. However, we have to keep in mind that the after-tax low income range in rural Canada in 2007 was \$ 14,914 for one person, \$ 18,567 for two persons and \$ 22,826 for three persons⁵⁶.

If these amounts in 2007 were already classified by Statistics Canada as low income cut-offs, in 2013, they should be considered as well below the low income cut-offs, knowing that 64.2% of the respondents have less than \$ 22,000 per year as an income (Table 29).

Education

The majority of respondents have completed secondary school and over 30% have completed postsecondary education (College 23% and University 7%) (Table 31).

However, when we consider a more specific group, the young women aged 25 to 34 years, 28% of the young girls have completed postsecondary education (Table 32) compared to 63% of the same women age group in Prescott-Russell Census, as indicated in the 2006 Census.

Table 31 : Highest level of education completed

Highest level of education	Number of persons	%
Secondary school not completed	29	29.0
Secondary school completed	26	26.0
College diploma not completed	13	13.0
College diploma completed	23	23.0
University diploma not completed	2	2.0
University diploma completed	7	7.0
Total	100	100.0

⁵⁶ Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2008004-eng.pdf>

Table 32 : Highest level of education completed according to two age groups

Highest level of education	25 to 34 years Number of persons	35 to 64 years Number of persons	Total
Secondary school not completed	8	12	20
Secondary school completed	8	14	22
College diploma not completed	5	8	13
College diploma completed	7	14	21
University diploma not completed	1	0	1
University diploma completed	0	7	7
Total	29	55	84

However, it is necessary to explain before we proceed, that despite difficult or precarious economic conditions under which the survey respondents live, we can not conclude that the conditions of poverty are the main reason for the violence they experienced.

Canadian data also allow us to conclude that sociodemographic factors such as the household income and the education level had little impact on being a victim of domestic violence. Thus, victims and perpetrators of domestic violence were not more likely to be university graduates than school dropouts.

Regardless of whether Canadians belonged to the upper or lower category of household income, the proportion of victims of domestic violence was between 1% and 2%⁵⁷.

Types of Violence Experienced

We wanted to document the types of violence experienced by women whether in the last year or in their past.

Before proceeding any further, we will describe each form of violence that we wanted to document⁵⁸:

“Spousal violence refers to physical or sexual violence or psychological or financial abuse within current or former marital or common-law relationships, including same-sex spousal relationships.

⁵⁷ Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/2010000/t006-eng.htm>

⁵⁸ Source: Federal - Provincial - Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women 2002. *Assessing Violence Against Women: A Statistical Profile*: p.3. http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/iws_stat_profil.pdf

Verbal violence is usually a result of psychological abuse; it consists of sarcasm, insults, screams, degrading and humiliating remarks, blackmail, threats or orders abruptly given. Verbal harassment often escalates to physical violence, creates insecurity or fear and prevents the spouse to escape from the situation.

Psychological violence consists in downgrading the other person; it includes attitudes and derogatory insults, humiliation, put-downs, blackmail or it may also take the form of isolation imposed by the man who, often motivated by jealousy, limits his wife to socialize or limits her comings and goings outside the house.

Physical violence asserts the power of the perpetrator; it is manifested by beatings, injuries of all kinds, ranging from pushing, burning, biting, fracture and even murder. Physical abuse is often concealed as accidents.

Financial or economic abuse occurs when the spouse:

- forbids her to work,
- controls her choice of work,
- prevents her from becoming or remaining financially independent,
- denies her any access to resources or financially exploits her.

Sexual violence infringes the sexual integrity of the women who suffers from it.

- It encompasses sexuality itself, in that it aims to dominate the other person in her most personal intimacy.
- It ranges from sexual assault, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, brutality and abuse for non-consensual or forced sexual activity. Several women consent to sexual intercourse in the hope of maintaining peace and prevent violence.

A woman is a victim of **spiritual violence** when:

- she is forbidden to participate in religious or spiritual practices of her choice,
- or by making fun of her spiritual values and beliefs,
- or invoking religious beliefs to justify control over her.

