

# ANNUAL REPORT

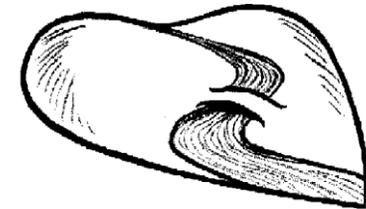
**2000-2001**

Parental

Legal

Emotional

Financial



**Separation and Divorce  
Resource Centre**

## **Mission Statement**

The **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre** provides counselling, emotional support, information and referral services for people of all ages affected by separation, divorce, or family re-organization. We assist individuals in recognizing their options and rebuilding their lives.

## **Board of Directors**

### **President**

Tim Schober

### **Secretary**

Crystal Buchan

### **Directors**

Suzanne Bell

Tessa Lloyd

Mariana Diacu

Jill Turner

Lex Reynolds

### **Staff** (year end)

#### **Executive Director**

Judith Avery

#### **Coordinator, Counselling Services, Adults**

Stephanie Ustina

#### **Coordinator, Counselling Services, Parents & Children**

Robin Fast

#### **Manager, Volunteer & Legal Support Services**

Pam Rudy

#### **Office Assistant**

Raji Goel

### **Contract Counsellors**

Ana McGregor

Trish Hamilton

Lionel Zelniker

Nadine Groves

Melanie Johnson

Donna-Rose Law

Susan Grady

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## President's Report

2000/2001 has been a year of successes and challenges. **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre** seems to follow that pattern every year. The successes include filling our group sessions, increasing our one on one service, and staying within our budget. **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre** continued to receive accolades for delivering desperately needed services to a large clientele. Challenges that we are meeting include: Robin Fast's departure (he has taken an opportunity to focus on operating a group home, which gives him more time with his family, good luck, Robin!); working with the Ministry of Attorney General, to ensure that the waiting list for our supervised access program is fair to both Ministry and non-Ministry clients; increasing the role of volunteers; exploring new sources of funds; and expanding our services. One serious challenge that we have not fully met is increasing the size of the Board of Directors. I would like to welcome Crystal Buchan back to the Board and Lex Reynolds to the Board – Lex and Crystal have already made their presence felt.

Thank you as well to all our Board members. Everyone has done double duty because the Board is currently too small. You have all shown great commitment to **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre**. Murray Crowther, although officially off the Board, deserves special thanks for continuing to supply us with reliable and understandable financial statements.

On the staff side, please welcome Stephanie Ustina, who has taken over from Donna-Rose as Coordinator, Counselling Services. Adults. Donna Rose has stayed with us in the newly created part time position of Volunteer Coordinator and Trainer. This is an important initiative, designed both to

increase the volume of services we can deliver by increasing the role of volunteers, and to free our senior staff from administrative work so that they can direct more of their time to developing and delivering programs.

Thank you to the Law Foundation of British Columbia for sponsoring Pam Rudy so that she could attend "Custody Wars". This was a seminar for lawyers that included children who reported on their own custody experience (including dealing with supervised access). Dr. Mathew Sullivan from California, a psychologist who specializes in alienation cases, also made a presentation.

Thank you also to the Canadian Bar Association Victoria Family Law Subsection members who sponsored Pam and Judith Avery so that they could attend Dr. Bricklin's program "Custody and Access Assessment".

Thank you to the Capital Health Region for supplying funds for us to work toward developing a program to follow the Caught in the Middle program. The new program will be targeted at children between the ages of 6-12, whose families are very conflicted and who would benefit from more skill building and one/one support. The goal would be to work with children and parents separately and then bring them together for a supported mediation.

Thank you to the Ministry of the Attorney General for its contribution to the Supervised Access program funding.

Thank you also to the Gaming Commission. Its generosity has left us a bit of breathing room. In addition to expanding services, we intend to improve the level of compensation for our Executive Director and Counselling Supervisors. The plain fact is that they are underpaid. We've studied the level of salary paid by similar size non-profit

organizations. Our conclusion is that if our Executive Director left, we would have to offer a much higher salary to replace Judith. As well, the turnover in the Counselling Supervisor positions over the last 5 years demonstrates that the salary for those positions is inadequate. The staff changes are clearly detrimental to **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre** and, in particular, it is difficult for children undergoing counselling to unburden themselves to a succession of different counsellors. Children deserve to see the same person to reinforce a sense of stability.

