

# Information *bulletin*

Victim Services and Crime Prevention

March 2014

## We Want to Hear from You!

If you have feedback about this bulletin or would like to submit information about an innovative project to be featured in a future bulletin, please contact us at [victimservices@gov.bc.ca](mailto:victimservices@gov.bc.ca).

Please consider the environment before printing this e-bulletin.

Thank you!



Victim Services and  
Crime Prevention  
Community Safety and  
Crime Prevention Branch  
Ministry of Justice



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## Message from the Executive Director



Welcome to the March 2014 Information Bulletin, which contains news and updates from the Victim Services and Crime

Prevention Division. In this issue, you will find information about the recent announcement of civil forfeiture grants, a compensation fund for children of missing women (MWCI Report), training for victim service workers on supporting family members of missing and murdered persons, information about the revision of online human trafficking training, as well as other news.

I hope you will enjoy this issue and thank you for your continued sup-

port to victims of crime and women and children impacted by violence.

*Taryn Walsh*  
Executive Director  
Victim Services and Crime Prevention  
Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch  
Ministry of Justice

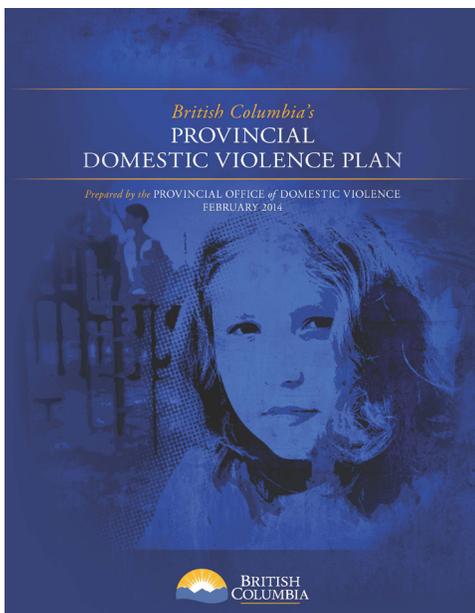
## Crime Prevention and Remediation Grants from Civil Forfeiture Proceeds

On March 13, 2014, the Honourable Minister Suzanne Anton announced the recipients of this year's grants from civil forfeiture proceeds. Grants were distributed for projects that support the prevention of violence against women, prevent youth from becoming involved in crime, and respond to the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry recommendations.



A full list of the grants distributed can be [found here](#).

## Three Year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan



On February 5, 2014, the B.C. government released a three-year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan that will strengthen approaches to addressing domestic violence in B.C. This new plan, coordinated through the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence (PODV), includes a \$5.5 million commitment in new funding for the creation of additional specialized domestic violence units,

programs for Aboriginal families, direct services for perpetrators, and improved access to services and social housing for survivors in rural and remote communities.

The plan builds on the work of the anti-violence sector and the considerable steps government has taken to strengthen the services and supports available for those affected by domestic violence. The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch, along with numerous other Ministries, worked closely with PODV to develop this plan, providing feedback and input along the way. Consultation also included discussion forums with community anti-violence partners, as well as an online public consultation that drew from the experiences and perspectives of hundreds of British Columbians affected by domestic violence.

For more information about the Provincial Domestic Violence Plan, please visit the [PODV website](#).

## Compensation for Children of Missing Women (MWCI Report)

On March 18, 2014, Attorney General and Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton announced that 98 children of missing and murdered women identified in the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry (MWCI) Report are eligible to share \$4.9 million from the Province, the Government of Canada, and the City of Vancouver. The establishment of the fund fulfills a key recommendation of the MWCI. The \$50,000-per-child compensation offer is intended to provide the children of the women identified in the MWCI report with an opportunity to enhance their education, housing, or other circumstances as they progress with their lives. For more information, please see the [government news release](#).

# Training For Victim Service Workers: Supporting Family Members of Missing and Murdered Persons

Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division has partnered with BC Victims of Homicide to offer training sessions across the province to enhance skills around supporting family members of missing and murdered persons. The training sessions will aim to:

- Increase knowledge on homicide bereavement and its unique characteristics;
- Increase knowledge on understanding shock and trauma;
- Increase knowledge on preparing for initial responses during family notification of a homicide or missing persons;
- Increase knowledge on cultural sensitivity;

- Increase skills for supporting a police officer who is providing the notification; and
- Increase skills on supporting the family after receiving notification.

