

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

DEVELOPING A SERVICE  
FOR BATTERED WOMEN

By

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A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty  
of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfillment of the  
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## INTRODUCTION

The following practicum report will give a description of the preliminary work required to develop community based crisis services for battered women. There are extremely few reports to be found that offer step by step instructions to aid in the design and implementation of such services. Hopefully this report will serve as a practical guide to supplement those few manuals that are available. Perhaps the steps followed in the process of the program development, as were experienced by the rural group discussed, will benefit other groups in their effort to establish similar resources for battered women.

The first two chapters of the report give an overview of the relevant literature and programs any planning group would familiarize themselves with prior to embarking on initial tasks involved in program development. Chapter III describes the student's practicum site, in this case, the rural setting of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. This chapter explores the special difficulties that exist for battered women who reside in rural locales.

The developmental phase described in Chapter IV outlines the actual ground work covered by the Portage group. This phase includes establishing the need for a service for battered women, shifting from an "informal" working group to a "formal" board, and developing critical community support for the proposed program.

Chapter V, or the strategic phase, illustrates how external decisions can influence program direction. The point is made however, that the program does not necessarily have to suffer because of these

decisions. Alternative planning involving a relatively new concept in services to battered women - the safe home program - will be described.

Finally, Chapter VI outlines some of the more valuable lessons learned by the Portage group in the described fifteen month period. This chapter takes the "safe home" program one step further in advocating that services be developed for more than the abused woman of the family.

It is hoped that other groups will be able to benefit from the growing pains experienced by the Portage group and in some way benefit from their experience through the recommendations offered in this report.

## CHAPTER I

## OVERVIEW OF THE SALIENT ISSUES ON WIFE ABUSE

The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women (C.A.C.S.W., 1982) state that according to estimates in this country one out of ten women is battered by her husband. The literature stresses the fact that battering does not have any geographical, economic, or cultural boundaries -- any woman can find herself in the position of being battered (Lewis, 1982). This chapter will give an overview of the problem of battering, the types of abuse, and it's causes. A major focus however, will deal with the response to battering on the part of the victims as well as social institutions.

In keeping with the fact that women of all backgrounds are victims of assault, the types of abuse and their causes are of universal concern for all women. What can be given consideration however are the idiosyncracies involved in certain contextual differences such as the rural battered women's situation. In this report, an effort will be made to highlight special hurdles faced by rural women which further complicate their vulnerability to abuse.

Overview of Wife Battering:

A great deal of the recent literature on wife battering emphasizes the fact that this problem has not received the public attention it deserves (MacLeod, 1980; Flynn, 1977; Small, 1979). The prevalence of battering was largely ignored until a number of shelters and transition houses for women sprang up across Canada through the 1970's as a result

of the need identified by the Women's movement. The extent and nature of battering has been clarified nationally as a result of the statistics recorded by these shelters in addition to groups and agencies taking an active role in the intervention and prevention of wife battering (Martin, 1977). Locally, it has only been in the past year that wife battering has received the public attention it deserves in this province as a result of the efforts of the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse. A major objective of the Committee is to raise public consciousness concerning the prevalence of wife battering and the need for adequate safety and services to these women through the media, political lobbying, workshops, and speaking engagements.

In order to understand wife battering, MacLeod (1980) suggests that it is important to take into account what it is not. This author is careful to point out that wife battering is not limited to spousal arguments which have gone out of control. She quotes an English study which found that more than three quarters of the women surveyed stated that most physical assaults were not preceded by verbal arguments. Wife battering is not limited in its definition to legally married couples but takes into consideration the strength of the relationship both in and outside of "legal" marriage. Ganley (1981) defines wife battering as "the assaultive behavior between adults in an intimate, sexual, theoretically peer, and usually cohabitating relationship." (p. 8). Ganley feels this definition serves to clarify both the behaviors taking place between the two persons and the context in which those behaviors take place.

### The Types of Abuse:

Wife assault is most commonly viewed as physical violence committed against women which Small (1979) feels is "probably the easiest crime to commit without getting caught" (p. 3). However the abuse or battering can be a combination of three types: 1) physical violence, 2) emotional battering within the relationship and 3) the psychological abuse experienced outside the relationship.

Physical abuse includes physical and/or sexual abuse. As an indication of the prevalence of this type of abuse, it has been estimated that seventy-two percent of "family violence" cases are really cases of wife battering (Lewis, 1982). The most extreme consequences of the violence experienced are seen in the homicide statistics. "Of 107 reported murders in immediate families in Canada in 1975, the wife was killed by the husband in 49 cases, but the husband was killed by the wife in only 8" (MacLeod, 1980, p. 10). Much of the literature on wife abuse points to the fact that battering is not typically an isolated act of anger. Statistics gathered by eight shelters across Canada indicated that of those residents questioned regarding the frequency of beatings, 31% stated they were beaten on a daily to weekly basis (MacLeod, 1980).

Physical battering includes all aggressive acts committed against the victim's body (e.g., pushing, hitting, punching, choking, etc.). Ganley (1981) indicates there is often a naive tendency to place various forms of "physical battering on some kind of continuum, ranging from a slight push to murder, to delineate the severity of the battering." "Such a severity continuum can be misleading if it is used to determine whether or not the battering is dangerous and whether it requires inter-

vention" (p. 9). For example a push or shove may lead to paralysis or death and should therefore not be minimized. Sexual violence consists of physical attacks on the victim's breasts/genitals or forced sexual activity in combination with either physical violence or the threat of such violence.

Emotional battering within the marriage frequently occurs in combination with physical violence. Viewed on its own, emotional abuse is considered to be as devastating to the woman as physical violence. This type of abuse can include direct threats of physical violence, kidnapping, or suicide, or it can take the form of a more direct type of aggression such as frequent criticism of personal appearance or abilities as a wife and mother. This type of abuse serves to undermine the wife's confidence to the extent that she is either afraid to do anything about her situation, or she no longer believes she is capable of managing without her spouse.

When considering the psychological factors affecting women outside of the family home, it is important to discuss one of the most common myths about women who are abused. Many people believe these women are passive victims of the violence they experience and do little to leave their abusive situation. Much of the literature supports the fact that battered women do work very actively at changing their situation, protecting their children and themselves, and would not stay if alternatives were available (Lewis, 1982; Hayden, 1980; Martin, 1977). The lack of alternatives and limited help is considered a form of psychological abuse and is key to understanding why women do not leave or why they leave and then return when they have been abused. Many of the

blocks existing which prevent these women from having any other alternatives are created by institutional structures. The systems supposedly in place to assist those in need (i.e., the legal, the medical and social service institutions), have historically neglected or inadequately dealt with the abused woman. This form of psychological abuse will be elaborated upon later in the chapter under the section dealing with institutional responses to wife abuse.

The overall effect the above types of violence or abuse have on the victims is to create feelings of confusion, worthlessness, fear, guilt, lack of trust and social isolation.

#### The Causes of Wife Abuse:

It is widely assumed that wife battering is caused by the use of alcohol (by one or both spouses) because drinking coincides with the attacks. A study conducted by Bard and Zacker (cited by Small, 1979) found that in 1,388 separate calls to police in West Harlem by some 962 families, alcohol was the primary cause in only 12% of the cases. A project in Kingston, Ontario also found it was possible to end the violence between spouses without stopping the drinking. Small (1979), Gelles (1972), and Wright (1982) do not feel alcohol is a cause of wife beating. They agree in some cases it may act as a facilitator in terms of reducing the individual's inhibitions against battering. They feel very strongly however, that instead of men beating their wives because they have been drinking they become intoxicated to carry out the violent act. "The problem then is not alcohol, it is the social use of alcohol to legitimate the violence" (MacLeod, 1980, p. 23).

Another apparent category are causes related to such stressors as pressures for men created at work and/or economic factors. This category relates battering to the fact that many families live in very stressful environments. When external pressures become too intense, violence erupts. In this regard, wife abuse is said to be more common among the lower classes and the unemployed. Although the "stressor causes" include an extensive portion of society it does not take into account the historical and cross-cultural accounts of wife battering. MacLeod (1980) feels that although wife battering is more visible among poverty stricken people, statistical evidence is beginning to support the belief that it is not primarily a lower-class phenomenon. Further to this, this author feels that there is a possibility that statistics on race may tend to over-estimate the problem; primarily because transition centres in Canada which house large numbers of native women are generally the only centres of this type that gather information directly relating to race.

More specifically, in terms of "stressor causes," Ganley (1981) views wife battering as learned behavior (i.e., individuals who batter "have learned at what time, in what place, under which circumstances, at whom, and in what way to act violently" (p. 21). She feels that wife battering is a learned response to stress in that some people have learned that it is appropriate to act violently toward their spouse. Ganley further explains the stress being experienced can be either internal in nature (e.g. feelings of helplessness, insecurity or inadequacy) or external (e.g., unemployment, racism, interpersonal conflicts, etc.). This particular "stressor cause" explanation of learned

behavior regarding battering provides a broader view of this type of violence cutting across socio-economic and racial barriers.

Ganley's contention that wife battering is a learned response is well documented in the literature in that there appears to be a high correlation between those who batter or are battered and what these same people experienced in terms of family violence while growing up. Many of these individuals came from families where they were either exposed to violence between their parents or were victims of abuse themselves (Hughes, 1982, 1983; Women's Research Council, 1980; Martin, 1977; Flynn, 1977). Much of the literature states that wife assault creates a generational cycle; first of all directly, by teaching children that violence against women is acceptable and secondly, indirectly, through the psychological battering of the children who witness the violence. This does not account for all cases of violence which have been statistically recorded however, as wife battering occurs in families where there has not been any history of abuse.

A final factor which is seen as contributing significantly to the pervasiveness of violence against women in our society will be dealt with under the general heading of "paternalism." It is felt that this "cause" helps to explain in general terms why so much violence takes place in the family and why it is so frequently directed against women.

A number of authors support MacLeod's view that wife abuse must be considered from a historical context to appreciate the extent of abuse today (King, 1980; Gordon, 1979; MacLeod, 1980; Nichols, 1976). The prevalence of the following historical attitudes considered as "paternalism" has contributed to what has come to be considered proper behavior

within the family for centuries: women have been seen as the property of their husbands; women were expected to obey their husbands and conform to the ideal of self-denial; men had complete authority over their wives that was unquestioned within their own homes; and a woman's place was identified as in the home (MacLeod, 1980). The C.A.C.S.W. supports the notion that these beliefs have become a part of law and religion, as well as a foundation for modern attitudes and practices. As a result the family is frequently immune to the same laws and rules that apply to society at large. A man's home is his castle and there is a general condoning of wife battering by society within the privacy of the home. In the strongest terms wife battering can be viewed as an institutionalized, accepted means of control. For this reason the women's movement does not view battering as a personal dilemma. It is more properly seen as a social problem and should be treated as such.

To summarize: alcohol, stressors (such as the work environment and economics), learned behavior and paternalism all may play a contributing role in facilitating wife battering. Wife battering has no single cause. It is a combination of a number of factors.

#### Responses to Wife Battering: (The Victim)

It is accurate to say that battering is not uncommonly a way of life for a large number of women (Hayden, 1980; MacLeod, 1980; Higgins, 1978; Lewis, 1982). However seeking help is often a step that is blocked by fear of reprisal and shame. In our society the success or failure of a marriage continues to be largely the responsibility of the wife. If she has been beaten, it is believed to occur because she must

have done something to deserve it.

If a woman does decide to leave the battering situation, the alternative is poverty in many cases. This is a difficult choice for those women dependent on a husband's income for an adequate or better standard of living who now not only alter their own financial situation drastically but also must make a decision which strongly affects the lives of their children. The sheer act of leaving the battering environment can be the first barrier for many women in isolated rural areas and native women residing on reserves. They may not have access to transportation (with or without their children). In the case of some native women, they may not have access to safe refuge within the close knit reserve community.

The alternative to leave is somewhat easier if there are support systems available such as transition houses or shelters. In many areas there are not. Many women (both native and non-native) are reluctant to leave rural communities to go to the city due to their discomfort with a large urban city. For those that do seek this refuge, the shelter offers a limited stay and then the women must leave. Most shelters are recognizing the drastic need for follow-up services for their residents. For those women from rural areas, the problem of continued service need is more frustrating and complicated. If they decide to return to their home communities, they are forced to seek out new sources of legal and social service assistance. Should they choose not to return to their spouse, finding alternative accommodation from the urban treatment setting back in their home rural area is difficult, if not impossible. This is particularly true in most rural locales as

available housing resources are often very scarce if not totally unavailable.

If the battered woman chooses not to reunite with her spouse she frequently experiences feelings of inadequacy, lack of confidence and self-esteem as a result of the abuse which she has endured over months or years. Compounding these feelings is the loneliness that can be part of having to relocate away from friends and family to an unfamiliar setting. (This is particularly evident in the case of native women from rural areas who face the added stress of societal prejudices in terms of housing, financial assistance, job opportunities, etc.). Many women who leave their husbands do not have the option of support and protection of relatives. Relatives may be afraid, do not want to become involved in a "personal" matter or reflect the "you-made-your-bed-now-lie-in-it" syndrome.

The most viable financial option for these women becomes city or municipal welfare during the first 90 days of separation from a spouse. Many authors (Martin, 1977; MacLeod, 1980; Star, et al. 1979) have documented the fact that husbands of battered wives typically control all family finances.) Due to a lack of skills, the unavailability of jobs, or a decision to remain with her children, welfare becomes the only alternative. In many rural communities and municipalities the women must pass a stringent needs test as welfare administrators in these areas tend not to be as "enlightened" as their city counterparts regarding battering, and the situation is further compounded by the fact that rural women do not have the benefit or comfort of remaining an "anonymous" applicant. The native women's situation can be further com-

plicated by a confusion as to who is responsible for costs incurred if she is of Treaty Status. This confusion can lead to delays in payment (particularly if the Band does not view the separation in a favorable light) and therefore add to the stresses already experienced by the woman.

An environment of poverty also means that a woman can spend twenty-four hours a day with her children with few social and recreational outlets available for the family. It is usually in the adjustment period after she has left the batterer that the woman is very susceptible to guilt feelings regarding the lack of opportunity for her kids. She is also particularly vulnerable to being pressured to return to the father of her children at this time.

The battered woman who decides to leave is faced with the task of learning about her rights and privileges as well as crucial resources that need to be tapped (e.g., legal aid). The likelihood of her becoming discouraged and giving up is great if her method of seeking help is by trial and error as opposed to seeking help from those familiar with the problems of battered women. This particular task is an even greater one for the native women who is mistrustful of the "white system" and apprehensive about approaching resources for assistance.

The biggest problem facing the battered women is fear. There is an obvious fear of being found by her husband or a fear that he will kidnap the children as a method of coercing her into returning (Hayden, 1980; Martin, 1977; MacLeod, 1980). Obviously for the rural woman who takes refuge in a small community, the chances of her whereabouts becoming common knowledge is much greater and consequently she may require a

greater network of support to help her cope with impending confrontation.

The realities faced by battered women have become obvious in the description of the victim's responses. However, an integral part of the problem can only be appreciated by gaining an awareness of the responses to battering by the social institutions.

#### Responses to Battering: (Social Institutions)

Earlier in the chapter it was suggested that social institutions set up blocks which severely limit the alternatives available to the battered women and this, in effect, constitutes what is considered psychological battering outside of the home environment. This final portion of the chapter will deal with the "responses" to battering by the social institutions. This will include legal, medical, and social service agencies.

MacLeod (1980) has stated that "the lack of adequate protection provided by the legal process and the police stems from the great disparity between the women's experience of a violent situation and the lack of seriousness attributed to wife battering by representatives of the legal system, who treat wife battering as a personal, family problem" (p. 9). In many parts of the country police are often reluctant to arrest men for assaulting their wives as most cases do not come to any legal solution (Edmiston, 1976). In cases where women lay charges against their husbands the judicial system frequently allows the husband to get his wife to drop charges through promises or threats. It is highly unlikely that a man will spend much time in jail for assaulting

his wife if his family has to go on welfare. Peace bonds and injunctions are frequently viewed as ineffective (MacLeod, 1980) because even if they are disobeyed, with the result that the husband is found in contempt of court, the financial hardship to the family deters sending the husband to jail.

It should be noted however that a recent directive issued by the Attorney General of Manitoba will no doubt bring the crime of wife battering out of the closet and into the courts. Law enforcers now have the responsibility of charging the assaulter in cases of physical violence against the wife rather than leaving it up to the woman, as was previously the case. This directive is described as forcing the issue "out of the closet" because accurate statistics must now be maintained by police in terms of the number of charges being laid and the disposition of each case. Previously police intervention was merely recorded as "domestic dispute calls" and very little further information was recorded. It is speculated that there will be a greater degree of action taken in reported cases as a result of this directive. However, it is also felt that there are and will continue to be a great number of cases that will go unreported or will take place without the possibility of police intervention occurring. This is particularly true in cases of isolated rural areas where access to neighbours for help and therefore assistance from police is limited.

Finally, in cases of battering it has been noted that lawyers may deliberately give poor service due to the inadequacy of legal aid fees or because they do not believe the victim and respond with some doubt (Lewis, 1982).

The medical profession's response is not unlike that of the legal profession. Help is not readily available. The Women's Research Council and Vancouver Transition House (1980) carried out an extensive research project on battered women in their shelter. As a result, they felt the medical profession approached by the victims generally took a detached position and attended only to women's physical symptoms. Of the 52 battered women who sought medical help, and responded to a project questionnaire, the majority indicated they were bandaged up and sent home. Only ten women in this group heard of the shelter and were provided with information by hospital staff and doctors.

This type of medical response is also identified by King (1980), Higgins (1978), and Edmiston (1976). Edmiston cites a study of one hundred abused women in England. Seventy-one of these women went to doctors and were prescribed anti-depressants and tranquilizers. Fifty of them went on to make suicide attempts. Forty-six of the women saw a psychiatrist with twenty-one of the women being given either anti-depressants or shock treatments. Edmiston states their depression and anxiety is directly correlated with being beaten and abused, yet the problem was not recognized as such or treated accordingly.

The responses to battering by the medical and legal profession do indeed block effective assistance to these women. Unfortunately the social service profession has also played a significant negative role.