The different types of domestic violence, presented above, show the common pattern of the various forms of domestic violence. This pattern is recognized as the escalation of domestic violence. The signs of violence are generally progressive, in a very subtle way and almost inevitably increases.

For some couples, the violence begins with punches and pinching, for others, it remains psychological or verbal abuse. However, in most cases, the violence worsens over time. The entire cycle of escalation can be fast and may happen in a day, or it may take months or even years.

It should be noted that during the escalation of domestic violence, the previous form of violence does not disappear when the stage of violence escalates.

All forms of domestic violence may not necessarily be experienced by a woman during the escalation, or physical violence may appear before verbal abuse for some women and economic violence for others, generally, during the escalation of violence, the types of violence are linked in a cycle that, for some women, is endless⁵⁹.

Taking into consideration that the respondents participating in our analysis had indicated that they had experienced one or more type of violence, it is evident that domestic violence is one of the most common forms of violence as there is self-declaration of 84% of domestic violence. Moreover, this form of violence is still present for 60% of them (Table 33).

Table 33 : Type of violence experienced by women

	In the last year		In the past	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Domestic Violence	60	60.0	84	84.0
Verbal Violence	55	55.0	76	76.0
Psychological/Emotional Violence	54	54.0	72	72.0
Physical Violence	28	28.0	55	55.0
Sexual Violence	19	19.0	46	46.0
Financial Violence	31	31.0	48	48.0
Spiritual Violence	11	11.0	14	14.0
	In the last year		In the past	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Dating Violence (25 years old and less)	10	10.0	43	43.0
	In the last year		In the past	
	Number of persons	%	Number of persons	%
Sexual Violence	15	15.0	54	54.0
During my childhood	4	4.0	42	42.0
During my adult life	15	15.0	35	35.0

⁵⁹ The cycle of violence generally consists of four phases: tension, abuse, justification and reconciliation.

Source: PRUD'HOMME, Diane (2011). *La violence conjugale : quand la victimisation prend des allures de dépendance affective! Reflets : revue d'intervention sociale et communautaire*, vol. 17, n° 1, 2011, p. 180-190. : p.181. (available in French only)

Therefore, we can note that in domestic violence, more women have experienced in the last year situations of verbal abuse (55%) and psychological/emotional violence in almost the same proportions (54%). However, the type of violence which is the most widely recognized among the public and is associated with domestic violence, is physical violence, although it is less present among respondents, or 28%. It is a form of violence that is usually added to the other two forms and which subsequently follows these forms in the escalation of violence for nearly a third of them.

This form of violence was however an unavoidable situation at a certain time of their life as, for more than half of the respondents (55%), it is a type of violence they experienced within the family and conjugal context (table 33).

Although it is very difficult to compare the data collected by the 2009 General Social Survey on Victimization in Canada (the most recent survey), it appears that the manifestations of physical violence are, in general, frequent for Canadian women. Below are some of the forms of physical violence they have experienced:

- 34% declared that they have been sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a gun or knife by their partner or ex-partner in the previous five years;
- 38% were pushed, grabbed, shoved or slapped;
- 14% were kicked, bit, slap or hit with something;
- 15% were threatened to hit, threw something.

Source: Statistics Canada 2011a p.10⁶⁰

A less common form of domestic violence is economic violence. However, it is reported by nearly half of the respondents when discussing a situation of domestic violence in the past. And it is still present for 31% of them since they reported this form of violence in the past year.

It is difficult to find Canadian statistics data to identify the prevalence of financial abuse in domestic violence. As it is not considered a crime, it is even more difficult to report it. However, for the purposes of this report, the data used is sufficiently reliable or comparable. The data itself results from the statements of Canadian women who have sought refuge in shelters and who specified the reasons for which they accessed the shelters.

In the following table, financial abuse was the reason cited for 39% of the women, data which is mostly comparable, but inferior to the percentage of the women who reported the survey data relating to their past (Table 34).