The training is designed to be an interactive workshop and the training agenda will be flexible to meet the unique needs of the community and the attending participants. Sessions will be offered in Kelowna, Nelson, Merritt, Prince George, Dawson Creek, Terrace, Nanaimo and Surrey. Registration is subject to availability and priority will be given to BC contracted victim service providers. For more information and a registration application form, please visit our [training webpage](#).

## Relaunch of Human Trafficking Online Training

*Human Trafficking: Canada is Not Immune*, a free online training course originally developed in 2011 on how to recognize, protect, and assist trafficked persons, is being revised for launch in spring 2014. The revised training, which is being funded by Public Safety Canada, includes new content and exciting new features in both English and French.

The updated training course will include information on human trafficking in Canada, global and national trends, stories from human trafficking survivors, quotations from subject matter experts from across the country, a list of organizations working on the issue in Canada, a final quiz, and an option to print a personalized certificate of completion.

Please stay tuned for the official launch date.

## Human Trafficking Poster for Live-in Caregivers

The Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons has produced an awareness poster that will help in the fight against human trafficking. *Do you feel trapped?* is designed to raise awareness about live-in caregivers who may be living in conditions of domestic servitude. The 11"x17" poster is a first of its kind in Canada, includes key indicators of human trafficking for forced labour, and is available in English, Tagalog (Filipino), Chinese and Punjabi. To order copies of the poster, please complete our [resource order form](#).

## New Training Standards Focus on Family Violence

New training and practice standards require, for the first time, that family dispute resolution professionals meet minimum training and practice standards, including training on how to screen for family violence.

Under B.C.'s Family Law Act, families going through separation and divorce are encouraged to consider, where appropriate, out-of-court family dispute resolution options. These options include the services of professionals such as mediators, parenting co-ordinators and arbitrators. The new training standards are intended to ensure that families are directed to safe and appropriate processes conducted by qualified professionals.

## \$90K in ICAT/Settlement Grants Awarded

In order to build stronger linkages between the broader Settlement community and Interagency Case Assessment Teams (ICATs), a total of 18 grants of \$5,000 each were awarded in January 2014 to communities across the province through a partnership between the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence and the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division. The goal of these grants is to enhance responses to highest risk victims of domestic violence and better respond to the specific needs of immigrant women, their children, and families dealing with domestic violence.

The challenges and issues for immigrant/refugee women, their children and families who are dealing with domestic violence in Canada are numerous. While Canadian-born women and immigrant and refugee women have much in common when it comes to issues of domes-

Prior to the new regulations under the Family Law Act, there were no minimum training or practice standards for mediators, parenting co-ordinators and arbitrators. The full list of regulations can be found at <http://ow.ly/rRIq3>.

Lawyers who act as family law mediators, parenting co-ordinators or arbitrators also have to meet similar training and practice standards under new Law Society of British Columbia rules. This will ensure that all family dispute resolution professionals, whether they are lawyers or non-lawyers, meet minimum standards.

tic violence, immigrant, refugee and non-status women often have unique vulnerabilities and may face many intersecting challenges that generate the need for a variety of service responses. Isolation, language, health needs, poverty, unmet cultural needs, and a lack of effective services can compound the vulnerability of immigrant and refugee survivors of domestic violence. In order to ensure the best possible safety of these women, their children and families, service providers need to understand the complexities of settlement experiences and balance this with the complexities inherent in domestic violence situations.

The initiative was made possible through funding from the Government of Canada and a partnership between the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence.

## After Hours Notification for Victims of Crime



During regular business hours the Victim Safety Unit (VSU) of the Ministry of Justice provides registered victims with notification regarding the custodial status of offenders. After-hours notification to victims is provided by VictimLink BC from 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday and statutory holidays. After hours notification may be required in a variety of circumstances, for example, if the accused was granted bail during the day but isn't released until after business hours, or if an offender's sentence ends on a weekend. The after-hours voice message of the Victim Safety Unit advises victims that they can call VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808 for information. Please note that VictimLink BC cannot provide copies of orders.