A common complaint of the literature is that social service agencies have frequently tended to ignore the issue of wife battering (McShane, 1979). When a battered woman seeks help it is generally reported among a number of other problems and complaints she may have

(Hilberman, 1978). As a result, the social service profession are just as guilty of maintaining the problem and creating blocks for the battered woman as are the legal aid and medical professions. They do not attend to the problem nor do they deal with it directly. More specifically, they do not ask "the question." Authors dealing with the area of wife battering feel this is largely due to the assumption that wife battering is a private problem of abnormal family interaction. "The reliance on professionals with this view negates the seriousness of wife battering as a major social problem ..." (MacLeod, 1980, p. 3). The social work profession has been guilty of treating a number of interrelated problems separately. A recent body of literature indicates that sexual/physical abuse of children is identified as a major problem in families where the wife is battered (Dietz and Croft, 1980; Star, 1979; MacLeod, 1980). When there is sexual abuse of children, in a home where the woman is also battered, the child abuse will frequently be treated as the sole priority problem. The wife is frequently seen as having colluded in the problem without taking into account the possibility of fear and inaction due to battering. When considering child abuse of native children, social agencies have overwhelmingly concentrated on the apprehension of the children, with little if any attention being focused on other intertwined problems, one of which would be wife battering (Hepworth, 1979).

Social agencies' tendency to put emphasis on the needs of children, can jeopardize the situation of battered women in other ways. Through family court the wife may be subjected to contact with the batterer by counsellors acting as advocates on behalf of fathers. As well, battered

wives are frequently coerced into reconciliation counselling. Higgins (1978) referring to couples who participated in counselling, states that most cases were resolved either by divorce or by termination of counselling. Consequently he cautions counsellors not only to assess their own views of divorce very carefully but, further, he states that it is critical for the worker to examine how they view the wife battering situation -- "the causes, the dynamics, and the possible solutions" (p. ?).

A great deal of the literature in this area focuses on the societal desire (also reflected in social work training) to keep the family together, regardless of the costs. The lack of accurate statistics on battering within social institutions (i.e., legal, medical and social agencies), may indicate their failure to define this as a serious problem that warrants special attention.

#### Conclusion:

Wife battering is frequently ignored, dismissed or left unattended, as among a series of other complaints a woman may have, when she goes to see a lawyer, doctor or social worker for help. There is an underlying tone of acceptance of the problem when it is not dealt with directly. Social workers in particular, because of their more frequent contact with women under social stress, are in a position where it is imperative that they become conscious of the complexities involved in battering. Assessment of the problem requires that an awareness of the factors involved be developed before treatment can be adequately initiated. As an example, it is necessary to take into account how the experience of battering effects the women in order to make a decision as to what type

of intervention is appropriate. The key question is whether a woman can be helped in her home relationship or should be assisted in her choice to leave. If she decides to remain with her spouse the primary intervention should concern itself with stopping the violence whether this takes the form of marital counselling and/or a group therapy process (possibly court mandated) for the batterer. Most importantly, awareness of the problem of battering must be recognized as one which extends beyond the individual personal situations of social work clients. The issue is an extremely complex one that is ingrained within the fabric of our society. An important key to reducing the incidence of wife battering rests with societal change in the perception of the roles and status of women.

Having considered the salient issues involved in wife abuse, Chapter II will give a description of services developed specifically for battered women and their children. That is, shelters and transition houses.

## CHAPTER II

### SHELTERS AND TRANSITION HOUSES

The first Western Canadian shelters and transition houses were developed in the early 1970's, as a result of the need identified by the Women's Movement. Women required respite from violence in a safe, supportive environment. The establishment of growing number of shelters and transition houses in the past few years has been proof of the need for such facilities. This chapter will focus on the objectives of shelters, discuss the various kinds and how they operate, and outline some general problems peculiar to this type of community resource.

A review of the literature on shelter houses (particularly in Western Canada) completed by MacLeod resulted in the identification of the objectives held by these programs. These are as follows:

- to provide a safe environment for women who have been physically assaulted, threatened or harassed (i.e., temporary accomodation, food and support on an emergency basis).
- to provide crisis counselling to enable the woman to gain perspective on her situation and help her consider options and alternatives.
- to offer practical assistance in terms of information that will help the woman make realistic plans about her life.
- to assist in contacting and making referrals to appropriate human service agencies and resources.
- to actively pursue consciousness raising of professional and non-professional groups regarding the needs of abused women and their families.

There appears to be very little difference between "shelters" and "transition houses" in terms of objectives. In fact, the two terms appear to be used interchangeably in the literature. MacLeod (1982) however, implies that the term "shelter" is frequently associated with the concept of hostels geared to providing short term housing to transient males and females (i.e., post mentally ill, runaways, alcoholics, homeless, etc.). In reality the only noticeable difference between shelters for battered women and transition houses (if one were to search) is the fact that transition houses may allow their residents the option of a longer stay extending to one to two months. (This is not to be confused with "second stage housing" with a stay of up to one year whose purpose it is to "provide intermediate housing for economically dependent women to facilitate their transition from temporary emergency shelter to independent living" (McNeely & Jones, 1980, pg. 73).

Many shelters (i.e., Osborne House in Winnipeg, Westman Women's Shelter in Brandon, and Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter) all seem to offer an average stay of 10 days (to be extended at the discretion of their Director). On the other hand, The Women's Centre, Port Coquitlam, B.C., Vancouver Transition House, and Interval House, Saskatoon, all offer a stay of at least one month (Secretary of State, 1978, The Western Producer, 1982). The greatest difference in the facilities seem apparent between shelters (designed to provide respite from the violence and an opportunity to be informed of resources, options and alternatives) and second stage (transition) housing (where the women may pay rent for a self contained apartment, living within a building supervised

by paid staff, and having access to ongoing services such as limited daycare, professional counselling, workshops and information on interpersonal skills).

Shelters and transition houses operate seven days per week, twenty-four hours per day. The shelter is generally staffed by three overlapping shifts per day which attend to short range non administrative tasks: 1) a day shift during which services and referrals (i.e., legal, medical, financial, etc.) are coordinated for the women, household duties are attended to (i.e. involving meal planning, preparation and clean-up), and individual counselling regarding support and options are discussed, 2) the evening shift consisting of individual and group sessions for the women, attendance to record keeping and planning, and response to crisis calls, and 3) the night shift which again focuses on the needs of the women as required concerning support regarding her crisis, help with children (assistance with parenting skills) and staffing of the crisis line (as most crisis of this nature occur later in the evening and on weekends).

Most shelters and transition houses compliment their staff with volunteers. These people attend to a variety of tasks, some of which are: minding children, helping with household maintenance, collecting donations of clothing for residents, and providing accompaniment for the women regarding appointments and accommodation.

The long range, administrative duties of most directors of shelters and transition houses include responsibility for recruitment, orientation and on-going training of staff and volunteers, and regular staff supervision. The director also prepares grant proposals, attends to

public relations work to develop community support, and remains accountable to the Board of Directors of the Shelters (McNeely & Jones, 1980).

The greatest challenge facing most facilities for battered women is the problem of ongoing funding. British Columbia appears to have the most progressive system in the country to date in that all shelters and transition houses are part of the human resource service network. Staff are accountable to representatives of this branch of the provincial government and are paid through this source. The day to day control of the house or shelters, however, is the responsibility of the staff. This represents a significant decrease in the total amount of the funds that have to be raised for such a program. In other words, B.C. shelters have several thousands of dollars in wages less to worry about raising. By contrast, most other shelters and transition houses across the country rely on funds from a variety of sources. In Manitoba, the shelter in Winnipeg (Osborne House) has received financial support for their building from the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation whereas the Brandon Shelter services are located within the Y.W.C.A. building. In Manitoba, per diem rates charged to women to cover shelter operating costs are generated through welfare (if the woman is eligible), from the woman herself if she has access to funds, or through allocations of money from United Way, private donations, or a sponsoring body such as the Y.W.C.A. Aside from local sources in Manitoba, a portion of the staff may be paid through temporary annual Federal grants. This makes positions somewhat vulnerable from year to year as employment creation priorities, set by the Federal Government, may shift away from supporting social programs.

An additional problem experienced by many shelters and falling within the category of "funding" is the wage paid to shelter staff. Most staff are paid little more than minimum wage to work in a highly stressful job and employment environment.

Staff are generally hired on the basis of having experienced abuse themselves as opposed to being hired on the basis of prior counselling experience. Unfortunately, staff often do not receive any additional, ongoing training. Due to the excessive time demands on most shelter staff, necessary on site time and personal resources are not available for ongoing training for staff. This presents a very real problem if shelters are to attempt to avoid staff burnout while at the same time provide support and counselling as are required by battered women.

Most of the literature dealing with the need for shelters and transition houses stress the fact that battered women do indeed require time and resources to sort out their predicament (MacLeod 1980, Martin, 1977). As McNeely and Jones (1980) indicates "to adequately intervene in the lives of battered women requires more than the provision of temporary, emergency shelter. Many of these women and their children will require the long-term assistance of intermediate, second-stage housing in which they can reassess their own strengths and vulnerabilities in a relatively stress-free environment, and can develop and experiment with coping skills and problem-solving techniques rooted in reason rather than spontaneous physical force" (pg. 81).

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PRACTICUM SITE

Having discussed the issues involved in wife abuse and the type of service offered by a "typical" shelter or transition house, the focus of this report will be narrowed to give a description of the location in which the practicum took place. This chapter is designed to give a flavor of the community setting as well as to discuss the particular problems faced by battered women in the geographic area. Portage la Prairie is a rather "typical" mid Western community for its size and population characteristics. The problems faced by the area's battered women, who do not have local access to a shelter, are also common to many rural towns.

Portage la Prairie is a city of 13,000 located in an area of Manitoba whose primary economical base relates either directly or indirectly to agriculture. The city is surrounded by large grain and vegetable farms, consequently the largest employing industries relate to this specific base (e.g., McCains, Campbell Soup, etc.). An exception to these types of industries in terms of employment would be in the "human service industry" (e.g., the Manitoba School for the Retarded, Agassiz Centre for Youth, and government agencies servicing the Central Region of Manitoba). Central offices for such services as agriculture, public health, Social Allowance, Community Mental Health, Probation, Retardation, Human Resource Opportunity, etc. are located in Portage. This city also provides many other typical municipal services to its citizens, such as a 131 bed hospital, three medical clinics, seven law

firms, Children's Aid Society of Central Region, an R.C.M.P. detachment, City Welfare, etc. There are a host of community service clubs and organizations represented, in addition to most religious denominations being established here. Many people from the surrounding rural areas retire in Portage, consequently services to retirees are adequate in terms of housing. The city has three large apartment complexes for senior citizens and one personal care home consisting of 150 beds.

In terms of the "working age" population, affordable housing presents a problem for those people who do not own their own homes. Despite the fact that the Portage Housing Authority manages two large apartment complexes and several houses with rent based on income, a lengthy waiting list exists for many families requiring subsidized housing.

Like many communities across the country, Portage appears to be hardest hit by high unemployment and lay offs during the winter months. This situation appears to ease somewhat in the spring and is directly related to the seasonal upsurge of the agricultural industry. In the past two years it has been increasingly difficult for women in particular to obtain full or part-time work as many smaller businesses have not survived the recession and/or existing businesses have cut back on operating hours.

Lack of employment opportunities make it difficult for women to supplement the family's income or to survive on their own if they happen to separate from their spouses or are already the head of a single parent family. Unemployment causes additional stress to families which can be reflected in an increase in alcohol and/or physical abuse in the family.

Up until the present and until the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program is operational, there has not been, nor is yet, a place where the battered woman and her children can go for respite from the violence locally. In the past women and their children in volatile situations involving battering were taken to a hotel by the R.C.M.P. Other women (up until four years ago) sought refuge with their children at the Portage Women's Correctional Institute. Human service professionals that were aware of Osborne House in Winnipeg referred their clients to that shelter. Typically referrals to Osborne House occurred one to four days after the violent episode (if the referral occurred at all) as women were frequently not connected with a local service that was knowledgeable about the Winnipeg shelter.

Also as touched upon in Chapter I, the situation of rural (Portage and surrounding area) battered women is compounded by the fact that they are geographically isolated from an established shelter such as Osborne House. It is a more fortunate battered woman who has access to transportation to a shelter which is 50 or more miles away. Those Portage area women who have gone to Osborne House have been socially isolated from their community, family and friends. If women did not wish to relocate in Winnipeg, very real problems have existed for them. It has been almost impossible for them to find living accommodation in the Portage community while residing at Osborne House in Winnipeg. They faced further difficulties in terms of having to link up with or coordinate legal, financial and counselling needs when they left the shelter and came back to Portage. Many women either have not made these connections or abandoned these support sources because of the fact that

they have had to face the institutional or system barriers on their own, at a time when they required support during a transition. Until a local program is functional the problem that exists for these women can best be described in terms of "service gaps." It would be accurate to say that agencies, services and the hospital on the whole do not utilize Osborne House to the extent that it is required by local battered women. As implied previously, this appears to be due to the lack of an appropriate response by professional care-givers to the battered woman, the lack of information available regarding Osborne House, and the lack of coordination of services with other local agencies who could have provided support and referral of these women. Even if a referral to Osborne House did occur, unless the woman is accompanied by a worker the chances of her receiving any assistance and/or coordination of services upon her return to Portage was very unlikely. Therefore referral to Osborne House was previously limited to "a break in the violence" because there was no existing service in Portage which provided coordinated follow-up care to the battered woman when she returned to her home community.

It was recognition of these problems that led to the planning of a program designed to provide a local shelter for battered women and their children in the "rural" community of Portage la Prairie.

The next chapter will deal with the initial ground work that was completed by a Portage working group which was instrumental in the establishment of a shelter for battered women and their children.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

This chapter will describe the initial stages of planning in the first year of development of the Portage Women's Shelter program. The work began in October, 1981. The initial effort involved preliminary planning and will be highlighted in four phases: 1) information gathering, 2) establishing the need, 3) formalizing the working group, and 4) developing community support. These phases are indeed highlights of the work that was done and reflect the actual experience of the Portage Steering Committee. It is recognized that groups in other communities may tackle planning in a different way depending on resources, priorities, time factors, and community support.

#### Phase I - Information Gathering:

The first phase emphasizes investigations in two key areas a) reviewing the literature on wife abuse and b) learning from the experience of other shelter programs. The challenge in Phase I is to specify the important directives that will frame initial program development.

In order to develop a shelter for battered women it is incumbent upon the organizers to understand the basic issues involved in this type of abuse in order to appreciate and reflect upon the phenomenon within the organizers' own community. Through review of the literature in Phase I, the organizers were acutely aware that very few statistics were recorded generally concerning wife abuse. However what the organizers learned locally (which substantiated the literature) was that even

services one might expect to be cognizant of wife abuse, did not routinely ask their female clientele whether or not they were subjected to assaults by their spouse. (This included local doctors, emergency hospital and clinic staff, social workers).

Having reviewed the literature on wife abuse, the organizers were aware that the "estimates" gathered from service agencies merely reflect "the tip of the iceberg" in terms of the pervasiveness of the problem (McNeely, 1980). In other words, the organizers had to be familiar with the basic issues to understand why some of the incongruities exist between national and local statistics (or "estimates"). (The specific issue relating to "estimates" will be expanded upon in phase two of this chapter.)

The other obvious reason for organizers to be familiar with the literature on wife abuse relates to providing accurate information (McNeely, 1980). The Portage group found that regardless of who was approached in this community concerning the proposed shelter, people generally expected the organizers to be able to answer their questions regarding this type of family violence (e.g., male and female community organizations, professional groups, the local radio station and newspaper etc.). Most frequently the questions focused on a clarification of "wife abuse"; what it is and why these women do not just leave their situations. Surprisingly (or not) the next most frequently addressed area related to requests as to how often men are beaten by their wives.

Overall, this important and obvious investigation of the issues is recommended during the initial stages of group planning to help organizers appreciate their local situation as a preliminary to assess-

ing the actual service need in their home community.

Aside from learning about wife abuse, the other area of information gathering by the Portage group involved learning about programs already in existence for battered women and their children. (Refer to Chapter II for objectives and services provided by Shelters in general.)

The group began by looking at other shelter programs in existence in Manitoba and North-Western Ontario in order to consider what would be appropriate to meet the needs of the community of Portage la Prairie and surrounding area. We first had to establish the fact that Portage was indeed large enough to support such a shelter as most of the community agencies and groups approached had knowledge of only shelters in existence in Winnipeg, Brandon, and other major cities across Canada. Cases of shelters established in communities smaller than Portage (population of 13,000) were documented, (i.e., Main Stay House in Fort Francis, North-Western Ontario, population 9,000; and Terrance, British Columbia, population 10,000) were cited. As MacLeod (1982, pg. 90) indicated "Experience has shown that towns of 12,000 to 15,000 in population can support a crisis line and a transition house, particularly given the surrounding rural catchment area."

In terms of the Portage experience the organizers were cognizant of the fact that women who were referred to a shelter received services from Osborne House in Winnipeg when faced with a crisis involving wife battering. A study of Osborne House established the fact that this shelter accommodates approximately thirty-eight to forty women and their children per month for a maximum period of ten days. Of this number, Osborne House stated that a "conservative" estimate of families

receiving shelter from the Portage area would be in the neighbourhood of twenty-five families per annum.

Osborne House suggested the Portage group look to establishing a shelter which would accommodate a maximum of fifteen people at one time as this was felt to be a manageable number during the shelter's initial stages of operation. As indicated in Chapter II a shelter operates on a twenty-four hour, seven days per week basis. It was suggested by Osborne House that the Portage group consider a minimum staffing ratio of six persons to cover three overlapping shifts per day.

Having established that the population of Portage could support a shelter, and having obtained a basic understanding of the objectives of shelters and how they operate, the group then turned to the third stage of information gathering.

The third stage involved the "how to" and "where to start" stage. Fortunately for our group we located one of the few manuals available on this topic, "Transition Houses: How to Establish a Refuge for Battered Women" (MacLeod, 1982). The MacLeod Manual proved to be particularly useful during this stage as it provides a basic recipe for the work required during this stage involving:

- the necessity of a needs survey
- formalizing the working group and becoming incorporated
- writing a goal statement and service description
- preparation and strategy regarding funding
- preparation of a budget
- per diem versus program funding
- zoning and licensing requirements

- obtaining political support
- and making effective use of the media.

In view of the direction and specific detail provided by the MacLeod Manual, important aspects covered by the Portage group will be discussed which either 1) are not described in the manual (i.e., the basic steps required in a needs survey of this type), or 2) reflect the particular interest and direction of the Portage group.

#### Phase II - Establishing the Need:

People intent on developing a shelter for battered women have to prove there is a need for such a facility to a) the community and b) the major grant source from which one hopes to obtain money for the hiring of shelter staff.

