



(Be the) PEACE TALKS

October 2013

www.bethepeace.ca

Volume 1, Number 1

In This Issue

Welcome to our new
E-Newsletter

Events to Consider

Updates from Working
Groups

New Online Resources

Contact Us

sue@bethepeace.ca
helen@bethepeace.ca



[www.facebook.com/bethe
peacemakeachange](http://www.facebook.com/bethepeacemakeachange)

Links to Explore*

Be the Peace web site:
www.bethepeace.ca



www.onebillionrising.org

www.secondstory.com

www.harbourhousebw.com

*Please note that we would welcome suggestions (and consent to post) added links to this list.

Welcome to (Be the) PEACE TALKS!

The second year of Be the Peace is in full swing! Because we know how important it is that people have a sense of what's happening with the project, we have started a newsletter. As you are aware, there are a number of working groups and spin-off initiatives that are up and running. All the work is valuable; every conversation fits into the larger picture of understanding and acting on violence against women and girls in Lunenburg County. An e-newsletter offers an effective way to stay in touch with everyone interested. Through Peace Talks, we will be able to update you regularly about the work of the groups, provide on-line resources and facilitate networking opportunities between members. The plan is to develop and distribute it periodically via our distribution lists. We hope that you find it valuable and that you will offer suggestions and comments about its effectiveness. Also, please pass it on to colleagues, friends, and family members, and "like" our facebook page.

Summer gave us some needed rest, reflection time, and now changes to the Be the Peace team. Both Nancy Ross and Elisabeth Bailey have taken on new positions and are not continuing as Be the Peace staff. But they are not far! Nancy has taken a term position teaching at the School of Social Work at Dalhousie University, while working hard to complete her PhD research related to the project. Elisabeth has been hired as the Community Relations Coordinator at Second Story Women's Centre; so while she is no longer acting as Administrative Support to the project, she has kindly offered to assist when she can until we have a plan to replace her. Many thanks are extended to both of these wonderful women! They have been integral to guiding the project over this first year and have brought so much talent, intelligence and dedication to the cause of peace and equity for women and girls.

Our exciting news is that Helen Lanthier has agreed to join the team as Co-Coordinator for the project. She has a wealth of experience, knowledge and passion for the issues and has been involved in our initiatives since the beginning. A hearty welcome, Helen! Check out her bio at www.bethepeace.ca.

As we enter year 2, we are excited about moving forward. We thank you for your continued commitment to spreading peace in relationships in Lunenburg County and we look forward to connecting with all who wish to participate.

One last note - we apologize for the length of this first official newsletter, but there is a lot of info that we wanted to pass on to you. We promise that that it won't be as long the next time!

Our Best, Sue and Helen

Events to Consider

- ◆ **Let Them Howl, October 19th, 7:30pm, The Pearl Theatre, Lunenburg.**
This is Second Story's annual fundraiser concert, an entertaining mix of songs, stories, and dance for all ages. Featured performers include Alex Hickey, Shannon Moore, Mary Knickle, and more! Tickets cost \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door.

- ◆ **One Billion Rising for Justice, March 2014** at the Lunenburg Farmer's Market and Bridgewater Mall. This 2nd annual event, part of the V-Day Global movement (www.onebillionrising.org) to end violence against women and girls, is in planning stages right now. Contact Helen if you are interested in being involved: helen@bethepeace.ca.

- ◆ **Youth Hypersexualization in the Media Project by Canadian Mental Health Assoc.**
Bringing youth voices together, an opportunity for youth, age 15-20. Conference at Mount Saint Vincent University, October 25th, includes a \$50 honorarium. For more info:
http://novascotia.cmha.ca/programs_services/hypersexualization/#.UkyJChByYhU

Updates from Working Groups

All Be the Peace Working Groups are open to new members and anyone who wants to contribute or be involved in the conversations and action initiatives. Please contact us at any time to include you in any of the groups! Dates for next meetings are forthcoming.....

