



## VANCOUVER WOMEN'S HEALTH COLLECTIVE

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hey everyone there's some changes going on.....

this is just to update everyone on what is being proposed for the next 3 months at the collective.

We have been carrying a \$10,000 deficit for the last 3 years and it has finally caught up with us. We have this deficit because in 1993 we lost a \$10,000 yearly trust fund but we were notified after we had budgeted & spent the money. The trust fund had run out. We have been putting off dealing with the loss since we are an organization that runs pretty close to the bone at the best of times. In Feb. we had to chose between paying the rent or the staff so we had to lay off our two staff workers.

We have applied for an extended line of credit and have a comprehensive fundraising plan to implement over the next 3 months. It includes the following elements:

- a direct ask to our membership to donate money, experience, connections and or time to help
- a newsletter that will start a lobby campaign to have the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Women's Equality CO-fund our WHIN system
- a direct mail campaign to our regular donors
- submissions to suitable corporate, foundation and granting agencies
- face to face ask of individuals with disposable income

You'll be asked to help out with our fundraising plan in various ways - stuffing envelopes, photocopying, phone calls and we will be grateful for any help you can offer. The future looks great - really ! - we are on the brink of implementing our WHIN program which will take the VWHC into the future.

To do this with confidence we will need to do more than raise money - we need to create a solid base from which to move forward.

A lot of work? yes and we feel that this is a great possibility to consolidate, refine, update and renew the VWHC from every aspect! We want to focus internally and prepare for this next step in our process. What does this mean? Well to start with, we are proposing that we close down the Information Center from April 1 - July 1, 97. This will enable us

to take all of that volunteer power now directed to helping the women in the community and to focus it into making the VWHC into an efficient and effective service provider.

What needs to be done is up to each committee to decide as they are in the best situation to know what needs to happen in order for the committee to run effectively but here are some suggestions to get the juices flowing:

- the info center volunteers would continue to do their shifts but instead of answering phones and dealing with women coming in for health info, they would work on updating the files, creating a solid training program for shift workers, creating policy for running the info center & the WHIN system, doing community outreach to assess if our center is doing what is needed and so on
- the education committee could work on coming up policy and procedures to run that program
- the publications committee could work on editorial policy for the newsletter, look at our mail-order business where it is going
- the administration committee could work on making the office procedures more accessible, arrange for the redecorating of the physical space, get all of our rooms rented
- the volunteer committee could get their coordinating manual done and developing a recruitment plan
- fundraising could make a strategic plan for the next 5 years

When all of the committees have come up with a plan of action we will be having a general meeting to see how we can work together to create a strong whole. We will also be asking the steering committee to coordinate a process for all of us to work together around umbrella issues like hiring policies, new job descriptions for the permanent staffing of the collective, the combining of all our committee activities into a strategic plan for the next year and creating a more cohesive communication and connecting process within the collective.

painting parties, sewing bees, library studies, policy soirees and a coming together to create a stronger whole from which to work. Please discuss this proposal - how do you feel about our major community service being shut down?, what would your committee work on? what issues do you feel need to be addressed by the whole collective to create a stronger whole? how can you help?

Please send your comments back with your steering committee reps or better yet come to the upcoming collective meetings to share in person.

*change is hard but exciting - lets do it together!*