



Photos by SUE REEVE The London Free Press

**WELL SAID:** Kate Wiggins, executive director of Women's Community House, applauds London police Chief Murray Faulkner after he addressed a news conference yesterday at city hall where a Mayor's Task Force to End Woman Abuse was launched. Wiggins is on the Co-ordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse.

# 'To be a man'

# Police Chief Murray Faulkner calls for frank talk about violence.

BY PATRICK MALONEY  
Free Press Reporter

Armed with pointed comments that drew praise from experts, London police Chief Murray Faulkner called on law-abiding London men yesterday to steer other men away from domestic violence.

Faulkner, speaking at the launch of a new city group to combat woman abuse, called such violence a "gender problem" that will change only with a new attitude among men.

"We need to have some frank conversations about what it is to be a man," Faulkner told a crowd at city hall yesterday morning.

"Violence is the symptom, not the cause. Men, and what it is to be a man in our society, (are) the problem."

Citing a series of high-profile slayings of local women in recent years, Faulkner also urged men to speak out if they



suspect domestic violence involving friends and family.

"The big part of (most agencies') work is reactive and I want to move that up," he said. "What we need to do is be preventive, not reactive."

Provincial statistics, he added, back up his concerns: about 94 per cent of domestic homicide victims are women, while 90 per cent of all assaults are committed by men.

The remarks are long overdue, said Michele Paddon of the London Abused Women's Centre.

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*Michele Paddon,  
London Abused Women's Centre*

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statement," she said. "I truly hope it filters down to the community."

The new task force, whose members include both local school boards and several anti-violence agencies, will combat the abuse that has resulted in several well-publicized deaths, Mayor Anne Marie DeCicco-Best said.

Families affected by two such cases — the killing of Laura Wilson by an ex-boyfriend and the deaths of young sisters Ashley and Stephanie Daubs — were at yesterday's event.

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*London police Det.  
Paul Martin*

# WOMAN ABUSE: Raising the issue's profile

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Along with raising the issue's profile, DeCicco-Best hopes the effort will make it easier for Londoners to report suspected domestic violence.

"There are already groups in the community who are there for the front-line efforts," she said. "What we're trying to do is get at it before it happens."

DeCicco-Best, who's running for re-election, said the announcement was months in the making.

"This was a community need that was identified months ago," she said. "This is an issue that's going to go on long after the election."

London police Det. Paul Martin, who handles domestic violence cases, said the signs of

potentially abusive men — alcohol troubles or social isolation, for example — can be seen by anyone.

"There's telltale signs," he said. "We have to stand up and . . . get the average male to realize this is something that needs to be spoken about."

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