#### The Community Needs Assessment

The MacLeod Manual suggested the collection of statistics and written statements of need from credible community sources. The problem that existed for the Portage group and which exists in other communities is that nobody (with the exception of shelters and the R.C.M.P. as of February 1983) keeps statistics relating specifically to wife battering. In order to establish the fact that there was a need for a shelter in Portage, the organizers chose to personally visit people in charge of the following agencies and services: R.C.M.P., Children's Aid, Community Mental Health Services, Portage General Hospital Emergency Department, the Portage Farm Labour Project (providing service to approximately 300 Native people), and all of the local Medical

Clinics. We explained our goal and objectives in terms of planning a shelter for the Portage area and requested that the person (or persons) contacted review their respective records and estimate the number of family violence cases that involved wife abuse they had come in contact with over a manageable amount of time (ranging from 6 months to one year). This request was made verbally and wife abuse was identified as being physical assault on a woman by her legal or common-law spouse. The organizers specified physical abuse because it is the most easily identifiable in people's minds. We requested a retrospective search of records because of time constraints framing the effort of the working group. The potential grant source identified by the group (Canada Community Development Project) had a specified submission deadline, therefore the group did not have sufficient time to carry out a comprehensive and detailed community survey. The group was faced with the problem of not having enough time to request that services keep an on-going standardized count of wife abuse cases over a two or three month period following our initial request of them. This would have been a preferable course of action.

There were two primary purposes for carrying out a needs survey: a) the estimates collected from a variety of local sources helped to substantiate the fact that there was a problem locally. This proved to be a sensitizing factor when the statistics were shared with numerous agencies and organizations. b) The estimates generated served to heighten community involvement in promoting letters of support for the project which proved to the grant source that there was not only a need for such a service locally, but that the community backed the idea.

As indicated, although the "estimates" served the purpose in terms of highlighting the fact that Portage was not immune to numerous incidents of family violence involving wife abuse, the estimates pointed to other important data which are not normally available to groups when attending to this type of needs survey. As an example, the R.C.M.P. reported they responded to 15 to 20 domestic situations in the preceding year where they judged there had been, or was about to be, an assault on the wife. (At this time these calls were classified as "domestic disputes" as opposed to "assaults".) Some discrepancy was later noted within the R.C.M.P. estimate. While they gave an official estimate of 15 to 20 domestic dispute calls per annum, an R.C.M.P. Sargent later noted that they annually accompanied approximately twenty-five women who had been assaulted by their spouse to the emergency department of the hospital for medical attention. The discrepancy noted between the R.C.M.P. estimate(s) and the actual hospital visits, was even more obviously distorted by the director of nursing of this hospital when she stated that she knew of only two cases of injuries treated in emergency involving wife abuse over the past one year period. Two further examples highlight the very low levels of "estimates" recognized by professional care-givers. Within the community's medical services, one clinic did not respond at all to an approach for help with estimating wife abuse. Another clinic stated they had not treated any women involved in wife abuse. The third clinic in town cited an estimate of at least 12 cases of wife abuse per annum. Within the Social Services, the local Children's Aid Society identified ten cases of wife abuse on their caseloads in the preceding six month period. (There are approxi-

mately 22 workers employed by this agency servicing Portage and the Central Region of Manitoba.)

Contrasted to the above examples, members of the Portage Working Group had access to individual workers within two separate human service agencies with a direct interest in wife abuse: Community Mental Health Services, and the Portage Farm Labour Project (employing 9 and 5 staff respectively). A member of the working group approached individual staff within both of these services, explained the purpose of the survey, provided a verbal definition of wife abuse (limited to physical assault), and personally collected the estimates from the workers. The estimates for the preceding eight month period were 31 cases of wife abuse as identified by Mental Health and an estimate of 35 cases coming from the Farm Labour Project. As these two agencies tend to serve very different population groups (Mental Health: townspeople; Labour Project: urban and rural native people), it was felt that there was very little overlap of abused individuals occurring between these separate estimates.

The discrepancy noted between the high and low estimate groups may possibly be explained in terms of the amount of access the Working Group had to individual care-givers. When personal contact occurred, wife abuse was defined specifically (limited to physical assault) and estimates tended to be higher. Without personal access to individual care-givers the estimates tended to be low. Future groups planning such community needs surveys would be well advised to plan to hold a conference on Wife Abuse involving local human service agency representation. In conjunction with such a conference, inservices should be held for

those service providers most likely to have access to abused wives. Organizers must be prepared to persist in terms of consciousness raising through inservices and special presentations for a variety of community groups, but in particular for care-givers. The organizers also have to be prepared to diplomatically pursue individuals and agencies in terms of data collection regarding abuse estimates. Both of these tasks can prove to be difficult in terms of time restraints voiced by doctors, hospital staff and other human service professionals. The estimates are invaluable however in providing an overview of the problem of wife abuse within the local community as citizens want to know the extent of the problem in their home area. The estimates also impress upon various care-givers and agencies the fact that statistics are not recorded regarding such a prevalent social problem. The fact that individuals are restricted to asking for "estimates" is evidence of the lack of acknowledgement of the problem as it is (i.e., wife abuse) as opposed to the problem being defined as one of depression, anxiety, physical symptoms or simply a "domestic dispute".

Having discussed the method, purpose, problems and recommendations concerning establishing community need, attention will now be given to another important aspect of planning. This relates to the organizing of the local planning group into a formal non-profit organization.

### Phase III - Formalizing the Working Group:

The original Portage la Prairie working group consisted of six people who shared a common interest in developing a service to deal specifically with battered women. This group decided to incorporate and

form an independent, non-profit organization following the community needs assessment (in Phase II) and prior to soliciting ongoing community support (this included the initial letters of support, and more importantly, ongoing donations of money and material goods from community groups). The primary reason for becoming incorporated is to substantiate the group's credibility in the eyes of both the community and the grant source. Local groups and organizations understand their tax deductible donations will be spent on a service to be utilized by local citizens. The granting body is assured that the funding allocated for the project is handled by a responsible, accountable group of people.

In the process of becoming incorporated, any planning group is forced to develop a goal statement, philosophy, and by-laws as part of the exercise of incorporation as a non-profit organization. This brings formal structure to the planning effort.

#### An Important Context for Services: The Needs of Native People

Before turning to the creation of a non-profit organization and the establishment of an executive board, it is necessary to discuss an important theme which influenced the initial planning of the Portage Shelter program and one which has continued to play an important part in all aspects of the emerging program.

Originally the Working Group had planned to establish a shelter for battered native women and their children. This was because of the fact that the Working Group was basically interested in local services in general to native people, not because they felt there was a higher incidence of battering among that population group (MacLeod, 1980). It

had been estimated that Portage la Prairie was populated by approximately 70 native families. There is a large native population on reserves in the Portage la Prairie vicinity (approximate figures: Long Plain, 1,200; Sandy Bay, 2,100; Dakota Tipi, 60; Dakota Plains, 150). In the basic groundwork of the group it was found that the original idea to provide a native shelter was not supported by other shelter directors nor by guest speakers queried at the Manitoba Conference on Wife Abuse, March, 1982. The rationale provided was that the townsfolk as a whole would not have access to a much needed facility and therefore the shelter should not be limited to one group. In view of the fact that non native women would then have to travel to Winnipeg for services, the group abandoned the plan. There was also a danger of a totally native shelter making the problem of wife abuse look as though it was restricted to native people only. As a result a compromise was reached whereby the group agreed to develop a program that included a range of 20 to 50% native representation within the staff and on the Board of Directors. Our research indicated that although the Shelters in Brandon and Winnipeg accommodated a significant proportion of native families, only Winnipeg had one native woman on staff at the time of contact. Research of the literature pertaining to native people consistently stresses the involvement and input of native people in terms of service delivery to their own people (Hepworth, 1976; Ast, 19??; Cardinal, 1977; Castellano, 1971). Our choice towards involvement of native and non-native groups proved to be correct particularly in terms of gaining native support from surrounding reserves . (These groups requested native representation on the Board of Directors in conjunction with

their letters of support for the shelter. This matter, had already been attended to as the following description explains.)

#### Forming the Board

The composition of the newly incorporated board included three native and three non native persons. These people were selected on the basis of representing a variety of links with the community as well as having professional expertise (i.e. legal aid, management skills, community organizational skills, access to housing and native groups, etc.). All board members also had had experience with wife abuse either personally or professionally and therefore had a vested interest in the problem.

Due to the fact that the board was still in an organizational stage, (that is, there was no money, director, or program yet in place) the role of the board at this time was much more action oriented than one would expect of most governing or advisory boards. In fact, the board tended to continue to operate more as a steering committee for several months after incorporation as much of the organizing and planning required strong cohesion and a unitary purpose and goal.

The board chose a "closed" format in the initial stage of development. The board is described as "closed" in that members did not pursue a general membership at this time. The primary purpose of this choice was the desire by the board to maintain a close knit working group and more particularly to ensure that native representation would be a reality from the start. Although the choice of a "closed" board creates more work for a limited number of people, it may be a more efficient

method of reaching decisions and putting plans into action. The board also has the advantage of knowing exactly what steps are being carried out by whom at any specific time. Although this decision may not be viewed as important by some, the board has since heard of examples of community groups formed for the purpose of establishing a shelter which experienced difficulty in the decision making process as well as in pursuing accepted common goals.

To reiterate, the choice of maintaining a closed board and ensuring native representation definitely has its advantages and disadvantages. A great deal of work is required by a few members. However, program design, as is originally envisioned, has a greater opportunity of being carried out.

The final major phase experienced by the Board of the Portage Women's Shelter Inc. in the initial stage of planning pertains to involving the community of Portage la Prairie in general.

#### Phase IV - Developing Community Support:

MacLeod (1982) states that "One of the important criteria potential funders will check is whether or not efforts have been made to gain support (in money or services) from other levels of government, including local government and from private sources" (pg. 21). In other words, it is difficult to get long-term funding unless one can prove to have obtained initial funding or support from local sources. The board initially sought the expertise of Children's Home in Winnipeg for ideas of potential funding sources. It was estimated that the board could expect to gain forty percent of the required funding from federal

sources who would be primarily interested in job creation and therefore payment of wages. We were advised that operational and material overhead costs, amounting to the remaining sixty percent, would likely have to originate from the community itself.

With these "ball park" figures in mind the board made application to the Canada Community Development Project grant source through Manpower and Immigration. We proposed funding for seven positions: a director, a child care worker, and five resident workers. To prove we had community support for the proposed shelter we first drafted an "Update" to inform people of the current status of the proposed project. This also outlined the Board's goals and philosophy, documented our local estimates, and requested letters of support. We then distributed the update, either personally (i.e. to politicians, city councilmen, presidents of male service clubs), or through group meetings, (i.e. representatives of female service clubs, church groups, etc.). All agencies, institutions, service clubs and organizations were then invited to attend one of three inservices held on Family Violence. The inservice was designed to illustrate the issues involved in wife abuse as one form of family violence. Board members further described the proposed shelter program and requested letters of support to accompany the grant application. The inservice was important in terms of educating the community about both wife abuse and the proposed program. As a result of this inservice the Board received 52 letters of support with a total of 300 signatures.

A further result of this inservice was the unexpected support that was gained. The local Kinsmen group indicated they owned a vacant

house, for which the board might be interested in negotiating with them, as a location for the shelter. A local employment training group expressed interest in renovating the proposed shelter without charging for labor if it were estimated the job would entail some training for their clientele. The Women's Institute made the first donation of money received by the Board of the Portage Women's Shelter, Incorporated.

In summary, the first application for a major grant for the program forced the board to reach out to the community at large. There is always a question as to at which point this should be done as once community interest is sparked a group can be inundated with requests for speakers on the topic of wife abuse and the proposed program. This request cannot be met until speakers have been methodically trained. Aside from the work created in terms of responding to community group requests, many individual citizens wish to get involved. This involvement is desired by the board but again it appears to be more constructive to organize citizens in some organizationally efficient form (i.e. committees relating to funding, public education, publicity, volunteer training, etc.). In other words once community support has been initiated the board's major task involves organization and maintenance of that support in an effective and efficient way. There is no doubt that the inservice held by the board generated community support. Another alternative that has been chosen by planning groups (MacLeod, 1982) is to hold a major conference on the topic of wife abuse as a starting point towards becoming organized. The Portage group felt that our method (although less chaotic) created more work for our group, but nevertheless we reached the same point of requesting and nurturing com-

munity support in an organized fashion.

Having highlighted the initial groundwork required to ensure the development of the shelter program was within reach, the next phase - Strategic Planning - focuses on how external factors can play a major role in determining the final outcome of a program.

CHAPTER V  
STRATEGIC PLANNING PHASE

This chapter will deal with the major revisions to the shelter program (as it had been originally envisioned) and will describe the rationale for the subsequent revisions. The major factors that influenced the direction of the program were as follows: local support, federal support, and an option provided by a provincial program.

Local Support:

As indicated in the previous chapter, an outcome of the inservice on wife abuse was the interest expressed in the proposed shelter by a few local Kinsmen who had been in attendance. A house they had purchased for use as a group home had been vacant for a number of months due to expenses involved in renovations required to meet provincial fire standards. Negotiations with the Kinsmen involved the board having to compete with Mental Retardation Services who had originally utilized the building as a group home. After a period of two and a half months, the Kinsmen voted to sell the house to Mental Retardation Services. The board was informed on more than one occasion later that the deciding factor not to back the shelter program at this time had been due to the emphasis placed on "wife abuse" (as opposed to the more palatable and less threatening theme of "family violence") in a speech delivered to a general meeting of the Kinsmen. This rather costly lesson was to influence from that point forward how the program was advertised and how community groups were approached. (This point will be elaborated upon

in the final chapter of the report.)

The loss of this particular kind of local support at the time left the board in the difficult position of trying to locate another appropriate building (i.e., one that was central, large enough, and would require a minimum of renovations). The board was experiencing pressure regarding the urgency of this task due to the fact that federal support in the way of a grant was on the horizon.

#### Federal Support:

The board had received word that the proposed shelter program would very likely receive a grant, although exactly when this was to happen and how much money would be allocated, was not known at the time. Obviously, this particular situation created a further predicament for the board as the grant source did set a definite deadline in terms of "late" starting dates for projects. The board therefore had to either accept the grant and modify the program plan, or lose the grant, delay the project to search for another building, and reapply for funds from alternative government sources at a later date. The board chose the former option (to alter the program plan) in view of the work that had been accomplished to that time. In retrospect this decision was based on the effort and resources already invested in the project and the desire to keep the momentum of the board going. This was a crucial decision because if the board had chosen the latter option it is very likely the effort to establish a facility would have dissipated in direct proportion to the time that would have been required to locate another building, generate more letters of support and reapply of

funding.

When the board received word that the project would definitely be funded by the grant source, it was also informed that funding would only allow for three project positions (i.e., a director and two resident workers). This created a further predicament for the board in view of the fact that this amounted to only half of the positions required to operate a shelter on a twenty-four hour per day, seven days per week basis. (One available option was to supplement staff positions with trained volunteers.)

Further to the above, contact with community groups thus far had left the board with the distinct impression that most groups preferred to make donations towards something concrete (i.e., material goods versus wages). Consequently, the community could not be relied upon to provide funding for wages. In view of this fact, community groups were relied upon for donations of furniture, office supplies, and a program vehicle.

As a result of the impact of the stated local and federal decisions involving changes, the board altered it's original plan to establish a shelter for battered women and their children in Portage la Prairie.

#### The Alternative and the Rational:

The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse, which became operational in September 1982, had been promoting the idea of "safe homes" to be located across the province as an alternative to shelters. Safe homes were viewed as being less costly and more accessible to women. The alternative of developing a network of "safe homes" as opposed to a shelter was suggested to the Board by the Manitoba Committee.

"Safe homes" are local residences in the community whose owners volunteer to take abused women and their children into their home on a short-term emergency basis. The basic objective is to provide respite from the violence in a safe, supportive environment. This particular concept is referred to in an unpublished Nova Scotia paper by the Dawson Memorial Hospital Mental Health Clinic (1981). The concept of "safe homes" has been operational however, in Nelson, B.C. since 1980. (Nelson has a population of 9,000 and services another 15,000 in the surrounding area.) A 24 hour crisis centre coordinates calls from battered women. If appropriate, the abused woman and her children are linked with a local "anonymous" safe home operator. In B.C., this person has been trained as a volunteer through the Ministry of Human Resources and receives a per diem rate through this Department to cover expenses incurred. The location of the safe homes are known only by the Crisis Centre and it is likely due to the strict adherence to their policy of confidentiality that the program has remained free from any potentially dangerous situations during it's period of operation.

After much deliberation, the board chose to use the grant received to hire three staff to operate a system of "safe homes" out of a central crisis office in Portage. In that way the board felt they would be able to get a program under way which would offer the following advantages: 1) Office costs would be less expensive than the purchase, renovation and upkeep of a shelter. This particular plan would also allow the program time to collect statistics, develop community support, and establish a service to justify a future shelter, if needed. 2) A network of "safe homes" would be less conspicuous than a shelter in a rural

community. 3) Beds would be paid for through per diem rates on an "as needed" basis ensuring a 100% occupancy rate. 4) It was felt that a greater socioeconomic proportion of the population could be reached through "safe homes" (i.e., women would have the option of receiving respite in an environment that was most comfortable for them). In other words, the program could develop a variety of low, middle and higher income safe homes including the development of native safe homes operated by native volunteers.

As a result of the above decision the board was able to pursue a program for battered women and their children, albeit through a revised plan.

