



WOMEN'S CENTRE

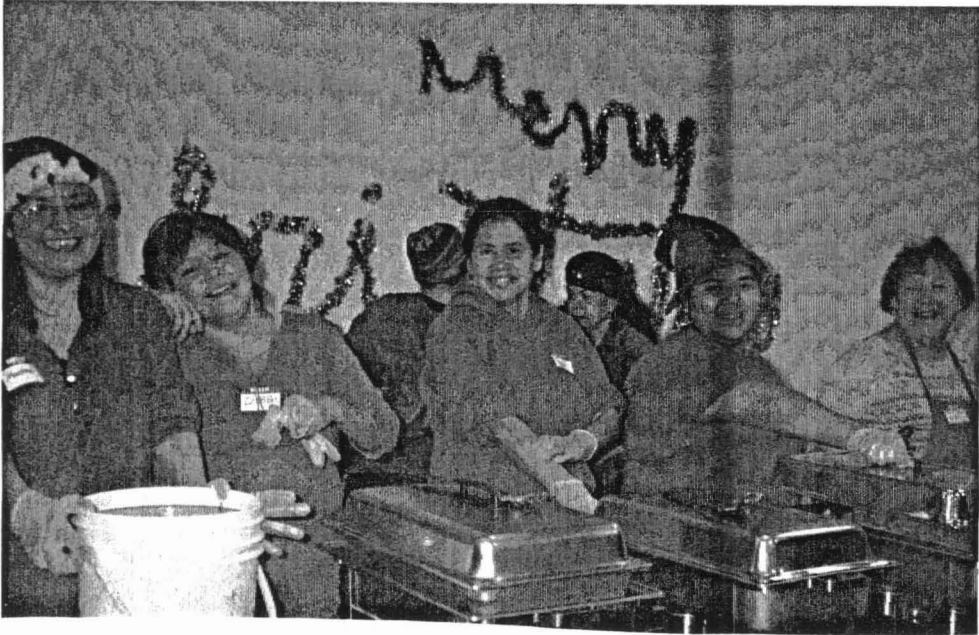
D.E.W. DROP IN

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

Downtown Eastside Women Do Drop In

December 2005

Free



INSIDE:

- Special Events during the holidays
- Poetry and thoughts from the DTES
- News from Cori
- DEWC Annual General Meeting

Up Coming events:

Thursday December 1 - 7

All Day

**Christmas Cards Pick up and Drop off
For Mailing**

Tuesday December 6, 05

10:00 -4:00

Sew Stockings with Freda

Make a stocking for yourself or as a gift for some one else.

Tuesday December 13, 05

10:00 -4:00

Wreath Making with Freda

Make a wreath and get into the holiday spirit

Wednesday December 14, at 11:00 am

And

Thursday December 15, at 10:00 am

Christmas Dinner Tickets Given Out

December 14, 05

5:00-9:00 pm.

DEWC Annual General Meeting

All women invited to attend

Thursday December 15, 05

5:00 pm.

Outing to The Vandeusan Garden Festival of Lights

All women invited, please sign at the front desk
and bring warm clothing to this event.

Tuesday December 20, 05

Seatings at 12:00 and 1:30

DEWC Christmas Dinner

Join us for a holiday celebration at The
Japanese Hall.

December 25 and January 1st

12:00- 2:00

DEWC Pancake Breakfast

Join us for a special holiday breakfast

Community Consultation Report

There was a consultation meeting on November 22, 2005 where community members were invited to express their views on the performance of the Centre, to discuss the issues affecting women in the Community and the role the Centre has in supporting women. 14 women attended and provided feedback to improve Centre operations, the topics that were discussed were;

The need for extended hours, there is no safe place for women to go when the Centre is closed. WISH is an option but only for certain women not for everyone. It was unanimous that women of the community need a space to be safe and secure during the most vulnerable times especially between midnight and 6 am. Currently the Centre is open 44 hours a week. In a year we hope to increase that to 60 hours a week and in two years the goal is to open 90 hours a week. An excellent suggestion was the use of volunteer professionals who are trained in trauma and crisis intervention to open longer hours. Women repeatedly said that we need a BIGGER place that is open 24 hours, with hard work and cooperation we will get there!

Support for women to help each other, the Centre should be supporting more women to support each other and to improve themselves by providing training, education and employment opportunities. Volunteers in the volunteer program are a really important aspect and asset of the Centre, volunteers can support women of the community at the same time they practice new skills, access educational opportunities, gain valuable experience and form support systems. The goal is for volunteers to be able to offer support and mediation in the Centre and refer women to staff. This can also help address the crisis that women are experiencing in the Centre. There are lots of reasons for women to be angry, frustrated, upset and aggravated. That does not mean that they can be disrespectful at the Centre or that their feelings should be dismissed. Volunteers can play a role to support women express their frustrations in positive ways. They can diffuse difficult situations, listen to women and provide appropriate encouragement.

