



Nellie's Newsletter

Nellie's Mission

Our Mission is to operate programs and services for women and children who have and are experiencing oppressions such as violence, poverty and homelessness. Nellie's is a community based feminist organization which operates within an anti-racist, anti-oppression framework. We are committed to social change through education and advocacy, to achieve social justice for all women and children.

Message from the Executive Director

June 2015 , Issue #39

The Province of Ontario declared May Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Sexual Assault Awareness Month is meant to prompt discussions about violent crime; make people aware of the counselling and support systems that are available to the women who experience sexual assault; and promote a better understanding of their legal rights and their options regarding medical treatment and contact with police.

The statistics are alarming: Approximately 1 in 3 women experience sexual assault in their lifetime. And perhaps the most disturbing thing is that many people are simply not aware of it. Few people want to talk about it. But awareness must be followed with increased services. These should include increased numbers of shelters beds, and counselling and other support services specifically designated for women victims of this violent crime.

The Board Membership and Development Committee has completed the hiring process for new board members and committee volunteers. The committee invested countless hours to ensure candidates had a good understanding of the organization's values, principles and mission before completing the hiring process. We are welcoming Joanne Fong and Donna Kellway to the Board; Halina Dekker and Melanie Moore to the Accessibility Committee; and Donnalea Sparling to the Fund Development Committee. We are still interviewing candidates for the Fund Development Committee, as it doesn't have a full complement yet.

Congratulations to our board Vice-President Sienna Leung and her husband on the arrival of their beautiful daughter Elizabeth Elaine Siobhan Bedford.

In a sad note we said good-bye to Monica Meireles, Shelter House Coordinator. Monica came to Nellie's as a student placement and then joined the staff team. We wish Monica all the best in her new endeavours.

Nellie's is undertaking a strategic planning process to set its future direction. We are also focussing on finding ways to address current sustainability challenges, especially in terms of our human resource capacity.

This year we have been granted funding from Employment and Social Development Canada to hire five summer students. The hiring process has just been initiated.

Our Sincere appreciation to the City of Toronto, Employment and Social Services Department for their support through Investing In Neighbourhoods (IIN) Projects; to the Ministry of Community and Social Services for their allocations in support of our annual Infrastructure Support toward the maintenance of the shelter and the community outreach site; and to United Way Toronto for granting our request under Education and Employment of Women for our project: Capacity Building for Women Experiencing Abuse and Violence. The latest project will be done in partnership with the Ralph Thornton Community Centre.

Our upcoming Annual General Meeting is set for Sept. 16, 6 p.m. at the Ralph Thornton Centre. Please mark the date in your calendar and join us in celebrating 42 years of services.

Our theme article: Beyond Barriers: An Intersectionality Analysis of Violence Against

Women aims to raise awareness about the many, complex reasons for which women remain in abusive relationships. The personal accounts following the article are a clear example of that complexity of personal circumstances and systemic factors that allow violence against women to occur, and that keep women in those abusive relationships.

Justice and Equity,



Margarita Méndez

Beyond Barriers: An Intersectionality Analysis of Violence Against Women

By Lillian Manger, Relief Counsellor and Social Justice Committee Member

The feminist anti-violence, anti-racism/anti-oppression framework states that there are a series of interlocking systems of oppression that not only allow violence against women to occur, but perpetuate it (Nellie's, 2009-2013, WomanACT, Barbra Schlifer and Elizabeth Fry, 2013 and Manger L., 2014). These systems are embedded within various laws, policies and procedures which operate at



multiple, diverse and intersecting levels: systemically, politically, legally, socially and within the context of individual interactions (Nellie's, 2009-2013, McMullin, 2010 and Manger, L., 2014). These systems

interlock, interplay and intersect to create multiple and diverse intersectionalities of both privilege and oppression, and have a differential impact on different individuals based on an individual's unique, intrinsic, personal and external factors (Nellie's, 2009-2013, Manger, L., 2014, hooks, 1997, McMullin, 2010 and OFL, 2009).

