



AMETHYST MATTERS

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Centre pour femmes toxicomanes

Amethyst

Women's Addiction Centre

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News and Views from Amethyst

Government Cuts are Killing Us!

*Taken from an article published by the Cross-sectoral
Violence Against Women Strategy Group
(CSVAWSG)*

Cuts and Inaction

- A total of \$9 million annualized funding was cut from **women's shelters** (5.5% cut) and second stage housing (eliminated) in July of 1995. That equals seven fiscal years times \$9 million for a total of \$63 million "saved" from direct services for women.
- Failed to implement **recommendations from two inquests** (Hadley, May-Iles) dealing with violence against women by intimate partners.
- Downloaded the cost of provincial **social housing programs** to municipalities. Cancelled new housing supply programs in 1995. Removed rent control.
- Cut **childcare spending** by \$100 million from 1995-96, and threatened to cut an additional \$200 million. In 2000 diverted a \$2.2 billion federal transfer specifically slated for parental services and daycare. Eliminated funding for non-profit childcare spaces and for childcare spaces in new schools. Continues to claw back the child benefit from women on welfare.
- Laid off **26,000 hospital workers** since 1995, including nurses. Privatized **home care**. Cut off thousands of senior women from home support services in 2002. Delisted \$100 million of **OHIP services**, meaning Ontarians pay more out-of-pocket medical expenses than other Canadians.



- Cut **social assistance** by 21.6% and froze the minimum wage at the 1995 level. Introduced the **60-hour work week**. Denied welfare recipients access to OSAP. Ignored the Kimberly Rogers inquest recommendations on social assistance reform.
- Cut **family law legal aid** certificates by 75% in 1996 (later increased, but not to the original level). Legal aid certificate hours have been capped and many women are left representing themselves in family courts.

Effects on Women

- Since June of 1995, at least 160 women have been murdered by their intimate partners in Ontario. These are only those women reported in major media.
- 21 children have been murdered with them, and 8 family members or friends.
- The number of men accused of killing their current wife or ex-wife in Canada rose 25% from 2000 to 2001, with "virtually all of this increase occurring in Ontario."
- Last year (2002) 34,588 abused women and their children stayed in women's emergency shelters in Ontario – 34% of all women and children taking refuge in shelters in Canada.
- An average of 40 women per year are murdered by male partners in Ontario.
- Kimberly Rogers, over 8 months pregnant, died in her home after being sentenced to house arrest for the "crime" of receiving social assistance and OSAP (allowable until 1995).

The Ontario Liberal Platform

Taken from the Ontario Liberal Web Site at www.ontarioliberal.com/en/platform/f/01.cfm

- The Ontario Liberals have a plan to make public education the best education. Public education is the ladder of opportunity for all our children. In a global economy, excellence in public education is a necessity, not an option.
- The Ontario Liberals have a plan for clean, safe communities that work. We will clean up our air and water. We will ease gridlock in our cities and protect green space in our rural areas. We will make our streets safer by cracking down on crime.
- Ontario can and should be the best place in North America to build a business and raise a family. The Ontario Liberal plan for economic growth will balance the budget, keep taxes down, create more and better jobs and raise our quality of life.
- The Ontario Liberals believe public health care is the best health care. Our plan for better health care will ensure you get the care you need, when you need it. We will strengthen and modernize medicare, not privatize it.
- The Ontario Liberals have a plan to reform government and renew trust in our democratic institutions. We will engage citizens in the political process and represent them fully, fairly and openly at Queen's Park. We will work in the interests of all Ontarians.
- Our plan to deliver positive change for rural Ontario features protection of rural schools, new markets for Ontario-grown products, and improved access to doctors and nurses.
- Our plan for the North will mean Northerners will get improved access to the quality public health care that they deserve and are entitled to. Our plan will improve the quality of life for all Northerners.





In response to this Platform, Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre has sent the following letter to the Premier of Ontario.

October 28, 2003

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty:

On behalf of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre congratulations on your election to the legislature. Recently you would have received a background letter from the Ontario Federation of Community Mental Health and Addiction Programs (OFCMHAP) asking for help to stabilize services to people in the province of Ontario.

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre works in your community to assist people in dealing with the debilitating effects of addictions. A growing need for services and a system that has not seen a base budget increase since 1992 means that Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre cannot meet all of the challenges in the community.