## Federal Funding Benefits B.C. Victims

The B.C. Government has received over \$500,000 from the federal Department of Justice Victims Fund for seven different projects that will assist victims across B.C.

One of the projects will involve building a victim friendly space at the Vancouver provincial courthouse. There is currently no dedicated victim support space at the courthouse, which means that children and their families currently wait in the public areas of the court facility, or meet with victim support workers using temporary office spaces in the building. The new space will improve the experience of vulnerable victims and witnesses, reducing the stress and trauma of attending the courthouse by providing a safe and secure waiting area and space for interviews. Jessica Hope and Nicole Redekop, Court Support Caseworkers at the Vancouver courthouse, are looking

forward to the new space, noting "It is very important for victims and witnesses to have a safe environment to wait away from the chaos of the corridors, and this new build will help us create this space."

A second project will build on the success of a recent awareness campaign to raise the profile of VictimLink BC. The B.C. Government will engage in an awareness project targeting rural communities in B.C. The last VictimLink BC awareness campaign undertaken in March of 2013 focused on urban centres and resulted in a 50% increase in visits to the VictimLink BC website.

Other projects will be detailed in the coming months, including enhanced training for victim service workers and three new "train the trainer" human trafficking workshops in three different cities across B.C.

## Provincial Employees Community Services Fund Raises \$1.77 Million for Charities

The 2013 Provincial Employees Community Services Fund (PECSF) campaign raised \$1.77 million province-wide for B.C. charities through public service employee donations. The theme of the 2013 campaign, "Caring for our Community," resonated with Ministry of Justice staff, who pledged more than \$174,000.

Community Safety and Crime Prevention Branch employees Sarah Campbell and Jamie Lipp received certificates of appreciation for coordinating canvassing efforts across the Branch on behalf of the campaign. Lisa Chong also played a crucial role in the success of the PECSF campaign at a provincial level through the PECSF Lower Mainland Committee, which allocates funds to Community Fund support charities, provides support and training to various ministry coordinators and canvassers, and launches the annual campaign.

PECSF was founded in 1965 to facilitate provincial government employee contributions to local non-profit organizations. One hundred percent of employee donations goes directly to charities and their programs, thereby saving charities the administrative costs of processing individual donations. Since 1965, PECSF has raised more than \$40 million for B.C. charities.



Photo: Sarah Campbell and Jamie Lipp

## VSU Application Form Updated

The Victim Safety Unit application form has been updated. Please switch to the new form, as it provides important contact information for the VSU that the old form does not have. You can find the newest version on [our website](#).

A signature is required from the victim even if the victim service worker is registering to receive information on behalf of the victim. For victims under 19 years of age, the signature of their parent or guardian is sufficient. If you have questions about the application process, please feel free to call and speak with the VSU Manager or Caseworkers at 604 660-0316 (lower mainland) or 1-877-315-8822 (toll-free in B.C.).

## B.C. Passes *Missing Persons Act*

The Missing Persons Act was passed by the BC Government on March 24, 2014 but is not yet in force. The legislation is aimed at improving police access to information that may hold clues to a missing person's whereabouts. It focuses on cases where a missing person hasn't been seen, or in touch with people who are normally involved in their lives. It also focuses on vulnerable or at-risk persons whose safety and welfare are of concern because of their age, physical or

mental capabilities, or the circumstances surrounding their absence. These changes mirror the intent of Missing Women Commission of Inquiry's recommendations calling for single-purpose legislation "to grant speedy access to personal information of missing persons without unduly infringing on privacy rights." For more information about the legislation, please see the [government news release](#).

## Social Planners to Liaise with Sex Workers

The City of Vancouver has hired two social planners to liaise with the City, the Vancouver Police Department, and the community to support the safety of survival sex workers. Informed by feedback from the City's Sex Work and Sexual Exploitation Task Force and other

community partners, the City has created two positions to fulfill a recommendation from the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry and support a range of issues related to sex work and sexual exploitation across Vancouver neighbourhoods.

## Pink Shirt Day



Photo: Branch staff pose during Pink Shirt Day (February 26, 2014), a day dedicated to the prevention of bullying.



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[www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victimservices](http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victimservices)  
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