

HELP & SHELTER

AVON FOUNDATION DONATION OF US\$10,000 FOR ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND CHILD ABUSE

PUBLIC EDUCATION OFFICER'S REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2011

1) CHILD PROTECTION PROJECT

- In-house meeting was held with project staff on Thursday 8th September 2011 at 1:30pm, next meeting scheduled for 8th October 2011.
- Management meeting was held on the 20th September 2011.

2) OTHER MATTERS

- A new brochure was designed for working with PTA's addressing problems (bullying, rape & Sexual assault and gang violence) teenagers faced in the school system. (copy attached)
- Sessions in Good-hope were done at the learning centre and Assembly of God Church Kaneville/Diamond were re-scheduled for October when persons would be available.
- Training for Trainers facilitation workshop was held on Saturday 10th & 17th September 2011. Follow-up schedule for October
- Some work was done with PTA's in September but due to school sports work with students could not be done. Schools were contacted and we were asked to call back in October to arrange sessions with both the PTA and students.
- Two-day workshop scheduled for 24th September & 1st October with Alberttown Policing Group was cancelled until further notice.

Details of Public Education work done for September 2011

Date	Organization	No. of Participants	Topic Discussed	Remarks
5.09.11	Leonora Health Centre	16 females	Child Abuse	• Session was done with mothers at the postnatal clinic. • Areas discussed - Physical and sexual abuse. • Physical forms - Reasons why children get licks - Alternatives (encouragement, choices, self-control (parental), respecting feelings etc. • Sexual form - Definition of sexual abuse - Forms (fondling, sexual suggestion, penetration (anal, oral and vaginal)

				Importance of listening to and taking action when children report sexual abuse. Helping agencies
06.09.11	Grove Health Centre	34 females	Abuse & Pregnancy	• Session done with prenatal mothers • Areas discussed • Forms of abuse • Reasons for abuse during pregnancy • Services of Help & Shelter
8.09.11	Den Amstel Health Centre	11 females	Abuse during pregnancy - reasons	• Session done with prenatal mothers • Areas discussed • Forms of abuse • Reasons for abuse during pregnancy • In discussing the reasons for abuse, some of the women were identifying with some issues addressed in which they acknowledge that they are affected by such behaviors. Mothers were reminded of the effects these can have both on them and their unborn child. • Services of Help & Shelter
9.09.11	Leonora Health Centre	15 females 1 male	Abuse & Pregnancy	• Session done with prenatal mothers • Areas discussed • Forms of abuse • Reasons for abuse during pregnancy Mothers expressed appreciation for the information, many saying that they have never before seen these behaviors as abusive nor that they can affect their unborn child. Services of Help & Shelter
10.09.11	Help & Shelter - Volunteers	4 females	Facilitation Training	• Training done with volunteers • Areas covered What is facilitation Facilitation versus teaching Purpose of facilitation
12.09.11	Leonora Health Centre	28 females 4 males	Child Abuse	• Continuation of previous session • Areas covered Neglect (physical, emotional and educational) Child's rights Emotional Abuse
14.09.11	Help & Shelter		Workshop – Advocacy	• In-house training

15.09.11	Den Amstel Health Centre	10 females	Abuse and Pregnancy	Reasons for abuse continued
15.09.11	Hague Primary School (PTA)	20 females 1 males 4 females 1 male	Alternative discipline	- Areas discussed - Parents received parenting tips and other information on the development of children (5-Spice - social, physical, intellectual, cognitive and emotional) . - Parents were briefly reminded of their responsibility to report cases of child abuse or any case where a child is in a vulnerable situation. They were also implored to get involved in community activities that support the general wellbeing of children, especially as it regards their care, health and education.
15.09.11	Saraswat Primary School (PTA)	98 females 7 males	Good Parenting	- Areas discussed - Gender socialization Parents were reminded that they are children's first role models and that their behaviors will have either a positive or negative impact on their children They were told of the treatment of their male children as compared to their female children Gender was defined and explain with emphasis on roles and how this socialization translates into adulthood - Basic parenting skills Parents were reminded that parenting is a process and were given info on basic parenting skills that can help in the process. These include: Encouragement A "Can Do instead" of a "Don't Do approach Allowing children to make decisions within reasonable limits Parents exercising self-control Respecting feelings of children
16.09.11	Workshop – Community Mobilization			In-house training
17.09.11	Help & Shelter	8 females	Facilitator Training	- Training done with volunteers - Areas covered The role of a good facilitator

				Facilitation & the learning environment
20.09.11	Grove Health Centre	27 females 6 nurses	Signs of Abusive behavior	• Areas discussed Mothers were made aware that there are many signs of an abusive relationship; the most telling sign is fear of your partner. Other signs may include a partner who belittles you or tries to control you. The following questions were asked to get persons to think about their relationship and get help where necessary. Your Inner Thoughts and Feelings • feel afraid of your partner much of the time? • avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner? • feel that you can't do anything right for your partner? • believe that you deserve to be hurt or mistreated? • wonder if you're the one who is crazy? • feel emotionally numb or helpless? Your Partner's Belittling Behavior • humiliate or yell at you? • criticize you and put you down? • treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends or family to see? • ignore or put down your opinions or accomplishments? • blame you for their own abusive behavior? • see you as property or a sex object, rather than as a person? Your Partner's Violent Behavior or Threats • have a bad and unpredictable temper? • hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you? • threaten to take your children away or harm them?