The impact of addictions in Ontario cannot be ignored. For example:

- Conservative cost to the economy of substance abuse in 1992 was over 7 billion dollars
- Annual number of hospitalizations due to substance abuse in Ontario – 114,481
- Annual number of hospital days due to substance abuse in Ontario – 1,608,138

Despite these increasing pressures on addiction services, providers across the province have identified that:

- 80% of community-based programs indicate that they have to close programs temporarily to cope with fiscal pressures. 25% are closing programs permanently
- Since 1996 Ontario has lost almost 10% of residential addiction treatment beds and over 14% of withdrawal management beds

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre provides outpatient day-treatment services to women with alcohol, drug and/or problem gambling issues. Even

though we're a small community-based organization,

last fiscal year we provided 704 women with the treatment services they needed to stay in their own community.

Despite the success of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre we could not provide the support that your community needs. For example, our waiting list for the first appointment is approximately three to six weeks, we are not funded to provide bus tickets and child care services to our clients. This creates a barrier for many of our clients for accessibility to our services; we have to fundraise for monies for bus tickets and childcare since our funder, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, does not provide funding for these essential services. Addiction programs in Ontario have been struggling to stay afloat with budgets that remain at 1991 levels; another example is that our Counsellors with a Masters Degree and fifteen years of experience are only getting \$23.45 per hour. For an Ottawa-based organization, this salary rate doesn't reflect a Professional Counsellor's salary.

We know that with the erosion of services over time, we are not meeting the needs of your community. Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre supports the call of OFCMHAP for immediate stabilization funding to prevent the further deterioration of community-based services. This support will help to stabilize the services being provided in your community.

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre will be celebrating 25 years of service in 2004 and would like to extend an invitation to you to visit us and see the dramatic impact of our services. We also hope that you will be able to hear our need for support in addressing the many crucial service issues confronting us as an organization.

As you face the many challenges of being the new Premier of Ontario be confident that we, as an organization, are ready to support you in addressing addiction issues.

Sincerely,
Anne Hrnchiar, Chair
Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre

c.c.: Kate Jackson, Action Regional Director, MOHLTC
David Kelly, Director, OFCMHAP



Subsidized Transportation Program



Most of our clients are low-income and do not have the money necessary to purchase bus passes or bus tickets. If we did not provide the bus tickets to our clients, they would not be able to access their treatment and their quest to change the factors in their lives affecting their well-being would be blocked.

We currently spend \$100.00 per month on bus tickets from our fund-raising monies. This amount only lasts until mid-month. When the bus tickets which we have purchased are gone ... they're gone. We do

not have the resources to spend any more than \$100.00 per month on bus tickets.

Our current needs are for \$200.00 per month x 12 months = \$2,400 which would purchase bus tickets to last the entire month and provide all of our clients and their children with a transportation means.

This program would be on-going each year, with no end until the provincial government, OC Transpo and the municipal government recognize that this is a very real obstacle for low-income women seeking to end their cycle of addiction. We are currently very focused on finding a solution to this problem as their ability to attend groups and counselling sessions is an integral part of the service which we provide to the women and children of Ottawa. Once this hurdle has been cleared our organization can focus on finding new ways of assisting our clients.

challenges by committing themselves to seek treatment and by providing them with bus tickets, it is one less challenge our clients must face.

Natalie Champagne
Community Relations & Media Coordinator

Early Childhood Development, Phase II

Exciting things have been happening on this project. Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre is again the lead agency in Phase II of this project (2003-2007) funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. We're now going to start the service delivery phase of this project which is providing services for (pregnant) women with addictions and their children age six years and under. The Project Coordinator, Cindy Deschenes, and the Project Assistant, Ruhyne Remtulla, were hired this past summer. Welcome to Cindy and Ruhyne!

The Project Coordinator will be working closely with each of the Local Sponsoring Agencies for each region to develop a Coalition made up of allied sector members that will determine the service delivery plan for each region. The Local Sponsoring Agency for the Ottawa Region is Rideauwood Addiction & Family Services, for the Renfrew Region it is Pathways Alcohol & Drug Treatment Program, and the Local Sponsoring Agency for the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry as well as Prescott-Russell is Addiction Services of Eastern Ontario.

The development of new partnerships and strengthening existing ones in each local region will lead to improved, integrated and coordinated services for the identified population and will ultimately improve outcomes for women and children.

Carol Wu
Chair, ECD Project Advisory Committee



La dépendance chez les femmes – Pays développés et pays en voie d'émergence

Avant mon arrivée au Canada, j'ai travaillé dans le domaine de la dépendance aux drogues ainsi que dans d'autres secteurs en santé mentale au Bangladesh.

J'ai eu à travailler avec des personnes souffrant de dépendances. Elles étaient issues de milieux socioculturels différents mais elles avaient la même histoire, la même douleur et elles éprouvaient des conséquences similaires.