⁶⁰ STATISTICS CANADA (2011a). Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile. Chart 1.2, p.10.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2010000-eng.pdf>

**Table 34 : Reasons women seek shelter,
Canada, April 15, 2010**

Reasons	Women living in shelters	
	Number	Percentage
Emotional abuse	2,998	66.0
Physical abuse	2,440	53.0
Threats	1,809	40.0
Financial abuse	1,791	39.0
Harassment	1,259	28.0
Sexual abuse	1,139	25.0

Source: Statistics Canada 2011b p.24⁶¹.

A form of domestic violence which has been recognized later, but which is very present for the respondents, is spiritual abuse. In fact, it is reported by 11% of the women with little variation between their past and the last year.

Domestic violence as previously mentioned is experienced in a cycle where various forms of violence are linked.

Thus, at least half of all the women have experienced in the last year, at least two forms of violence, being verbal abuse and psychological/emotional violence. And this percentage reached nearly two-thirds of the respondents when they referred to their past (Table 33).

Moreover, half of them experienced three forms: verbal, psychological and physical violence in their past.

And, more than a quarter (27%) of women who experienced in the past five (5) forms adding sexual and economic violence to the other three forms (Table 35). We can rightly say that it is the escalation of violence.

⁶¹ STATISTICS CANADA (2011b). *Shelters for abused women in Canada, 2010, Juristat*, Table 6, p.24.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2011001/article/11495-eng.pdf>

Table 35 : Types of multiple violence

	Last year	History
	Number of persons	Number of persons
Verbal, Psychological/Emotional	51	68
Verbal, Psychological/Emotional, Physical	25	48
Verbal, Psychological/Emotional, Physical, Sexual	9	34
Verbal, Psychological/Emotional, Physical, Sexual, Financial	7	27
Verbal, Psychological/Emotional, Physical, Sexual, Financial, Spiritual	5	11

In this survey, sexual violence is frequently mentioned. It includes many different forms. Sexual violence can be committed within marriage or dating relationships, or be referred as sexual abuse in the childhood.

Furthermore, in the domestic context, in the past for 46% of the respondents or in the last year, for 19% of the respondents, they have experienced sexual violence. It is also present in a non-domestic context, in the past of 35% of the respondents. And finally, in the childhood, sexual abuse by a family member or a friend or a person in authority for 42% of the respondents.

Moreover, in our survey, for several of the respondents, these sexual assaults occurred at different times in their life, and they have experienced multiple episodes, from childhood to adulthood and in their domestic relationship.

These data are quite dramatic, and it is estimated that this is only the tip of the iceberg, since in fact, sexual violence or sexual assault are often under-reported. Undeniably, for your information, we should point out that the synthesized information by the Legal and Social Affairs Division in its newsletter *Hillnotes* highlights this under-reporting concern.

The 2009 General Social Survey (GSS) data showed that 53% of women aged 15 and older who reported being sexually assaulted by their husband or partner in the past 12 months said that the police were notified. This compares with 10% of cases involving non-spouses.⁶²

It also indicate several reasons to explain this under-reporting, such as shame, fear of not being believed or lack of confidence in the police and judicial systems.

⁶² LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS (2013). *Under-Reporting and Low Conviction Rates for Sexual Assault*, Legal and Social Affairs Division, by Julia NICOL, April 17, 2013. Hillnotes n° 2013-16-F. <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2013-16-e.htm>

Victims gave various explanations for not seeking police assistance. Some cited shame, fear of reprisals, and fear of not being believed or of being blamed for what happened. Some felt that the situation was not important enough, or that it was a personal matter. Some also felt the police or court system could not or would not do anything⁶³.

Source: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2013-16-e.htm>

This lack of confidence in the judicial system is however confirmed by the very high number of unfounded complaints. A dual standard system for this type of crime that affects even the credibility of the victim is involved.

Within seven police services in Ontario⁶⁴, 2 to 34% of sexual assault complaints were deemed unfounded. Regardless of the percentage, the rate was significantly higher in the case of sexual assault, compared with any other crime in the six police services that had comparative data.

