

# D.E.W. DROP IN

## DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN DO DROP IN

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

APRIL 2002

FREE

ALL WELCOME  
ANNUAL SPRING DINNER!  
*Thursday April 4<sup>th</sup>*  
*12pm*



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY!  
*APRIL 10<sup>th</sup>*

### INSIDE:

We love our Volunteers!

Beauty Night Photographs

Health Update: Health and Societal Oppression- the links



## VOLUNTEERS ON THE MOVE...

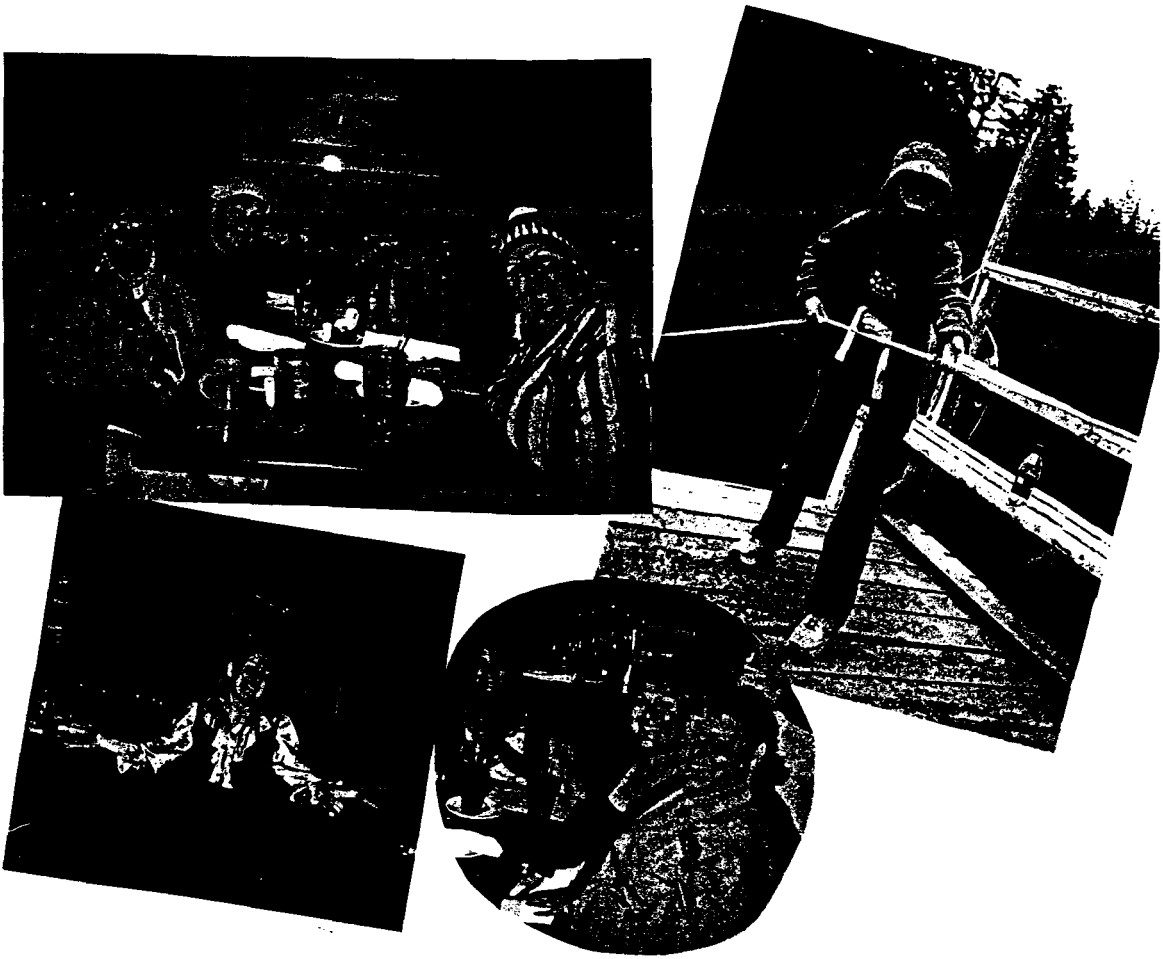


The Women's Centre extends our appreciation to all the dedicated, hard work of all our volunteers!