				• threaten to commit suicide if you leave? • force you to have sex? • destroy your belongings? Mothers were reminded that if their answers to these questions are yes, their relationship is an unhealthy one and they should seek help not only for themselves but their partner and children. Most of the women present said they were not experiencing any of the above. However, for those who have experienced most of their experiences fall in the final category. Mothers were reminded to take threats seriously and to report these and also to seek help early.
20.09.11	Grove Nursery School (PTA)	54 females 13 males	Services of H & S Socialization of Children	• Areas discussed • Gender socialization and discipline Session was done with parents, who were told of the socialization of their children and the long term effects of same. Parents were encouraged to talk with their children, respect their child's feelings and to recognize them as individuals, to be aware of their children's rights and also to educate them on their responsibilities. They were made aware of the effects of violence on children who witness/are affected by violence in the home. Parents were encouraged to visit H & S and were told of the services available to them.
21.09.11	Stewartville Secondary	28 males 11 females	Self Esteem	• Coming out from the discussion, two students were referred for suicide counseling at the West Demerara Hospital. One has lost both her parents and is in a state of grief, the other, a victim of neglect, her mother walked out since she was six weeks old. She does not know her father.
22.09.11	Workshop – Help & Shelter		Proposal Writing	• In-house training
23.09.11	Workshop – Help & Shelter		Proposal Writing	• In-house training
26.09.11	Good-Hope Learning Centre	10 males 12 females	Child Abuse	• Areas discussed • Types and forms of child abuse • A review of the previous session was done to find out what students understood about domestic violence. Responses indicated that students gained information as they were able to answer questions

				asked. - For the discussion on child abuse, from the handout definitions, forms and signs of abuse were read for the students after which a discussion followed on the various types and forms of abuse Physical Abuse - Students indicated that many of them are beaten by their parents and parents would use anything to beat them and they are usually hit on all parts of their body. Students were asked what their feeling are concerning same to which about 10% felt hurt, 35% felt that they deserve licks and the remainder felt it was necessary for wrongdoing. Verbal Abuse - Verbal abuse happens to be a major problem for many students. Everyone acknowledged that this happens quite often. Students indicated that parents would often curse them a lot, say degrading things to them that really hurt. One striking case is that of a 15 year old girl who claims that her mother repeatedly says degrading things to her and would often say to her “I have four children, two boys and two girls” and she is the fifth child. This she says! Hurts so bad that she often feels like ending her life. Same was echoed by many others who have had similar experiences. Students were informed of help available and encouraged not to contemplate suicide. Sexual Abuse - Students were told of the different forms of sexual abuse, the importance of reporting and getting help. Students were reminded that sexual abuse is not their fault therefore they should not be secretive about it. - Although no one indicated any form of sexual abuse to their person, when asked about reasons why children don’t tell, Some responses were as follows “if you tell you would be beaten, you are blamed for it, sometimes the abuser will threaten to kill you if you tell and persons are bribed so they don’t talk”. Students were reminded that it’s not their fault and there is help available - Students were also told of STD’s and effects, to be aware of gang-rape and were given the contact information for agencies where they can get help for abuse.
26.09.11	Zeelugt Primary School	14 females	Parenting-Alternative discipline	- Areas discussed - Teachers were asked to give reasons for working with children.

				- Teachers were taken through an exercise (5-SPICE) which was aimed at helping them to better understand the development of children and how they act and react to their environment. - Punishment On the issue of punishment teachers felt they had no alternative to “licks” both in their work and private life. Teachers were reminded of some long term effects of physical punishment and the importance of examining a child’s environment and situation as this will bring awareness of the child’s behavior and put them in a better position to relate to the child or children in their care. The issue of absent parents /role models was also addressed. Some other areas addressed in the discussion was referrals by teachers to helping agencies, reporting abuse, methods of discipline and effects of violence on children particularly violence occurring in the home. Teachers were also given handouts.
27.09.11	Grove Health Centre	26 females	Reasons for entrapment & DVA	- Areas discussed Reasons why women stay in abusive relationships We examined reasons why persons stay in abusive relationships. Mothers gave their suggestions. Among the responses given the most important reasons for women was “ because of the children” Mothers were reminded that staying in an abusive relationship will neither benefit them or their children but is likely to put them at greater risk of harm. Other reasons were identified and mothers were informed that a combination of reasons may exists in the abusive relationship that prevents the person from leaving. Reporting abuse Mothers were encouraged to seek help and to tell others they know of help available to them. They were told of all helping agencies available to them. A female police officer who was present at the clinic outlined the process of reporting domestic abuse and what measures are taken when such a report is made. She however acknowledged that not all police officers follow the

				procedures outlined. She also indicated that most women who report DV usually asked that a warning be issued to their abusive partner rather than having the case go to court. She also shared her personal experience of DV. • Orders under the Domestic Violence Act • Mothers were informed of the orders under the DVA available to them and how they can access same. Mothers were also reminded of the services offered by H & S. Handouts were given.
27.09.11	Lusignan Assembly of God Church	15 females	Domestic Violence	• The movie “provoked” was shown, however by the end there was not enough time for discussion. Follow up session for discussion scheduled for 4th October at 5:00 pm.

Submitted by: Kevin Massiah