Studies show that victims may seem less credible in situations that do not correspond to the stereotype of sexual assault, such as a violent act committed by a stranger against a "virtuous" woman who strongly resisted. With regards to sexual abuse in the childhood, the survey data are very high. Considering that this crime is often under-reported to the police or protective services for children, the estimates are very difficult⁶⁵.

For instance, an Ontario study showed that only 8% of sexual assault victims had reported the incident to youth protection services (MacMillan et al., 2003). Therefore, it is difficult to accurately estimate the actual number of victims of sexual assault in a society, as well as the annual fluctuations in the incidence rate of this problem. Source: <http://revasquebec.org/fr/documents/augrecenteincidasq.pdf>

A small number of such abuses are reported to the police, but they are mostly girls who are victims, regardless of their age.

In 2009, the rate of sexual offences by family members that came to the attention of police was four times higher for girls than boys. Higher rates of sexual victimization against girls held true regardless of the victim's age⁶⁶.

⁶³ LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS (2013). *Under-Reporting and Low Conviction Rates for Sexual Assault*, Legal and Social Affairs Division, by Julia NICOL, April 17, 2013. Hillnotes n° 2013-16-F.

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2013-16-e.htm>

⁶⁴ Rates of "unfounding," the finding by police that no crime took place, vary significantly across jurisdictions for sexual assault complaints and have been criticized for being unreliable.

Source: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/2013-16-e.htm>

⁶⁵ Approximately one in 10 men (9.7%) and nearly one in four women (22.1%) in Quebec in 2006 reported having experienced at least one incident of sexual abuse with contact before age 18, representing 16% of the Quebec population. In 2008, 43 cases per 100,000 children across Canada.[unofficial translation]: [ÉIQ-2008, ÉCI-2008](#) (available in French only)

⁶⁶ 113 compared to 28 for 100 000 child and youth victims (Table 2.3).

Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2010000-eng.pdf>

Last episode of violence

In the survey, we interviewed women at a greater length on the last incident of violence they had experienced.

Types of violence

We can observe that the forms of domestic violence of the last incident are different when the violence is in a recent past, more than a year than in the past. In particular, sexual violence is less present as well as physical violence (Table 36).

The latest episode of violence that we will further document permits to better understand the relationship with the abuser as well as the services they have accessed to seek help but also to get to safety.

**Table 36 : Last incident of violence –
Types of violence experienced and time of the event**

	Actual	Last Year	History
	Number of persons	Number of persons	Number of persons
Verbal Violence	8	19	18
Psychological/Emotional Violence	6	25	16
Physical Violence	3	10	18
Sexual Violence	3	7	14
Financial Violence	0	1	9
Spiritual Violence	0	1	2

First of all, the perpetrator was most often an ex-spouse, an ex-husband or an ex-boyfriend or 41.6% (Table 37). These data are consistent with the fact that the majority of women are unmarried at the time of the investigation and that the majority of the respondents refer to an episode of more than 30 days or more than a year.

However, for more than a third of the women, the abuser is a spouse, a friend or a current partner.

Table 37 : Relationship with the abuser during the last incident

	Number of persons	%
Ex-common-law partner	24	25.0
Current boyfriend	17	17.7
Current common-law partner	12	12.5
Ex-husband	8	8.3
Ex-boyfriend	8	8.3
Current husband	7	7.3
Member of the family	7	7.3
Friend	7	7.3
Other	4	4.2
Parent	1	1.0
Unknown	1	1.0
Total	96	100.0

When the respondents describe the latest episode of violence, and the relationship with the abuser, they also had to mention if he had a history of violence. More than half of the women reported that their abuser had a history of violent behavior (Table 38).

Table 38 : The abuser has a history of violent/abusive behaviour

History of violence	Number of persons	%
Yes	53	53.0
No	34	34.0
N/a	13	13.0
Total	100	100.0

Resources Accessed

In situations of domestic violence, a significant number of women have contacted the police; nearly half of them. And among these, a little over half of the perpetrators were arrested and in more than two thirds of cases, charges were laid (Table 39).