1. Sexual Assault Services

This working group is now being coordinated by Second Story Women's Centre, although Be the Peace will remain an integral partner. This community-based collaborative group was awarded Phase 1 funding from the provincial government to understand the scope of sexual assault in Lunenburg County and the nature of current services and experiences. Stacey Godsoe and Dianne Crowell were hired as project coordinators, and have completed a statistical scan and conducted consultations with victims/survivors and service organizations. With Phase 1 completed, a final report has been written, and will be posted on both the Be the Peace and Second Story web sites soon. The project coordinators and Advisory Group have also submitted a letter of intent for a Phase 2 demonstration project for services on the South Shore. A full proposal is due in November 2013 with key partners on board, including Harbour House, South Shore Health, Schools Plus, Bridgewater Police and RCMP among others. Thank you to Dianne and Stacey for dedicated and exceptional work over an intensive 8-week period.

2. Youth and Schools

With members from schools, community organizations, Community Services, police/RCMP, School Board, Schools Plus, parents and youth, this group hosted 2 youth forums with over 100 Grade 6 and 8 students about healthy relationships and hypersexualization at Bluenose Academy, as well as establishing contact with 4 other schools for potential activities. We also hosted a very successful 'Parent Café', the first of its kind in Lunenburg County, at the same school. The Working Group will continue to promote peaceful school environments and resolution of relationship violence, bring resources to schools, students and parents about healthy relationships and preventing bullying, gender-based violence and sexual assault.

We very much appreciate the support and partnership of the administration at the South Shore Regional School Board and Schools Plus, plus the incredible principals, vice principals, teachers and guidance counselors and all our volunteers whose efforts have been instrumental in these successes.

This September, with funding from the RCMP Family Violence Initiative Fund, and in partnership with RCMP, the South Shore Regional School Board and Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, who developed the program, we are piloting a Healthy Relationships for Youth curriculum for all Grade 9 students at Bridgewater and New Germany Rural High Schools. Liz McCurdy is the Coordinator of this project, working closely with the teachers, guidance counselors and administrators at the two schools, plus the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre Coordinator of the program, Laura Swaine who has been invaluable in the whole process of getting this going.

This year we are considering workshops in Non-Violent Communication, a Peace Ambassador program, and engaging with boys (in addition to girls), regarding healthy masculinity, respectful relationships and consent, among other topics.

3. Parenting Support- Parent Cafes

The Parent Café we hosted at Bluenose Academy in May was successful beyond expectations with 33 participants. Parents and school staff have already partnered to follow-up on the ideas and suggestions generated at that event. In year 2, we will continue to pursue hosting **Parent Cafés** at schools and community venues around the County, as an effective mechanism for parents and school communities to become partners with youth in addressing the myriad of social challenges they face. Through this partnership we can create peaceful, kind and compassionate learning environments for children and youth at all ages.

Once a school team has been established, we will help host and train people in the World Café hosting methodology so they can host their own Parent Cafes and carry on that pattern of open and engaged conversation. [Read more...](#)

[Parent Café Summary](#)

4. Men and Boys

A focus in Year 2 will be on continuing to engage men in the discourse about violence against women (VAW), and to explore how they can be more involved in engaging boys, particularly. The Gather the Men Working Group has been meeting regularly and will consider their next steps, including partnering with women in Gathering the People -- women and men in conversation together about gender relations and how to promote structures and cultures of equity and peace.

For boys, recent surveys and media reports have pointed to the need to have a component of gender-separated activities, conversations and exploration of healthy masculinity, navigating intimate relationships and consent, plus the influence of alcohol and other substances on relationship situations (for both girls and boys). We are exploring with various partners, (Community Services, Schools Plus, HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development, Department of Health and Wellness, YMCA, School Board), and other youth organizations, plus the national White Ribbon organization, to develop programs, initiatives, learning opportunities for boys.

5. Interagency Network on VAW

This Working Group has become a forum for various organizations to update one another about initiatives, programs, services, and hopefully potential areas for collaboration to close gaps in services for women, families, and men affected by violence. Participants include RCMP, Victim Services, Bridgewater Police, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Community Services, Schools Plus, Harbour House, Second Story, Family Support Centre and Family Resource Centre, Alternatives Institute (Men's Intervention), and others. This group has become independent of Be the Peace, although we will remain involved.

