

Members' Bulletin



Safer for Women ... Safer for Everyone



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New year, new challenges

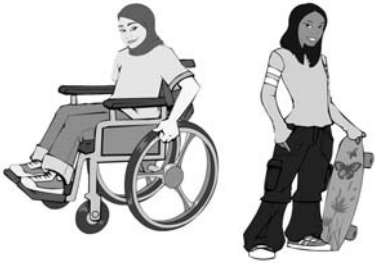
METRAC sends warm greetings to all of our members in this new year. We have been busy wrapping up existing projects and starting new initiatives to address the issue of violence against women, youth, and children. In this bulletin, we would like to highlight our upcoming volunteer training and our *What's New in the Law: Trafficking Forum* (free for METRAC members!). As always, we look forward to doing great work in 2007 to make our *communities safer for women, youth, and children, and safer for everyone* – with the valuable support of people like you.

Volunteer update

At METRAC, volunteers are an important part of our community, and we value their skills, energy, and ideas. Volunteers assist all of our programs and services by helping to create policy, raise money, contribute to newsletters, develop marketing and branding strategies, work in the community, and assist in the office, to name just a few roles.

We hold three volunteer training and orientation sessions every year, with the next one scheduled for **Saturday, February 10 from 10 AM to 3 PM**. We have invited 18 fantastic women to this training session, which will cover the following topics: METRAC's mission, structure, and programs; volunteer rights and responsibilities; an introduction to the issue of violence against women; the feminist perspective on violence against women; and an introduction to the principles of anti-oppression. After training, these women will help end violence against women, children, and youth by assisting with special events, helping METRAC manage its website, conducting community safety audits, joining committees, assisting with database support, and much more! In return, they'll receive opportunities for skill development, access to resources on women's issues, networking opportunities, resume credits, and a supportive environment based on teamwork. For more information on our volunteer program, please visit www.metrac.org or call 416-392-3135.

Project spotlight: METRAC's RePlay Positive Gaming Project



RePlay game characters

RePlay is METRAC's special project for children and youth aged 8 to 14. Funded by the Ontario Women's Directorate, it seeks to promote healthy, equal relationships amongst diverse children and youth through the mechanism of an educational online video game. The RePlay Project started with a series of focus groups, consisting of more than 250 children and youth throughout Ontario – this helped us ensure that the game is grounded in their needs and preferences.

With the guidance of our Advisory Committee and talented team of developers, RePlay's game design is well underway. It includes a variety of youth-friendly elements, such as player control over the characteristics of avatars and a community component where players can interact with one another with respect to the issue of healthy relationships. Throughout the course of RePlay, the player will have to access community services and work through challenging situations to help a friend deal with an abusive relationship.

Thank you to our Advisory Committee: Chris Carder, Karen Blake, Jen Evans, Angelique Jenney, Jennifer Jenson, Bill McLeod, Alyson Pancer, Marianne Park, Carolyn Prolux, Idris Madar, Katreena Scott, Dawna Speers, Tina Vincent, Anna Vo, Luke Walker, and Hilda Watkins. The RePlay video game will be publicly launched in March 2007. For info, contact 416-392-4760 or outreach@metrac.org.

Free event Upcoming ...

METRAC is hosting a special ***What's New in the Law Forum***, with a focus on ***Trafficking of Women and Girls***.

When: Tuesday, February 27, 2007
6:30 to 8:00 PM

Where: Metro Hall (55 John Street)

Clara Ho (METRAC's Legal Director) and Loly Rico (co-director of the FCJ Refugee Centre) will be speaking at this important event. It will be moderated by Sudabeh Mashkuri (Vice President of METRAC's board and a human rights lawyer).

The Forum is FREE for all METRAC members. There is a nominal cost of \$5 for non-members. Please RSVP by February 20 by contacting 416-392-3135 or info@metrac.org.

Bowlathon Update

On Saturday December 2, 2006, METRAC held its first-ever Bowlathon fundraiser. 100 people participated in this event as team captains, team members, volunteers, staff, and board members.

It was a great time and very important to our Respect in Action: Youth Preventing Violence program (ReAct) to be able to continue doing violence prevention work with diverse young people. **All in all, the Bowlathon raised \$15,000 to help ReAct!**



ReAct Program members at the Bowlathon

METRAC would like to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who participated in the Bowlathon and helped us raise funds to make a difference in our communities. We would also like to thank our generous sponsors and donors, who helped make the event possible. METRAC's 2006 Bowlathon Sponsors are: All Languages Ltd.; Anne Spencer Insurance Agencies Ltd., Borden Ladner Gervais LLP; Bosley Real Estate; Debra Smith, CA; Frito Lay; Kristyn Wong-Tam; Kyle Spencer; Lerner's LLP; Sherrard Kuzz LLP; Woolgar, Van Weichen Ketcheson, Ducoffe LLP; Donovan by Design Inc.

Stay tuned for METRAC's Spring 2007 fundraising event, *A Night Out With a Difference*.

Ongoing wish list

As a small community-based organization, METRAC has a lean operating budget and many pressing needs, including the need for accessible program and office space and equipment to run our programs well. Here are some of the things we need:

- ✓ An accessible office/programming space (approx. 2000 sq. feet)
- ✓ An LCD projector (recent make)
- ✓ Portable CD/Cassette Tape player (CD-R compatible)
- ✓ 17+ inch television (recent make)
- ✓ VCR and DVD player (recent make)

If you are interested in donating any such items to METRAC, please contact us directly.

What's new at METRAC

Hiring of new Justice Program Coordinator: in January 2007, Farheen Beg joined the staff team at METRAC as the Justice Program Coordinator. Previously, as National Project Coordinator with YWCA Canada, she successfully coordinated three national advocacy initiatives: a research study presenting the voices of women fleeing violence in intimate relationships, a policy paper presenting community models for early childhood learning and care, and the YWCA Week Without Violence campaign in 30 communities across Canada. Farheen's professional experience includes supporting immigrant women fleeing violence, child and youth advocacy and leadership development, and years of experience as a manager of volunteers. Farheen is also an avid singer/songwriter.

METRAC in the media

In November 2006, METRAC was interviewed for a Global National News series on domestic violence. We commented on the fact that media attention fades fast after incidents of violence, and that violence against women is not often considered an ongoing newsworthy issue.

METRAC also appeared on a CBC French Radio show to discuss women's public safety issues on campuses. The story was run in reference to recent public sexual assaults of women near the York University campus in Toronto. Several other interviews have been done with other radio and newspaper outlets as well.



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