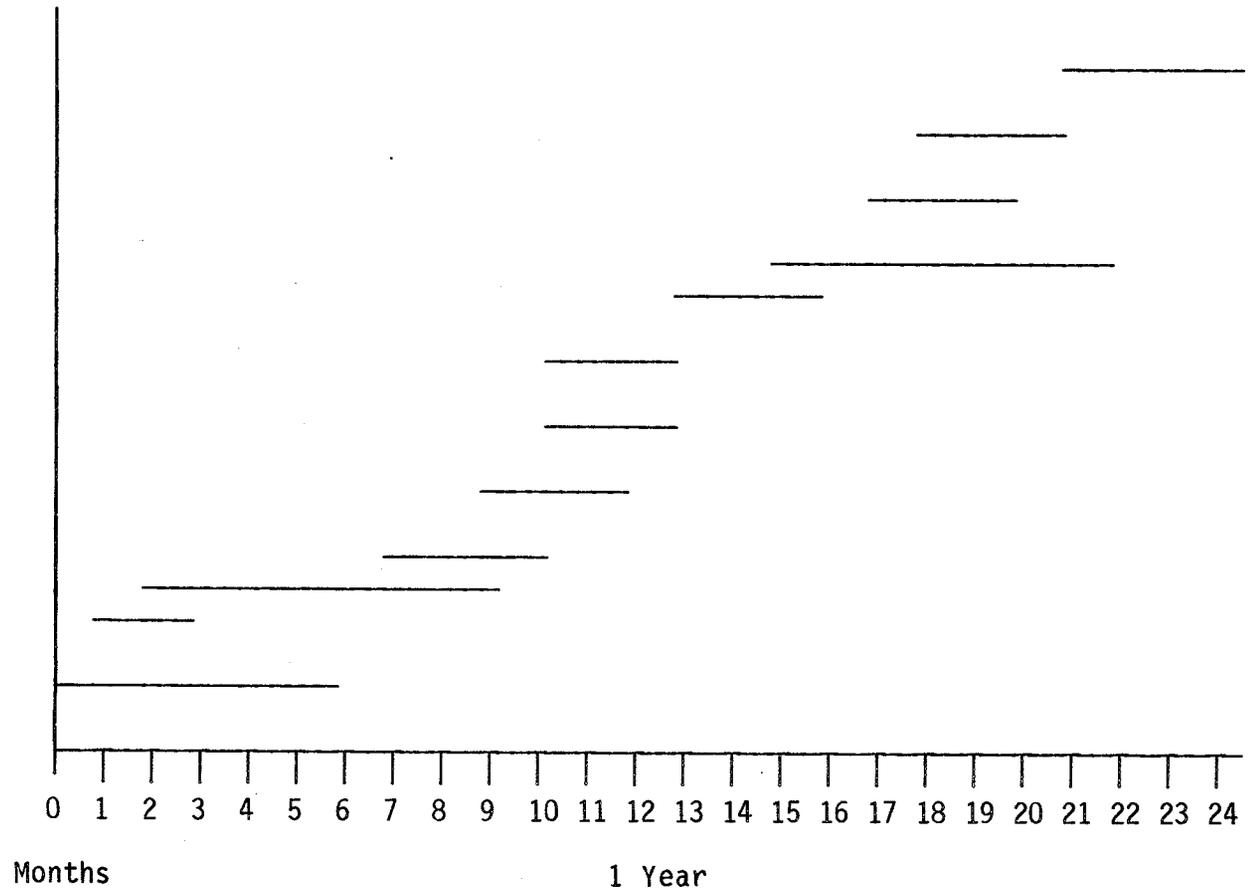
In conclusion, the major task at hand for groups during this phase is indeed "strategic" in terms of planning. There appears to be a number of tasks to be juggled within a short period of time. Most important is coordinating the extent of community support required (both material and financial) with what can be an undetermined amount of government financial support prior to receipt of secure ongoing funding.

In terms of the Portage situation, it was a distinct advantage to be able to come up with an alternative plan as opposed to postponing the operation of a program for several months. The shift from a shelter to a safe home program as suggested by the Manitoba Committee forced the board to find a more efficient and economical way of providing a similar, and hopefully an improved service.

## OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

### MAJOR TASKS

- 12) Program Operational
- 11) Hired Staff: Training and Office Setup
- 10) Trained First Group of Public Speakers
- 9) Revised Plan: Shelter to "Safe Homes"
- 8) Negotiated for Shelter
- 7) Prepared for and Submitted Grant Application
- 6) Contacted Community Groups, Held Inservice.
- 5) Incorporation Process of Working Group
- 4) Groundwork & Data Collection (Needs Survey)
- 3) Investigated Funding Sources
- 2) Toured Other Shelters
- 1) Reviewed Literature (Wife Abuse & Programs)



CHAPTER VI  
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MacLeod (1982) advises that groups can expect to spend approximately "two to three years of work to open the doors of a new transition house facility" (p. 15). The conclusions and recommendations in this final chapter represent the first fifteen months of work accomplished by the board in their effort to develop a service for battered women and their children. This final chapter will highlight some of the more important lessons learned by the group and make recommendations based on the Portage experience.

1) Information Gathering - Basic research regarding wife abuse, programs established to deal with this problem, and information regarding a strategy for developing this type of community service is a necessity in terms of the groundwork to be covered by any group interested in establishing a shelter for battered women. This research enables the group to become the "local experts" on the issue as very often rural groups do not have ready access to urban experts and reliance on external consultants can become very cumbersome and costly.

2) Establishing the Need - Groups must be cognizant of the fact that statistics on wife abuse at the local level are generally not available and it is the local statistics which "bring the problem home" and force the community to begin to think of the needs of their citizens. Hopefully other groups will learn from the experience of the Portage group in terms of how methodical a "needs survey" should be in order to get an accurate reflection of the problem locally. This

requires developing a form that clearly defines what constitutes wife abuse and deciding whether to limit the statistics to physical abuse or to include both physical and emotional abuse within the relationship. It is speculated that groups will receive a greater response (note our problem with non response from some sources) if services and agencies are asked to complete a written form. This particular kind of form, supplemented by an inservice and the issues involved in wife abuse, will do much to ensure the accuracy of the statistics. Groups should also allow time for the services to make an ongoing count of cases of wife abuse over a specified time period. It is obvious from the Portage example that many people involved in human resource services do not "ask the questions". It is speculated that a less rushed, more methodical approach will do much towards the consciousness raising of professionals.

3) Formalizing the Working Group - Groups may decide to become incorporated as an independent corporation for different reasons and at different times (as the Portage experience illustrates). As explained, some of the less obvious factors involved the Portage choice to maintain planning control and to ensure native representation from the start. It would be naive to think that native representation would occur, particularly in rural areas (similar to the Portage locale), if a local conference were held and a board and general membership were drawn from conference participants. Because of the dominance of non-natives in such "community conferences", such a process would not democratically ensure native participation. Our society has not overcome prejudicial hurdles and this is especially obvious in rural areas.

Aside from the above factor, groups would also be strongly advised to include persons in the working group or on the board who have the following experiences/qualifications: someone with the experience and the time to write minor and major grant proposals, a member who has a working knowledge of how federal grants operate, group members who possess good negotiating skills and have a thorough knowledge of community resources and organizations, competent members who can provide legal and financial (accounting) advice. And finally, based on the Portage experience, it is strongly recommended that some of the people involved in the initial working group be potential employees of the project (i.e., program coordinator or director). Obviously this person would have a commitment to the project prior to it's becoming operational and therefore would have the experience of having learned much through the process of developmental and strategic phases. This person would then be able to carry on the momentum of the group following it's transition from a working group into an "incorporated" board. It is speculated that the board can then truly begin to operate primarily a decision making body as opposed to an action orientated working group.

4) Timing of the Project and the Grant Application - It is important to say something about "timing" if future groups find themselves in the position of being able to influence this factor at all. To cite a prior example, the accuracy of a "needs survey" can be improved if a group has the time to accomplish the task in a more thorough manner. A more important example of "timing" involves having the project as well organized as possible prior to receipt of the grant money, particularly for a project that must rely extensively on com-

munity support. To clarify this point, groups have a distinct advantage if their project begins as early in the fall as possible because concrete appeals can be made to community groups and organizations before they have committed their energy and resources to other projects. In many communities, local service clubs decide on their annual project and donations in the autumn of the year. If the timing of the project is delayed (groups do not have control over when grant money is allocated) it is possible that the group may not only find themselves in the unenviable position of not being able to generate the community funding from organizations that could have been possible earlier in the year, but also, towards spring it becomes very difficult to generate volunteers for numerous tasks that require attention. Organizations disband for the summer holidays and people generally do not choose to become involved in new projects at this time of year. This was certainly so in the described rural community of Portage La Prairie.

5) Developing Community Support - In view of the fact it had been estimated that 60% of the board's funding for the proposed program may have to come from the home community, it is important to stress that careful planning is required in terms of "selling" the program, identifying and gaining the support of influential citizens, and then constructively organizing the support gained towards the end goal of accepting the first client into the proposed program.

In terms of "selling" the program, the board found that we were faced with two sensitive issues: a) including the native component into the program and b) dealing with pervasive defensiveness regarding the term "wife abuse" on the part of potential financial backers in the com-

munity.

Regarding the native component of the program, it was important to publicly advertise the fact that the program planned to develop native safe homes for native people. Our rationale for doing so had to do with the organizers belief that native people should have access to services provided by their own people. By contrast, the parts of the white community that are not quite as sensitive to native issues want to be assured that they will not have to re-examine their sensitivities by having a native family placed in their home if they choose to be a safe home volunteer. What was not an advertised part of the program but which did become a reality was the fact that there was native representation throughout all components of the program (i.e., on the board, on the staff, through volunteers, public speakers, and safe home operators). A problem exists for the board: If the program advertises the fact that we have tried to incorporate native representation throughout all parts of the program "it makes "wife abuse", as a form of family violence, look as though it is predominantly a "native" problem (which is a myth that the program is trying to dispel). If the program does not advertise an important priority it may be accused of not being entirely open. The issue may be idiosyncratic to this particular board, however due to the variety of culturally distinct communities throughout Manitoba, this matter maybe are other groups would like to take into consideration in their planning efforts.

The other sensitive issue which the board became aware of during it's efforts to "sell" the program was the issue of predominantly male defensiveness when faced with the issues involved in wife abuse. As

indicated in the literature review on wife abuse (Chapter I) there is a strong suggestion that wife abuse should not be disguised by any other labels. Our group agreed with this suggestion in principal. However, in reality a group does not always have this option as our board soon learned. As indicated previously, the board had experienced a rather costly lesson in terms of losing a potential "shelter" building. It was shortly after this experience, that the decision was reached to promote our effort as one which intervened in the cycle of "family violence", with wife abuse representing one form of family violence. This decision was based on the following facts. 1) "Significant" donations of money are generated by male, as opposed to female, organizations in the community. These groups are sympathetic to problems experienced by children, however, they are generally not as enthusiastic about funding projects relating directly to women. If a group must rely on community support, this is a powerful incentive not to concentrate solely on "the victim" but to try to present a broader view of the problem. This means emphasizing the important fact that children, in many ways, are casualties of the violence that occurs between their parents. 2) The board philosophically believes that everyone in the family is effected by violence occurring within the family system. Most of the literature however, focuses on the victim as illustrated in Chapter I. What happens though, and what is evident, is that services are developed for the victim only, and frequently stop at that. The lack of available literature on effective therapy or research dealing with battering couples is evidence of the fact that services must go beyond taking mere "stop gap" measures. This is not to say that the literature is irrele-

vant. It does point to the fact that most of the efforts to date have focused on the development of primary services dealing with the victim. If a program chooses to deal with wife abuse in terms of family violence, it should be prepared to ensure that services for all members is a reality (i.e., therapy for batterers, qualified help to deal with children, referrals for marital and family therapy for those who choose to reunite).

To reiterate, groups that must rely on an extensive amount of community support should be prepared to be flexible in terms of how the program is advertised within the community. The issue of wife abuse is not a pleasant one, consequently groups must be prepared to expend a considerable amount of diplomatic effort to secure the support the program requires.

#### From Shelter to Safe Homes: Conclusions

The board's decision to modify the program from a shelter, to a program which operated out of a central crisis office with a network of safe homes, forced the board to expand the program in many ways. It was recognized that a greater degree of public relations work would be required in order to promote the concept of "safe homes". This meant that public speakers (male and female, native and non-native) as well as volunteers had to be trained to supplement the program. Because the board elected to deal with wife abuse as one type of family violence, it was necessary to ensure that help was available for the batterer. As a result, probation services became interested and now offers group therapy for those men referred through the court system as well as men

who attend voluntarily.

To compensate for the fact that the program does not offer a mutually supportive shelter environment for the women, the program offers a weekly self help group for women still with their spouse, currently in a safe home, or separated and on her own.

For those so inclined referrals for marital and family counselling are made to a locally based mental health service.

The most recent summary of the program and statistics gathered in the first four months of program operation can be found at the beginning of the attached appendix entitled "Description of the Portage Women's Shelter Inc. Program" Oct. 1983.

It is yet to be seen if the revised program will offer any advantages over a shelter in terms of the high rate of staff burnout. It is expected that workers will be freed of energy and time consuming household tasks. They should therefore be able to provide a greater quantity of time with clients and their children and hopefully an improved quality of service.

In conclusion, it is obvious that the course of events experienced by the board, particularly relating to local and federal support, definitely influenced the direction the program took. The board's decision to alter the original program and emphasize "family violence" forced the board to develop a more comprehensive program. This meant there had to be a greater emphasis on consciousness raising through a speakers bureau to gain community support for the program. It also meant that the program had to make a greater effort to ensure that services did not stop at the "victim" but were coordinated to include the choice

of involving the whole family.

The development and coordination of such a program may more easily be managed in rural communities such as Portage la Prairie as opposed to a highly urbanized setting. The advantage offered by the rural area is the ease with which talents of various staff in the existing cross-section of human service programs can be tapped and coordinated. Services in rural areas do not include as many people and the network of programs available is not as complex as those which exist in urban settings. Due to the fact that care givers in rural services often have the advantage of frequent personal contact with one another, cooperation can be more easily obtained. At times when compromises are required to initiate and maintain services which exceed traditional program boundaries, issues which impede or block the delivery of such services can be addressed directly by the people involved.

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**APPENDIX**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following manual was originally written to provide new board members with pertinent information regarding the history of the Portage Women's Shelter Inc. program and the program as it currently exists. The manual is intended to give board members, staff and volunteers a working knowledge of the program and its objectives.

The task of developing the manual was facilitated by the adoption (with and without alterations) of a number of forms and recommendations on behalf of two major sources: The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse and an unpublished manual developed by C.H. Nelson, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, entitled "Evaluation Guidelines for Beendigan Native Crisis Housing" 1982. These two sources provided an important reference in the design of our locally relevant manual.

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM: (March 1983)

The initial steering committee of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. became aware of the difficulties faced by battered women and their children in the Portage area approximately two years ago. It was recognized that when faced with a crisis involving violence, families had to be referred to Osborne House in Winnipeg, a shelter for battered women and their children. Although providing an excellent service, this shelter did not meet the needs of many Portage area residents for the following reasons:

- (1) in many cases victims of family violence were not aware of this shelter
- (2) people in need of the service could not always be accommodated due to lack of space
- (3) families did not always have access to transportation to get to the shelter 50 miles away
- (4) some families were reluctant to leave their home community to utilize a facility in the city.

The steering committee was also aware of some practical considerations that made referrals to Osborne House somewhat awkward. For those people who went to this shelter, many expressed frustration at establishing vital links with medical, social service and legal services in Winnipeg only to be faced with having to coordinate the same links upon their return to Portage. For those women who did not wish to relocate permanently in Winnipeg, finding accommodation in Portage from Osborne House (if they decided not to reunite with their spouse) proved difficult if not impossible. In addition, many women returned to their homes without counselling services being set up to deal with the existing marital conflict.

As a result of the above outlined problems, the steering committee researched the literature on wife abuse so that we would be well aware of the issue involved in this type of family violence. We were interested in not only the abused wife, but also the impact this type of crisis had on the whole family, i.e. the causes of battering, the effects of domestic violence on the children, etc.

We visited other shelters in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario to see how they operated and also to find out if a shelter could exist in a community the size of Portage or smaller. The latter fact was confirmed, e.g. Main Stay House, Fort Frances, population 9,000.

Our group then set about establishing the need for a shelter in the Portage area. We approached a number of agencies and services and requested that they give us an "estimate" of the number of cases of wife abuse they had dealt with in a given time period. We were forced to ask for estimates as services do not typically keep statistics on this particular problem.

Estimates:

- (A) The local RCMP detachment noted they responded to 15 to 20 domestic situations in the last year where they judged there has been, or is about to be, an assault on the wife. Staff Sargent Barrie stated the local detachment is faced with the following problems: a) traditionally the women are reluctant to charge the spouse with assault, consequently the police feel inadequate in terms of being able to offer much assistance, b) with incidents frequently happening late at night and "where children are present or involved there is always difficulty of relocating several people in order to separate the combatants". Further, "often the victim has no friends or family to turn to and if they do, they may not want to involve these people". "As well, the wife is afraid to leave the children in the house with the husband. The police are thus faced with the problem of having to leave the combatants in the same house with the knowledge that the matter is now even more inflamed because of (police) involvement and the likelihood of a further assault is very high". The RCMP Detachment felt a shelter would serve the following purposes: (i) to "separate the combatants and allow a "cooling off" period for all concerned, (ii) "give the wife a place from which to properly analyze her situation and obtain the moral and legal support she requires", and to (iii) "supply a place for the children involved and thus make it less traumatic for them".
- (B) The Children's Aid Society of Central identified ten cases of family violence in ongoing cases in a period of approximately six months.
- (C) Prairie Medical Clinic estimated they were aware of approximately twelve cases involving family violence per annum and added that they acknowledged this was "just the tip of the iceberg".

- (D) The Portage Farm Labour Project recorded the number of known cases of battering they came in contact with over an eight month period, the result of which was thirty-five cases of family violence.
- (E) Community Mental Health Services in the Portage area identified thirty-one cases reflecting incidents of wife abuse and family violence.
- (F) Osborne House, Winnipeg, a shelter for battered women and their children, stated that they had provided shelter for close to twenty-five families from the Central Region on an annual basis.

The above estimates were collected in August, 1982 and since that time the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. have become aware of approximately 120 families experiencing domestic violence in Portage la Prairie (this allows for some overlap in families who may be involved with more than one agency or service).

Following the collection of estimates the steering committee formed a Board and became incorporated. We applied for a Canada Community Development Grant (C.C.D.P.) in July, 1982 to cover the costs of hiring and training staff. We then held an inservice day on Family Violence which consisted of a seminar directed at three separate groups, i.e. the professions and service providers, the businessmen and men's service clubs, and the women's service clubs. We explained the purpose of our proposed program and requested individuals and groups supply us with letters of support to accompany our grant application. We received 52 letters of support which included over 350 signatures (we were advised that this was the greatest amount of community support to accompany a C.C.D.P. grant application received by Manpower and Immigration). We did not receive a decision regarding our grant application until January, 1983. Since that time Manpower and Immigration have allocated funding for a Director and three crisis workers. This particular C.C.D.P. grant provides wages for the first year of operation and will be followed up with a three year Canada Community Services Project grant.

Due to the fact that it was not possible to operate a 24 hour service, 7 days per week with four staff members, we approached Employment Services who consented to allocate three more positions to us on a six month contract basis. These positions will be followed by a NEEDS grant to extend the staff complement over the full year.

Initially the Board had pursued the idea of establishing a shelter for battered women and their children in Portage la Prairie. However when we studied our budgetary costs we felt that this was somewhat unrealistic and began looking at ways to provide the same service to Portage families at less cost. We adopted the proposed plan of the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse. That is, to develop a system of "safe homes" in the community whereby persons who are interested in providing short term safety and support to victims of family violence are identified. These people are screened by staff members of our program and are provided with an orientation and training regarding the program and issues of confidentiality.

