



WAVAW's Newsletter is now monthly. To receive monthly electronic copies, please subscribe on our website [www.wavaw.ca](http://www.wavaw.ca)

## A New Year, New Challenges, and New Opportunities

In 1982 eighteen women shared a vision of a world free from sexual violence against women. In the spirit of women helping women, these clear-minded feminists came together and formed a non-profit, grassroots organization called Women Against Violence Against Women / Rape Crisis Centre (WAVAW/RCC). As the story goes, the work began with two women operating the crisis line from a member's home. WAVAW was set in motion.

Today WAVAW is recognized for our services, which include one-to-one counseling,



support groups, accompaniments to the hospital, police and courts, advocacy, educational outreach in the community, violence prevention youth programs, and culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal women and youth. After almost 30 years of struggle and hard work WAVAW is proud of the contribution it has made in changing the condition of women's lives. However WAVAW's vision, which is a society where all women are free from violence, has not yet been realized.

With each new year, WAVAW is also faced with new and growing challenges: increasing sexual assaults, decreasing government support, ongoing systemic problems and continuing funding cuts. Yet we are motivated each day by the strength and resilience of women, and by the community support WAVAW receives. More than 50% of our revenue comes from donations. We know that together as a community **we can end violence against women**. Below are some of the initiatives already underway for 2012 which will enable WAVAW to advance into a successful future:

- Attaining stable revenue to maintain our services and plan for the future by conducting Monthly Donor Campaigns and inviting current donors to become monthly donors;
- Reaching out to more women and youth in our community through programs and the expansion of our **Raise It Up** violence prevention youth program;
- Working with a consultant, Board Members, staff, volunteers, clients, community members, women in the community and specifically women in the Downtown Eastside, to develop a Strategic Plan for the next three years;
- Engaging in a Capital Campaign Feasibility Study to assess if WAVAW could finally purchase our own space; and,

Much much more, which we will feature in our newsletters, on our website, and in our social media throughout the year. Stay tuned, it's going to be an exciting year.

## Did You Know?

Last year alone,

WAVAW provided over **6,000** direct services to women

WAVAW delivered over **50** educational outreach events

WAVAW provided over **1,300** counseling hours to women survivors of sexual violence

WAVAW answered over **3,300** crisis calls on our 24-hour crisis line

WAVAW provided over **121** accompaniments for women to the hospital, police interviews and court hearings

Aboriginal Youth accessed WAVAW's Sacred Footprints Group over **900** times

## Become a Monthly Donor Today

Monthly donations allow WAVAW to plan for the future, develop new programs, and save on administrative fees.

To become a monthly donor please call **604-255-6228 ext. 237** or by email [fundraising@wavaw.ca](mailto:fundraising@wavaw.ca)

## What can your Gift Do?

**\$30** can provide  
1 hour of **Direct Service** for a Survivor of Sexual Violence

**\$100** can provide 4 hours of **Crisis Line Support**

**\$250** can educate 80 Youth on the **Root Causes of Violence**

**\$500** can provide **support group counselling** for 8 Survivors of Sexual Assault

## Contact WAVAW

**By Phone:**  
Office:  
604 255 6228

Toll-Free 24 hour  
Crisis Line:  
1 877 3927583  
Lower Mainland  
604 255 6344

**By Mail:**  
WAVAW  
Rape Crisis Centre  
Delamont RPO, PO  
Box 29084  
Vancouver, BC  
Canada  
V6J 5C2

**By Email:**  
admin@wavaw.ca

**Online:**  
www.wavaw.ca  
Facebook: WAVAW  
Twitter: WAVAWRCC

## Our Women-Centered Practices



At WAVAW, women are at the center of all our work. This value is not only applied to all our clients but is also practiced within WAVAW through our policies, our culture and our daily work routines.

One example of this practice is WAVAW's Clinical Supervision. All WAVAW staff and volunteers who provide front-line services or who have direct contact with service users participate in regular clinical supervision. By being connected with a Clinical Supervisor, staff and volunteers can critically engage with their work, be more effective with women, and be accompanied in the ethical struggles

that are a part of the difficult and sometimes heartbreaking anti-violence work we do.

WAVAW's Clinical Supervisor is Vikki Reynolds, whose PhD focused on supervision of community workers and therapists working alongside clients who are marginalized and who have suffered oppression. Vikki has a deep commitment to social justice and her work is based on an anti-oppression framework. The care of the WAVAW team is the heart of Vikki's job, and she engages a spirit of solidarity in the work, putting our collective feminist based ethics at the centre.

This month, Vikki has contributed a personal and provocative story, "**A Story from the 20 Bus**" to the newsletter. This writing touches on the imperfect ways to be an ally and on the ever present possibilities for being in solidarity with each other. The story is attached to this newsletter.

## WAVAW on Groupon!

We are excited to announce that WAVAW is going to be featured on Groupon.com with a G-Team campaign from **January 31, 2012 to February 2, 2012**. G-Team is a community outreach initiative within Groupon that brings communities together to do good, have fun, and make an impact.



**The campaign is quite simple: If 24 people pledge \$13, then 12 Hours of the 24-Hour Crisis Line can be supported.** 100% of the proceeds will be donated to WAVAW but we need your help in making this a successful campaign:

1. Visit Groupon.com from Jan. 31 to Feb 2, 2012 and view the campaign on the right side of the page
2. Support the campaign with a pledge and spread the word to friends and family, encouraging them to do the same

Thank you for your support!