6. Restorative Approaches in Domestic Violence

Various people with experience in restorative justice/practices/approaches have come together to explore how these can be applied to intimate partner violence situations. We will follow 2 streams:

The formation of a community restorative justice entity that would offer education, services, support for restorative approaches and non-violent resolution of conflict. Funding will be required for this stream; sources have not yet been identified.

A proposal to pilot an expansion of the mandate of South Shore Community Justice Society is in the works. It will involve community collaboration on development and training. The proposal is currently circulating in draft form to potential partners.

Stay tuned. If you're interested, let us know!

7. Engaging the Business Community

This year we will begin to engage the business community as important partners in addressing VAW. Presentations to Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce will be offered with various options for participation that might include: presentations, workshops and support for employers and employees,

resources and encouragement for people to seek assistance as needed, workshops on non-violent communication, building compassionate businesses, and the possibility of establishing a Youth Initiatives Fund to support preventive programming for youth. We welcome the opportunity to offer a presentation to any business group in the Lunenburg County area.

8. Gather the Women

This group was first gathered in order to engage women who have experienced violence in relationship to explore what else the Be the Peace project could be doing to address the needs of women in similar situations. Women who participate are at varying stages in their own process and this group will continue to provide support, storytelling and compassionate non-judgment under the leadership of Second Story Women's Centre. The group did offer suggestions for the revision of the resource book, "Making Changes," published by the N.S. Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

We continue to work in close partnership with Second Story staff, and also our Strategic Thinking group that meets quarterly to explore different leverage points in the systems that play a role in addressing VAW.

In addition to these main priorities, we will continue to raise awareness, host community dialogues, forums and events, and seek opportunities for collaboration and partnership with citizens, community organizations, youth, municipalities, government agencies and elected leaders, developing our collective capacity to address and prevent violence against women and girls, and indeed to create peace for all.

Online Resources ~ New Links

- ✓ When it comes to responding to inappropriate behavior on the college campus, a small but growing number of professionals responsible for addressing student conduct at colleges and universities are recognizing **the potential of restorative practices to help young adults take responsibility for their behavior and set a new course:**
<http://restorativeworks.net/2013/09/restorative-practices-student-conduct-college-campus/>
- ✓ **A New Dad Asks: If Male Violence is the Biggest Threat to Women, How Do I Raise a Kind Son?** http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/19388-a-new-dad-asks-if-male-violence-is-the-biggest-threat-to-women%E2%80%94how-do-i-raise-a-kind-son_
- ✓ **Parent Cafés** - an innovative process for building the protective factors that keep families strong. An initiative of Strengthening Families Illinois:
<http://www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org/downloads/Parent%20Cafe%20FAQ%20General.pdf>
- ✓ **The Gap in the Gender Gap** - this important study estimates the combined cost of adult sexual assault and intimate partner violence in Canada and makes recommendations on how to improve the situation:
<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/gap-gender-gap>

- ✓ **Government of N.S. Acting Together on Sexual Violence and Bullying**, including Interim Report, September 2013 [www. novascotia.ca/actingtogether/](http://www.novascotia.ca/actingtogether/)
- ✓ **Breaking the Male Code after Steubenville**. Eve Ensler (V-Day) in conversation with a panel of 5 men. (Fascinating!) <http://www.vday.org/node/3054>
- ✓ **Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls** (Annapolis Valley) <http://engagingmenandboys.ca/>
- ✓ Article: **“Tackling the Roots of Rape”** NY Times, Frank Bruni, Aug 2013 http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/13/opinion/bruni-tackling-the-roots-of-rape.html?smid=fb-share&_r=1&
- ✓ Article: **For teens porn is pervasive and parents can’t ignore this. Chronicle Herald Oct. 7, 2013** - <http://thechronicleherald.ca/artslife/1158930-life-with-kids-for-teens-porn-is-pervasive-and-parents-can-t-ignore-this>

Happy Persons’ Day—October 18th !

“Never retract, never apologize, never explain. Get the thing done and let them howl!” ~ Nellie McClung