Il est intéressant d'observer comment les réponses émotionnelles sont présentées différemment (au Canada et au Bangladesh). Au Bangladesh, les femmes apprennent plus souvent à gérer leurs difficultés par la dissociation ou en convertissant leurs symptômes de difficultés psychologiques en de vagues symptômes physiques (la somatisation).

L'ignorance, la stigmatisation, le sentiment d'impuissance et d'être sans recours dominant la vie d'une femme. L'absence de systèmes de soutien social adéquats ou d'un filet de sécurité empirent la situation.

La dépendance aux drogues chez les femmes est moins grande au Bangladesh qu'ici. Cependant, il y en a de plus en plus, la croissance est rapide et un environnement critique n'offrant aucun soutien force les femmes à souffrir intérieurement en silence. Éventuellement leurs familles prennent des mesures draconiennes pour les contrôler ou elles sont abandonnées pour toujours.

Les femmes vont rarement dans des centres de traitement; elles ne cherchent pas de soutien non plus. La honte et le secret sont omniprésents. Une grande proportion de personnes vit sous le seuil de la pauvreté et la dépendance n'est qu'un problème de plus dans leur vie. La gestion financière est le plus grand défi auquel elles ont à faire face dans leur rétablissement.

C'est un grand soulagement de voir le grand éventail de services offerts à Ottawa. Cela peut, en bout de ligne, rendre la vie plus facile qu'elle ne l'est dans les pays en voie d'émergence.

Nighat Ara
Conseillère

Traduction Marie Gérin, conseillère

Help Women Build Healthier Lives

Become a **member** and/or **donor**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- Individual (\$15)
- Organization (\$50)
- Pay-as-you-can \$ _____

Your membership includes:

- ◆ a vote at our Annual General Meeting in June
- ◆ Amethyst mailings including our Newsletter and Annual Report

DONATION

- Here is my donation: \$ _____

For your donation you will receive:

- ◆ an income tax receipt for donations over \$10
- ◆ Amethyst mailings including our Newsletter and Annual Report

To make a **donation**, please make your cheque payable to

Friends of Amethyst.

For a **membership**, make your cheque payable to

Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre

**488 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, ON
K1N 6M8**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Prov. _____

Postal Code _____

Phone _____



Aidez les femmes à bâtir des vies plus saines

Devenez **membre** ou faites un **don**

FORMULAIRE D'ADHÉSION

- Individu (15 \$)
- Organisme (50 \$)
- Ce que vous pouvez _____ \$

Les privilèges de membre incluent :

- ◆ le droit de vote à notre assemblée générale annuelle au mois de juin
- ◆ nos bulletins d'information, notre rapport annuel, etc.

DON

- Voici mon don : _____ \$

Pour votre don vous recevrez :

- ◆ un reçu pour fins d'impôt (pour tout don de 10 \$ et plus)
- ◆ nos bulletins d'information, notre rapport annuel, etc.

S.V.P. faites votre chèque à l'ordre de
« **Friends of Amethyst** »
s'il s'agit d'un **don**.

Faites-le au nom du
Centre Amethyst pour femmes toxicomanes
pour devenir **membre**.

**488, rue Wilbrod
Ottawa, ON
K1N 6M8**

Nom _____

Adresse _____

Ville _____

Prov. _____

Code Postal _____

Tél. _____

Événements dans la communauté

anniversaire avancent bien et plusieurs événements y seront consacrés dès février 2004.

Here's to you Sister! Ce sera notre premier événement, lequel aura lieu le 26 février prochain au Collège Algonquin sur l'avenue Woodroffe. Ce sera un dîner/souvenirs des tous débuts du Centre Amethyst pour femmes toxicomanes mais qui nous fera aussi voir à quel point notre parcours a progressé.

Notre second événement sera notre premier tournoi de golf. Il aura lieu le 23 juin 2004 au Loch March Golf and Country Club de Kanata.

Quant au principal événement, il se tiendra au Centre des congrès d'Ottawa le 25 septembre prochain. Suzie Vinick sera l'invitée principale et elle chantera ses *Blues*. Vous pouvez aussi visiter notre site, www.amethyst-ottawa.org pour plus d'information.

Bradda Printing a accepté de commanditer tous nos besoins d'imprimerie pour ces événements. Nous tenons à remercier Rick Deschamps pour son soutien continu du Centre Amethyst pour femmes toxicomanes. Nous sommes également en processus pour obtenir un "commanditaire principal" pour ces événements.

Au cours des mois de l'été dernier, nous avons participé à la *Pride Parade* du 13 juillet, tenant fièrement notre bannière le long du parcours du défilé.

