

Essential Skills:  
Information Sharing &  
Team Development

Catherine Burr  
cburr@sympatico.ca

Domestic Violence Risk Assessment  
And Management in the Workplace  
Toronto – June 14, 2011

# The Challenge

*If you do not connect the dots,*

you will not prevent violence

nor will you respond effectively.

# You – and your workplace – need:

1. Information, data, evidence
2. Expertise (internally/externally) to make sense of it
3. Connections, networks
4. Multiple perspectives
5. Decision-making authority, an ability to act
6. Support/resources
7. Monitoring

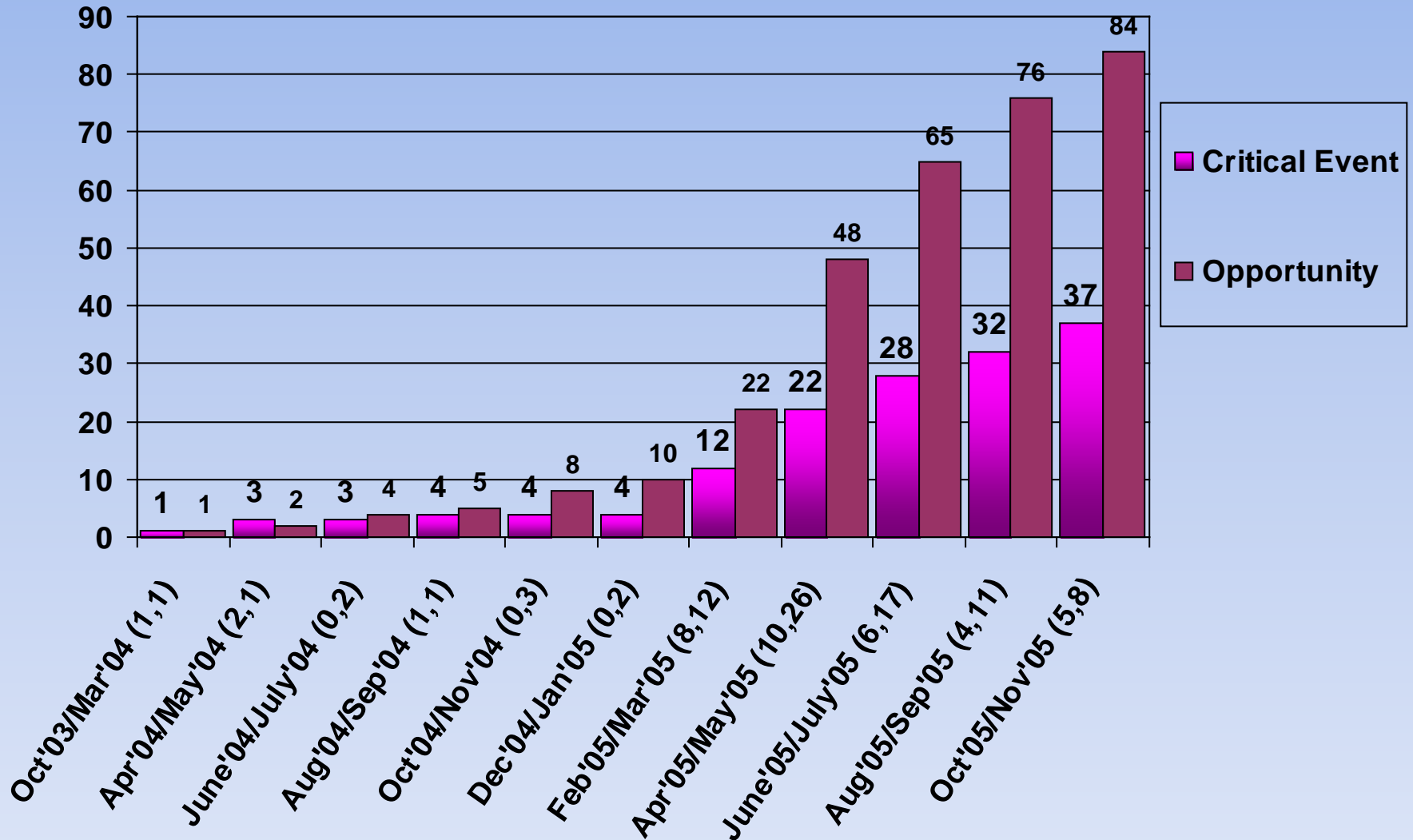
# Roadmap

- Information Sharing: Overcoming Barriers
  - What?
  - How to evaluate? By whom? Share with whom?
  - Dynamic nature of risk
- Team development: Workplace Collaboration
  - Expertise
  - Coordination
- Dupont Inquest: Learning from tragedy