The food program is always a priority. At this meeting again we heard that the Centre needs to increase the quantity and quality of the food we offer. We need more options to deal with different health needs such as allergies,

health conditions and taste. The menu should have variety, it should be balanced and low cholesterol. Other suggestions included;

- Baking healthy pastries in our own kitchen
- Including more fish, beans and tofu options
- Test the water in the Centre to make sure it is not making us sick

Programming issues include:

- Request for an information board to let women in the Centre know who staff are and what services are available
- Informing members what topics are scheduled for different groups – what is planned, what is happening, etc.
- Having more advocates in the Centre for accompaniments to Ministry and other government issues.
- Addressing Mental Health issues and providing more support
- Having more one to one opportunities for women in crisis to talk to someone

Results from recent survey:

- 63% are residents in the DTES
- 37% use the Centre every day
- 32% have been using the Centre for 3-5 years

The Drop In is the most important program at the Centre.

Programs women would like to have at the Centre are:

1. Job training
2. Income support
3. Crafts
4. Social Justice Organizing

The full results will be available in the next newsletter.

Some other suggestions are:

- Getting the library started so there can be a quiet space for women to hang out.
- Need help with Cantonese speaking seniors, it would be good to have a volunteer or staff to improve relations between people.

Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting and provided input. This gives the Board of Directors and the Management Team goals that we are confident are important to the community.

The next community consultation will be in Spring 2006 we hope that some of the suggestions and feedback would have been implemented. Try to be there.

The New Beginning

*There is a place called The "44"
They answered a knock and opened the door
To new ideas and lots of fun
Creative thinking has just begun*

*Instead of sitting in the bleachers
The people here will be your teachers
To open the door that was closed for years
A time to change, To rid their fears*

*We're surging ahead in leaps and bounds
And we will cover a lot of ground
Before we're through, you will awake
We're doing for you, For your sake*

*The time is now for all the thinkers
To re-awaken all the tinkers
They've had the world for much too long
To let them sleep, it's all too wrong*

*Now's the time to make them turn
To do the things we always yearn
When we learn on how to love
Then we will be blessed from up above*

*The things that we take for granted
Will have to be re-implanted
When we learn on how to give
Then we will just begin to live*

Leona Reid, June 29, 1984

Thomas Kerns' book "*Ethical Issues in HIV Vaccine Trials*" tries to simplify and I will also attempt to do that, not for you but basically myself. The following is my trip through the complex mire of HIV and vaccine and what 'they' are.

HIV: "IT'S NOT JUST ANOTHER DISEASE."

- High morbidity and mortality; (sick rate and death rate) 90% who contact HIV will get AIDS and die from it
- Lifelong infectiousness (infected for life)
- Lengthy asymptomatic stage; (no symptoms) "people are extremely contagious in the first 60 days after getting {HIV} – the same period in which they don't {yet} know they have it."
- Highly mutable; a target that changes its coat almost every time it reproduces (replicates and mutates rapidly)
- Effective modes of transmission; (sexual contact, blood transfusions, injection drug use) HIV is transmitted by means of the most 'biologically urgent' of human behaviors; private, pleasurable and occasionally unlawful (difficult to exert social controls over)
- Destroys the immune system; it targets the very system whose purpose it is to protect us from disease
- Viral reservoir: the total sum of people infected who can act as a source of infectious virus to others, is constantly expanding

IMMUNE SYSTEM:

- The primary function of the immune system is to distinguish between self and non-self
- When non-self gets 'inside the walls,' breaks the skin and membrane barriers the immune system shifts into gear
- If the invader is a bacterium (germ) or virus (RNA or DNA material that come into contact with a living thing and reproduce)
- Macrophage cells seek it out, surround it, and try to absorb or ingest it (cells that eat germs)
- They then transport portions to another cell system, the T4 cell, the cell that oversees and regulates the entire cellular and humoral immune response, and present the surface of the invader to the surface of the T4 cell for recognition and say
- "See what I have here?"
- "Well, there are more out there just like this one, and they have the same coat this one has

