

# Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy



women against violence  
against women

SOUTH FRASER  
WOMEN'S SERVICES SOCIETY



surrey women's centre



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## Urban Women's Anti Violence Strategy hosts successful community events during Prevention of Violence against Women Week April 18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>

An alliance of Vancouver anti violence organizations is raising the alarm on the Provincial Government cuts to social services which leave essential services for women at real risk. Building on the success from their "Death does NOT become her: Pre-Mortem Initiatives" series of events the group conducted over the last week, Urban Women's Anti-Violence Strategy have begun to collect signatures from men and women who have signed 'Toe Tags' in support of independent women's groups who provide 'life saving' services. The Toe Tags speak to the Provincial Governments focus on women after they have been killed while virtually ignoring the life saving work of the independent women's organizations.

Dalya Israel of Women Against Violence Against Women Rape Crisis Centre described the situation for women: "In a world where we are inundated with stereotypes, myths and images about violence against women 'as usual', where women are made to feel responsible for the violence they endure, it is essential that they have a women's organization to reach out to. Women's groups support women to make sense of the shift in their world, to find options for more safety, to connect with resources and community".

Daisy Kler from Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter: "The elimination of core funding to women's centers and the refusal to grant core funding to rape crisis centers is a blow to all women in BC since there are no services that can replace the equality seeking initiative of these centers. No government body has taken on the task of ensuring women's rights are protected the provincial government has a responsibility to sustain our equality work by consultation and cooperation with women groups that have not only excellent feminist services but provide a systemic solutions to male violence."

Sonya Boyce from Surrey Women's Centre: "Since the elimination of the Ministry of Women's Equality in 2004, the political landscape has become increasingly gender neutral. We have seen a shift from women's equality to the risk management of victim safety. Risk management frameworks encourage women to report to the police and testify in court without providing them with the safety and supports they need to stay alive such as increased welfare rates, safe and affordable housing and access to legal aid. Ongoing policy changes and budgetary cutbacks suggest an increased tolerance for violence against women."

"All crime and social research statistics point to the fact that violence against women is the most pressing social issue of our time" Said Angela Marie MacDougall, "however our provincial government continues to tinker with policy and institute gimmicks including the recent release of the Domestic Violence Action Plan, while ignoring the life saving work of independent women's organizations."

Government may promise they will commit to addressing violence against women, but history shows, it is the independent women's groups and the services we provide who lead and have always led the essential fight for women's liberation and equality.

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