Table 39 : Police involvement

	Number of persons	%
Contacted the Police	49	49.0
Arrests (/49)	28	57.1
Charges laid (/49)	32	65.3

These figures are higher than the Canadian data, where the rate of reporting to the police represented a decrease from 36%⁶⁷ in 2004. However, the reporting to the police often depends on the severity of the injuries.

In Table 40, we can observe that in 34% of the cases, the women had suffered physical injuries and in half of the cases, medical care was required.

We should also recognize that in addition to physical injuries, women emphasized that they had, after the last episode, required psychological support (76%).

Finally, the women who have children have sought support for their children after the last episode of violence they had experienced.

Table 40: Physical injuries and psychological support

	Number of persons	%
Physical injuries	34	34.0
Medical care required	17	50.0
Psychological support required	76	76.0
Support sought for the children	30	30.0 ⁶⁸

Besides seeking help from police services, women use many resources that are available in Prescott-Russell.

As in the Canadian surveys, most women disclose their situation to family members or friends. Thus, 56% of respondents of our survey sought support from a family member or friend (Table 41).

⁶⁷ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, edited by Maire SINHA. p.10.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

⁶⁸ Please note that 30 of the 54 respondents declared living with children.

Table 41 : Support Services

Support Services	Number of persons	%
Friends/Family	56	56.0
Police (OPP)	36	36.0
Shelter/Transition Housing (MIH)	32	32.0
Mental Health Services (CRCC, CCSMP-R-Rockland, CSC Estrie, Crisis lines, Valoris)	32	32.0
Community Resources (CMHA, Valoris)	31	31.0
Medical Centre/Family Physician	30	30.0
Psychological Services (CRCC/Rockland/L'Estrie, private therapists)	18	18.0
Social Assistance (Ontario Works)	18	18.0
Victim/Witness Assistance Program (V/WAP – at the Court)	17	17.0
Hospital	14	14.0
Victim Crisis Assistance & Referral Services (VCARS)	13	13.0
Social/Emergency Housing Services	11	11.0
Crisis Center for Sexual Assaults (Centre NOVAS, Fem'aide)	10	10.0
Programs and Services for Victims of Crime	8	8.0
Priest, Pastor or other authority/Religious Community	7	7.0
Addiction Services	5	5.0
Other	4	4.0
None of the above	3	3.0

Although the comparisons can be difficult to understand between surveys, more than 80% of Canadian women victimized by their spouse told family, friends or another source of informal support about the incident. Therefore,

Women often use sources other than the criminal justice system as a result of an experience of victimization. Thus, eight out of ten women who have been victimized by their spouses spoke about the incident to family members, friends or other sources of informal support. (...) The family and friends or neighbors were the most common sources of informal support for women, regardless of whether the incident was committed by a spouse or by another person⁶⁹.

Does this mean that the disclosure or seeking informal support from a family member is more difficult for the women victims of domestic violence in rural areas or even in the counties?

⁶⁹ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, edited by Maire SINHA. p.93. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>

But more generally, women have used various regional social services. Approximately the same proportions, being one third of the women have sought assistance from shelters, mental health services, and various community resources.

Women often use more than one resource, whether support services for witnesses (13%), services for victims of crime (8%) or services to ensure a transition towards a life without violence by completing applications for social housing or social assistance (11%) and job search (18%). It should also be noted that only 3% of women did not seek assistance at all after the last incident of violence. Are they able to resolve the situation on their own or are they completely isolated; it is not conclusive.

More generally, it is proportionally the respondents of the survey and both the women who responded to the 2009 General Social Survey, who used the resources of social and community services.

A variety of social services are available to women who are violently victimized, including counsellors, crisis lines, community centres, shelters, women's centres, and support groups. According to the 2009 GSS, 38% of women who were victimized by their spouse used a social service, two times higher than for male victims (18%). Female victims most often turned to counsellors or psychologists (32%). The next most common services used by women were crisis centres/lines and community/family centres (26% combined)⁷⁰.