- **Let's gear up for them, train our troops to recognize them, and fight them off. What say?**
- **Should we get to battle stations?"**
- **Thus begins the buildup to fight against this specific invader with this specific coat**
- **The T4 cell starts to instruct other cells, B cells, T8 cells, CTL cells, and others, to start multiplying their numbers and performing their necessary functions**
- **Interleukins are chemical messengers that carry instructions from one cell to another, are manufactured and secrete**
- **Antibodies are concocted to fit the surface molecules of the invader, are manufactured by the billions, and are sent out into the bloodstream to affix themselves to the surface of every invader found**
- **Many preparations are made for the battle, and these preparations take some finite (specific) amount of time to adequately be accomplished.**
- **In the meantime, the invaders are invading, are multiplying their own forces, and are beginning to have their toxic effect on the body (assuming that the invading microorganism is pathogenic [disease-carrying] to some extent)**
- **They are making the body sick**
- **If, for example, the human being begins to feel a cold coming on, begins to feel headachey, run down, tired, and maybe feels a fever developing**
- **As the microbes multiply during the next hours or days, and as the immune system is building up its defenses, the human being is experiencing the pathogenic effects of the invader**
- **It will probably be several days before the forces of the immune system are able to overcome the forces of the invading rhinovirus, and the body can get the bug under control**
- **After the battle is won by the immune system and the microbes are finally conquered, the immune system can rest from their work, can stand down, relax, and go back to semi-dormancy**
- **But - and the "but" here is enormously significant - now they remember (by means of T and B memory cells) exactly how they defeated that invader, so that next time they can defeat it much more rapidly**
- **The next time they encounter that same invader, and its particular bag of tricks, they will be ready to fight it in full force almost immediately**
- **They will not suffer from that very costly time delay to ready their defenses**
- **They can start the battle at once and conquer the invaders before they**

3
Excuse me....

Can you spare some *social* change?

DONOR

**ELDER RETA
WATCHING
OVER US**



**BIG SIS
CAROL –
DO RIGHT!**

**OUR
FUTURE**

News from Management Team

November and December are busy months for fundraising, this year we have a direct mail campaign. In addition to our Christmas letter where we ask for financial and material support for our activities over the holiday season we are also asking our supporters to donate to the Centre to encourage social change. The Centre exists because poverty exist. Poverty is a condition of our society that excludes people, especially women, from sharing in the wealth of our resources. In some parts of Vancouver people pay \$1,000 for a dinner for two! People live in mansions with 30 rooms, while others live without. We work towards social change to remove the barriers that protect wealth. SHARE!

In November 1,352 newsletters and book marks were sent to our donors. We also printed posters to put up in high traffic areas and at businesses that give to the Centre.

Preparations for the AGM have also been high on our priority, making amendments to existing by laws to make it easier for women to participate in decision making at the Centre and developing guidelines to ensure that the Board of Directors are accountable and if they are not they can be removed by the membership. Be a part of the decision.

TEST OR NOT TO TEST; WHAT WAS THE QUESTION?

The Downtown Eastside of Vancouver has become a testing ground. There has been no lack of research. The Safe Injection Site, a medical, legal heroin trial at NAOMI (who are still looking for candidates), and now a proposal for testing of women and their bodies for the HIV vaccine!

The following speaks volumes of the constant pursuit of knowledge from outside.

“Went to a meeting a couple of weeks ago. About a new anti-body HIV drug. Needless to say I thought it was stupid. What they are asking for is for people to commit to this treatment for 4 years and at the same time it is not guaranteed that they even get the meds. It’s a study just using people as guinea pigs. They say they’re not but they are. And how can you ask people to do this not knowing what’s going to happen. They want people in the high-risk category to do this but they can’t be using. Come on; get real, I say. I say to them people are sick and tired of being used then thrown away. Why pick the low-income people to do this. Ask a middle class to do this and see how they feel. As far as I ‘m concerned I want to be seen as a human being, and not a test subject. Just my opinion” (LAURIE PELLETIER 2005).

~~Actually this is not the first HIV vaccine trial held in Vancouver. Recently “a randomized, double-blind, placebo 3-year study to evaluate efficacy of the bivalent rgp 120/HIV vaccine (AIDSVAX®B/B) to prevent sexually transmitted HIV-1 infection was completed in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver as...Subjects were men who had sex with men and were vaccinated at 0, 1, 6, 12,24, and 30 months. At each visit, risk reduction counseling was provided....Intravenous drug users were excluded from enrollment” (International AIDS Society 2004). This was a Phase III test.~~

It has been suggested that the same kind of study be carried on in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver with at-risk women. The method of this research would involve a double-blind, placebo-controlled 4-year study to evaluate the efficacy of an HIV vaccine. That means that the woman would not know if she was getting the vaccine or a placebo (harmless substance). But intravenous users will be excluded.

- have a chance to multiply and do their pathogenic work
- In fact, the immune system will kill the invaders before the human being in which all this is happening even knows there has been an invasion
- The body will not even get sick the second time

