

ANNUAL REPORT

2003-2004

**Caught in the
Middle**

Evolutions

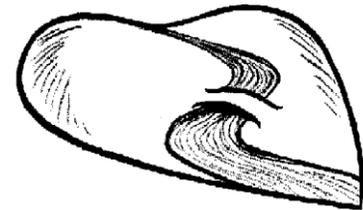
Legal Support

**Parenting After
Separation
Workshop**

Step by Step

**Facilitated
Access**

**Information
and Referrals**



**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.

April 1, 2003 – March 31, 2004

Board of Directors

President

Mariana Diacu

Directors

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Melina Barnes | Marilyn Miller |
| Crystal Buchan | Gay Pringle |
| Dyan Davison | Lex Reynolds |
| Robert Haymond | Avi Tal |
| Ken Harper | Jill Turner |

Staff

Acting Executive Director (as of January 2004)

Pam Rudy

Executive Director (August – December 2003)

Ken Cooper

Manager, Volunteer & Legal Support Services

Pam Rudy

Coordinator, Counselling Services, Parents & Children

Rachel Treloar

Coordinator, Counselling Services, Adults

Jürgen Jung

Coordinator, Facilitated Access

Claudette Sells

Office Assistant

Raji Goel

Contract Counsellors

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Rod Chant | Helen Lennie |
| Dorina Germinario | Tessa Lloyd |
| Susan Grady | Bev Regan |
| Donnarose Law | Stephanie Ustina |
| Ananda Lazare | Lionel Zelniker |

Marie-Christine White (Legal Support)
Jane Taylor Lee (Administrative Support)
Raymonde Vachon (Bookkeeping)
Diana Schulz (Office Support)

Separation and Divorce Resource Centre

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President's Report

I am pleased to present my second Annual Report as President of the Victoria Separation and Divorce Resource Centre for the year 2003/2004. This Report provides an overview of the progress made by the Board of Directors together with our personnel, contractors and other volunteers in implementing the agency's objectives and commitments.

The agency is acting "as an independent, self-sustaining organization which meets the needs of families located in Victoria and surrounding area through a complete range of programs and services, with staff that have the skills and depth of knowledge to meet the legal, emotional, financial and parental challenges experienced by clients". The Board of Directors is responsible for providing the overall strategic direction to staff in implementing this plan to ensure the agency meets these goals and commitments in a timely and effective way.

Since June 2003, we have made a number of innovations and improvements, reflecting our vision to create a self-sustaining organization. We have developed policies and measures to secure adequate funding for programs we deliver, including the development of a calendar of events, activities and deadlines for the submission of grant applications to current and prospective funders. Each application for grant is prepared and signed off collaboratively by staff members delivering the program and member(s) of the Board of Directors. In addition, the Board of Directors has recently decided to focus its efforts in the upcoming year on fundraising. This will be done by approaching businesses and tapping into community resources unexplored before. To this end, we are currently exploring the possibility of hiring a fundraising co-ordinator.

All these measures are designed to ensure that the agency continues to operate on sound financial basis. We will continue working in the year ahead to build future opportunities for developing programs to serve our clients in the Greater Victoria area.

The Law Foundation, United Way, Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, Ministry of the Attorney General and Ministry of Children and Family Development have continued to provide funding and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their generous contributions and continuous trust and support.

One again our staff members rose to the challenge this year - a challenge inherent to any dynamic agency going through a transition period. While our staff members have diligently and professionally run programs and provided services, our current Acting Executive Director, Pam Rudy, has done an outstanding job throughout the year, providing leadership, stability and continuity within the organization. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to specifically thank her for her services and dedication to the agency. She is an example and inspiration to all of us.

This year we are saying good-bye to one of the most dedicated and knowledgeable Board members, Crystal Buchan. I would personally like to thank Crystal for her commitment to the agency and her professionalism in mediating and finding solutions to controversial issues. While we lose Crystal as a Board member, she will continue her involvement with the agency as supervising lawyer to the Legal Support Services Program funded by the Law Foundation. We would also like to thank Jill Turner and Gay Pringle for their past services and contributions to Board activities (they withdrew from the Board for personal reasons).