Thank you, thank you from the Women's Centre staff! The volunteers at the Centre are the absolute best! Thank you for all your help on/in the kitchen, floor, desk, clothing room, laundry room, raffle, computer room, special events, and for all the spontaneous times the Centre has need an extra hand or two. Without the volunteer team, the Centre could not run as it does, to support every woman who enters our community. You all enrich the Spirit of the Centre.

Best Wishes, The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre Staff.



A few words on The International Year of the Volunteer (2001) from the Secretary-General Kofi Annan

“...Dedication comes in many forms. And contrary to what many people say, volunteering does not occur only among the better-off members of society. Of the 4,500 United Nations Volunteers serving around the world every year, more than two-thirds are from developing countries... We must do all we can to support this invaluable work. WE need their commitment more than ever to help reach our goal of a better and safer world for all... Each and everyone of us, wherever we live or work, has something to share. “

THANK YOU!

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# PROPOSED REDUCTION IN WELFARE RATES

These are not yet the law; write to your MLA

Changes in Monthly Support Allowances for Welfare Recipients				
Category	Current Rate	New Rate	Loss	% Loss
Single Parent, One Child	\$376.58	\$307.22	\$69.36	18.4%
Single Employable Person 55-59	\$231.92	\$185.00	\$46.92	20.2%
Single Employable Person 60-64	\$282.92	\$185.00	\$97.92	34.6%
Employable Couple 55-59, No Children	\$401.06	\$307.22	\$93.84	23.4%
Employable Couple 60-64, No Children	\$452.06	\$307.22	\$144.84	32.0%
Support Allowance for Single Parent does not include BC Family Bonus or Canada Child Tax Benefit payments for dependant children under 18				
<b>Source:</b> courtesy <u>SPARC of BC</u>				

Note: As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, many changes will be in place. For the latest up to date information, please contact an advocate, your FAW, or visit the BC Provincial Government website at [www.gov.bc.ca](http://www.gov.bc.ca)

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# ImpACT of Provincial Government Cuts on Women....SHAME!

(brief fact sheet prepared by Benita Bunjun and Ellen Woodsworth, alongside other social justice groups in BC-adapted for the Centre's newsletter)

## Elimination of Women Rights = Violence on Women and Children

- Eliminated the Ministry of Women's Equality
- Elimination of funding to Women's Centres end of March 2004
- Eliminated Employment Equity
- Universal Childcare Cancelled- scrapped \$15.6 million
- Before/After School Care Programs eliminated

## Cuts to Income= Increased Poverty

- 0.5% increase in sales tax
- Reduced training wage to 6.00\$/hour
- Cuts to Income Assistance for ages 50-64 (see prior page)
- Cut welfare rates for Single Mothers by 18%
- Reduction in government's contribution to the BC Family Bonus
- Women whose youngest child has turned three must find paid work
- Eliminated the Family Maintenance exemption, which allows those receiving child support payments to keep \$100/month
- Welfare "recipients aged 60-64 will be required to seek work or participate in employment programs".
- Over 83% of health care jobs lost were women's and 1/3 of all jobs lost were by immigrant people or people of colour

## Cuts to Housing= Homelessness

- Landlord and Tenant Offices in Vancouver and Nanaimo-closed
- Social Housing projects frozen
- Only those disabled people receiving "continuous" assistance will be eligible to apply for seniors housing through BC Housing]

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# HEALTH AND INEQUALITY

## Women with disabilities

Women with disabilities are often assumed by doctors and others to be asexual, and not asked questions about reproductive health or fertility. Doctors and others often talk past them to their attendants or family members, as if they are not there or unable to understand. Women with disabilities are often assumed to be unhealthy, when disability is not necessarily due to a chronic disease. Women and girls with mobility impairments are often left out of physical activity, when there are activities that could be beneficial to their health. Being disabled and female also skyrockets your chances of being low income and vulnerable to violence,<sup>72</sup> both of which have direct health impacts. Women with disabilities will not have equal access to health and health care until we deal head-on with the ignorance, prejudice, hatred and structural barriers faced by people with disabilities.