The use of various regional social services by women who have experienced situations of domestic violence, sexual violence or violence in their dating relationships when they were under 25 years old, lead us to believe that these services should have in place a specialized and formalized center to take into consideration their conditions and those of their children, and in all dimensions of their lives.

Limitation of the study

It is important to note that an important limitation of this survey is that it is difficult, even impossible, to avoid double counting in the findings provided by the agencies. It is quite possible that women completed the questionnaire more than once in different agencies they accessed. This methodological constraint implies that the generalization is even less possible. And, therefore, comparisons with other data are exploratory for both Canadian data and regional data.

However, for each organization that provides services to women experiencing such abusive situations, these conditions are the harsh reality of their everyday life.

⁷⁰ STATISTICS CANADA (2013b). *Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends*, edited by Maire SINHA. p.109.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766/11766-4-eng.htm>

Recommendations

A REALITY THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED:

**Regional Profile of Violence Towards Women in
the Counties of Prescott-Russell
and the Community Resources that are available
to the Women and Families**

June 2014

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Coalition of Prescott-Russell to eliminate violence towards women has great expectations in working collaboratively with the entire community of Prescott-Russell to eradicate violence against women. The participation of so many various social and community organizations in this research is a very positive indication of this commitment, as well as the declaration of the Council of the Corporation of the United Counties of Prescott and Russell that from now on, December 6th will be designated as a non violence day in Prescott and Russell.

However, there is still work to be done to shatter the myths and secrets surrounding violence against women and girls in the United Counties of Prescott-Russell. Women and girls have the right to live in an environment free from violence, which is one of their most legitimate rights and guarantees their equality in society.

The Coalition intends in the coming years to repeat this exercise to better understand the profile of violence against women and girls and to measure the progress. In order to do so, the Coalition will need to continue to rely on the support of the organizations.

- Therefore, it is important that the member organizations of the Coalition improve their common methodological tools and annually update their information in order to provide a more accurate profile and a unique insight. Through this project, several organizations have already taken the necessary measures to detect, recognize and adequately serve more women and girls victims of violence in the United Counties and several organizations have already chosen to be more systematic.

The Coalition members also took measures regarding barriers and obstacles women and girls face in their efforts to live free of violence. Access to resources in the community remains a key issue for women and girls. Although the lack of transportation is not the only problem, it is mainly accountable for this situation. The isolation of women and girls experiencing violence has been sufficiently documented in the research, but the lack of transportation worsens the problem. Several organizations have tried to overcome this barrier. Community initiatives such as Interlude House, *Hand in Hand* project, and a group of volunteers providing transportation for women to go to their appointments is only a drop in an ocean of needs. However, in the counties, we are far from having a viable solution.

- The Coalition recognizes the importance to find a solution to the problems related to transportation and to collaboratively work with the various levels of government of the counties. And this solution should be considered not only for access to emergency and follow-up services but also to provide the women and girls with the necessary tools to prevail over actual alternative to violence such as the access to post-secondary education, or professional education, and to access the employment market.

The Coalition is also committed to develop concrete actions based on the needs identified in the research.

- Therefore, the Coalition intends to further investigate the issue concerning the double indictment, the response and the follow-up of complaints regarding police services for domestic violence and sexual violence.
- The Coalition also intends to have a more concrete and permanent commitment in terms of the implementation of prevention programs in the school boards in the counties.
- Recent changes in programs intended for violent partners, such as the reduction of the number of weeks of intervention, should be adequately measured for their proficient effectiveness in the upcoming years.
- Finally, permanent financial programs must be ensured in different organizations to eradicate violence against women and girls.

The Coalition also intends to pursue the consultation work between the various socio-community organizations.

