

**Pre-Budget Consultations
Brief
Friday, February 27, 2015
Stephenville, NL**

Submitted by:

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The Southwestern Coalition to End Violence is one of ten Regional Coordinating Committees funded by the Women's Policy Office Provincial Violence Prevention Initiative. The role of the Southwestern Coalition to End Violence is to facilitate a collaborative partnership between community groups, government agencies and interested individuals to collectively address issues of violence and work together to promote safe, peaceful and healthy communities throughout Southwestern Newfoundland.

The Southwestern Region of Newfoundland has a lengthy history of community mobilization to address issues of violence. The three local committees; Bay St. George Coalition to End Violence; HELP Committee (Burgeo and Coastal Communities) and Peaceful Communities (Port aux Basques, Codroy Valley and Coastal Communities were all formed in the early nineties as a coordinated community response to violence prevention. With the launch of the Provincial Violence Prevention Initiative Phase I, the three Local Coordinating Committees came together to form the Regional Coordinating Committee, Southwestern Coalition to End Violence.

Addressing issues of abuse and violence is a complex issue requiring a multi-sector approach which includes public awareness and community involvement in addressing all forms of violence. Collaborative partnership initiatives are essential in ensuring safe and caring schools and communities. The role of the Regional Coordinating Committees is to facilitate collective grass roots initiatives which increase knowledge and awareness, help to prevent violence, and advocate for supports and services for those impacted by violence.

Initiatives undertaken by the Southwestern Coalition to End Violence include: locally promoting province-wide anti-violence campaigns; coordinating school and community-based activities during Violence Prevention Month; organizing social learning events for World Elder Abuse Prevention Day; partnering with local Women's Centres to address the issue of violence against women (Take Back the Night; Purple Ribbon Campaign); supporting PRIDE Week activities; supporting Mental Health Week Activities; providing Violence Awareness and Action Training Workshops; advocating for those affected by violence and abuse and referring them to appropriate supports and services; and providing a wide array of resources and information for groups and individuals.

Phase I of the Provincial Violence Prevention Initiative Strategy (2006-2012) demonstrated the positive impact of a commitment to violence prevention province-wide with the ten Regional Coordinating Committees providing invaluable grass-roots coordination of local and regional initiatives. Funding to address issues of violence and abuse, particularly among vulnerable populations, must be an ongoing commitment that is not tied to the provinces fiscal position from year to year. We ask that funding to the ten Regional Coordinating Committees be sustained with a total annual commitment of approximately 800,000 per year. This relatively small amount of funding ensures that communities will continue to have financial support for coordination of local and regional violence prevention initiatives.