Violence against women can occur given a series of different combinations of intersectionalities of both privilege and oppression, which work to create complexity. For example, one woman's experience of violence might intersect with experiences of racism, poverty, homophobia and oppression based on immigration status as well as privilege based on level of education, while another woman's experience of violence might intersect with sexism, ageism, audism and oppression based on drug use, yet privilege based on access to financial resources and family support. The intersectionalities of oppression can interlock in almost infinite ways, creating limitless intersectionalities of both oppression and privilege, in which violence against women can occur.

One way to understand some of the factors that allow violence against women to occur, may be through an intersectionality analysis between woman and abuser. Therefore, it is still possible for a woman experiencing an intersectionality of both privilege and oppression to find

herself in an abusive situation if her abuser's intersectionality creates an intersectionality of greater privilege, and therefore power and control, than her own. For instance, an abuser's greater physical strength, male or masculine privilege, status or even connections to larger systems of privilege, could be key factors that allow violence against women to occur. Given that violence against woman can essentially be reduced to methods of power and control, it is important to consider the intersectionality analysis between woman and abuser as a key factor in the causes of violence against women.

It is also important to note that within the context of an intersectionality analysis, there are a series of reasons why women may stay in abusive relationships. For example, a woman might stay because of the fear of laws, regulations and procedures that may cause loss of custody of her children, loss of financial resources and security, lack of education or current employment opportunities, fear of disconnection and/or pressures from family, community and other support systems, fear of deportation, fear of increased violence and/or retaliation, fear of homelessness or of living at a shelter, as well as a lack of knowledge of resources for women experiencing violence due to isolation, cultural and linguistic barriers as well as the practical impacts of various methods of power

and control by the abuser (Nellie's, 2009-2013, WomanACT, et al., 2013 and Manger, L., 2014). There are also a series of

countless other reasons. These fears are justified by laws, policies and procedures that produce risks of deportation,

inadequate and unaffordable housing options, unlivable OW and ODSP rates and child protection service policies that may leave a woman at risk of losing her children (WomanACT et al., 2013). Therefore, when working to understand why violence against women occurs, it is important to understand the impact of the interlocking systems of oppression, through both individual and systemic analyses.



Why Women Stay?

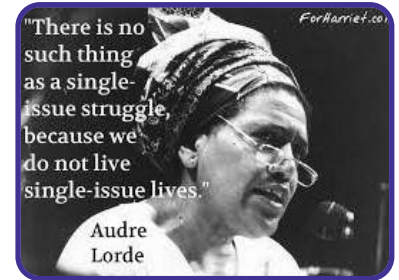
Anna Morgan, Transition Support Worker and Social Justice Committee Member

Mary* endured many years of financial, physical and emotional abuse by her husband. Police had been called by witnesses to the abuse, but Mary always lied and would say nothing happened. The police would become angry at her and would ask: "Why are you protecting him?" On a couple of occasions, her husband was charged with assault. Mary always let him come back home. Her friends would ask her: "Why would you do that?" Why would you stay?"

Mary is a woman living with a physical disability. She had been told over and over again, by her husband and society, that she wouldn't be able to parent their child without him. Mary believed this. She was also financially dependent on her husband. Mary relied solely on her husband's finances, as she faced discrimination finding employment. Even though he often withheld money for necessities as a form of punishment, her husband did pay the rent and she was not sure where she would go. Mary had expensive medication and was covered under his benefits plan at work. He told her if she left, she would no longer be able to afford her medication. Mary had been abused as a child and had grown to accept this mistreatment as normal. Mary stayed and endured his abuse for several years.