What does the future hold for us? A larger Board, a return to creative fund raising such as the Affair to Remember (from the summer of 2000), an expansion of our services, and a new President with the enthusiasm to make it all happen.

Tim Schober, President

## Executive Directors Report

*"I want to get you excited about whom you are, what you have, and what can still be for you. I want to inspire you to see that you can go far beyond where you are right now."* Virginia Satir

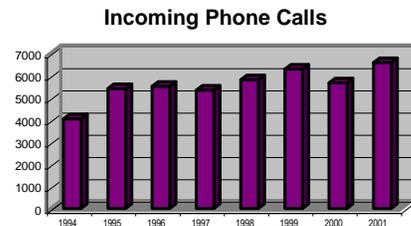
Words that remind me of what **Separation and Divorce Resource Centre** should strive to do for clients. It also reminds me what I wish for staff, volunteers and board members – excitement in who they are individually and collectively, pride in the excellent services that they provide and the inspiration and freedom to be creative and move outside the box in developing supports for the individuals we assist.

Every year when faced with writing the annual report I want to relay something new and exciting that we have accomplished over the past year, to excite you about who we are and what

we do. For the last few years I have stated that we are operating at maximum (and we are) and that we cannot possibly change or grow any more...but we do. Subtle changes that could be easily overlooked, but, over a period of a year, make big differences for our clients. Subtle changes that give cause for celebration, for excitement.

Staff, board and volunteers amaze me. When I know that we are operating at max, they stretch just a little bit more to go beyond where we were to provide new services. Case in point is the addition of evening parent groups for parents whose children were unable to attend Caught in the Middle, starting a Step Mom's Group, laying the groundwork for a group for Adult Children of Divorce and developing a roster of workshops for the fall.

The excitement about who we are and what we do is transmitted everyday when they respond to questions and needs for reorganizing families. Over the past year we received in excess of **6500** phone calls- up 900 from the previous year! The addition of voice mail has increased our capacity to respond to clients – what will it be like when we add the new phone system with an added line?



The expansion of our computer system and the addition of online access to the Internet have opened another means for us to reach out and be in touch with people. Staff are excited at the potential to access research on the net and challenged to find the time to

actually do it. Next year you will be able to visit our web site.

Staff and board remain excited about who we are and what we do and collectively they provide a vision that accommodates continued growth.

They inspire and excite me. What I have is a great team that gives of its time, energy and talent and carries us forward to becoming

**the place that people think of**

**when a relationship ends.** Outsiders are amazed at what we accomplish on the very small budget that we have and so should we be.

Judith Avery  
Executive Director

### Adult Small Group

This program continues to be popular, and helpful. We had eight groups this year serving 69 participants. Of these three groups chose to extend their meetings for an additional four weeks.

The Centre has supported these requests for continued formal association by offering the extended meetings on a cost recovery basis. Some groups continue to meet informally after the group has ended, evidence of the Centre's ongoing contribution to the development of community and fellowship.

Stephanie Ustina  
Coordinator, Counselling Services  
Adults

It would be great if there was more funding for courses like these

### Caught in the Middle

This program continues to provide skills and support for parents and children facing the reorganization of their families. This year 327 intakes resulted

in 242 participants, an increase from 167 participants in 1999-2000. We have been able to provide additional assistance to clients and facilitators by having a "float" person available during most sessions and we continue to provide one-on-one support for children less able to participate in the group setting. We are currently reviewing the program with the aim of increasing our ability to respond to families where more intensive help is required and, with the inspired efforts of our facilitators, ensuring the needs of all children in the program are met.

Robin Fast  
Coordinator, Counselling Services  
Parents and Children

### Parenting After Separation

395 people attended the workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Attorney General this year. In September 2000 the program became mandatory for clients going to Family Court in Victoria, however voluntary attendance continues to be high.