- **THAT'S HOW VACCINES WORK**

- "When a body is vaccinated, immunized, or inoculated
- That body is artificially introduced to a pathogen (any disease-forming bacteria) or some form of the pathogen (an attenuated form of the virus, a form that has been somehow artificially weakened), or some fragmentary portion of the pathogen (using only the coat of the virus, minus the genetic material inside its core), or some artificially grown unit that looks like a fragmentary portion of the pathogen (a genetically engineered molecule which is identical to a molecule on the coat of the virus)
- It is introduced into the body by injection, scarification, ingestion or suppository (Think of the flu shot)
- In some cases, the body does get moderately sick, and sometimes it does not get sick at all (The body usually responds to the flu vaccine within 2 weeks)
- The immune system is thus alerted, ready and charged, waiting for a time when it might see a realworld, wild variety of that [pathogen trying to get in. it will be able to fight off that invading pathogen without the person's body ever feeling any sickness at all
- That's how vaccines work!
- They prepare a body for the battle, so that when the real virus comes along, the immune system will be able to
- recognize the virus by its coat, and
- fight it off before the pathogen can replicate itself in large enough numbers to cause disease
- vaccines do not prevent initial infection with the invading virus
- they prevent disease
- In 'fighting off the germ or virus it may mean either of two things;
- the immune system is able to completely eliminate all viruses
- the immune system is able to keep it in check, or under control
- The important key is that before any immune response can happen, the invading wild virus must be recognized by the immune system
- If it is not recognized, then the immune system does not mount a response, the invader's invasion succeeds, and the person will get the disease

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE
 302 Columbia Street, Vancouver
 604.681.8480

LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30-1:45

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Chinese Women's Group (CWS) -Open to women whose first language is Chinese. The group will focus on cultural awareness, advocacy, and social events.

Massage—pamper yourself courtesy of Anita and Rosemary.
Resume Workshop - Create your own Resume with the help of Eemina.

The **Street Nurse, Christina**, comes by every Tuesday between 12noon-2pm to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

Sweat Lodge - is on hold for a while until Reta comes back.

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOP

Cares (Community Art Recovery Education Society)—Arts and crafts each week with new themes all the time, all women welcome, everything supplied.

Crafts every Monday- 10am.

Painting- with materials supplied- every Thursday - 2:00 pm.

Crochet with Anna & Freeda-Every Wednesday, 2:00pm.

Fabric Arts with Freeda- Every Tuesday morning, 10:00am.

EVENING PROGRAMMING

Music Jam- Sing and play instruments with Reta and Leona.

Always a week before welfare day from 5-8:00

Community Kitchen- come and learn new recipes 'share your cooking expertise with everything supplied- Always a Monday before welfare day.

Women's Health Clinic-on going 59 West Pender

Batter Women Support Services- Support for women experiencing violence.

Taiko Drumming-Learn to play big drums and train to perform.

Healing Circle-Every Thursday except welfare week.

Just a reminder-there is no bus tickets or child care provided for groups.

SUNDAY 12:00-5:00*	MONDAY 10:00-5:00*	TUESDAY 10:00-5:00*	WEDNESDAY 11:00-5:00*	THURSDAY- 10:00-5:00*	FRIDAY 10:00-5:00*	SATURDAY 12:00-5:00*
				1 10:30 -4:00 IIG University Access Program 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	2	3 2:00 Video
4 2:00 Video 5:00 Taiko	5 10:00 Hair Cut 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	6 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Counseling 2:00: Bingo	7 2:00 Crochet	8 10:30 -4:00 IIG University Access Program 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	9	10 2:00 Video
11 2:00 Video 5:00 Taiko	12 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	13 10:00 Massage & Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas Counselling 1:30- 3:30 By Law Resolution Info Session	14 11:00 Xmas Dinner Tickets 2:00 Crochet 5:00 AGM	15 10:00 Xmas Dinner Tickets. 10:30 -4:00 IIG University Access 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle 5:00 Outing	16	17 Wrapping Day 2:00 video 5:00 Music Jam
18 Wrapping Day 2:00 Video 5:00 Taiko	19 10:00 Crafts 10:00 CWS 11:00 Yoga	20 Christmas Dinner At The Japanese Hall 12:00 pm 1:39 Pm	21 2:00 Crochet	22 CENTRE CLOSED	23	24 2:00Video HAMPER DAY
25 12:00- 2:00 Pancake Breakfast	26 Boxing Day Open 12:00- 5:00	27 10 :00 Massage &Sewing 12-2 Street Nurse 1:30 deyas 2:00: Bingo 5:00 BWS	28 2:00 Crochet	29 10:30 -4:00 IIG Math & English University Access 2:00 Painting 5:00 Healing Circle	30	31 2: 00 Video

* PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CENTRE IS OPEN UNTIL 5:00 PM BUT DOORS WILL BE LOCKED AT 4:45

Proposed Changes to the Bylaws of the Downtown Eastside Women' s Centre Association

Any changes to the by-laws must be passed by a " special resolution" where 75% of the members present vote in favour of the resolution. 14 days notice has to been given to the membership of the proposed changes.

This does look very confusing. This is not the entire bylaws, only the sections of the bylaws where there are proposed changes. Copies of the complete By-Laws are available at the front desk.