Mary came to Nellie's Community Support and Outreach Office when she decided that she could no longer put up with the abuse. Nellie's helped Mary to draw up a safety plan, connect to a lawyer to get family legal advice, and get into one of the few beds for women with disabilities in the VAW shelter system. Once there, she was able to get social assistance. Nellie's also helped Mary apply for affordable housing. Today, Mary has moved into affordable housing with her daughter. Nellie's connected Mary to an employment agency and she is now doing a paid placement. Mary and her daughter have also been connected to support groups for women who have experienced abuse and children that have witnessed abuse to begin their healing journey.

** not real name*



To Start All Over Again*

By Sahar Zaidi, Nellie's Board Member

She never told anyone what was happening at home. For a long time, she didn't know what was happening to her. All she understood was the narrative that she was constantly told: "You don't know how to make him happy. If you did, he would never behave this way".

Her cousin and father saw the changes in her behavior. They saw her weight gain, her constant illness, her lack of ambition, her lack of friends and most importantly her constant fear to keep him happy. The rest of the world saw a privileged woman who had all the luxuries in the world and nothing to complain about.

Then one day, things got from bad to worse. Her bedroom was covered in glass and blood and the yelling would not end. Something snapped inside of her. This could not be her life. She could not raise kids in this environment. She had to leave.

She had hidden her life successfully for four years. No one believed her story now. Questions were thrown at her: "if he was that bad, how come we never saw this side of him?" "How could you stay with a man like that? You are an educated woman" "You should be grateful for all that he provides for you", "Well he wasn't a womanizer or an alcoholic; so you should be thankful"...



It was going to be a hard and lonely journey to recover from his abuse. Her community no longer accepted her because they felt she had thrown away her privileged life.

She had to leave everyone behind because it was easier for society to ostracize her then ostracize him. It is always seen as the woman's fault.

Program Update – Shelter

By Tamara Nickie, Shelter Admin. Support Worker



Yoga Lesson

The December holiday season is one of the busiest and exciting times of the year. However, for some women and children, it can be a sad time as they do not have access to either presents or family. With help from our community partners, we were able to provide some festive joy. We celebrated with our women and children at a holiday party so that they felt a sense of family and community.

After the New Year's, things were a bit quiet and due to the coldness of January, we had most of our programming 'in house'. We had movie nights and women learned to make jewellery for themselves.

For February, we showed appreciation of each other at our Valentine's Day party and also observed the Chinese New Year. February is Black History month and as part of our Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression (ARAO) committee strategic plan, we had a community partner come in and do a workshop about racism. We also had a gathering where women and staff were able to share their experiences.

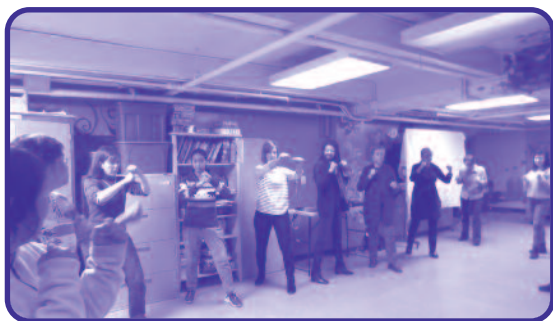


Morris Komakech from Public Health gives a speech on breast cancer

In March, spring began and we looked forward to warmer weather, but as the cold continued, we continued with indoor

programming, such as arts and crafts.

However, as part of March break, we took to the skating rinks to have what one child called "loads of fun", and also went swimming at one of the community pools.



WenDo Lesson

April came and went and we enjoyed hot cross buns for Easter, and a new round of our Women Experiencing Abuse & Violence (WEAV) group was begun. Women are learning to take care of themselves with the Nurturing Ourselves group.



Diabetes prevention with Sarpreet Khera, South Riverdale Health



Team members from RBC, lead by Peggy Captain, came to give our community program area a major clean up

Have a wonderful summer!