## Racism and the health of immigrant, refugee and racialized women

Racism itself can cause illness.<sup>64</sup> Racism can invoke feelings of powerlessness and low self-esteem,<sup>65</sup> which have health consequences. Some groups of women face particular health problems, such as women who are survivors of female genital mutilation (FGM). Sometimes race itself can predispose people to certain illnesses, such as the higher breast cancer risk for Black women<sup>66</sup>, and diabetes for Aboriginal women.<sup>67</sup>

Sometimes a complex interaction of race, gender, income, education, language and cultural barriers and access to services puts some women at much greater risk of ill health than others. For example, immigrant women from China living in BC have cervical cancer rates that are twice as high as white women in that area. Only 56% (compared with 67% of all BC women) reported having had a Pap smear in the last two years, and 26% had never had one. Those least likely to have this simple test were women from Mainland China, those who never married, had the lowest levels of formal education, no fluency in English, those with the lowest income, and those having spent the least amount of time in North America.<sup>68</sup> The availability of services in your own language from someone who respects you can be a matter of life and death.

Immigrant, refugee and racialized women will not have the same access to health and health care until racism is eliminated and immigrants and refugees have access to the resources they need to become full participating citizens in control of their health.

employment  
education  
healthy childhood development

CULTURE

social status

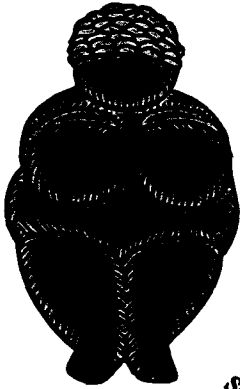
social support networks

health services

gender

biology

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**biology**

**social status**

**social support networks**

**employment**

**education**

**healthy childhood development**

**CULTURE**

**9<sup>th</sup> international women's health meeting**

Women's health is a world-wide issue, with many women around the world still dying from preventable illness resulting from poverty, lack of social status and power, and lack of access to basic health care. The IWHMs are an international grassroots forum for women who work locally, nationally and globally to deliver and advocate for essential health services and rights for women and girls, based on the recognition that women continue to be marginalized from the mainstream of economic and social life. The 9<sup>th</sup> International Women's Health Meeting will be held in Toronto from August 12-17, 2002, co-chaired by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW) and the Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre. Two other key partners are the Canadian Women's Health Network and the Réseau québécois d'action pour la santé des femmes. For more info contact: CRIAW at 613-563-0681 or [www.iwhm-rifs.org](http://www.iwhm-rifs.org)

**Lesbian and bisexual women**

Many health practitioners assume their clients are heterosexual, and don't ask the right health-related questions. Because of the stigma still associated with being gay, some lesbians and bisexual women avoid getting health care altogether, or go along with the health practitioner's assumption. If they do reveal their sexual orientation, they may not receive appropriate treatment - lesbians are less likely to receive regular pap smears to test for cervical cancer, because doctors assume they are not at risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).<sup>73</sup> Stigmatization and social marginalization also means some lesbians and bisexual women may be more likely to engage in behaviours that endanger their health,<sup>74</sup> and may be at a disproportionately high risk for obesity and substance abuse, perhaps because food and drugs are used as compensations for the stress and low self-esteem that can accompany having to lead a double life. This marginalization also means a greater risk of violence and suicide. Some physicians even refuse to treat lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered people, or tell someone coming in for a medical problem to go home and pray for forgiveness for being gay. Some lesbians and bisexual women may also not have the same coverage as straight people through their partner's private or employer health insurance.<sup>75</sup> Lesbian and bisexual women have less access to health and health care because of homophobia.