Feedback continues to be positive for this free 3 hour workshop. Sessions are run about 3 times a month. Because the program is mandated we have a security guard on duty to maintain the safety of our attendees.

### Legal Support Services

The year began with lawyer Janet Ross continuing to volunteer one day per month in our office. Janet met with former clients by pre-arranged individual appointments to provide information on family law. Client feedback and demand for this service was very positive. Unfortunately Janet gave notice in June that she would not be able to continue.

My son is more able to talk about his feelings and the divorce

I'm not alone and there's help for me

I learned to be more patient, more tuned into my kids

In addition to providing brief agency presentations to the Law Centre's Public Legal Education sessions during the year, Pam gave extended presentations to groups of parents from COPE with Connections and with Rainbows Grief Support Program.

Pam attended the week long Family Law Mediation course put on by the Continuing Legal Education Society in July 2000 at Dunsmuir Lodge. This course was taught by Gordon Sloan, a very popular instructor and mediator. Gordon asked Pam to provide materials and do a presentation on Day 3 covering resources available to parents and children. Pam also attended the CLE course The Custody Wars in Vancouver January 2001. The Law Foundation's professional development budget covered the costs of both courses.

During September and October Pam scheduled eleven orientation/training sessions. Different sessions covered office assistance, family court support, and legal information interviewing. For various reasons new volunteers did not continue and volunteer involvement reached an all time low. Addressing this problem is the priority and challenge.

**Apr 1, 2000 – Mar 31, 2001**

Cathy Rhodes  
Denise Wadsworth  
Diana Sarosi  
Eileen Forsyth  
John Robertson  
Kendra Barely  
Lauree Sears  
Leah Graham  
Maggie Lum  
Mel Klassen  
Moses Watson  
Paula Kroeker

Over the year we provided:

- **505** hours serving **528** clients with legal information sessions – pre-separation, lawyer, and court preparation
- **82.5** hours serving **366** clients with support and information at Family Court.

The trend this year over last year has been more clients coming to us who have separated but have not pursued any legal action.

**Supervised Access**

This year we provided:

- **15** families were in the program, given a total of **459** hours of supervision.

Actual hours of work involved in managing supervised access are much higher due to the time invasiveness of telephone calls related to this program.

More time was also spent as a result of subpoenas to court and involvement at case conferences.

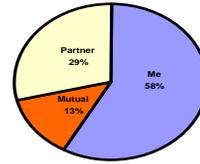
Pam and Judith were fortunate to attend the Supervised Visitation Network conference held in Vancouver from April 13 - 15, 2000.

Pam Rudy, Manager  
Volunteer & Legal Support

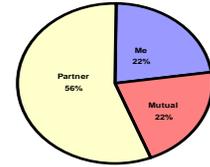
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**Interesting Agency Stats**  
**Who Initiated Separation?**

**Women**



**Men**



## Financial Position

For the fiscal year April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Law Foundation	\$46,225	\$46,815
United Way	20,780	22,559
Bingo	21,937	20,461
Casino	25,000	40,000
Ministry of the Attorney General	41,669	35,089
Ministry of Children & Families	7,000	7,000
Foundations	9,000	0
Fees & Misc.	31,894	23,498
	<u><b>\$203,505</b></u>	<u><b>\$195,422</b></u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Wages and Benefits	\$121,668	\$125,075
Counselling	21,887	12,300
Office and Operating	21,952	16,533
Rent	15,562	13,910
Research/Program Dev.	3,226	50
Audit/Legal	4,755	4,929
	<u><b>\$189,050</b></u>	<u><b>\$172,797</b></u>
<b>Net Income(Loss)</b>	<b>\$14,455</b>	<b>\$22,625</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit), beginning of year</b>	<b>\$46,921</b>	<b>\$24,296</b>
<b>Surplus (loss), end of year</b>	<u><b>\$61,376</b></u>	<u><b>\$46,921</b></u>

## **FUNDERS**

Attorney General

B.C. Gaming Commission

Ministry of Children and  
Family Development



*Our thanks to all who financially supported our organization in the past year.*