# Take aways...

1. Violence/risk – dynamic, not static
2. Continuum
3. Think “danger” (safety)
4. Bill 168 – sets a floor, not a ceiling
5. What ifs
6. Never have full information
7. Always make a difference

# Accumulation of Critical Events & Missed Opportunities Dupont Inquest



A sobering example:  
Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital

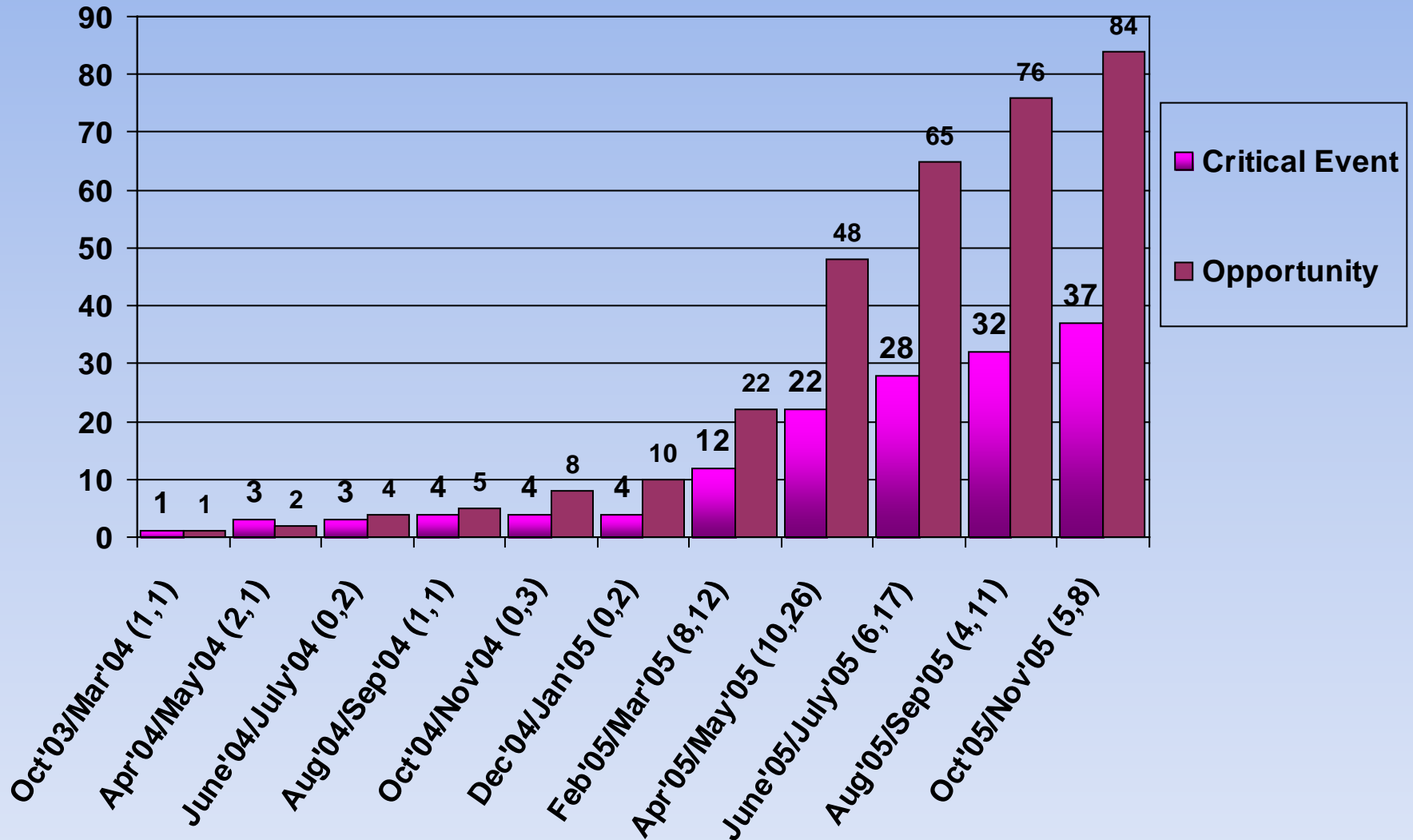
- October 2003 – November 2005
- 37 critical events
- 84 opportunities
- Murder-suicide

# Critical Events & Opportunities

(Dr. Peter Jaffe, prepared for the Corner's Inquiry, Dupont and Daniels, Hotel-Dieu  
Grace Hospital, Windsor, )

- Critical events
  - Visible *warning signs* and *risk factors*
  - Should raise *possibility of danger*
- Opportunities for response
  - A chance to intervene
  - Can be missed because of *uncertainty* or *missing information*