**Fact Sheets are from: "Women's health and action", published by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women.**

# DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

302 Columbia Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 4J1

Front Desk: 681 - 8480 Women's Line: 681-7458

**LUNCH SERVED  
DAILY AT 12:30- 1:45**

**APRIL 2002**

## REGULAR PROGRAMMING

**Library Group** –Every Monday at 5pm. Works on developing Centre library and works on literacy through crafts and fun activities!

**Organizers Training (ELP)** takes place on Monday nights at 5-8pm. Learn to facilitate and organize anti-poverty activists, rallies, and develop political strategies around various poverty issues.

**Battered Women Support Services (BWSS)** takes place on Tuesday nights from 5 - 8:30pm. This group offers support for women affected by violence in their lives.

**Creative Writing Group** – Every Tuesday, 5 pm. Facilitated by Rosemary and Linda. Group takes place in the Centre. The **Street Nurse** is here every Wednesday from 1 – 4pm to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

**Popular Education Group** – This group has ended at the Centre. Another group will replace this one in the coming months.

The **Alcohol and Drug Harm Reduction Support Group** is back with Mary from DAMS! Takes place Wednesdays from 5-8pm. All are welcome.

**Women's Voice** – Every Thursday, 1:30. Let us know what you think about the Centre. Your opinions and ideas are needed!

**Women Surviving Together** – Every Thursday 5 pm. Healing Circle and support group for women. Facilitated by elder Reta Blind and Stopping the Violence Counselor, Carol Martin. **Sweat Lodge** 12pm every Thursday (except day after Cheque Issue). Reta takes women to the North Shore for a sweat. Temporarily on hold.

**Music Jam**- Every third Friday of the month. Sing and play instruments with special guests!

**ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS:** Materials provided.

**Beading with Leona** – Every Monday, 1:30 pm.

**Yoga**- Monday 10:45am with Roma. Blankets provided.

Wear comfy clothing! Note new time!


**Crochet with Anna**- Every Wednesday, 2:00pm

**Collage Arts with Anna B.**-Every Wednesday, 2:00pm

**Fabric Arts with Freeda** - Every Friday morning, 10:30am.

**Dreamcatchers** every Saturday with Denny at 1:30pm.

Expand your skills and share stories with other women.

SUNDAY 12-5pm	MONDAY 10-5pm (Full Meal Day)	TUESDAY 10-5pm	WEDNESDAY 11-5pm	THURSDAY 10-5pm (Full Meal Day)	FRIDAY 10-5pm	SATURDAY 12-5pm
* Note: Group Times are subject to change- keep an eye out for Centre updates	1  <b>Easter Monday Centre Open 12pm-5pm</b>	2 2:30 Joint Effort-Film and Discussion! 5:00 BWSS 5:00 Writing Group	3 1-4pm Street Nurse 1:30 Raffle* (New time!) 2:00 Crochet 2:00 Collage	4 All Welcome to our annual <b>SPRING LUNCHEON 12 noon</b>  5:00 Healing Circle	5 10:30 Sewing etc.	6 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:30 Video
7	8 10:45 Yoga 1:30 Beading 5:00 Library Group	9 5:00 Writing Group	10 1-4pm Street Nurse 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Crochet/Collage <b>Volunteer Appreciation Day!</b> <i>Centre closes at 4pm</i>	11 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Outing 5:00 Healing Circle	12 10:30 Sewing etc	13 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video
14	15 10:45 Yoga 1:30 Beading 5:00 Library Group	16 5:00 Writing Group	17 1-4pm Street Nurse 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Crochet 2:00 Collage	18 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Outing 5:00 Healing Circle	19 10:30 Sewing etc 5:00 Music Jam with Special Guests!	20 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video
21	22 10:45 Yoga 1:30 Beading 5:00 Library Group	23 5:00 Writing Group	24 1-4pm Street Nurse 1:30 Raffle 2:00 Crochet 2:00 Collage <i>Place of Grace 8:30am-8pm</i>	25 <b>Centre Closed for All-day Staff Meeting</b>  <i>Place of Grace 8:30am-8pm</i>	26 10:30 Sewing, etc.	27 1:30 Dreamcatchers 2:00 Video
28 	29 10:45 Yoga 1:30 Beading 5:00 Library Group	30 5:00 Writing Group		* Please note that Monday's Yoga class, will now begin a half hour earlier than previously scheduled; it starts at 10:45am.		