These proposed changes were discussed and identified as a priority by the Board of Directors. They are intended to ensure the Membership (you) have the ability to 1) have control to ensure the Board Directors cannot limit applications for membership 2) force an AGM or 3) have the ability to remove the Board of Directors if you feel that they are not representing the best interest of the Centre

An info session regarding these proposed changes will be held at the Centre on **Tuesday December 13th between 1:30 – 3:30pm.** If you have any questions or concerns or just want to know how these changes will support the membership of the DEWC come to this information session or ask Alice Kendall or Cynthia Low.

Resolution #1

The members of the society are the applicants for incorporation of the society, and those persons who subsequently become members, in accordance with these bylaws and, in either case, have not ceased to be members.

ADD:

*Terms under which a person may be admitted to the Society:
Individual Members, Honourary Members, Group Members*

Any woman who lives or works in the Downtown Eastside or uses any of the services offered by DEWC may apply for individual membership to the Society, by applying to the Board of Directors.

Any woman who is now or has been concerned with the wellbeing of women in the Downtown Eastside area of Vancouver but does not meet the criteria for individual membership to the Society may apply as an honourary member of the Society by applying to the Board of Directors. Honourary members are entitled to speak at any meeting of the members of the Society but are not entitled to vote.

Any group incorporated pursuant to the laws of the Province of British Columbia, or of

any other province, or of the Dominion of Canada that is concerned with the wellbeing of women in the DTES may apply for group membership to the Society by applying to the Board of Directors. A group member will be entitled to one delegate. The delegate must be a woman and will exercise the voting privileges for the group.

Resolution # 2

DELETE

A person may apply to the directors for membership in the society and on acceptance by the directors is a member

REPLACE WITH

The Board of Directors has discretion to accept or reject an application for membership to the Society. The exercise of this discretion is subject to review at any general or special meeting of the members of the Society where the membership may accept the application(s) for membership to the Society

Resolution #3

DELETE

The amount of the first annual membership dues must be determined by the directors and after that the annual membership dues must be determined at the annual general meeting of the society.

REPLACE WITH

There is no fee for membership

Resolution #4

A person ceases to be a member of the society

DELETE

- (a) by delivering his or her resignation in writing to the secretary of the society or by mailing or delivering it to the address of the society
- (b) on his or her death or, in the case of a corporation, on dissolution,
- (c) on being expelled, or
- (d) on having been a member not in good standing for 12 consecutive months

REPLACE WITH

By notifying the Board of Directors in writing at the address of the Society
On her death or in the case of a group membership, the dissolution of the organization, or
By being expelled by the membership of the society at a general meeting or special meeting

Resolution #5

Part 3 — Meetings of Members

DELETE

The Annual Meeting shall be held no later than June 30th of each year at a place within the Province and on a day to be fixed by the Board of Directors

REPLACE WITH

The Annual Meeting shall be held no later than 15 months after the last Annual Meeting at a place within the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver on a day to be fixed by the Board of Directors.

Resolution #6

DELETE

The directors may, when they think fit, convene an extraordinary general meeting

REPLACE WITH

The directors, or any two members of the Board of Directors, or 10% of the membership as defined by the membership roll may convene a special general meeting for any purpose

Resolution #7

DELETE

The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice by, any of the members entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceedings at that meeting

REPLACE WITH

Notice will be deemed to be given to every member if posted in the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre 14 days prior to any annual or special meeting and advertised in the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre monthly newsletter

Resolution #8

PART 4 - Proceedings at a General Meeting

DELETE

3. A quorum is 3 members present or a greater number that the members may determine at a general meeting

REPLACE

A quorum is 5% of the membership

Resolution #9

DELETE

18. Subject to bylaw 19, the president of the society, the vice president or, in the absence of both, one of the other directors present must preside as chair of a general meeting

REPLACE WITH

The Chair, Co-Chair, or in the absence of both one of the other directors present will preside as chair of a general meeting unless the majority (50% + 1) of the membership present object. In this case, Roberts Rules of Order will apply and the membership will appoint a Chair of the meeting by a majority vote.

Resolution #10

DELETE

22(2) voting is by show of hands

REPLACE WITH

Voting is by show of hands or by secret ballot if requested by the majority of the membership

**Resolution #11
PART 5**

DELETE

25(2) The number of directors must be 5 or a greater number determined from time to time at a general meeting

REPLACE WITH

The number of directors must be at least 5 and a maximum of 12

Resolution #12

ADD

One position on the Board of Directors will be reserved for the position of Elders Council representative to be appointed by the Elders Council

One position on the Board of Directors will be reserved for the position of Volunteer representative to be appointed by the DEWC Volunteers

At least one position on the Board of Directors will be filled by a regular user of the Centre services.

Resolution #13

ADD

The Directors of the society shall be elected by the members of the society at the annual meeting and shall hold office until the next annual meeting.

Any vacancy in the directors may be filled by appointment by the directors or by an election at a meeting called for that specific purpose. Meetings of the directors may be called by the Chair, two or more directors, or by 5 or more members of the society.