This is also the time for me to say good-bye. As I step down as President and Board member, I look back with fondness to my years of volunteer work with the agency and hope that one day I will be back.

Mariana Diacu

Acting Executive Director's Report

The biggest challenges of the year involved replacing staff positions and having to relocate our office. Given the limited time we had to vacate Rose Manor, priority was given to finding suitable, affordable space. We found our first store-front office and negotiated a five-year lease with Greater Victoria Savings Credit Union. Thanks to Tim Schober who reviewed our lease documents and supported me with the negotiations.

The actual move went fairly smoothly. Time-consuming jobs of reconnecting all the computers and wiring our office for internet accessibility were efficiently handled by Raji, Mel Klassen and Mark Beiderweiden. Thank you Mel and Mark for spending a weekend to complete the internet wiring.

Once settled in our new space we focused on hiring an Executive Director. Ken Cooper was hired in August. Unfortunately, due to differing management expectations between Ken and the Board, Ken's position ended in mid December.

We were fortunate through Ken's discussions with Spectrum Job Search Centre, to hire Diana Schulz to be our receptionist. Diana's actual work term was from September to February; however, we are pleased that she has continued to bring her welcoming smile and friendly disposition to volunteer in reception for us on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Special acknowledgment is due to all the staff who did their jobs with excellence during a challenging year.

The support you have offered me has been immeasurably appreciated. I also want to acknowledge the Board's steadfast encouragement during this year of challenges.

Legal Support Services

A major achievement this year was completing an evaluation of the volunteer component of our Legal Support Services Program. Additional funding from the Law Foundation was available for this evaluation. Surveys and focus groups involving 34 clients and 22 community professionals were used to gather feedback. There was extremely positive reinforcement to continue providing our existing legal support services.

In spite of the challenges of moving our office, including periods of being short on staff, the level of legal support service provision remained high. There was an increase in the number of clients (**458**) provided with court support on family remand days (386 in previous year).

For the past year at family court I have worked alongside the "duty counsel project" that was implemented so that unrepresented clients had the opportunity to obtain legal advice. This experience has been an enjoyable and rewarding one because our complementary roles result in clients who are better prepared for their court appearance.

There were **408** client interviews for legal support (458 in previous year) Marie-Christine White deserves special recognition for assisting me in providing legal support interviews. Thank you, Marie-Christine!

We had two outstanding office volunteers, Angela Reid and Kathy Cormier, who worked full days providing office back-up before, during and after our move from Rose Manor.

Pam Rudy

Adult Counselling Services

I was happy to take over the position of Coordinator in April of 2003 and in September I was officially offered the position.

Over the past year, 111 individuals have had appointments for emotional support and our workshops, Evolutions and Step-by-Step.

We offered 5 Evolutions workshops in the past year. 33 individuals, 26 women and 7 men, participated in the 8-week sessions. We received very positive evaluations about our facilitators, Lionel Zelniker, Susan Grady and Stephanie Ustina.

Bev Regan facilitated the a Step-by-Step group in January for 2 couples and 2 individuals. We hope to have additional funding available to offer the workshop with both a female and a male co-facilitator.

Since the fall we have been able to offer one-to-one counselling sessions. Some people scheduled these sessions while waiting for the start of the next Evolutions group, the majority of the 42 appointments were for individuals who preferred the one-to-one emotional support or were unable to commit themselves to weekly sessions.

Jürgen Jung

Facilitated Access

There were two major changes in the facilitated access program last year.

In November, my position became full time. This allowed me to start offering facilitated access on a private basis, as well as referrals from the Family Justice Centre. At the Strategic Planning Meeting in November we decided to call this new program Parent Child Connections.

I am also pleased to announce that we received a three-year contract with the Attorney General in October to continue to provide Facilitated Access from referrals from the Family Justice Centre.

We provided service for **11** families under the Attorney General Program. and the Parent Child Connections provided service for **5** families totalling **79** hours of supervision.