CSO Update

By Adriana Pelayo, Community Support & Outreach Worker



Basil Jancso Szabo & Andrew Robinson on trumpets

The holiday season is always full of surprises! Love, fun, presents, parties and more; this one was no exception. Our Holiday Party was once again organized by Peggy Chan and her amazing team from RBC. The food was delicious, and the music was fun and full of surprises. Daniela Chow played the sax, Andrew Robinson and Basil Jancso Szabo played the trumpets, and Rosy Cervantes sang and played guitar. The women and kids from the community were very happy and touched by all the surprises.



Daniela Chow playing the sax

After the holidays, the workshops and groups in our program begin. Staff, students and volunteers kicked off all of the workshops and events in the Riverdale community, starting in February with Black History Month at the Ralph Thornton Community Centre. Our Black History Heritage celebrations included Caribbean folk music and traditional Caribbean food. The women then had Yoga in the afternoon.



METRAC Legal Aid information session

The spring workshops address a variety of different topics, like anger management, police reporting, and employment. We also work on the different aspects of self care, including nutrition, reading labels, and cancer and diabetes prevention.

A full, five-week diabetes prevention program was delivered by the South Riverdale Health Centre. The facilitators were Sarpreet, Khera, Jill and Debbie. “One Step at a Time” was a big success: we had 25 to 30 women coming to the workshop.



Passionate food program volunteers! From left: Jessica Lederer, Jolene Hoffie, Michel Alba, Patricia Chow and Nu Tang



Make up by Project Reset

For Easter, Nell and Natasha Real Estate from our community had an egg hunt to raise funds for Nellie's programs. Nearly 300 kids came out in the chill of early April to participate in this beautiful and fun activity.

The Women Experiencing Abuse and Violence group has already started at the shelter and it will be running until the end of June. The kids' summer program will be running from July to August, and we have lots of surprises in store for our participants this year. Stay tuned for more information!

Nellie's Donors Recognition Event at Gladstone Hotel



The Chair of Fund Development Committee Lori Loewen welcoming, along with Board President Fran Odette and Honorable Speaker Lynda Roy

On April 9, 2015 Nellie's held its third annual Donor's Recognition Event in appreciation of the generous support of our donors and to update them regarding Nellie's current work with women with disabilities.

We'd like to show our sincere appreciation to the Gladstone Hotel, Annie Sakkab and two other donors who have requested to remain anonymous. Lynda Roy, a past board member and member of the Accessibility Committee was our guest speaker. Her presentation focused on raising awareness regarding accessibility issues.



From left - Helen Stalker from Nellie's, Cheryl Stoneburg & Ann Hunt from The Basketeers, Lynda Roy & Fran Odette



Adrianna Pelayo, Margarita Mendez & Heather McGuigan from Hope Totes

Board President and Lori Loewen, Chair of the Fund Development committee, welcomed all those in attendance and thanked our donors for their ongoing support. It was a wonderful evening, enjoyed by all.

2015 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon

By Amran Jama, Intake Administrative Support Worker

Please join Nellie's team to run or walk in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon on Sunday Oct. 18, 2015. Our goal is to raise \$20,000. Help Nellie's to provide the emergency shelter and community support and outreach services to the women and children who are experiencing abuse, poverty and homelessness.

Please register yourself as a Nellie's team member and invite your family members and friends to run or walk. The registration fee varies from \$40 to \$80, depending on if you choose a walk or run. Nellie's will reimburse the registration fee if you raise \$250 or more.

You can join one of the following challenges: 1) 5K Walk/Run 2) Half Marathon (21 km Walk/Run) 3) Full Marathon (42 km Walk/Run)

Steps to register Nellie's Team at <http://secure.eventsonline.ca/reg/crs>

1. Click on Waterfront Marathon on Oct 18 and choose the distance you would like to walk/run and follow the steps

If you don't want to run/walk but would like to make a donation to support Nellie's team members, simply go to <https://secure.e2rm.com/registrant/startup.aspx?eventid=164260>

1. Under How Can I Support This Event, click Sponsor an Individual or Charity
2. Enter Nellie's on box "First Name" then search
3. Click on Nellie's link that you will see on the top left hand side.
4. Click on the Donate Now and follow the steps



For over five years, Nellie's has been a participant in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon. All the funds you raise will go directly to Nellie's, so get out your running or walking shoes and come support Nellie's Team. Call Amran or Janna at 416-461-8903 for details.