Resolution #14

ADD

Five per cent of the membership can require the directors to call a special meeting of the members of the society for the purpose of removing any member of the board of directors and/or substituting a new member in that position

CELL-ASSOCIATED TRANSMISSION

- HIV can be transmitted from one person to another either as viral particles floating freely in the bloodstream (or other tissues or fluids), or it can be transmitted from one person to another within certain cells
- This is analogous to the way the Greeks got inside the walls of Troy by hiding inside a hollow horse which was then wheeled into the city)
- If the virus is hiding inside the cells of an HIV-infected person, and some of those infected cells are transmitted via one of the usual modes of transmission sexual intercourse, needle-sharing, or some other blood-borne path, -then the newly infected person's immune system would not be alerted to the presence of the viral invader in the same way it is alerted when the virus is floating free
- The virus would have successfully sneaked into the new host as a stowaway inside a cell
- That virus, in fact, could continue to replicate itself by the thousands inside that cell or cells enough times to insure a successful assault
- The most common mode of transmission of HIV is sexual transmission (86%)

SUGGESTED STUDY

Upon further reading of the fact-sheet (Canadian Strategy on HIV/AIDS 2002) I received, it began with

- “The potential for risk behavior among participants in an HIV vaccine trial is significant. For scientific reasons, large-scale trials often deliberately recruit populations at greater risk of contracting HIV.”
- “As well, taking part may cause participants to adopt more risky behaviors and thus expose themselves to possible infection if they falsely assume they are receiving the vaccine (rather than the placebo) and that the vaccine is effective. So organizers are ethically obligated to take all reasonable actions to reduce HIV risk behaviors. Preventative counseling is one way to do this”
- They are ethically obligated to counsel safer behaviors

BUT

- If participants do not take risks the trial will not be able to judge the efficacy of the vaccine candidate

Women in the Downtown Eastside and many of our sisters globally live with violence EVERYDAY! However it seems that at this time of the year the rest of the nation and the rest of the world tries really hard to remember this reality and try to do something about it.

November 25 to December 10, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, kick-starts "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence" which runs until International Human Rights Day (10 December)

December 6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

From the Government webpage.

Did you know that December 6 is the *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women* in Canada? Established in 1991 by the Parliament of Canada, this day coincides with the sad anniversary of the death of fourteen young women who were tragically killed on December 6, 1989 at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal because of their gender. Beyond commemorating the loss of these fourteen young lives, this day represents a time to pause and reflect on the phenomenon of violence against women in our society. It is also a time to have a special thought for all the women and girls who live daily with the threat of violence or who have died as a result of deliberate acts of gender-based violence. Last but not least, it is a day for communities to reflect on concrete actions that each Canadian can take to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

December 17 - 3rd Annual International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers

International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers is meant to call attention to hate crimes and violence against sex workers all over the globe. Originally thought of by Dr. Annie Sprinkle and started by the Sex Workers Outreach Project USA as a memorial and vigil for the victims of the Green River Killer, it has grown to be a day for strategizing to end these acts as well as remember the victims. Over thirty cities around the world have participated in this event. There will be a gathering at the Vancouver Art Gallery at 7pm.

Everyday is a day for us to commemorate and honor the loss of our mothers, daughters, sisters, friends and family loss tragically to violence, exploitation and poverty here in the neighbourhood.

WATCH OUT FOR THE DEWC SAFE PLACE STICKER CAMPAIGN THAT WE WILL LAUNCH IN DECEMBER!

Annual General Meeting

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2005

5:00 Dinner

5:30 Meeting Begins

We are having our Annual General Meeting to elect the new Board of Directors who will oversee the activities of the Centre for the next year. It is important that all women who use the Center have an opportunity to elect women who will respect and represent the interest of the community.

During this meeting the current Board of Directors and the DEWC Management Team will present the audited financial statements and the annual report. In these presentations the membership will be informed on the financial status of the Centre, program updates and other relevant details on the standing of the Centre.

We urge women of the Downtown Eastside to attend and be involved. All women who use the Centre may be voting members. And anyone can sign up at the meeting.

See you there!

INFORMED CONSENT

- In its simplest terms, the principle requires that you tell potential volunteers what the proposed research is about
- What you hope to learn by it
- What will be expected of them
- And what they can expect to happen to them during (and after) the experiment

As an anthropologist I am familiar with “Cultural anthropologists who often obtain no informed consent for their studies, but assume that if the community tolerates their presence it implies informed consent.”