Claudette Sells

Parenting After Separation

418 people attended the workshop sponsored by the Ministry of Attorney General. About half of these were people who were mandated to take the 3 hour session as a result of going to court. Response continues to be very positive from attendees.

Due to the move of the Victoria Silver Threads, we had to find new space to hold the workshop. We were fortunate to find new space at Citizen's Counselling. Our hope for the future is to be able to hold the workshop at our own office.

Parents & Children Support Services

This year has been a time of change for the Caught in the Middle Program. Due to our office move the program did not run in the Spring of 2003. Jane Taylor Lee left in April of 2003 as she was expecting her first child in May. The position was vacant until I started in September. Thanks to Jane's support and our dedicated contract facilitators the program was able to start up on time in the Fall of 2003.

Over the past 7 months, **123** parents and **102** children were provided with counselling services. The majority went on to attend Caught in the Middle. In the fall of 2003 there were 4 parents groups with a total of 24 attending, and 4 children's groups with a total of 25 attending. In the winter 27 parents and 22 children attended. In the past there have been three children's groups each evening, but in our new facility we can only accommodate two.

Another positive change has been staggering the start dates of Caught in the Middle. We now have groups

starting in September, October, January, February, March, and April. This change has meant a shorter wait for families anxious to start the program, as well as made intake interviews more evenly distributed throughout the year.

The Program fees and counselling fees were increased significantly this year. A sliding scale was introduced to ensure that cost does not present a barrier to accessing our services. However, many prospective clients and referring individuals still do not realize that there is a fee for our services.

We were fortunate to have four practicum students involved this year: Jessica Lefebvre (Child & Youth Care), Lara Schultz, Sylvie Cottell and Nirrie Kistan (all from the MA in Counselling program at U Vic). Their enthusiasm and commitment was much appreciated

by both staff and clients and we wish them well in their future careers.

Over the next year I will begin to update and review program materials in order to incorporate new research and interventions. As well, we are hoping to secure funding to expand the program into the community. Many participants, particularly those with ongoing challenges, have expressed an interest in a longer program. We hope to offer an extension to Caught in the Middle this fall, on a trial basis.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the staff and board for their support this year. Particular thanks to Jane Taylor Lee, Lionel Zelniker, and Donnarose Law who made themselves regularly available on their own time to guide and support me in my new position.

Rachel Treloar

**Unaudited
Financial Statements (at year end)**

| | 2004 | 2003 |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Ministry of Attorney General | \$ 38,371 | \$ 42,655 |
| Law Foundation | 40,600 | 41,916 |
| Fees & Miscellaneous | 24,340 | 28,398 |
| United Way | 40,712 | 36,063 |
| BC Gaming | 26,000 | 21,695 |
| Ministry for Children and Families | -- | 7,000 |
| Vancouver Island Health Authority | -- | 1,000 |
| Donations (receipted) | 1,005 | -- |
| Other | 8,104 | -- |
| | <u>\$179,132</u> | <u>178,727</u> |
| Expenses | | |
| Salaries & benefits | \$115,434 | \$128,165 |
| Counselling | 21,901 | 20,683 |
| Rent | 12,634 | 12,699 |
| Office & administration | 6,502 | 7,713 |
| Professional Fees | 1,811 | 3,305 |
| Program Development | -- | 2,275 |
| Telephone | 5,159 | 5,079 |
| Insurance | 517 | 1,863 |
| Bookkeeping | 100 | 1,820 |
| Amortization | 1,144 | 1,378 |
| Printing | -- | -- |
| Training & Travel | 263 | 684 |
| Research | 3,000 | -- |
| Security | 1,684 | -- |
| Moving | 3,033 | -- |
| | <u>\$173,182</u> | <u>\$190,189</u> |
| Surplus(Loss) | <u>5,950</u> | <u>(6,937)</u> |

FUNDERS

Ministry of Attorney General

B.C. Gaming Commission

Ministry of Children and Family
Development

Vancouver Island Health
Authority

Individual Donations



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