The staff that we are hiring will work out of a central crisis office designed to handle a crisis line on a 24 hour basis. The staff member will connect the identified woman and her children in crisis with an appropriate "safe house", i.e. provide transportation if required, assist with introductions and settling the woman and her children into the home, arrange for an appointment the following day at the central crisis office for the woman to receive counselling services and assistance regarding referrals to medical, legal and social services.

We feel that "safe houses" offer the following advantages over a shelter:

- (1) A network of "safe houses" would be less conspicuous than a shelter.
- (2) Office costs would be less expensive than the purchase of a house as a shelter and its operation.
- (3) A greater socioeconomic proportion of the population can be reached, i.e. provide the type of atmosphere people are most comfortable with--low, middle, and high income homes, the development of native "safe houses" for native people, etc.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS INC. PROGRAM

- (1) To provide safety and support for victims of family violence. The program is designed to provide a break in the violence, to give families an opportunity to consider their options, become aware of resources they can utilize, i.e. a supportive network, an opportunity for referral to marital counselling, assistance in dealing with children effected by the trauma of violence.

- (2) To raise community awareness of family violence through publicity and public education as provided for by our speakers bureau. Very frequently violence between couples is passed on from one generation to the next. In terms of prevention, public education is a necessity.
- (3) To establish a self help group for the battered women for problem solving and support purposes. In addition, due to the recent number of men being charged with assault on their wives, we have been working towards supporting Probation Services in Portage la Prairie in its efforts to establish a group therapy program for these men. We feel, and much of the literature substantiates the fact, that the group process can be a critical preceding step to marital counselling.
- (4) To provide ongoing volunteer training to supplement the program. Volunteers can provide support, accompaniment and act as an advocate to victims of family violence. Utilization of volunteers can free up staff time, allowing staff to devote their energies towards counselling the women and providing attention and care to children in crisis.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTER INC. PROGRAM: (Oct '83)

The program first received funding via a C.C.D.P. grant at the end of March, 1983. The money allocated at that time allowed for the hiring of one director and two crisis line workers. Rather than these employees working out of a "shelter" for battered women, the Board of Directors had decided to operate a crisis line out of a central crisis office. This particular office utilizes a system of emergency volunteer "safe homes" in the community which are judged to be less conspicuous and far less costly than a "shelter". Therefore the first two and a half months of program operation focused on setting up a central crisis office with a crisis line designed to provide a 24 hour service for victims of family violence.

Additional staff duties at this time included attending training sessions, publicizing the proposed program, screening volunteers and safe home operators, training these volunteers, and attending to public speaking engagements to generate community support, i.e. financial donations and volunteer input.

The grant was expanded in June, 1983 to allow for sufficient staff to operate the crisis line on a 24 hour basis. The allotment of additional staff ensured the crisis line became operational as of July 5, 1983 (this included six crisis line workers and one director to cover three shifts per day, seven days/week). The expansion also allowed for ongoing training of staff, the recruitment and training of volunteers by staff, as well as providing emergency services and continued counselling of clients by staff members.

STATISTICS:

In the four months the crisis office has been in operation it has provided direct service to 16 women and 19 children. An additional 12 women have received service through the weekly women's support group which meets at the crisis office. The "female" group is run in conjunction with group therapy for "batterers". This "male" group developed as a result of the need as identified by the Shelter program and is operated separately by Probation Services of Portage la Prairie.

In the overall seven month history of the program, a total of 46 volunteers have been screened, oriented, and trained as follows:

14 public speakers (purpose (the emphasis is on prevention) to provide public education and to generate community support

for the program)

- to date this group and program staff have dealt with 38 speaking engagements

10 advocates - (purpose to provide transportation, accompaniment, follow-up support for women, to supplement staff)

4 child care volunteers - (purpose to help the child deal with the trauma of violence, temporary separation, to keep the child constructively occupied while the mother is in counselling)

5 safe home operators (purpose to provide short-term (1 to 5 nights) emergency accommodation for the mother and her children in a safe, supportive environment)

7 committee members (purpose tasks related to publicity and finances for the program)

6 non-active volunteers

PROGRAM INNOVATIONS:

It is believed that the Portage Women's Shelter Inc. program is unique in the following ways:

The program has endeavoured to provide services for the entire family as opposed to focusing totally on the victim. This is in keeping with the philosophy of the program; it is believed family violence is something that often exists from one generation to another within the family, consequently every member is affected by it. The program should therefore strive to ensure services are accessible for all members of the family.

If the program expects to intercede in the cycle of family violence, it must work towards raising public and professional awareness regarding the issues involved in family violence and the prevalence of this problem. As part of our efforts to reach a varied cross section of the community, we have deliberately set out to include the male point of view with regards to this problem by training men within our speakers bureau. A third of the people trained to date also work within the school system. Again, if changes are ever to occur, it is important that this issue be discussed by the younger generation.

Part of the philosophy of this program emphasizes the fact that native people have the right to receive services from their own people. As a result, the program has strived to ensure native representation in all components of the program, i.e. on the board, as part of the staff, the volunteer training, the speakers bureau, the safe home operators, etc.

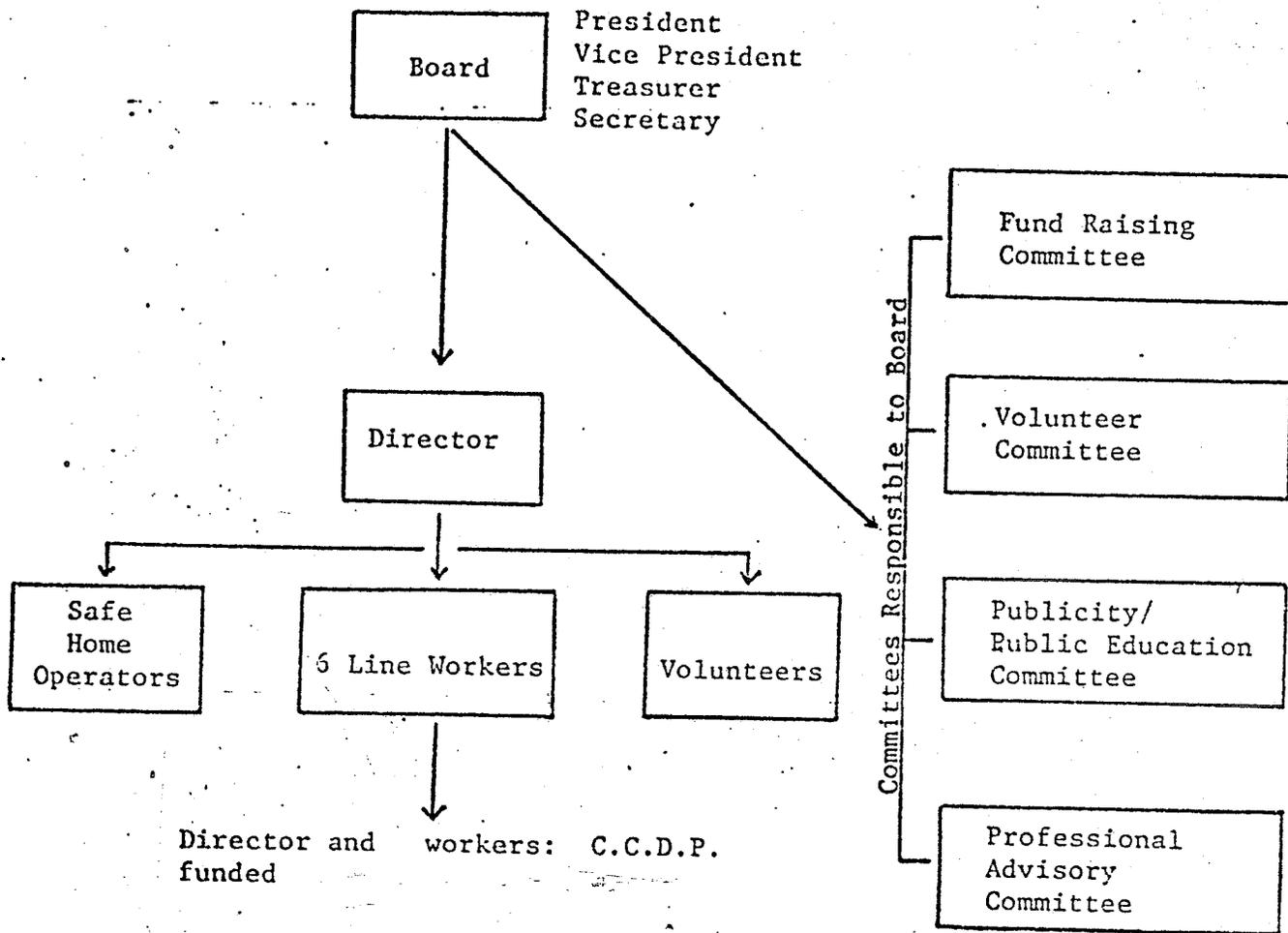
SUMMARY:

To our knowledge, within a very short time, Portage la Prairie developed one of the most comprehensive programs dealing with family violence in the province: i.e. crisis line, safe homes, women's support group, support therapy group, a referral system for marital and family counselling, extensive volunteer training, public speakers bureau including both male and female input with access to the school system, and finally, native representation in all areas of the program.

POLICY FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS, INC.

Line of Accountability:



POLICY FOR BOARD MEMBERS

During the initial year of operation Board Members will consist of citizens who have been appointed to the Board. At this time the Board will adopt a "closed" format, i.e. no general membership attached to the program at this time. The purpose of appointments is to ensure the development of a strong central Board with appointments being based on Board members' area of expertise or specialization, their connections with the community at large, and their commitment to work as an active Board member.

In addition to being aware of the issues involved in family violence, and in particular wife abuse, it is important that the Board ensure that there is representation of native persons on the Board. These Board members will provide a vital link to the native organizations and the native population within the city of Portage la Prairie. They will also act as advisors to the Director in terms of the program link with native communities (see Policy re Native Communities).

\*Attendance: Board meetings will be held every second week initially and once the program is in operation meetings will be held on a monthly basis. In order to provide continuity and direction for the program, it is proposed that Board members notify the Secretary of the Board if they are not able to attend a meeting. If a member misses three (3) consecutive Board meetings without a very valid reason, the member will be considered to have resigned from the Board, they will be notified of same by the Secretary, and a replacement will be appointed.

(1) Board members will receive inservices directed towards the following:

Board members roles and responsibilities

Wife Abuse/Family Violence

Portage Women's Shelters Inc. Program (Specific Objectives)

Canada Community Development Project Grant Contract

(2) The Board of Directors is responsible for assuring adequate funding is available for meeting the functions of Portage Women's Shelters Inc. The Director will be responsible for the development of budgets to be approved by the Board and submitted to appropriate funding sources with the assistance of the Finance Committee.

- (3) Board members will be appointed to act as a liaison and advisor to the various program committees; i.e. Public Education/Publicity, Finance, Volunteer, Professional Advisory Committees. The Chairperson of each individual committee will keep the appointed Board member informed of progress, problems, questions, etc. so that the Board member may report back to the Board of Directors. (Also see Board policy re link with Reserve Communities)
- (4) The Board is responsible for the selection, job description, and evaluation of the Director. The Board should not be directly involved in selection and development of job descriptions of staff. The Board should vote on the recommendation of the Director for hiring and job descriptions of the staff.
- (5) While the Board of Directors will adopt and/or develop overall policy and guidelines, the implementation of the policies is the responsibility of the Director and staff.  
Note: The Director will act as the liaison between the Board of Directors and staff members. It is suggested that staff member(s) periodically accompany the Director to Board meetings to ensure staff accessibility to the Board. Staff members are however, directly responsible to the Director of Portage Women's Shelters Inc.
- (6) The Board will approve the evaluation format of the staff developed by the Director in conjunction with the Professional Advisory Committee. The evaluation itself must be carried out by the Director. The Board will vote on the recommendations of the Director.
- (7) The Board members will not be involved in decisions regarding specific cases of clients involved in the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. Board members involved in direct services to clients through their place of employment will deal with clients as an employee of their service, but not acting as a Board member of Portage Women's Shelters Inc. In such circumstances the Board member can make a referral to the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. or receive a referral from this program (either to or through the Director or designated crisis worker).
- (8) Individual Board member's concern or involvement with client cases should be conducted through the Director (this relates to Board members who are not employed by human service agencies or direct services to clients).

- (9) Relatives of Board members cannot be hired to work in the program as paid staff.

POLICY REGARDING BOARD AND PROGRAM LINKS WITH NATIVE COMMUNITIES

A minimum of one native Board member will be appointed to work with the Director and assigned native staff person(s) to consult regarding the program link with reserve communities who wish to utilize the services of the program.

This will involve:

- (1) ensuring that relevant persons, i.e. Chief on the respective band council are aware of the program offered by Portage Women's Shelters Inc.
- (2) that a Child and Family Services Worker from the respective reserve (and any identified volunteers) be included in the volunteer training program so that (a) they know what the program offers and (b) they will be able to provide counselling and a network of safe homes in their communities if they so desire. The Portage Women's Shelters Inc. will offer requested input and assistance toward establishing safe homes and services by the reserve for their people.
- (3) in cases where family violence is deemed to be volatile, families from the reserve may want to utilize native safe homes based in Portage, providing an agreement has been reached regarding per diem rates that the program will have to charge to the reserve. It will also be understood that Program accommodation of native families from reserves will first have to be approved by an appointed contact person on the reserve. The Central Crisis Office of the program will coordinate placement and services to these specified families.
- (4) The assigned Board member will act as a consultant to the Program Director, however the Director will be responsible for seeing that services and connections are carried out by the staff person.

- (5) The assigned staff person(s) is responsible for maintaining feedback and cooperation with the Reserve Child & Family Services Worker.
- (6) Reserves interested in setting up safe homes in their communities will be responsible for ensuring the safety of these homes.
- (7) The Consultant Board member(s) regarding links with reserve communities will provide feedback to the Board with respect to progress, cooperation, questions and problems occurring in the program's connection with native communities.

POLICY RE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- (1) Members of the Finance Committee will receive an orientation regarding Family Violence and the program of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc.
- (2) The Chairperson and members of the Finance Committee will develop and carry out strategies regarding raising funds for the program. Strategies will be approved by the Board through the Board member(s) appointed to act in an advisory and consultant capacity to the Finance Committee.
- (3) The Chairperson of the Finance Committee will provide progress reports to the appointed Board member(s) and attend Board meetings as required.
- (4) The Chairperson of the Finance Committee will be aware of and act within the limitations of guidelines provided to the Program by United Way.
- (5) The appointed Board member(s) will advise the Chairperson of the Program's budgetary needs and the specific purpose of the fund raising drive.

POLICY RE PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- (1) Members of the Committee will receive an orientation regarding Family Violence/Wife Abuse and the program of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc.
- (2) Members of this Committee will be appointed on the basis of professional social work/counselling skills and experience.
- (3) The Chairperson of this Committee will report to an appointed Board member regarding input, problems, and recommendations for specific staff training.
- (4) Members of the Committee will act as consultants to (1) the Director, and (2) the staff in terms of problems experienced with clients, case management, workshops and inservices of direct value to staff, etc.
- (5) Members of the Committee will work towards arranging an evaluation of the program following its first year of operation. It is suggested that an outside evaluation may be arranged through the School of Social Work, University of Manitoba to ensure that the program is meeting its objectives.

STAFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS

## JOB DESCRIPTION - DIRECTOR: PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS INC.

Starting Date: March 28, 1983

The position will consist of an initial three month probationary period at the end of which time the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. will evaluate the job performance of the Director. Three alternatives will then exist: full-time employment, a further three month probationary period, or the Board will give the employee two weeks notice of release from duties.

Line of Accountability:

- The Director shall be responsible to the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. During the initial three month period, the Director will also liaise with the three established committees as needed: Fund Raising Committee, Volunteer Committee and Public Education/Publicity Committee. The link with the Board and the Committees at this time is designed to familiarize the Director with the proposed program and assist the Committees in the developmental stages of the program.

Duties of the Director in the initial three month phase:

- 1) Receive administrative training regarding duties relating to the Canada Community Development Program Grant. Training will be provided by the assigned Project Director from Manpower and Immigration.
- 2) To set up an operational Central Crisis Office, as a home base for the program. This will include: a bookkeeping system, organization of resource material, assisting the Board regarding development of a record keeping system.
- 3) The Director shall be familiar with resource material provided including: issues regarding wife abuse/family violence; problems encountered by native people with regards to services in the community.
- 4) The Director shall be familiar with relevant community resources available in the Portage la Prairie locale and their functions as they pertain to victims of family violence, i.e. RCMP, City Welfare, Provincial Social Allowance, Portage Housing Authority, Legal Aid, CAS, Portage General Hospital Emergency Services, Portage Farm Labor Project, Friendship Centre, Community Mental Health Services, Work Activity Project, Employment Services.
- 5) The Director is responsible for maintaining positive public relations between the "program" being developed and agencies and the community at large.
- 6) The Director shall have a thorough knowledge of the proposed program and shall carry out the policy of same as it is developed by the Board.

Job description - Director: Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. continued...

- 7) To partake in the "Training of Volunteers" workshop as offered by the Manitoba Committee On Wife Abuse if possible. Involvement in this workshop is designed to give the Director a preview of the topic areas which will be covered more extensively in future training sessions of the program's staff.

Proposed Program Priorities for the Initial Three Month Phase:

- 1) Community fund raising/donations of office furniture and supplies.

Task: Identify major and secondary funding sources and blitz same.

- 2) Develop Job Descriptions for staff. If possible staff will be selected following an initial volunteer training program. Criteria for staff selection: In all cases the following qualification will apply: "to have a sensitivity and understanding of family violence as gained through personal experience". (Related community service work will be a further qualification).

- 3) To identify "safe home" operators in the community and to screen same and provide an orientation regarding program operation and policy.

- 4) Initiate proposed training program for staff (see pg. 4).