In the case of HIV vaccine research specifically,

- The concepts of randomization, blinding (double-blinding), placebos, informed consent, and risk/benefit, concepts which [may not be’ easily understood in the cultural context of many developing countries (Downtown Eastside)
- At the other end of the spectrum some people believe that informed consent includes not only an explanation of data collection methods but a detailed explanation of the research topics that will be examined with the data collected from a study subject
- If this view were taken literally many studies could never be carried out (because informing subjects will sometimes change the character of the data gotten from them)
- and no post facto analysis of any field data could ever be done (since subjects wouldn’t have been informed at the time that a particular use of the data was part of the research)
- This version of informed consent would probably eliminate all behavioral research in the world (since the behavior of study subjects would always be affected by knowing why they were being observed)
- and would eliminate a huge number of useful scientific studies done using data initially collected for a different purpose
- The use of data collected by others for analysis into a new topic would be considered unethical, essentially eliminating a huge fraction of current research
- Finally, no scientifically sophisticated studies could ever be done on relatively uneducated populations because they could not give true informed consent (implying that they understood the purpose of the research)

**For example no DNA studies could be done on any population that didn't know what DNA is and understand the basics of modern genetics
Both extremes of the informed consent debate seem unfair or unrealistic, but the AAA (and every other trial system) should provide some guidelines on what exactly constitutes valid informed consent in anthropological studies**

The same standards that apply to material data collection (blood, DNA, etc.) should apply to the collection of any information about a study group

There are vaccines against many diseases like the measles, chicken pox rubella to name just a few BUT there are no vaccines against HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and tuberculosis (There is a partially effective vaccine against TB but it needs improvement) (Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network 2002).

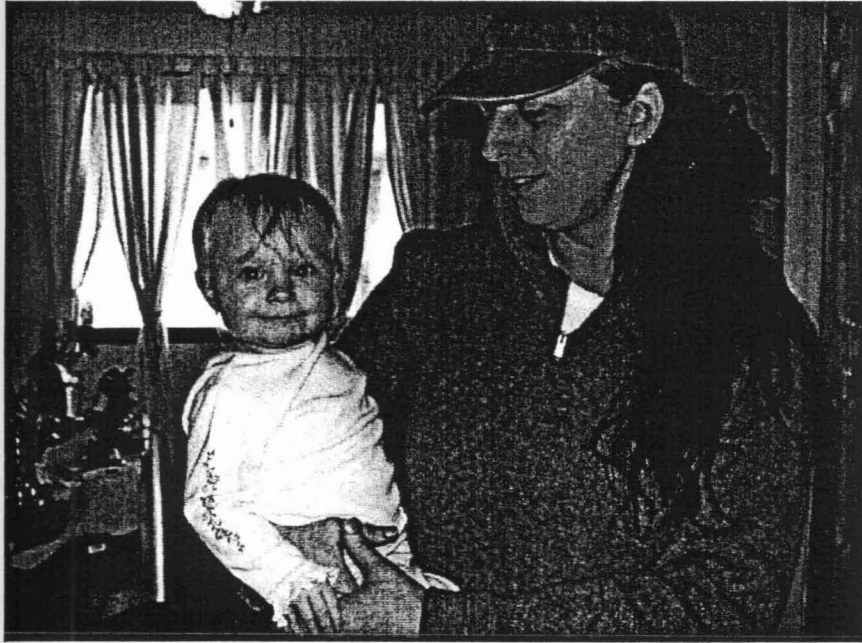
Phase III trials are the definitive test. Using thousands of volunteers from high-risk populations...the incidence of HIV in vaccinated people is compared to that of people who receive a placebo (aidslaw 2002).

Now this article only offers some collected information. In the pursuit of this knowledge, no animals were hurt. There are websites galore, and many writings on the subject of HIV Vaccines.

After further reading in Canada, all clinical trials must be approved in advance by the Therapeutics Products Directorate of Health Canada. So there is a system protecting participants. For further reading please ask Myrna (Outreach Worker).

DECEMBER 1 HIV/AIDS DAY

News from Cori



Hi All

So sad to say I'm not returning to the Women's Centre. We've made a home here in Prince George and things are just moving along swimmingly, ha, well no ocean to speak of for an eight hour drive, but lotsa lakes, bear, moose and the like, and as you know of me, just loving the back country. Dakota's doing great, we call her six-tooth these days, but chances are that nickname will change. We send you our love, big hugs, and wishing you all the very best Cori, Dakota, Steve, Jake, Angus, and Doug

Here is something I would like to share with everyone, I received this letter by email about 2 weeks ago and it made me cry. She has given her approval to print the letter in the DEW DROP.

Hello - My name is Diana Govenlock, I used to live on the streets of the Eastside from 1993-2001 and many times came to the Women's Center for food, clothes, a shower or just to sit on the couch and read a book,

Thank you for offering this service - it means alot to the women who use it.

You may or may not remember me - I was pregnant in 1995 and gave birth in September of that year. I was an addict - and often you would have to ask me to leave the center as I was too high. I was skinny and had sores on my face. I had blonde unwashed hair, my clothes were filthy and I was angry and often would swear at you if you wanted to send me away. Once you accused me of using needles in the bathroom while I was having a shower (I didnt use needles anymore but you still accused me of it) and you sent me away.