Nous avons aussi participé à plusieurs foires d'agences diverses dans la communauté. Nous espérons vraiment être du *Rock City Women's Festival* mais malheureusement, l'événement n'a pas eu lieu. Nous espérons que 2004 nous le ramènera!

Natalie Champagne
Coordonatrice du développement et relations
communautaires/ médias
Traduction Marie Gérin, conseillère



In the Community

The plans for our 25th Anniversary Celebrations are beginning to take shape and we are looking forward to

many events beginning in February, 2004.

HERE'S TO YOU SISTER! Our first event on February 26, 2004 will be held at Algonquin College on Woodroffe Avenue as a dinner/reminiscent of the very beginning of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre and a look at how far we've come.

Our 2nd event will be our 1st Annual Golf Tournament which will be held on June 23, 2004 at the Loch March Golf and Country Club in Kanata.

Our main event will be held at the Ottawa Congress Centre on September 25, 2004 featuring Suzie Vinick (Blues). Check our web site at www.amethyst-ottawa.org for further details.

We have secured Bradda Printing as a sponsor for our printing requirements for these events. We would like to thank Rick Deschamps for his on-going support of Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre. We are still in the process of securing a 'Title' sponsor for these events.

Over the summer months we participated in the Pride Parade on July 13, 2003 by walking our banner down the parade route.

We also participated in numerous Agency Fairs in the community. Unfortunately, the Rock City Women's Festival was not held this year which is an event that we were looking forward to attending. We hope that this event will return in 2004.

*Natalie Champagne
Community Relations & Media Coordinator*

***Wishing you a lovely holiday season and
all the best for the new year.
All the best from the Staff and Board of
Amethyst Women's Addiction Centre***

Addiction in Women – Developing versus Developed Countries

I used to work in the field of drug addiction as well as in other mental health sectors in Bangladesh before I came to Canada in August 2002.

I have dealt with people suffering from addiction, they came from different socio-cultural backgrounds but had almost the same story, same pain and similar consequences.

It is interesting to observe how the emotional responses can differ in their presentation. In Bangladesh, women learn to cope more often by dissociating or converting the psychological symptoms into vague physical symptoms (somatization).

In Bangladesh, ignorance, stigma, helplessness and powerlessness rule the life of a woman. Absence of adequate social support systems or a safety net makes the situation worse.

Drug addiction in women is less prevalent in Bangladesh than it is here. However, the number is growing fast but an unsupportive critical environment forces women to suffer silently inside. Eventually their families take drastic measures to control them or they are abandoned forever.

Women rarely go to any treatment centre or seek any support. Shame and secrecy are pervasive. A large number of people live below the poverty line and addiction is just an added problem in their life. Financial management is the greatest challenge in their recovery.

It is of great relief to me that a wide range of services are available in Ottawa. This can ultimately make life easier than it is in developing countries.

*Nighat Ara
Counsellor*



Farewell Rosemary



There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember. ~ William Shakespeare

July marked yet another bittersweet moment for Amethyst when Rosemary Barrett, a much loved and respected counsellor, returned home to Montreal to take a

position with Pavilion Foster as a full-time counsellor in the problem gambling program. Never has it been more true that Amethyst's loss has certainly been another agency's gain.

It was truly an honour and my pleasure to have had the opportunity to work with and learn from Rosemary. Rosemary was instrumental in the establishment and development of the problem gambling program at Amethyst, but also continued to work equally as passionately in the substance use program.

It seems an impossible task to capture in a few short paragraphs, what Rosemary brought to Amethyst. Her talents, strengths, and gifts are many after all. Perhaps what stands out for me the most however in remembering Rosemary, is how fully she gave of her self as a staff member. Not only is she a compassionate, sensitive, gentle, and empowering counsellor, but she is also a dedicated, passionate, and political woman who always reminded us of our connections and responsibilities outside of Amethyst in terms of making the world a better place, particularly for women. Rosemary's work and life is grounded in a tremendous belief in women's strength and capacity for healing, and she continues to serve as an inspiration to all of us at Amethyst.

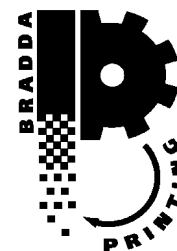
In the words of Isabelle Arpin, Rosemary, you are truly "a woman full of wonder." May this next phase in your journey be filled with much happiness and love.

Gundel Lake, Counsellor

Our Sponsors



Hawkesbury
General Hospital



Our Supporters

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pporters are organizations which have given a donation of \$1,000 or more. We wish to thank all of our donors, we consider all donations a significant contribution, but individual donors are too numerous to mention.

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