- Thus, they propose to consolidate the Coalition to ensure better referrals to women and girls towards the most useful resources.
- The Coalition also considers engaging new partners in joining the Coalition to deliver more services for the needs of women and girls who are victims of domestic and sexual violence.
- Finally, the Coalition believes that the member organizations should join their efforts to further integrate the issues of violence against women and girls in their respective mandates both in terms of mental health, substance abuse, employability or even housing. Awareness to eradicate violence against women is essential to improve the services provided for the well-being of the women and the girls, but also in the follow-up that is offered to them. The objective is to achieve an integrated approach toward the issues and the services.

LIST OF ANNEXES

- Annex 1 :** Member organizations of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women
- Annex 2 :** Presentation letter to the organizations – Call for participation
- Annex 3 :** Snapshot – Consent Form and Data Collection Form

Annex 1

Member Organizations of the Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women

- ▶ Canadian Mental Health Association – East Champlain branch
- ▶ Office of the Attorney General
- ▶ Centre Novas – CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell
- ▶ Ontario Court of Justice – L’Original
- ▶ Hawkesbury General Hospital
 - ▶ Royal Comtois Center
 - ▶ Prescott-Russell Addiction Services
- ▶ Interlude House
- ▶ Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services
- ▶ Ontario Provincial Police – Hawkesbury Detachment
- ▶ Ontario Provincial Police – Russell Detachment
- ▶ Victim/Witness Assistance Program
- ▶ Prescott-Russell Social Services
- ▶ Prescott-Russell Victim Services
- ▶ Valoris for Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell

Annex 2

Presentation letter to the organizations – Call for participation



October 5, 2012

Mrs.

Madam,

The Coalition of Prescott-Russell to end violence towards women wants to better understand the scopes and the needs of women living in situations of violence in the counties. We are currently pursuing an ambitious project to collect data. This project will extend over a period of one year beginning in September 2012 and ending with the final report release regarding the situation of violence against women in the counties in the fall of 2013.

This project has two main goals. The first goal is to consolidate available statistics regarding violence against women (conjugal, domestic or sexual violence) from your organization for the years 2011 and 2012. The second goal is to consolidate the original data from your clients during a short period using a general questionnaire to all participating regional resources.

A comparable project was successfully completed in 2011 by the Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women and in the Niagara area. Your participation in this project research is crucial to better understand the needs of women who are dealing with abusive situations. We will then be able to better identify potential obstacles and challenges that women have to overcome to get services and support, and this, with the demographic profile defined in the snapshot.

Your contribution for each of the two stages of the data collection is different. In the first phase, the data that we would like you to send us is all your existing stats data regarding domestic violence and sexual violence affecting women for the years 2011 and 2012, as of March 31, respectively. We would greatly appreciate that these data be submitted to us before the end of March 2013.

For the second stage, we have prepared a snapshot survey that should be completed by **each client** served in person or by phone *between November 19 and November 23, 2012*. The length of time to administer the snapshot questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes per person. At the end of the week, the questionnaires will be collected and subsequently analyzed by the research team of the Coalition. Beforehand, the investigators-participants from each of the interested agencies will participate in a training session regarding the use of the snapshot questionnaire which will be held on November 5, 2012 from 9 am to 12 pm. A sample of the snapshot questionnaire is attached to this letter.

The publication of the report on the state of violence against women in the counties as well as the resources available will also serve as a resource for advocacy, public education and awareness of the services offered in the counties.

Please let us know your interest in this project by contacting Rachel Lamoureux at 613-632-9963 before October 22, 2012.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sylvie Bisson,
copresident

Chantal Tremblay,
copresident

Annex 3

Snapshot – Consent Form and Data Collection Form



CONSENT FORM

Date: _____

Form no: _____

The Prescott-Russell Coalition to end violence towards women is currently collecting data to better understand how women in the counties of Prescott-Russell respond to incidents of violence and the services upon which they rely to find support.

The information gathered will help improve services currently provided in the counties.

You are free to answer all of the questions or you can choose to answer certain questions only. Your answers will remain confidential.

Do you agree to answer this brief questionnaire (approx. 15 minutes)?