I was one one many addicts who come to you for help - and I remember the help you gave. The meals you fed me were delicious (warm buns, sweet buns, bannock, soup, chili) Thank you.

I have attached a picture of me today - I have none of me from my time on the streets.

I am getting married next week - in Mexico. My life, since I quit using drugs, has changed in ways that one would never think possible. I have a life today - I have my family back - my kids (now 18 and 16) are a part of my life. My son (who I gave up for adoption in 1995 knows me as his tummy mommy. I never knew that there was a life out there for me. I wish that I could share this with the other women out there - those who are struggling with their addictions and demons - show them and make them believe that there is a life for them. It took me only one year to save enough money to rent my own place - I worked 3 jobs during that year - 7 days a week - low pay - and saved and saved. Today - I am the proud owner of not one but two homes! Sure I still owe a mortgage - but they are still mine!

Well - if any of the oltimers are there - please pass on my message - Terri Brewster and Kim, Flaka (Anne) Heather, Candace, Colleen R, Bonnie Swan, Lisa, Crystal Pete. Please pass on my message and my greetings to those women and tell them there is another life out here.

*Peace
Diana*



I sent her this letter in response to her touching story.

Dear Diana,

I am so very very happy for you, your message of hope gives not only staff here at the Centre the inspiration to continue the work but your hard work and dedication is an inspiration to women who use the Centre.

I'm sure there were times that I did bar you from the Centre or asked you to leave or accused you, unjustly, for using in the Centre!! As you know it can get a bit crazy and sometimes those of us who work in the community may not be the best equipped to deal with the difficulties. For those times that I may have been unduly harsh and unkind, I am sorry.

Thank you so much for taking the time to keep us informed of your life, just this past summer we organized a street party for the whole community it was an opportunity to honor women like yourself who worked so hard, despite so many barriers to regain control, joy and hope in your lives. We handed out awards to about 20 women and 10 men - men who took a path to address their behaviours of violence against women. The award was called the 'Courage to Change', if we knew you were out there you would have been number 1 on our list. You are so beautiful and you look so happy - WAY TO GO GIRL! I do not know if you remember that the Centre has a newsletter, I am hoping that we can use part of you letter in the newsletter as well as a photo. I understand if you are not comfortable with the photo but I really think it will be inspirational to all, not just women in the Centre, but the community and our society. Everyone thinks an addict is worthless - we know it is not true.

The Centre is now located on Columbia Street 1/2 block away from the old one, it is busier than ever even though it is bigger. There are more and more women on the street and what is really heart breaking are the young ones who are here. We try our best and we know that, like you they have the potential for change.

Anyways I am getting all emotional. I wish you all the happiness in the world, your marriage, your family and most important strength and confidence in yourself to claim what is due to you.

Sincerely,

Cynthia



To register for the Christmas Bureau

Registration begins December 7th and ends December 23th

Bring a completed application form between 9:30 - 4 Monday to Friday
to 1370 Napier Street

Registration forms are available at the front desk of the DEWC.

You must bring

Proof of Income: The last 2 stubs from MHR or the registration form
completed by your FAW

Care Cards For **all** family members

Proof of address: Bring phone, hydro, or cable bill with your name and
address showing

2nd piece of ID: Drivers license, BCID, passport

Women who have signed up for eye glasses

Women who signed to get their eye glasses need to bring their
Doctor's prescription to have them done.

When: Tuesday December 6th

Time: 10:00 am

Where: Lenscrafter in Metro Town- 4700 Kingsway, Burnaby.

(Lenscrafter is next door to Sports Check)

What It Means to Be a Native of the Country of Israel

A young tree with young green leaves.....seems like spring

A tree with coloured leaves and light snow on the ground.

(Fall didn't bring enough wind to tear sown the coloured leaves)

Spring and Fall. These are the two seasons that are important to the circle of the seasons.

Each bring a different picture in one's mind . Let us try and picture a winter scene.

Outside it is snowing .

Indoors it is warm under the covers.

You wake up and find brightly coloured parcels called in my native tongue "matanot" meaning presents or gifts. You have guessed right it is a Szabra's first Christmas in Canada.

My first Christmas in Canada was like this: I am a Szabra meaning I am a native of the land of Israel. Szabra is the name for a male who was born n the country of Israel. I have been in Vancouver for fifteen years. Vancouver has a freezing cold in the winter, when it is supposed to be mild. Another set back that one will find when talking about the winters of Vancouver, there has rarely been any snow for Christmas .

That is all I have to say about seasons and subjects related to them.

Annie Eskenazy

Merry Christmas to the Lost Sisters,

May they find their way home.
Please Creator give us the strength to carry on for them, heal our hearts that ache for our Sisters, they need our Love now and the families as well. I only want one thing this Christmas, God, give me back my sister Mary Florence Lands, she is very nice, beautiful smile, that's all I will ask for Dear Creator thank you for the blessings that you give me.
written by little sister,

Maria Lands