# CENTRE NEWS

## **BUS TICKETS**

The Women's Centre will no longer be giving out bus tickets for medical appointments or emergencies. If you have a medical emergency and need to go to the hospital, the Women's Centre will support you by providing taxi service to the hospital. This collective decision was made due to our annual budget review. If you have any questions or concerns, please see a staff member, or Executive Director, Karyn Atlin.

## **LAUNDRY**

*Days and Times: Note no laundry between 12:30-1:30pm daily, and no laundry on Saturdays.*

**PATRONS:** Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (10am-3pm)

**VOLUNTEERS:** Sunday, Monday, Thursday (10am-3pm)

There have been some recent difficulties with the laundry facilities. Here are a few reminders with the hope the laundry service better serves all Centre patrons.

- You must sign up for laundry before putting your clothes in.
- Laundry Room is locked at all times to protect the belongings of those who use it.
- The only person permitted into the Laundry Room is the person actively doing their laundry.
- Please do not overload the washer/dryer. The Laundry Room Volunteer or Floor Staff will show you an acceptable load size. Respect and do not exceed this size, as this can break our machines.

## **RAFFLE**

Raffle Day has been changed! Raffle will now be held on Wednesdays at 1:30pm, hosted by our lovely Raffle Volunteers Leona and Ilona! This change is due to the lower staffing numbers on Fridays. Thank you for your understanding. See you Wednesdays!!

**YOGA** Yoga with Roma on Monday mornings will begin a half hour earlier than previously scheduled. Yoga will begin at 10:45am. Yoga resumes after the holidays on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>.

**EVENING GROUPS** For all evening groups, the Centre now asks that all women sign in. Due to our increasing numbers, we need to keep track of the numbers of attendees, as to apply for further funding. Also, doors will be closed at 5:15pm sharp, so you plan on being late for an evening group, please call the Centre ahead of time.

**CHILD-CARE** All women who need childcare for evening groups, must fill out a form that verifies the number of children in their care. You can pick up the form from our Administrator, Barb Millard from Mondays-Fridays. The form needs to be taken to your FAW and returned to Barb before you will be eligible for childcare. While paperwork is never fun, this move is to help us keep track of our evening group costs, so that the Centre is more accountable during this time of tighter budgets. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

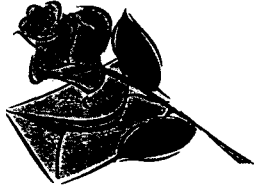


## **NEW STAFF!!**

Welcome to our new Executive Director, Karyn Atlin! The Women's Centre warmly welcomes Karyn, of the Tagish First Nation (Yukon), to her new position. Karyn previously worked as the Centre's Fund Developer for a year and a half, helping the Centre grow with new staffing and programming, while maintaining our advocacy, volunteer, and food services. Karyn is excited about her new position at the Women's Centre, where she will oversee the finances, budget, fundraising, and staffing while building a stronger collective between patrons, volunteers, and staff. Karyn's door is always open- if you would like to drop in and say hello or bring any concerns, she is in her office Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

With Karyn moving into a new position, the Women's Centre is in the process of advertising and hiring someone to fill the Fund Developer position as soon as possible. Keep your eyes peeled for the announcement in early May!