Yes, I agree _____

(Signature of the woman interviewed)

Yes, I agree _____

(Verbal consent given by **telephone**)

No, I refuse _____

(Signature of the woman interviewed)

DATA COLLECTION FORM

Date: _____

Form no: _____

Let's start with a few general questions.

What is your age?	
What are the first three (3) characters of your postal code?	
What is your marital status?	Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Common law spouse <input type="checkbox"/> Separated/Divorced/Widowed <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your family situation?	Living alone <input type="checkbox"/> Living alone with children <input type="checkbox"/> ____ (number of children) Couple with children <input type="checkbox"/> ____ (number of children) Couple, no children <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your current living arrangement?	Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Renting an apt. <input type="checkbox"/> Co-renting an apt. <input type="checkbox"/> Living with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Renting a room <input type="checkbox"/> Social Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Halfway House <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your country of birth?	
What is your citizenship status in Canada?	Canadian <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent resident <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting for status ruling <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your mother tongue?	
What is your preferred language of communication?	French <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you belong to a visible minority?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have aboriginal status?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your sexual orientation?	
What is your highest level of education?	High School not completed <input type="checkbox"/> High School diploma completed <input type="checkbox"/> Completed College diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Undertaken, not completed <input type="checkbox"/> Completed University diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Undertaken, not completed <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you currently employed outside the home?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you currently employed?	Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/>
What is your income bracket?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than de \$10,000 per year <input type="checkbox"/> Between \$10,001 and \$22,000 per year <input type="checkbox"/> Between \$22,001 and \$45,000 per year <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$45,001 per year <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
What is your main source of income?	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid employment, Self-employment, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Government benefit

We would like to know if you have been subjected to one or more of these forms of violence.

Forms of violence experienced	In the last year		Previous to last year	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN</i>				
Verbal violence				
Psychological - Emotional violence				
Physical violence				
Sexual violence				
Financial violence				
Spiritual violence				
My children have witnessed/been exposed to the violence of my abuser				
Dating violence (during adolescence or as a young adult)				
<i>SEXUAL VIOLENCE</i>				
During my childhood				
As an adult				

Can you tell us about the latest incident of violence (the most recent)?

Form(s)/Type(s) of violence (name them)	
Date of the incident of violence (month or year)	

What was your relationship with the abuser (about the latest incident of violence)?

What was your relationship with the aggressor?	Spouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Husband	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boyfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ex-spouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ex-Husband	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ex-Boyfriend	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Family member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brother/Sister	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Stranger	<input type="checkbox"/>	Friend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
What is or was the length of the relationship (if applicable, month/year)?						
Does the abuser have a history of violence/abuse?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Was the police contacted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Was an arrest made?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>				
Were charges laid?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>				

About the latest incident of violence, can you tell us if you received any support?

Assistance/support requested	YES	NO	Comments provided
Did you have any physical injuries?			
Did you require medical treatment / was it requested?			
Did you require psychological/emotional support / was it requested?			
What was the first resource contacted for assistance (name or type)?			
Other resources contacted (check mark all applicable choices)			
HOSPITAL			
WOMEN'S SHELTER/TRANSITION HOUSE (MIH)			
HELP CENTER FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT (Centre NOVAS, Women's Helpline)			
POLICE (OPP)			
COMMUNITY RESOURCES (CMHA)			
ADDICTION SERVICES (ASEO)			
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CRCC, Crisis Services)			
MEDICAL FACILITY/ FAMILY DOCTOR			
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE (CRCC, CCSMP-R, CSC Estrie, therapists in private practice)			
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (ONTARIO WORKS)			
EMERGENCY/SOCIAL HOUSING SERVICE			
VICTIM AND WITNESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VWAP)			
VICTIM SERVICES (VCARS)			
SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME			
PASTOR, PRIEST, RELIGIOUS FIGURE/COMMUNITY			
FRIENDS/FAMILY			
OTHER			
NO RESOURCE WAS CONTACTED			

Had you contacted these resources before? If Yes, which ones?

Types of resources (and types of violence, if mentioned)

Thank you for your precious collaboration.