Proposed Training Program for Staff:

Phase #1

- 1) familiarize staff with literature re wife abuse/family violence
- 2) familiarize staff with proposed program and program priorities: victims of family violence, service input for native families
- 3) Crisis Intervention Workshop -
- 4) On-the-job-training -

Operational Phase of Central Crisis Office:

Phase #2

- 1) Assertiveness Training - 2 day workshop - Manitoba Mental Health Association
- 2) Coping with Stress - 2 day workshop - Manitoba Mental Health Association

Work-Period at Central Crisis Office:

Phase #3

(possible)

- 1) Native Cultural Awareness Workshop -
- 2) Working with Battered Women Workshop -

## JOB DESCRIPTION OF DIRECTOR FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF PHASE #1:

- 1) Reports directly to the Board of the Portage Womens Shelters, Inc.
- 2) Attends all Board meetings.
- 3) Prepares monthly program and finance reports for all Board meetings and for the funding source as requested.
- 4) Oversees keeping of records, billings, books and documents pertaining to client contacts.
- 5) Participates and assumes equal responsibility for the following: personnel, staff training and development, hiring, etc.
- 6) Supervises staff and conducts semi-annual Performance Evaluations on all employees. These evaluations will then be submitted to the Board.
- 7) Liaise directly with various local agencies and departments: i.e. Legal Aid, Portage General, City Welfare, etc.
- 8) Oversees and consults with staff regarding case input and planning.
- 9) Responsible for overall maintenance and daily supervisory operation of program of the Portage Womens Shelters, Inc. i.e. staff schedules, delegation of staff responsibilities, coordination of volunteers and safe home operator input, etc.
- 10) The Director shall have signing authority for all expenses incurred by the program up to \$100.00. Any expenses over \$100.00 will have to be approved by the Board of Directors.
- 11) In order to provide for consistency in the delivery of service, the Director will initiate regular staff meetings where case progress and planning is discussed, staff concerns expressed, and information is shared. The Director will ensure a log book is accurately kept to update staff at shift changes regarding client contact and disposition.

JOB DESCRIPTION - Crisis Line Workers: Portage Women's Shelters Inc.

Starting Date: April/May, 1983

The position will consist of an initial three month probationary period for each staff member at the end of which time the Director will evaluate the job performance of each line worker. The evaluations will then be discussed with the Board and three alternatives will then exist: full-time employment, a further three-month probationary period, or release from duties.

Line of Accountability:

The crisis line workers shall be directly responsible to the Director of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc.

Duties of the Crisis Line Workers prior to the establishment of the Crisis Line and Central Crisis Office:

- 1) Line workers will familiarize themselves with the literature on wife abuse/family violence, and be responsible for setting up a resource library on this issue so that articles, books, pamphlets, etc. are not lost. Should staff members, volunteers etc. wish to borrow material a recording book should be maintained including the borrowers name, address, phone number, date borrowed, and return date, and name of article, book, author, etc.
- 2) Workers will have a thorough knowledge of the proposed program and shall carry out the policy of same as it is developed by the Board.
- 3) Staff are expected to partake in all training sessions organized by the Board, prior to operation of the crisis line (ie) literature, Crisis Intervention Workshop (Klinic), On-the-job training (Osborne House).
- 4) Staff shall be familiar with relevant community resources available in the Portage la Prairie locale and their functions as they pertain to victims of family violence (ie) R.C.M.P., City Welfare, Provincial Social Allowance, Portage Housing Authority, Legal Aid, C.A.S., Portage General Hospital, Emergency Services, Portage Farm Labour Project, Friendship Centre, Community Mental Health Services, Work Activity Project, Employment Services, Public Health, etc.

- 5) In conjunction with the Director, staff are responsible for maintaining positive public relations between the "program" being developed and agencies and the community at large.
- 6) Staff will assist in the identification, interviewing, orientation and screening of potential "safe home" operators.
- 7) Staff will assist in helping the committees set up by the Board as required (ie) the finance committee and the volunteer committee.

Duties of Crisis Line Workers in the Operational Phase of the Program:

- 1) Workers will operate out of a Central Crisis Office and man the crisis line on a rotating shift basis, 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Shifts will be arranged by the Director with a slight overlap occurring in each shift so that relevant information can be shared between staff members.
- 2) The crisis workers will screen the incoming calls, assess the nature of the crisis (whether immediate action is required as opposed to a woman requesting information regarding services, referrals, etc.). If immediate action is required the worker will obtain the following information: name, phone number, location, number of children, have the R.C.M.P. been contacted?, spouse present or absent, weapons involved?, alcohol involved (either by spouse or victim), access to transportation.
- 3) For those clients requiring assistance (safety and support for their children and themselves), the victim and her children will come, or be brought to the central crisis office where any other pertinent information will be obtained and a safe home contacted. The worker will then accompany the woman and her children to the notified safe house and assist in settling this family into the safe home. Arrangements will then be made for a follow-up appointment in the morning with a crisis worker at the central crisis office (NB., if medical attention is required the worker will accompany the woman to the hospital.).
- 4) The crisis workers will provide support and counselling necessary to the woman to assess her situation and make decisions regarding her future whether this be to return to her own home or partner, or to live independently.

- 5) Workers will advise clients regarding various community resources they will need to utilize and assist in making these arrangements with the help of volunteers as required.
- 6) Workers will respond to telephone requests and inquiries re: counselling, information and resources, etc.
- 7) Statistics recording forms and a daily log book will be kept up to date and complete.
- 8) Workers will provide support and keep in close contact with the "safe home" being utilized ensuring safety, confidentiality, and co-operation.
- 9) To provide follow-up assistance if agreed upon by the woman(client) by means of visits, phone contacts and group activities.
- 10) Attend regular staff meetings - a team approach is necessary for the staff so that delivery of service remains consistent. It is suggested that weekly meetings be held where client cases can be discussed in terms of what actions have been taken, problems encountered, alternatives possible, etc.

### Professionalism

Professionalism can be translated to mean "worker responsibility". Two areas of worker responsibility are (1) confidentiality and (2) handling of personal difficulties.

#### 1. Confidentiality

POLICY - All employees must respect the confidential nature of their work in dealing with clients of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. Any information received about clients provided by individuals is to be treated confidentially and is not to be repeated.

Due to the nature of circumstances involving a client and children during crisis, no information will be given to any individual as to the client/children's whereabouts, unless permission is received from the client.

Any information relating to Portage Women's Shelters Inc. business will be available to the Board of Directors at any time.

Enquiries concerning the affairs of the Board of Directors, and the organization, must be directed to the Director of Portage Women's Shelters Inc. or to a member of the Board of Directors.

### Notes on Confidentiality

Portage Women's Shelters Inc. policy indicates that "all employees must respect the confidential nature of their work in dealing with clients" of the program. In regard to this, consideration should be given to the following situations:

1) Often a worker will meet a former client on the street, store, etc. Respecting the client's possible discomfort with such a confrontation, the worker is advised to let the client decide whether or not she wants to say hi or talk for a few minutes.

2) Workers will also encounter individuals who will ask about certain clients. Whether or not the inquirer is a friend or relative of the client, the worker should inform the person that her job requires that client cases are not discussed with anyone.

3) At the central crisis office of Portage Women's Shelters Inc. workers should ensure that they do not discuss confidential information concerning a client when other clients are near enough to overhear such information.

4) Direct counselling should not take place when other individuals are near unless the client has consented. The worker should always seek the permission of the client in such circumstances. Please bear confidentiality in mind when dealing with "safe homes" as well.

### Personal Problems or Difficulties

Workers are human beings. It is expected that they will encounter personal difficulties of their own. In regard to professionalism, what is a worker expected to do when her own difficulties begin to interfere with her performance at work? In such a situation, it is useful to consider the

following:

- 1) A worker should NEVER discuss her own personal problems with a client. When a woman uses the services of Portage Women's Shelters Inc., she is in need of support herself. She should not be expected to take on the problems of the worker.
- 2) A worker could consider exchanging one or two shifts with another worker, giving her time to sort out her difficulties. If this alternative is chosen, the Director should be informed of such changes as soon as possible.
- 3) A worker might also consider requesting a leave of absence. Again, this should be discussed with the Director.
- 4) Should a worker find herself in the position where she is continually encountering personal difficulties which affect her performance at work, she might consider looking at her suitability for this type of job. If a worker's personal problems are allowed to affect her job performance, the client is not receiving the service to which she is entitled.

PROPOSED REPORTING PROCEDURES

Program Reporting

Project line workers should each prepare monthly program reports regarding their respective area of responsibility. These monthly reports should include:

- 1) work accomplished during the previous month
- 2) problems and areas of concern along with recommendations for dealing with such problems and/or areas of concern
- 3) areas of potential development along with recommendations for actualizing that potential
- 4) projected activity for the coming month.

Monthly progress reports should be discussed by all staff and then referred to the Board for review and reaction.

Financial Reporting

The Project Director should prepare monthly financial statements including:

- 1) budget line-items
- 2) budgetted amounts
- 3) amounts expended during the previous month for each item
- 4) amounts expended to date for each item
- 5) amounts over (under) for each item
- 6) projected expenditures for the coming month for each item
- 7) projected expenditures for the year for each item.

Monthly financial statements should be discussed by all staff and them referred to the Board for review and approval.

## TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

### Regular

- 1) regular employment should be defined as full-time employment with all the rights and fringe benefits according thereof.

### Probationary

- 1) probationary employment should be defined as consisting of a three month period followed by a written evaluation by the Project Director recommending termination, regular employee status, or an extension of the probationary period

### Fee for Service

- 1) consultants should be defined as persons who perform specified tasks for a pre-agreed fee, and normally for a pre-agreed period of time
- 2) the period of time and tasks involved as well as any other relevant terms and/or conditions should be stipulated in writing prior to commencement of work
- 3) the Project Director should be responsible for arranging the recruitment, hiring, supervision, evaluation and termination of consultants subject only to the budget and approval of the Board
- 4) fringe benefits should not apply to consultants unless otherwise specified.

### Payment for Services

Regular and probationary employees should be paid every two weeks for a total of 26 pay periods a year.

Consultants should be paid as per written agreement.

### Dismissal

- 1) unsatisfactory employees will be dismissed by the Director in consultation with the Board.

### Resignation

- 1) the employee is required to give the Director one month's notice of intention to leave, but a minimum of two weeks is essential.
- 2) the Director should give at least six weeks notice if resignation is being considered.

Sick Leave

It is recommended that regular employees be entitled to 15 days per year of paid sick leave accrued at the rate of 1¼ days per month.

It is further recommended that payment not be made for unused sick leave at the time of duration.

It is further recommended that normal medical and dental appointments not be considered sick leave.

It is further recommended that employees be required to notify their immediate supervisor of illness as soon as possible.

It is further recommended that a signed statement from the employee's doctor be required in instances where more than 3 days consecutive sick leave are required.

Bereavement Leave

It is recommended that bereavement leave without pay be determined in consultation with the employee's immediate supervisor ( normally 3 days would be allowed for this purpose).

It is further recommended that employees be allowed to use accrued sick leave and/or vacation time to cover time spent on bereavement leave.

It is further recommended that bereavement leave be applicable to the following definition:

Immediate family be defined as spouse, children, mother, father, brother and sister.

Mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law apply in this definition.

Maternity and Paternity Leave

Due to the nature of this program, there is no maternity benefits and a maximum of one (1) day paternity leave be granted employees on the day of his child's birth or on the day the wife and child leave the hospital.

It is further recommended that the employees immediate supervisor approve the paternity leave.

### Emergency Leave

It is recommended that emergency leave be granted at the discretion of the immediate supervisor.

### Accumulated Over-time

It is recommended that all staff, other than Consultants, who put in overtime (in excess of an eight hour day), keep a log of such overtime and submit same to Project Director for approval to regain time off on a monthly basis. Such overtime is not applicable to paid vacation leave.

### Confidentiality

It is recommended that all persons who do work for the Corporation be required to sign a confidentiality statement.

### Release of Non-Public Information

It is recommended that only the Board or its delegate be authorized to release non-public information concerning the Corporation.

### Conflict of Interest

It is recommended that all persons doing work for the Corporation be prohibited from engaging in any business transactions or having any financial interest either direct or indirect which is incompatible with the interests of the Corporation or proper discharge of his/her duties.

### The Role of Staff and Consultants in Representing the Corporation

It is recommended that staff and consultants be prohibited from representing the Corporation in regard to policy level matters without the explicit authorization of the Project Director and/or the Board.

### Restriction of Outside Work

It is recommended that persons working for the Corporation be prohibited from engaging in other employment which conflicts with Corporation interests or adversely affects his/her ability to perform his/her duties.

### Political Activity

It is recommended that employees interested in seeking political office be required to either take an official leave of absence or resign their position with the Corporation.

Confidentiality Statement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned so hereby agree to consult my immediate supervisor as regards dissemination of any and all information related to my work that has not been previously defined as confidential, that may be considered harmful to the project in general, and or could be injurious to the project, persons or individuals related to the project or its goals and objectives.

Further, I agree to exercise confidentiality in all matters that have previously been defined as such.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

VOLUNTEER INPUT

POLICY

RE: Volunteer work in conjunction with Portage Women's Shelters, Inc.  
Program

Training - Volunteer Training Program via the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc.

- 1) Issues re Wife Battering - why they do not leave?  
- why they return?  
- services required: legal, medical and social services systems.
- 2) Orientation regarding Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. Program and policies.

Tasks - To provide accompaniment and support to the battered woman and her children.  
To oversee children at the Crisis Office while the woman attends appointments.

Issue - For many women in a crisis situation, approaching formal institutions can be overwhelming. She may be too distraught in shock, or lacking in necessary self-confidence to ensure that she receives proper care and attention.

Goal - To bridge the knowledge and service gap and provide support by accompanying the victim to police, the hospital, city welfare, social services, or the lawyer as arranged by the Central Crisis Office. To provide the women with explanations about procedures re the above. If she chooses to relocate, to assist her in finding accommodation. Provide follow-up to victims who relocate.

Policy - Accompanying the women through any or all of the above stages is dependent upon the victim's request. The staff members will provide information about alternatives which the women may choose among; but they are trained not to interfere with, or influence her in deciding whether to proceed with pressing charges, separating and so forth.

- \* Counselling of the battered woman and appointments to appropriate and agreed upon resources in the community will be coordinated by the Central Crisis Office workers. Volunteers will be utilized in terms of helping the woman through this process (i.e. accompaniment, support, reassurance) in addition to providing follow-up service to the woman through visiting, phone calls, etc.

CONFIDENTIALITY - (Keeping the trust of the client in mind at all times.)

It is our written policy that we do not divulge statistical information, a client's whereabouts or information concerning a client to anyone other than program personnel unless:

- i) There is a request in writing and legally compellable, and/or
- ii) Consent is given by the client to share information with a referral agency.

Giving Advise - Give no advise unless you are qualified to give it, i.e. legal advise should be given by a lawyer. Program staff will act as advocates. Volunteers will assist in assuring the process agreed upon by a staff member and the woman is carried out.

Specialized Volunteer Input -

Volunteer secretary/typist.  
Volunteers with background/and or training in child care.  
Volunteer input from A.F.M. or A.A. group.  
Volunteer input from Alanon group.  
Volunteer input from Home Economist re budgeting/nutrition.

POLICY

RE: Safe Home Operators

- Operators have a basic interest in the family violence issue and identify themselves as interested participants as a result of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. public education campaign.

- Operators attend a Volunteer Training Program as sponsored by the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc.

Training includes:

- a) basic issues regarding wife abuse.
- N.B. b) maintaining confidentiality of victims and of their home.
- c) abilities re support, comfort and safety.
- d) liason with assigned Crisis Worker
- e) record keeping per diem rates - accommodation, meals.
- f) basic knowledge of role of Central Crisis Office.
- g) payment procedure.

Screening process of safe home operators - policy and form adopted from procedure outlined by Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse.

PROPOSAL RE: SCREENING PROCEDURE FOR SAFE-HOMES

- Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. staff will be responsible for screening of safe-homes.

- The Central Crisis Office for the program will coordinate and monitor the use of safe-homes (i.e. all referrals must be made through the Crisis Office.

- When potential safe-home volunteers are identified, an application form will be completed. On the basis of a completed application, a program staff member will interview the applicant(s). If an applicant is "screened-in" as a suitable safe-home operator, an agreement will be entered into, including the terms of service offered and the safe-home operator will undergo an orientation re the program and its policies.

If an applicant is "screened-out" as an unsuitable safe-home operator or facility, staff will examine the possibility of channelling the applicant's concern into a more appropriate type of volunteer activity, i.e. other type of volunteer input.

- The interview should be conducted at the applicant's home; if the applicant has a spouse, request that the spouse be present for the interview.

- Program direction re safe homes: need to establish an evaluation mechanism (input from "users").

(DRAFT) SAFE-HOME VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

NAME OF APPLICANT(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION OF LOCATION (if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

IS THIS A PARTY-LINE? \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD:

NAME:	RELATIONSHIP TO YOU:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ADULTS IN HOME: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state whether employed outside of home: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYER(S): \_\_\_\_\_

HOURS OF WORK: \_\_\_\_\_

HEALTH (Please note any problems): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF HOUSE/APARTMENT: (Please list number of bedrooms, bathrooms, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CAN YOU ACCOMMODATE CHILDREN? \_\_\_\_\_ IF YES, HOW MANY? \_\_\_\_\_  
INFANTS? \_\_\_\_\_ IF YES, HOW MANY? \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OF TIME YOU ARE WILLING TO HAVE A FAMILY STAY: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FREQUENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU HAVE A VEHICLE (or access to a vehicle)? \_\_\_\_\_

REFERENCES: (please include your doctor, social worker, minister or lawyer as one of your references)

	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE #</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____

WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE A SAFE-HOME VOLUNTEER? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I/we the undersigned do hereby apply to \_\_\_\_\_ Page 41

\_\_\_\_\_ to be available as a safe-home for families in crisis.

I/we hereby consent to the contacting of the above-named references, and agree to provide all information deemed relevant to this application.

I/we also agree to undergo any necessary health and safety inspections that may be necessary.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE(S): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
FOR OFFICE USE:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ PARTY LINE? \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ACCOMMODATION FOR: \_\_\_\_\_ ADULTS

\_\_\_\_\_ CHILDREN

\_\_\_\_\_ INFANTS

HAS THIS SAFE-HOME BEEN APPROVED? \_\_\_\_\_ IF SO, BY WHOM? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW RE: ASSESSING SUITABILITY OF SAFE-HOME VOLUNTEERSBACKGROUND:

Purpose of such an interview is to gain insight into applicant's sensitivity and understanding of an abused woman's situation. Further, it is important to recognize that each woman's crisis has particular differences and variables; a safe-home volunteer must be able to perceive and accept those particularities, and deal with the woman in an accepting and uncritical manner. In addition to providing physical shelter/refuge for a woman/family in crisis, emotional support will be needed. A safe-home volunteer should be supportive without being directive, i.e. providing input and guidance but not exerting pressure on the woman to pursue any particular direction.

\* open-ended questions

ATTITUDES/VALUES:

- what are the applicant's attitudes vis-a-vis battered/abused woman?
  - ever known a victim?
  - ever been battered yourself?
  - why are women abused? = focus on woman
  - what should be done with batterers?
  
- attitudes re: "marital problems"/crisis in relationship?
  - = focus on relationship
  
- attitude to common-law unions
  
- flexibility of attitudes - degree of judgement
  
- ability to accept woman's indecision
  
- ability to support and guide but not direct and pressure
  
- if applicant married/coupled, are the spouses united in their concerns and attitudes?
  
- how will both play supportive role?
  