# Accumulation of Critical Events & Missed Opportunities Dupont Inquest



# Information Sharing: Overcoming Barriers

- What?
- How to evaluate? By whom?
- Share with whom?
- Dynamic nature of risk

# Information:

## Bill 168

- Bill 168 (32.0.4):
  - “becomes aware”
  - “ought reasonably to be aware
  - “take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the worker”
- 32.0.3 (4):
  - “shall reassess the risks of workplace violence as often as is necessary”

- 32.0.5 (3) – Provision of information
  - “the duty to provide information, including personal information, related to *a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour* if
  - The worker can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work; and
  - The risk of workplace violence is *likely to expose* the worker to physical injury”

- 32.0.2 (2) – Contents of violence program
  - To control the risks identified
  - For summoning immediate assistance when violence occurs or *is likely to occur*
  - To report incidents of workplace violence
  - How ... investigate and deal with incidents or complaints

# What information?

MakeItOurBusiness.com

- Recognize
  - Violent behaviours
  - Visible warning signs
  - Risk factors
- Respond
- Refer

# How to evaluate? By whom?

- Respond?
- Refer?
- Suggestion:  
Develop your own checklists – information for risk assessment (violence, domestic violence)

# Share with whom?

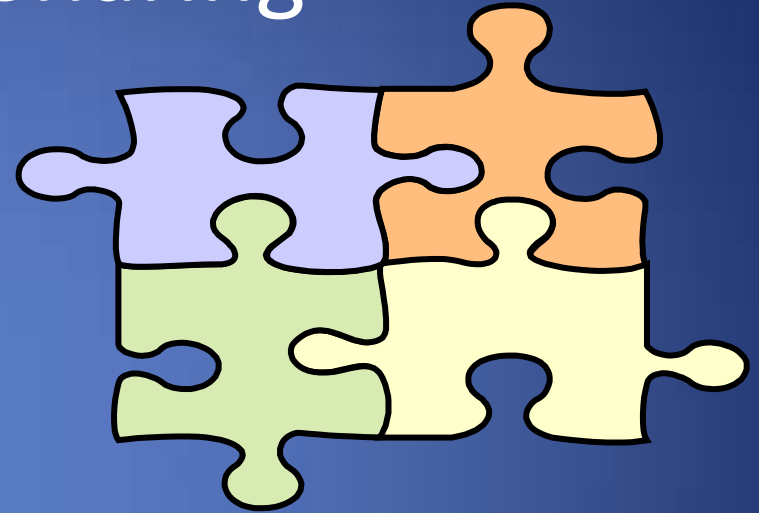
- Decision-makers/management
- Targets/victims/complainants/grievant
- Perpetrators/respondents
- Witnesses/co-workers
- Front-line 'eyes' (supervisors, union reps)
- Others?

# Dynamic nature of risk

- Escalate, de-escalate
- Mitigation strategies: neutralize, stabilize
- On-going monitoring
- Re-evaluation

# Connecting the Dots: Discussion of Information Sharing

- Comment
- Questions?
- Clarifications
- Your ideas, suggestions and experience



# Team Development: Workplace Collaboration

- Expertise
- Coordination
- Collaboration

# Bill 168

- Explanatory Note to Bill 168:
  - “The Bill provides for authority to make regulations, including the following:
    - 1. Requiring an employer to designate a workplace coordinator with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment.”
- Domestic violence (32.0.4)
  - “...becomes aware or ought reasonably to be aware...shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances...”

# Team Development

- *Make It Our Business*  
*“Guidelines for Setting up an Interprofessional Team”*  
(Checklist)
- Multidisciplinary
- Size
- Joint labour/worker-management
- Health & safety committee
- Expertise

# Expertise – from whom?

- INTERNAL

- Senior mgnt
- “designated management reps”
- **Coordinator**
- JHSC
- HR/ER/LR
- Security
- Training
- Communications
- Union/ee reps
- Mgnt/supervisory reps
- Admin/clerical support

- EXTERNAL

- **EAP**
- Legal counsel
- Diversity/equity/human rights
- Nurse/medical
- WSIB, RTW...
- **Threat assessment/risk mgt**
- Community affairs, PR...
- Privacy
- IS
- Community women’s shelter, VAW agency
- Police
- Security company

# Cautions & Considerations

- Physical force, physical injury
- Playing psychologist – know your boundaries
- Gut feel
- SWAT team
- EAP
- Confidentiality
- Be kind to yourself
- Debrief

# Connecting the Dots: Discussion of Team Development

- Questions?
- Clarifications
- Your ideas, suggestions and experience

