

**RURAL YOUTH HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PROJECT
ANNUAL REPORT
FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2002**

INTRODUCTION:

The Rural Youth Healthy Relationships Education Project is a four year project which started in February/02. This project is sponsored by the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and funded by Justice Canada, Crime Prevention Investment Fund (CPIF). The project implements a gender-based, violence prevention model which will provide youth with skills to build and maintain healthy relationships.

In September, 2001, the AWRC was invited by the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) to visit a CPIF project underway in British Columbia and to submit a proposal to replicate that model. The Saltspring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse (SWOVA) Community Development and Research Society had obtained three years of CPIF funding for their project: "Women and Violence - Education in Prevention".

Jean Crosby and Pamela Fry travelled to B.C. to meet with SWOVA project staff, participants, school personnel and board members over a three day period (October 16 - 18). On returning to Nova Scotia, a proposal was researched and drafted. After several revisions and negotiations regarding the partnership with SWOVA, the proposal was accepted for consideration in December by NCPC. After delays relating to a change of Federal Cabinet Ministers, funding was approved for the "Rural Youth Healthy Relationships Education Project" in February/02.

The project work is being carried out with ongoing consultation and collaboration with SWOVA staff and in partnership with the Antigonish East Education Centre in Antigonish County and Chedabucto Place in Guysborough County. These rural schools reflect a diverse population with a significant percentage of the students coming from Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian communities. Please refer to Appendix A for a project summary.

PROJECT ACTIVITY: March 4 - March 31, 2002

STAFF: Jean Crosby, Project Co-ordinator :

Employment Date: March 4/02 - Full-Time Permanent - 35 hrs/wk

Jackie Jacques, Office Administrator:

Employment Date: March 25/02 - Part-Time Permanent - 20 hrs/wk

ACTIVITIES:

The first month of activity for the project involved established the office with the attendant tasks of acquiring furniture/supplies, telephone/internet hook up and computer installation. Guidelines were established for consultation/training with SWOVA for the length of the project which will involve ongoing communication and a annual visit by their staff for consultation and training. The curriculum documents were obtained from SWOVA and delivered to Jack Beaton of the Strait Regional School Board who then initiated the process of approval by the Department of Education.

Jackie Jacques was hired as Office Administrator and the hiring process was initiated for the Diversity Consultant position. An important connection was made with Percy Paris of Henson College, Dalhousie University, regarding diversity work and education. Dalhousie University Diversity Initiative shares some common goals with the project regarding diversity issues. This relationship will be developed in coming months.

Initial exploration of additional funding supports for the project resulted in an application to the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund for an enhancement project to the Rural Youth Project - "Parents of Rural Youth Support Project".

NEXT STEPS:

A focus for coming months will be completing staff hiring: Diversity Consultant, Adult Facilitators (4) and Counsellor. Other immediate priorities will be; achieving Department of Education approval of the SWOVA curriculum; implementation of the Advisory Committee, training of Adult Facilitators, initial consultation/training visit from SWOVA and exploring additional sources of funding support.

Submitted by:

Jean Crosby, B.S.W., R.S.W.
Project Co-ordinator