- getting a sense of applicant's "lifestyle"
  
- important to know whether any alcoholics in the house

ABILITIES:

- physical/emotional stamina to cope with woman/children in crisis in home situation?
  
- can applicant assist woman in care of children?
  - and avoid completely overtaking woman's responsibility for her children?
  
- can applicant respond to stressful incidents in helpful and constructive way?
  
- can applicant recognize and respond appropriately to a call for help from woman? i.e. may involve calling in support from professionals, often outside resources in the community.
  
- ability to cope with medical problems/emergencies associated with abuse.

- interviewer's general perceptions
- fire safety concerns e.g. smoke detectors?
- interactions observed between household members and comments on projected ability, competence, comfort levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

- any restrictions on placement?
- any particular concerns requiring further investigation?
- Number of persons (children/infants) that can reasonably be accommodated.

etc.

- Report of Reference -

PROPOSED "AGREEMENT"

- To be entered into by the safe-home volunteer, once assessed to be suitable.

- Statement of availability as safe-home, for women and their children in crisis.

- Subject to any specified restrictions/conditions:

- eg. - 10 months of the year
- once a month for up to five days
- cannot have babies, no crib
- etc.

- Agreement to notify local Crisis Office if home will not be available for a period of time.

- Initial agreement that financial reward for service can not be made and that the operator understands the volunteer nature of the service (subject to establishment of per diem rates from city welfare - if such is established, could include statement of reimbursement scheme to be followed).

## Public Speakers Training Schedule: Proposed Outline

NOTE: Trainees responsible for pre-reading assigned. Please be prepared to take notes. Trainees must attend all sessions.

## WEEK #1

First Session: 7:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Monday, February 14, 1983.

- a) Introduction. Presented: Kim Bager.
- b) Film "Loved, Honoured and Bruised."
- c) Family Violence/Wife Abuse.
- d) Discussion.
- e) The Legal Perspective.

Pre-reading to be covered prior to the first session.

## WEEK #1

Second Session:

- a) The Police Perspective: Sgt. Ken Phillips, R.C.M.P.
- b) Osborne House - Problems for Rural People. Gwen & Dale
- c) Shelter versus Safe Home Program. Gwen & Dale
- d) Portage Women's Shelter's Inc. Program versus Other Programs. Gwen & Dale
- e) Program Emphasis: i) The rationale for "Family Violence" i.e. speaking to mixed groups, male/female groups, the issue of children ii) Cross Cultural Awareness Gwen
- f) The lack of local statistics - service blocks. Gwen & Dale

Question & Answer Period.

## WEEK #2

Third Session:

- a) How to Lead Small Group Discussions: Doug Tiltman
- b) Break into Small Groups to discuss material presented in sessions #1 and #2. (Suggest 15 minutes per topic.)
  - i) Family Violence - The Vicious Circle, Perpetuation of Societal Violence with a Family Context.
  - ii) Important Statistical Information to be covered.
  - iii) Possible case examples as selected from reading material?
  - iv) The Portage Program.
- c) Large Group - further questions and clarification of material.
- d) Introduction to Public Speaking Techniques - Toastmistress.
- e) Assignment of 8 minute presentation topics.

## WEEK #2

Fourth Session:

- a) Presentation of 8 minute assignments.
- b) Topic evaluation and coaching.

Assignment of 20 minute presentation.

## WEEK #3

Fifth Session:

- a) Trial Run.
- b) Course Evaluation.

PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS INC.

Publicity/Public Education Committee.  
Chairperson: Pauline Chudzik; 857-9817

Volunteer Speakers Bureau:

Purpose:

- To represent the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program in the community as a member of the volunteer speaker's bureau.
- To attend orientation/training sessions as designed by the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program.
- To prepare the presentation based on materials provided by the program.
- To provide feedback to the Chairperson of the Speakers Bureau regarding speaking engagements assigned to you.

Time Requirement:

- The Chairperson is responsible for coordinating requests for speakers with those speakers trained by the program, bearing in mind the working schedule of each speaker. Hopefully speaking engagements can be assigned on a rotation basis. Speakers are asked to state their preference for day time versus evening engagements. Time commitment of speaking engagement - average of 1 hour.

Qualifications/Skills:

- male or female, 18 years of age or over.
- ability to speak in public with ease.
- interest in the issues involved in Family Violence and the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program.
- ability to organize speech material for presentation to differing audiences.
- an advocate for the program in a non-judgemental manner.

Orientation:

- See Speakers Training Schedule.

Accountability:

- To the Chairperson of the Publicity/Public Education Committee.

Accountability cont'd ...

- The Chairperson will maintain a record of a) speaking engagements requested and b) which speakers spoke to which group. (See Request for Speaker form.)

NOTE: If you are requested to speak to a group please inform the Chairperson so that this engagement can be recorded. Please have evaluation form (see attached) filled out and return to Chairperson.

Transportation:

If you require transportation please inform the Chairperson so that arrangements can be made. We will request that out-of-town groups requesting a speaker pay for mileage costs or transportation.

Benefits:

As well as utilizing the skills the speaker trainees already have this may prove to be an opportunity to develop new ones in public speaking or improve skills in this area. There is a great need for the public to become aware of the issues involved in family violence if we ever expect to have an impact on this problem. Your job as public speakers is a very critical one as a first step towards prevention.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN SPEAKING TO COMMUNITY GROUPS:

- 1) You are a volunteer speaker for the Portage Women's Shelters Inc., groups you speak to should know this. (You can mention it to make sure, if you like.) You should not be expected to have all the answers but you can be expected to make a note of questions you cannot answer and find out from the Committee what the correct response is. Then get back to the person making the inquiry or the group's contact person.
- 2) Be aware of the bounds of confidentiality. If you use case examples, do not quote names or obvious identifying information.
- 3) If anyone in the group you are speaking to approaches you with a negative remark or a criticism of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program, the Publicity/Public Education Committee, or your presentation (unlikely!), do not be defensive. As a program and

as a committee, we do have limitations -- this is not a secret. These limitations are not your fault. The whole idea is to do some consciousness-raising.

- 4) Direct requests for service to the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters Inc.

PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ NO PRESENT: \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP SPOKEN TO: \_\_\_\_\_ SPEAKER'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

THANK-YOU FOR SHOWING YOUR INTEREST AND CONCERN BY REQUESTING A SPEAKER TO TALK ABOUT THE ISSUES INVOLVED IN FAMILY VIOLENCE. IT WOULD HELP OUR SPEAKER'S BUREAU IF YOU WOULD TAKE THE TIME TO FILL IN THIS EVALUATION FORM BEFORE YOU LEAVE. THE EVALUATION NOT ONLY GIVES THE SPEAKERS VALUABLE FEEDBACK BUT IT ALSO ALLOWS US TO MAKE CHANGES AND ADJUSTMENTS IN OUR PRESENTATIONS AND THUS IMPROVE OUR PRESENTATIONS.

- 1) Had you read or studied about the issues involved in family violence before this presentation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Was the subject covered to your satisfaction? Were there areas covered you are unsure about or unclear about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Are there areas you disagreed with? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) What do you feel should be seen as top priorities in dealing with this problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Any other further comments, criticisms, suggestions, questions, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

REQUEST FOR SPEAKER

Portage Women's Shelters Inc.  
Publicity/Public Education Committee

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_ (purpose)

\_\_\_\_\_ (age range)

Length of Talk Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Ques. & Answer \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Estimated Size of Audience: \_\_\_\_\_ Actual: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person from Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Pamphlets \_\_\_\_\_

Films 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

FUNDING

SOURCE OF FUNDS RECEIVED TO DATE: (May, 1983)

University of Manitoba Community Outreach Program - research, travelling, conference, inservice costs	\$ 800.00
Canada Community Development Project Grant (one year) Wages and training of Director and 3 crisis workers	\$59,408.00
Womens Institute Donation	\$ 100.00
P.L.U.R.A. Religious organization (Winnipeg) Crisis Line Costs (one year)	\$ 2,400.00
Roman Catholic Womens Group C.F.B. Portage donation towards office rental (1st six months)	\$ 225.00
Officers Wives Club C.F.B. Portage donations towards 1st six months office rental	\$ 150.00
Trinity United Church Community Outreach Program donation towards office rental (1st six months)	\$ 1,000.00
Kinsmen - current negotiations for a program vehicle (delivered June, 1983)	

The program fund raising/finance committee is in the process of canvassing local groups and organizations for donations to be used towards office rental, insurance and supply costs in the first seven months of operation (June '83 to December '83).

The finance committee will have to continue to pursue strategies towards raising funds for ongoing program costs in future, within the boundaries and limitations set by Portage Plains United Way should your organization decide to fund the specified area of our program.

FUNDS RECEIVED TO DATE: \* (May, 1983)\*Canada Community Development Grant (C.C.D.P.)  
(first year of operation)

Director	\$16,640.00
3 Line Workers	\$29,952.00
Transportation for	
training & vehicle costs	\$ 3,016.00
Training & supplies	\$ 3,155.00
Employee benefits @ 11%	\$ 5,124.00
Workers Compensation @2%	\$ 1,066.00
Bank Charges	\$ 130.00
Postage	\$ 325.00

TOTAL

\$59,408.00

← Revised July '83  
\$82,408

\*Note: No capital costs are allowed in this grant.

PLURA GRANT: Telephone Crisis Line - \$2,400.00/year

Additional Budgetary Costs to Be Met: (All Capital Costs)Office rent: Three rooms are required i.e. one each  
for counselling, office, and children - \$225.00 (plus utilities)

Liability Insurance: \$250.00/year

Supplies @ \$60.00/month - \$720.00/year  
i.e. public education and volunteer training material,  
advertising, pamphlets

Office Equipment: donations of used furniture

PROPOSED FLURA GRANT APPLICATION FORMTO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICATION:

NAME OF APPLYING ORGANIZATION: Portage Women's Shelters, Inc.  
 ADDRESS: 25 Tupper St. N., Portage la Prairie TEL. NO.: 857-9711 (Ext.220)  
 TITLE OF PROJECT: Crisis Line relating to Family Violence  
 TYPE OF PROJECT: SOCIAL ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL: yes  
 SERVICE: yes OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE OF APPLICATION: March 22/83 AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUESTED: \$2,400.00\*  
 NAME OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: Dale MacKenzie  
 TITLE: Board Member SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR PROJECT:

The crisis line will be used by trained, paid staff operating out of a central crisis office operating 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The purpose of the crisis line is to provide a means by which persons experiencing a crisis involving family violence may phone the central crisis office requesting services designed to provide respite from the violent episode.

NOTE: BEFORE SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION, PLEASE PREPARE A PROJECT SUBMISSION USING THE OUTLINE ATTACHED. PLEASE SUBMIT IN DUPLICATE.

FOR FLURA USE ONLY:

AMOUNT OF GRANT APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF APPROVAL: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Note: Amount of grant requested is to cover costs of crisis line for communities in the Portage la Prairie vicinity. Long distance calls will also involve operating costs in the program's first year regarding inquiries for public education services to outlying communities. Additionally, long distance calls will be a necessity of the program for training and information requests the program will have of existing services in Winnipeg.

## APPENDIX C

OUTLINE FOR PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

- I Brief description of applying organization (history, purpose, nature of membership, population served, and nature of operation).
- II Brief statement of problem or need to which the project addresses itself.
- III Rationale -- statement of why project is needed; i.e., what are the gaps in service, resource inadequacies, or social values, condition, attitudes, which make it important that the project be carried out.
- IV Specific objectives of the project.
- V Project description:
  - a) Identifying project -- area to be served, number of potential participants, nature of project clientele, how they will benefit, etc.
  - b) Scope -- is project narrowly or broadly focused; explain.
  - c) Duration -- starting and completion dates.
  - d) Outline the project activities -- description of activities, new or innovative methods to be employed, resource requirements, how resources will be used, project timetable, etc.
  - e) Training of staff or volunteers if applicable.
- VI Project staff. Identify project personnel, their function, desired qualifications and duties, whether paid or volunteer, etc.
- VII Briefly describe relationship of project to other programs and activities of your organization.
- VIII Briefly describe how the project relates to the existing pattern of community services and/or activities, and how the general community and/or its service system will be involved and will benefit from the project.
- IX Describe briefly how the project will be evaluated.
- X Proposed budget -- see attached outline.

PROJECT SUBMISSION:

## I. Description of applying organization:

Founding members of the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. became cognizant of the fact that despite evidence of a significant number of cases of family violence in the Portage la Prairie area, there was not a service in existence in this rural community designed to provide respite from the violence. After researching the literature, visiting a number of shelters in existence in Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, and documenting estimates of the number of cases of family violence in Portage, a Board was formed and became incorporated in the summer of 1982. The purpose of this Board is to look at ways and means of designing a program which will provide a break in the violence being experienced by families residing in the Portage la Prairie locale. At present the Board consists of six members, all of which are women. Half of our Board membership includes persons of native origin; half of the membership have experienced family violence themselves and therefore have a vested interest in the development of our program. Our Board members constitute representation from a variety of community agencies and organizations (i.e. Legal Aid (providing legal counsel), the Friendship Center and Probation Services (which represent the native component and a valuable link with the native community), the Portage Farm Labour Project (providing native input and managerial skills) and Mental Health Services and Day Care (which offer agency and community organizational skills). To date we are considered a "closed" board as we do not have a general membership at this stage of our planning. However, we have formed three committees with Chairpersons in place: a volunteer committee, a fund raising committee and a publicity/public education committee.

The program being designed will serve both native and nonnative families experiencing violence in Portage la Prairie and surrounding communities.

A central crisis office will be set up to operate a 24 hour crisis line seven days per week. In addition to the telephone number of the crisis line (which will be advertised), the program is training speakers who will talk to community professional groups about the issues involved in family violence as well as the purpose of our program. In addition to the public education component of the speaker's bureau, the Board is presently undertaking a media blitz to inform the community of the program and its purpose. Due to budgetary restraints, the Board has chosen to develop a network of safe homes in the

community whereby people interested in providing basic safety and shelter to victims of family violence will be identified, screened and trained.

Through public education and advertising, the crisis line will be made available to families in crisis to contact the worker manning the central office. Each woman needing aid and her children will be met by a worker (with RCMP involvement if necessary) and taken to an appropriate safe home designed to provide a safe, short-term (1 to 5 nights) escape from violence. The crisis office will provide counselling and referral information to the victim, outlining her options and encouraging ongoing support and referral to appropriate services, i.e. individual counselling, support groups for both women and men, and referrals for marital or family counselling.

It is anticipated that the costs for the crisis line will be relatively high due to long distance inquiries involving family crisis, program information, requests for speakers for outlying communities, as well as telephone crisis intervention calls for individuals not willing or able to leave the home situations.

## II. Brief Statement of problem or need to which the project addresses itself:

The statistics for Canada indicate that one in ten women experience violence within a married or live-in relationship with their spouse. The Board of the Portage Women's Shelters has thus far identified over 100 cases of family violence in our area in our initial request for "estimates" from community agencies and organizations. As indicated previously there is no service yet in place in this area which is designed to provide a sanctuary from violence and offer counselling, appropriate service referral or family functioning options which will be directed at disrupting cycles of violence. Without the service we are proposing, there are no means of relief from on-going violence for battered women and their children.

## III. Rationale:

The Board of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. strongly believe that until a service is in place that deals specifically with breaking the cycle of family violence, it will continue indefinitely for the majority of families experiencing this type of crisis. A particular emphasis of our overall program has been to provide education to the community at large regarding the prevalence of family violence, its causes and why it continues. This type of education is needed not only by the general community, but also by human

service professionals so that this problem does not continue to be ignored. The fact that statistics are not documented is indicative of the problem that there has been a tendency for the community at large to ignore family violence, or at best to focus on the children in cases of child abuse and incest.

Identified cases have been referred to Osborne House in Winnipeg (a distance of fifty miles away) for those fortunate enough to be involved with service providers who are aware of Osborne House. Other women and the children have been placed in hotels or motels overnight by the RCMP when they were in danger. Referral to Winnipeg presents the following problems:

- a) lack of transportation to Winnipeg in emergency situations
- b) loss of natural support networks, i.e. friends, family
- c) desire to return or remain in their home community as opposed to relocating in Winnipeg
- d) the difficulties that exist around connecting with services that the family requires in their home community upon their return from Winnipeg, i.e. legal input, counselling services, financial and housing assistance if need be.

A central crisis office and telephone line would provide the link which families need in order to break the cycle of violence and cope with their situations in their own community.

#### IV. Specific objectives of the project:

- (A) The program objectives of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. are:
  - to provide community and professional education regarding the causes and issues involved in family violence
  - to advertise the program and the services it offers, geared towards providing a break in the violence and offering basic safety and support
  - to ensure that the program is sensitive to native families and issues by (1) requiring 50% native representation on the Board and staff, (2) through the development of native safe homes, (3) through training of native speakers within the speakers bureau, (4) through cross cultural awareness training of Board members, staff and committee members, and (5) by maintaining a close link and cooperation with native band members and staff.

- (B) The project objective of the crisis line itself will be:
- to utilize staff to operate a crisis line for victims of family violence
  - the crisis line will be used to coordinate the program designed to provide a break in the violence through crisis intervention, support and safety, and through a referral system (to ensure families are provided with the services they require to provide an alternative to violent behavior).

V. Project Description:

(a) Identifying project:

The central office and the crisis line will service the City of Portage la Prairie proper, surrounding reserve communities, i.e. Dakota Tipi, Long Plain, Sandy Bay, etc., as well as smaller communities in the Portage vicinity. The actual number of potential participants is unknown at this time, however it is anticipated that there will be a high correlation between the extent to which the program is publicized and the number of service recipients. With the program still in the latter planning phase, Board members are experiencing an increasing number of calls at a rate of approximately five per week from persons requiring services. These clientele are persons who are experiencing family violence and are requesting legal, social service and safety resources. The crisis line would operate to provide the information requested, provide services needed, and alternatives to the situation victims of family violence are currently experiencing.

(b) Scope:

The crisis line will operate to provide a method by which people can contact the service they require and get the help they need. It can therefore be thought of in terms of providing a narrow service function.

The overall program being developed by the Board has a broad focus in that aside from the service aspect of the program it will also provide community education and therefore be involved in the consciousness raising of citizens regarding the unacceptability and prevalence of family violence.

(c) Duration:

It is hoped that the crisis line will be in place by the end of March, 1983. Our first year of operation as outlined by the C.C.D.P. grant runs from a late starting date of March/April '83 for a year's duration. During the first year of operation we expect to be able to generate other sources of community backing and fund raising to ensure continuation of the program on an annual basis.