Keep up-to-date with what's happening at WAVAW through our **website, Facebook page** and our **Twitter** account.



## A Story from the 20 Bus

By Vikki Reynolds

I'm going to tell you a story about the number 20 bus. In East Van, the 20 goes through the Downtown East Side, the poorest part of Vancouver, and the poorest off-reserve part of Canada. I live on Commercial Drive so I'm on the 20 a lot. I tell all my counselling students, "Go sit on that bus, you'll learn everything you need to know. Figure out how to respond. This is where you are going to get your education".

I get on the 20 bus late at night, and like most women, I can tell you exactly how many drunk men are on the bus. But there is one guy that requires all of my attention because he's loud, he's standing up and he's shouting racist things at an elder Chinese woman. I freeze, I'm paralyzed and I think, what am I going to do? The first thing I think about is, I can't take on a great big, drunk man. I've tried this in my life, it hasn't worked for me and I'm scared of great big drunk men. I'm not required as an ally to take on that guy unless I have the power to do it. I am required to be an ally to this woman.



I looked at the Chinese elder woman and I kind of threw my love at her. I wanted her to know I was there, I'm with her. I'm going to try to figure out what I'm going to do. She's got her head down, she's got her groceries on her seat next to her and she's tucked in tight. She's not looking at my love that I'm throwing at her. This is a good tactic, but it's not working. While I'm trying to figure out how the heck I'm going to respond, a young sweet lovely person who I could not tell the gender of slips by me, Aikido style, and picks up the groceries, puts them on their lap and sits next to her. What I saw as a full seat, this person saw as a seat without a person in it. Beautiful, what a beautiful thing. So now, there is a body between this elder Chinese woman and this man who is attacking her with racism. The Chinese woman doesn't thank this person. I can tell this person is looking to say, "Should I put my arm around you? Should I talk to you?" And the Chinese woman is letting them know she's not engaging with them either.

There's a whole bunch of us on the bus that are thinking, "OK. What's the next thing we should do?". This guy is still going. Now I'm rooting for this young person, and I'm worried for them. My read is that they are possibly trans, or gender variant and maybe they are queer, so they could be next to be attacked. Why should they be in front of this big angry guy? This is not good.

There's a really large First Nations guy on the bus. I can't tell whether or not he's had a few beers or he's doing performance art because he's by the window, and he slips by the person on the aisle

seat, puts his hand on the bar and swings around, you know, takes all the room on the bus. In my head I'm thinking, "Oh man! Big guy stuff, there's big guy and big guy; this is going to be bad". But no, I totally mistrusted this guy. He's being an accountable man, what he's saying is bring it on, bring it over here. One of the nasty things the white guy had said to the Chinese woman was "Get back on the boat. Go back to China". And the big First Nations guy says to the white guy, with humour, "Hey man, you are the original boat person. Christopher Columbus was your captain. Get back on you own damn boat" and he's laughing as he says this.

Everyone on the bus exhales because we know we are going to be OK-enough, and then everybody leans in, and the guy looks at me, and though I do seem inept, I am available to be an ally. He looks at me and he says, "What the hell boat did you come from?" I timidly say, "Ireland, Newfy, a little bit of England". He says "You can stay, you know your boats". He starts holding court, inviting other folks into the fray.

As all this is going down I notice the elder Chinese woman picks up her groceries and slips out the door at the next stop. I go out with her. The bus goes on. I don't get to see the rest of this lesson in 500 years of resistance to colonization, but I envision it: It makes me happy. But I'm left on the sidewalk with the Chinese woman, and I'm wondering if she wanted me to accompany her, does she feel safe-enough to go to her home. She puts her head down and she kind of runs, dragging her groceries behind her. She's probably not new to this. She probably has really good reasons to not trust me either. I'm not a perfect ally to her, she doesn't love me, she doesn't thank me: She takes off.

I realize I cannot follow her. A big white person following her would be scary, so I try to let go of what I want to do. I want to be the perfect ally, but she's saying, "No". This is what no looks like. I work at WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Violence) a rape crisis centre. We work really hard to hear no and listen to no. So I'm thinking "Vikki, you've got to hear no too". So I know this is going to be imperfect, she's probably OK-enough, and she's probably lived with this her whole life.

I turn around, there are three other women at the bus stop and we are a real multiplicity of women. And one of them looks at me, looks at everyone else, and says "This is nobody's stop is it?" and we say "No". "We're all going to wait for the next bus?". We all chuckle and respond, "Yeah".

And that was my moment of the social divine, that four different women would get off at the wrong stop to accompany this woman who didn't need us to walk her home, and didn't thank us. This is a beautiful moment. When people do the right thing. And there I was saying "Oh man. What am I doing alone at night at an unfamiliar bus stop? This isn't the best scene for you Vik". But I have these other women in solidarity on this street, and I know there are accountable men on that bus. This changes things for me, it matters for me. I hold this moment of the social divine alongside the terror of the racism this Chinese woman experienced. That's the real story, and that's a heart breaking story.

Vikki Reynolds is the Clinical Supervisor at WAVAW. To learn more about Vikki please visit her personal page [www.vikkireynolds.ca](http://www.vikkireynolds.ca). To learn more about Clinical Supervision at WAVAW, please view page 2 of the "First Newsletter of 2012".