Introducing our Amazing Volunteer - Peggy Capitain

By Amran Jama, Intake Administrative Support Worker



At Nellie's, volunteers play a crucial role in the continuing success of our organization. What we do would not be possible without the endless efforts of our volunteers. Nellie's would like to introduce Peggy Capitain, an Honorary Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal recipient, whose continuous support at Nellie's does not go unrecognized.

Peggy Capitain was born in Hong Kong and migrated to Canada when she was 13 years old. Her mother was born in Vietnam. She expressed that her mom grew up in a time where only boys could go to school. As a result of her mom experiencing sexism when she grew up, her parents made sure that she got the best education they could afford and decided to move to Canada.

Peggy has been volunteering for the last 10 years and has been with Nellie's since 2011. She started out as a RBC Sponsored Employee at United Way Toronto in 2010, where she attended various workplace campaigns to provide information on United Way, its agencies and the impacts of donations. It was there she came across a speaker from Nellie's and was greatly moved, hearing about the work that we do. Along with her team, Peggy was able to make over 40 care packages for the women in the shelter for the holidays. Since then, she has been our major volunteer team leader for our annual holiday party. Without her and her dedicated groups of friends and supporters, the party wouldn't be a success.

"Professionally, I have gained invaluable skills such as leadership and project management and it's a fantastic way to meet like-minded people. On a personal level, it has been incredibly rewarding to empower others to join forces in making our community a better place for all. Being able to see some of the tangible impacts motivate me to continue to help Nellie's with their important work".

On behalf of the Nellie's team we would like to thank Peggy for all the work she has done. We wish her well in her new motherhood!

Nellie's Community Events



International Women's Day March



Board members Michel Bain, Helen Nowak, and Nellie's ED Margarita Mendez, joined the second annual provincial Wrapped in Courage Campaign



Mother and daughter Nell and Natasha held an Easter egg hunt for the community to raise fund for Nellie's. 300 kids showed up for the game

Acknowledgements



Peggy Capitain and her team of volunteers from RBC held a holiday party for about 100 women and children in December



For the fifth year, Sebasien Morielli, now aged 12, gave hats, mittens and scarves to Nellie's shelter



Executive Director Margarita Mendez receiving a cheque from Thomas Chen of Shopper's Drug Mart

Nellie's Calendar of Events

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Jun 18 | Ramadan begins (Islam) |
| Jun 27 | Toronto DYKE March |
| Jun 28 | Toronto Pride Parade |
| Jul 1 | Canada Day |
| Jul 17 | Eid-ul-Fitr (Islam) |
| Sept 1 | Labour Day |
| Sept 14-15 | Rosh Hashanah (Jewish) |
| Oct 1 | International Day for the Elderly – UN |
| Oct 10 | World Mental Health Day – UN |
| Oct 12 | Thanksgiving |
| Oct 17 | Int'l Day for Eradication of Poverty - UN |
| Nov 11 | Diwali (Hindu) |
| Nov 25 | Int'l Day for Elimination of VAW - UN |
| December | Universal Human Rights Month |
| Dec 6 | National Day for Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women |
| Dec 7-14 | Hanukkah (Jewish) |
| Dec 25 | Christmas (Christian) |
| Dec 26-Jan 1 | Kwanzaa (African-American) |

Note: Please visit our website at www.nellies.org for more community & cultural celebrations for 2015.

Nellie's Contact Information

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Program, Volunteers, Students: 416-461-0739
Financial Donations: 416-461-0769
In Kind Donations: 416-461-0521
Charitable No.: 11930-2727-RR0001

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