(d) Project activities:

The crisis line will be used to receive calls from families in crisis as well as to take calls from referral sources involved with such families, i.e. RCMP, CAS, hospital or friends. Basic information will be requested regarding the name, location and numbers and ages of children involved. If the situation is deemed to be a volatile one, the RCMP will be requested to provide accompaniment to the "on-call" worker in going to meet the victim and her children. An appropriate safe home operator will be contacted and the worker and the RCMP will provide accompaniment for the family to the safe home. The family will be introduced to the safe home operator and the worker will assist in settling the family for the night. The worker will also ensure medical treatment is obtained if necessary. The RCMP have stated they will provide safety and assistance to our program whenever necessary. During the duration of their stay in the safe home, the women will be offered counselling services by the program workers. The counselling emphasis will stress crisis intervention and point out the alternatives the women may choose from. Should a woman wish to return to her home she will be connected with an ongoing support group operating out of the central office. Both she and her spouse will also be provided with information regarding group therapy for men involved in the violence, and options available for marital and family counselling provided by Community Mental Health Services.

Legal Aid, CAS, financial and housing referrals will be made as necessary and appropriate. The utilization of the crisis line portion of the program is viewed as a necessary component of the delivery of this type of service and is therefore viewed in terms of an ongoing part of the program.

(e) Training of staff and volunteers:

All volunteers and committee personnel will receive an orientation regarding the issues involved in family violence. A basis requirement for those involved is that they have a working knowledge of the program, its goals and how it functions. This will include being cognizant of the fact that the program attempts to meet the needs of both native and non-native families. The orientation will take place in the form of a workshop organized by Board members and persons from the Speakers Bureau.

Staff manning the crisis line will receive crisis intervention training through Klinik of Winnipeg. Arrangements have been made for the staff to receive on-the-job training at Osborne House of Winnipeg. We are also in the process of negotiating training regarding cross cultural awareness,

parent effectiveness, and assertiveness training for staff through existing resources in the community. The Program Director will receive special instruction regarding grant budgetary policies and program guidelines. All staff will receive an orientation regarding referral resources present in the Portage locale.

VI. Project staff:

The Canada Community Development Grant has provided the program with funding for four positions: the director and three line staff. Employment Services had provided funding for two more line staff positions on a six-month contract basis to bring our full staff complement for the program to six people. The program director will be responsible for the overall operation of the program on a day-to-day basis. This position will oversee staff, provide direction, ensure program policies are followed, maintain the program within the operating budget, provide a link with the community at large, and be responsible to the Board of the Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. The line staff will be responsible for manning the crisis line, coordinating families in need with appropriate safe homes, provide counselling to the women in terms of outlining options and helping through the initial crisis, making appropriate referrals and operating within the policies of the program as outlined.

VII. Relationship of project to other programs and activities of your organization:

The crisis line will provide the initial link for persons involved in family violence to the program's major services, i.e. safe homes (when needed), referrals to and through the system as required, and counselling-- either individual (for the woman) or on a group basis, i.e. a support group for the women, group therapy for batterers, or couple and family counselling which will take the form of referrals for this more specialized type of service.

VIII. (a) How the project relates to the existing pattern of community services and/or activities, (b) how the general community and/or its service system will be involved and will benefit from the project:

At present victims of family violence are currently in contact with a number of community service providers, i.e. local doctors and the hospital for medical attention, CAS regarding the physical and emotional impact of violence on the children, Legal Aid, RCMP and the court system pertaining to restraining and ex parte orders for protection from the violence, financial

and housing assistance when the victim chooses to leave the battering situation, and Mental Health Services in cases where persons have been referred due to depression, anxiety or requiring marital counselling due to the conflictual nature of the relationship. The service gap that exists is that there is at present no service in existence that provides continuity among the number of services that are required by families involved in these types of violent crises. The Portage Women's Shelters, Inc. program is designed to fill that gap and deal with a service need that historically has not been met. The program provides a means by which these families are assisted in reaching the appropriate existing services. The program is also designed to receive referrals from existing services who do not have the mandate nor the time to deal with this identified population group. The program being described will provide a service to which other community services can make referrals to ensure basic safety and support is forthcoming for these families. The program will also add a new dimension to existing services in that problems presently experienced by husbands and/or wives involved in domestic disputes will be dealt with specifically. This will take the form of a self help group for the women and group therapy designed especially for men who resort to violent action against their spouse.

IX. How this project will be evaluated:

A record of the disposition of calls received on the crisis line will be kept. Statistics in terms of the number of families receiving service by the program will be maintained. This will include a profile of the families receiving service, i.e. ages, number of children, employment, education, nature of the crisis, referrals made by the program, and outcome of service provided by the program.

The line workers will be evaluated in terms of their job performance and effectiveness by the program director on a biannual basis. The evaluations will be shared with the Board members. Board members will be responsible for performance appraisal of the director.

It is anticipated that the overall program will receive an evaluation from an outside source (University of Manitoba, Social Work Department?) following the first year or two of operation. This evaluation will be geared towards identifying program policy and delivery gaps. Current Board members have appreciated the value of the evaluation undertaken at Beendigan Inc., a shelter for native women and their children in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The Thunder Bay evaluation has proven to be extremely valuable in terms of providing program and policy direction for the budding program in Portage la Prairie.

X

BUDGET OUTLINE

a) Itemized projected budget (explain need):

Salaries:

Director (1)(No. of staff)	X	<u>52</u>	(wks.)	X	<u>\$320.00</u>	(\$/wk.):	<u>\$16,640.00</u>
Line							
Workers (3)(No. of staff)	X	<u>52</u>	(wks.)	X	<u>\$192.00</u>	(\$/wk.):	<u>\$ 9,984.00 (Each)</u>
Line							
Workers (2)(No. of staff)	X	<u>6 mon. con</u>	(wks.)	X	<u>unknown</u>	(\$/wk.):	<u>unknown</u>
			tract				

Employee benefits such as Unemployment Insurance, Canada pension, Compensation, Holiday Pay - 9% of Salaries:

Workmen's Composition for 3 positions - \$732.00

Operating Costs:

Total:

Transportation:

n/a

Equipment Rental:

n/a

Rent:

\$400 to \$600/mo.

Supplies:

unknown

\*Telephone: \*Crisis line

\$200/mo = \$2,400.00

Heat, Light, Water

n/a

Special Costs:

unknown

Total:

(Salaries and operating costs)

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ (a)

b) Other sources of income: see page two...

..... \_\_\_\_\_

b) Other sources of income:

Women's Institute = \$100.00

C.C.P.C. - additional funds, March 2/83 = \$15,000 (1 line position plus training  
and operating costs)

Additional Community organizational contribution still in negotiating  
process: Kinsmen, Community Outreach (Trinity United Church), Beta  
Sigma Phi, Officer's Wives Club (Southport Canadian Forces Base),  
Portage United Way, Lions, Rotary, Campbell's Soup, McCain's, etc.

Portage Women's Shelters Inc.  
Box 1541  
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, Manitoba  
R1N 3P1

(April, 1983)

Portage Plains United Way  
Box 810  
PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, Manitoba  
R1N 3C3

Members of the Allocations Committee,

On behalf of the Board of Directors for the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. I would like to thank the Board of Portage Plains United Way for accepting our program as one of the agencies that have been considered for United Way funding in 1984. Your support and acceptance of our agency is greatly appreciated.

I am including this covering letter with the attached 1984 budget proposal for the following purposes: a) to provide the "Board" information requested by United Way, b) to clarify funding received by our program to date, and c) to outline specific program requests in terms of allocation of funds from Portage Plains United Way in 1984.

Please be advised that Mr. Doug Johnson (serving as the consulting accountant on our Board), and Miss Diana Meseyton (our Program Director), will meet with the Allocation Committee on June 1, 1983, at 9:00 P.M. Gwen Hiebert and myself apologize for not being able to attend due to a prior out of province commitment.

a) The members of the Board for the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. are as follows:

- Gwen Hiebert, President
- Dale McKenzie, Vice-President
- Diane Cress, Secretary/Treasurer
- Doug Johnson, consulting accountant
- Barbara De Smedt, board link with the Volunteer Committee
- Anne Johnston, board link with the Professional Advisory Committee
- Ron Roteliuk, board link with the Finance Committee
- Barb Whitford - board links with the native community
- Maurice Myran -

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## Portage Plains United Way

It should be noted that the following, although not chartered Board members, have an active role in our program: Pauline Chudzik coordinates our Publicity and Public Education efforts, and Barney Christianson has offered to act as a legal consultant to our Board.

b) Clarification of funding received to date;  
Due to the fact that our program did not receive funds through our grant source for office rental and utilities, crisis line phone costs, and office supplies we have received the following donations for the specified time periods:

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Funds Received</u>	<u>Time Period Covered</u>
P.L.U.R.A. (Crisis Line Costs) (Religious Organization Winnipeg)	\$2,400.00	June 1/83 to June 1/84
Kinsmen - donation of a vehicle for program use including first year insurance		insurance & registration from June 1/83 to June 1/84
Women's Institute		
C.F.B. Roman Catholic Women's Group	* donations towards first seven months office rental and utilities	\$1,645.00
C.F.B. Officers Wives Club		
Trinity United Church		
Members of Royal Purple University Women's Club		

\* We are currently still receiving donations towards the costs of office rental, utilities, and vehicle operation to cover the time period from June 1/83 to the end of December/83. We are also receiving donations of office furniture at this time.

NOTE: Please refer to the numbered appendices for an explanation of each category listed in our proposed budget.

c) Specific program requests regarding allocation of funds from Portage Plains United Way:

In view of the funds received by our program to date we are requesting the Allocation Committee consider program funding for the following categories, (considering the time period specified). Please refer to the budget for further details.

- 1) Office rental and utilities (Jan/84 to Dec/84)
- 2) Liability insurance (Jan/84 to Dec/84)
- 3) Training materials for Public Education and Publicity (Jan/84 to Dec/84)
- 4) Crisis telephone costs July/84 to Dec/84
- 5) Vehicle registration costs (annual) July/84 to July/85

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Portage Plains United Way

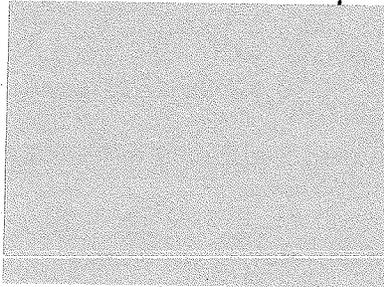
It should be noted that our program will continue to receive donations in the next seven months of operation as a number of community groups and organizations have requested speakers from our Publicity/Public Education Committee to talk to their groups when they resume activities in the fall. These donations will be used to offset office operational costs (if required), as well as ongoing program vehicle costs.

The Portage Women's Shelters Inc. program will begin documenting statistics in July, 1983 regarding crisis calls, services delivered, referrals made to and received from community agencies, etc. The purpose of this type of documentation is to determine the extent to which our program is used by the citizens of Portage la Prairie, as well as to provide a basis from which the program can be evaluated in future.

It is hoped that this "covering" letter will serve to provide the requested information, clarify points to be included in the attached budget, and outline specifics in terms of our program's requests of United Way.

Again, on behalf of our Board members, thank you for accepting our program for consideration of funding.

Sincerely,



rs Inc.

DM/lm

\* Proposal accepted June, 1983 for funding of \$7,500.00 to begin January, 1984 covering costs of office rental, utilities and some supplies.

PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS INC.  
 Operating Budget for the Year Ended  
 April 1, 1984

Attached notes

EXPENSES:

Director Salary	\$16,640.00		(1)
3 Line Workers Salary	29,952.00		
Transportation for Training & Vehicle Costs	3,016.00		
Staff Training	3,155.00		
Employer's Benefits 11%	5,124.00		
Workman's Compensation	1,066.00		
Bank Charges	130.00		
Postage	<u>325.00</u>		
		\$59,408.00	
Program Material & Supplies			(2)
Telephone - Crisis line	2,400.00		(3)
Utilities & Repairs	3,000.00		(4)
Publicity & Public Education & Volunteer Training	1,800.00		(5)
Travel	2,400.00		(6)
Auto - operating	3,000.00		(7)
Rent	<u>2,945.00</u>		(8)
		15,545.00	
<del>Wages (3 line Workers)</del>	<del>24,960.00</del>	24,960.00	(9)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<u><u>\$99,913.00</u></u>	

PORTAGE WOMEN'S SHELTERS INC.  
 Operating Budget for the Year Ended  
 April 1, 1984

RECEIPTS:

Canada Community Development Grant		\$ 82,408.00 (Revised July, 1983)
P. L. U. R. A. Grant		2,400.00
Other Donations - Actuals		1,645.00
- Projected		1,500.00
<u>Projected Portage Plains United</u>		
<u>Way Grant:</u>		
Telephone (6 mos.)	1,200.00	
Rent	7,200.00	
Training materials etc.	720.00	
Liability Ins.	250.00	
Vehicle Costs	<u>500.00</u>	<u>9,870.00</u>
<u>Total Receipts</u>		99,783.00
<u>Deficit</u>		<u>130.00</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>		<u><u>\$99,913.00</u></u>

- (1) C.C.D.P., \$59,408.00  
Funding is currently in place from the Canada Community Development Program (C.C.D.P.) for the period March 14, 1983 to March 19, 1984. It is anticipated that the subsequent year's funding including a 5% increment will be forthcoming from the Canada Community Services Program (C.C.S.P.). This current funding includes salaries, employee benefits, limited staff training, limited vehicle costs, bank charges and postage.
- (2) Program Material and Supplies will be included with note (5).
- (3) Telephone, \$2,400.00  
A religious organization called P.L.U.R.A., based in Winnipeg, has granted the Portage Women's Shelters Inc. a total of \$2,400.00 specifically for the telephone crisis line for one year. The subsequent year funding is anticipated at an increment of 5%.
- (4) Utilities & Repairs, \$3,000.00  
The anticipated cost of utilities such as hydro, heat and water will be \$150/month and the anticipated cost of repairs to our office and vehicle will be \$100.00/month. The subsequent year will see an increase in 5% at a minimum.
- (5) Note (3) and Publicity & Public Education, \$1800.00  
This cost will cover the cost of advertising the crisis line in the local newspaper, the services the program offers, public education on an on-going basis for community groups and organizations, and volunteer training involves extensive photocopying costs.
- (6) Travel, \$2,400.00  
Target budget of \$200.00/month. This will cover the cost of picking up women and their children and transporting them to a safe home. The women and their children will also have to be transported to and from counselling sessions and support services. Next year will also see an increment of at least 5%.
- (7) Auto - Operation Costs, \$3,000.00  
This target cost will cover the cost of repairs, fuel and insurance of the vehicle. Next year will see an increment of 5%.
- (8) Rent, \$2,945.00  
At present, space is being used in the Farm Labour Project offices. Appropriate space has been obtained effective June 1/83 at a cost of \$225/month initially. It is anticipated that this will increase to approximately \$350/month after six months. This will be paid by donations.



Mayor and Council, Portage la Prairie....

June 16, 1983

Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba rates:

<u>Age:</u>	<u>Boarding Rate (per day):</u>
0 - 4	\$5.16
5 - 10	\$5.75
11 - 13	\$6.94
14 - 17	\$9.37

Due to the short-term nature of stay in safe homes, we are suggesting an overall rate of \$6.00 for all children, 17 years of age and under.

The proposed rate does not involve any of our program costs, it is merely intended to provide short-term emergency accommodation and food expenses to families assessed to be in need due to their crisis situation. It is anticipated that the program will commence operation in July, 1983.

We feel our program will be able to offer a strict monitoring and accounting mechanism in order to assure proper billing procedures due to the fact that the Central Crisis Office will control which families are placed in which particular homes. The office will also be aware of how many children accompany the adult as well as the length of time the family utilizes the safe home.

Due to the fact that the success of the safe home program is dependent upon strict maintenance of confidentiality of safe homes, we would suggest that the Central Crisis Office prepare billings which City Welfare would then pay to the office so that the program could reimburse the safe home. We understand this involves an element of trust, however it is obvious that the program could hardly be expected to maintain a good relationship with safe homes if they were not fully reimbursed. Persons offering their services as safe homes will be asked to meet as a group with staff to share concerns, problems, etc. during the operation of the program.

It is extremely difficult at this point to anticipate the number of people who will require emergency shelter of the type we are proposing. We do know that an average of 25 families per year from Portage area are accommodated at Osborne House in Winnipeg. We also know that Nelson, B.C. has offered emergency refuge to 72 people (women and children) over a period of 2½ years (population of Nelson - 9,000, catchment area 15,000).

We realize our contact with City Council has emphasized the negotiation per diem rates for safe homes and that this might seem to be the total focus of the program. Although it is extremely important to be able to offer emergency refuge in a safe, supportive environment, we also feel other clientele we will be dealing with will not require this particular service. As indicated in our meeting with your committee, a major thrust of the program has been, and will continue to be, public education to raise community consciousness regarding family violence. The program will also offer individual counselling and group sessions for persons not utilizing safe homes.

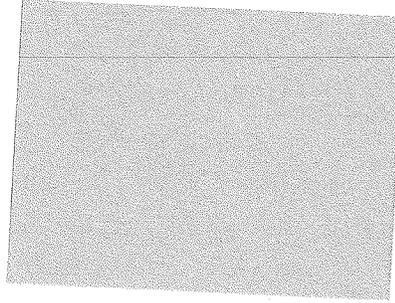
Mayor and Council, Portage la Prairie....

June 16, 1983

We thank you for your endorsement of our program and hope that the City Council of Portage la Prairie will assist us through specified per diem rates in our endeavour to stop the cycle of family violence.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Yours truly,



DMacK/mm



**CITY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE**

P.O. BOX 490

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MANITOBA, CANADA R1N 3C1

of the  
TANT SECRETARY-TREASURER

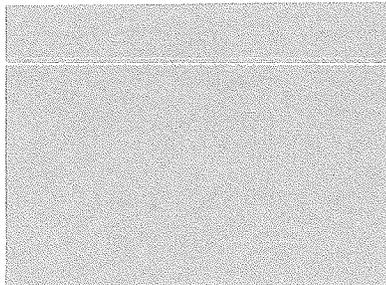
June 23, 1983.

Portage Women's Shelters Inc.,  
Post Office Box 1541,  
Portage la Prairie,  
Manitoba. R1N 3P1

ATTENTION: Dale McKenzie

Dear Ms. McKenzie:

Your letter of June 16, 1983 was discussed at Health & Social  
Development Committee, June 20, 1983 and that Committee has rec-  
ommended that the rates of the Portage Women's Shelters Incorpor-  
ated be incorporated into our Welfare By-Law. I shall be contact-  
ing the City Solicitor to have a by-law drafted and presented to  
Council as quickly as possible. I trust you will find that to be  
in order.



C.M.A.,

ms

Resolutions passed by City Council June 20, 1983