## AN OPEN LETTER



First of all I'd like to say thank you to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre for all their programs and wonderful meals.

This letter is for the "Battered Women" out there. I was a battered woman! I dated my ex-husband 6 months before we married. Were there any noticeable signs he was an abuser?? None... never hit me once. Then about three months after I was married he back-handed me while I was in the car and blackened my eye. I was shocked. Both of us had been drinking. I was madly in love with him and shocked that he hit me. Then came "I'm sorry etc., etc." You've heard it...never do it again honey etc. etc. NOT. Are you still getting hit? I got sober to see if maybe I was provoking him to hit me. NOT. I told him I was leaving if he didn't quit drinking and drugging. So we did the AA thing and bowling and swimming and bingo etc. etc. Then one day he exploded....What? No alcohol, no drugs... Sober and he's ranting and raving. I jumped out of the car. I called the Battered Women's Shelter and they came and picked me up.

I got a lot of information there and decided to leave him, which I did. It was the hardest thing I've ever done. There goes my marriage, my happiness and my so called soul mate.

These men have anger problems and even with help few of them change. Sorry not to give you hope. Be real. Be honest with yourself. You've got to get out before he kills you while he's in a blackout or worse leaves you disabled for the rest of your life. Leave and find some happiness in life. Think about it.

Good Luck.

My prayers are for all of you suffering in this kind of a relationship.

Cynthia Bottomley

A Joke from Betty Williams

I am Bart

Bart I art

I stop at the Kwik-E-Mart

These franks have become old and fragrant

Perhaps they'll sell to this young vagrant

Please buy these dogs, Sir, they taste great,

Do not mind the expiration date!

Eat just one, I know you can.

You can't refuse they're priced too low

I made them fresh a week ago

I won't buy them let me out

They're made from ear, and tail, and snout

But these beef franks they have no meat

Then you enjoy them eat, eat, eat.

I get all the dogs I want at Krusty Burger Restaurant

What should I do?

I cooked a ton

I ate them all...

Dial 9-1-1!

Eastside-Westside

East is East

and

West is West

Ever the Valiant and

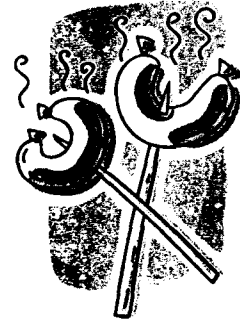
Sentimental trooper at-

East and West

East and West

When will they-

Ever Meet...



By: Estee

WHAT'S SHAKIN' at the CENTRE these DAYS!

FABulous hair, spectacular food, good company, Pedicure Pandamonium, LUCIOUS lashes, massages, intoxicating relaxation, Manic Manicures, ROSES for home, dying the hair, happy faces, and incredible volunteers. It all happened, right here, at the *Women's* Centre at the end of February.

## LADIES GET AQUAINTED WITH BEAUTY NIGHT!

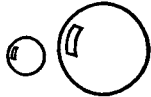




## Springtime fun for your little ones...

### Easy to Make Bubbles

1 cup Dishsoap  
3 cups Water  
1/3 cup Corn Syrup

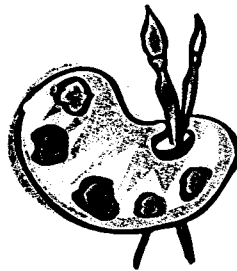


### Superfine Simple Finger Paint

Need: Liquid Dish Detergent  
Dry Tempera Paint

Method:

Slowly mix dry tempera. Paint with Dish Detergent until you have desired thickness. This formula lets you make fingerpaint as often as you like, and in the amount you need.



*An inspiration to all*

*Our Greatest Glory  
is not in never  
Falling,  
But in Rising every  
Time we Fall.*

*~Confucius*

*Submissions: Estee*

