

Building Partnerships



Centre for Research
on Violence Against Women and Children

Winter 2005

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the Centre is to promote the development of community-centred action research on violence against women and children, using a feminist analysis. The Centre's role is to facilitate individuals, groups and institutions representing the diversity of the community to pursue research questions and training opportunities related to the understanding and prevention of woman and child abuse.

Exploring Intersectionality

N.B. This article is an attempt to broaden the discussion of what intersectionality means and to reflect upon how it can be used in our work. The frame for this paper was *The Final Summary Report of a Roundtable on Integrated Feminist Analysis* sponsored by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women in February 19-20, 2004. Many of the ideas below have been taken from there.

This is not intended to be a definitive statement about intersectionality, but a contribution to the current discussion and dialogue that is taking place about an important concept in research and social activism. Intersectionality may also be referred to as a gender and diversity analysis, a diversity lens, an anti-oppression analysis, gender based analysis or gender mainstreaming (when it includes an expanded understanding of anti-oppression,) BIAS FREE (Best Integrative Analytical System for Recognizing and Eliminating Biases in Research and Policy).

Thanks are due to CRIAW for providing important leadership in opening this discussion and to all of the individual women who have helped to structure the discussion.

Why do research?

In the field of Violence Against Women and Children, we conduct research to deepen our understanding

of the problem and to contribute to efforts to stop and prevent it. Research can advance understanding of the causes of violence, promote innovation, progress and excellence in prevention and intervention efforts, help to develop solutions to specific problems, contribute to existing expertise, provide commentary on published findings to place them in a broader context and inspire the next generation of researchers. While research may produce information and tools that assist in the daily work to end violence towards women and children, it is also an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. As such research helps to shape public policy.

Internationally, public policy is shaped by corporate and government goals of globalization. Deregulation and privatization are key goals. Major players in the shaping of public policy are private corporations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and key governments, including the USA.

There are also key players who influence public policy and who want to change (or support) the primary goals of deregulation and privatization. These players include:

- Research institutes (which influence the public discourse through the media and through

Intersectionality - *continued*

the use of their research by governments and politicians);

- Social change organizations (through their advocacy);
- Government public servants (through the development of draft policies and the issues they bring to the minister's attention.)
- Consultants (through the advice, information and expertise they bring to various governments and organizations.)

If as feminist researchers we agree that those who are affected by public policy, in particular girls and women, deserve to have some influence in the shaping of that policy; then we have a responsibility to design and conduct research that permits the inclusion of a broader group of people.

Feminist Participatory Action Research, using an intersectional analysis can be a vehicle to increase women's and other marginalized people's participation in influencing both their communities and public policy.

What Is an Intersection?

The socio-political, ideological, cultural, and intellectual spaces within which marginalized people create communities are intersections. bell hooks refers to marginality as the symbolic and sometimes actual physical space that minorities occupy in relation to members of the dominant group, who occupy the center.

Intersections are characterized by structures of domination. These structures of domination can be based on race, class, sexual orientation, disability, gender and/or other differences that can be used to assign less value to an individual or a group of people. These structures of domination are often challenged by resistance from those living within the intersections. Hooks contends that although the margins can be oppressive spaces, they have a liberating potential. She argues that it is often a chosen space that can provide strength and valuable insight for originating counter-hegemonic discourses.

Those living within intersections have varied experiences marked by varying forms of oppression, discrimination and subordination. Within intersections, the macro structures of capitalism, racism, sexism, ableism, heteronormativity and ethnocentricity are experienced simultaneously and interconnectedly by individuals. Yet each individual experiences them differently because these structures of domination create distinct relations of power that can result in various forms of oppression and privilege for different individuals, depending on the context.

Multiple marginalities can help us better understand the various ways that individuals and groups of people can be marginalized. But the intersection is different from the concept of multiple marginalities because it offers the potential for oppressed (or marginalized) groups to simultaneously experience privilege depending on the context.

If we recognize the spaces that oppressed people occupy as spaces where they become participants, willing or not, in historically created relations of power, these relations of power, at times, position them as less powerful compared to others, and at other times privilege them in relation to others who are less empowered. For example, an entire community can experience racism and at the same time women in that community can experience sexism, gays and lesbians in that community can experience heteronormativity and people with disabilities can experience ableism. Individuals may participate in efforts to recreate or transform the relations of power within the intersection.

What is an Intersectional Analysis

An intersectional analysis recognizes and takes into account the multiple and interconnecting impacts of policies and practices on different groups because of their race, class, ability, sexuality, gender identity, religion, culture, refugee or immigrant status, or other status.

An intersectional analysis moves away from the use of a one-dimensional gender lens to the use of a multi-dimensional lens that brings awareness of the multiple ways of denying power to individuals and groups. Each individual belongs to many groups and

Intersectionality - *continued*

communities. This framework recognizes that our life experiences occur in multiple and compounding spheres.

An intersectional analysis begins with an individual's experiences and as such is not identity based. It moves away from examining identity to looking at the structural impact of an individual's experience. It requires that in seeking to understand and interpret facts, situations, experiences, activities, events or trends we look at patterns and dynamics of oppression. An intersectional analysis seeks to expose the rationales used to exploit differences, and to oppress individuals and groups based on these differences. It acknowledges the central role of relationships in creating and structuring our world.

An intersectional analysis engages us in the process of dialogue. Ultimately it is a transformational tool, it helps us to deepen our understanding of self through deepening our understanding of others. It is not our differences that cause violence and oppression, but rather how these differences are interpreted and acted upon.

In summary, an intersectional analysis:

- Defines identity in relation to power imbalances
- Views the structure of power relations (social hierarchy) as the backdrop of identities
- Gives the power to define one's experience and identity to the individual that has had the experience
- Recognizes that the experience has to be understood and analyzed in collaboration with the individuals, researchers and other participants
- Recognizes the links between the global and local economies and social hierarchies and their impacts on all of our lives
- Explicitly names power and privilege

Using an Intersectional Analysis in Research

Research using an intersectional analysis is a conceptual approach/framework that has an explicit value base

and a political motivation. In acknowledging the essential role of relationships in creating dynamics of oppression and of equality, it seeks to transform or reconstruct current power relations. An intersectional analysis lends itself to a methodology in which people participate in the research.

Researchers using an intersectional analysis can start by asking a series of questions:

- Where did the need for this research come from? What part of the community?
- Does it aim to challenge the status quo?
- Is the design of the research self-reflective about power relations?
- What are the values that this research implicitly seeks to promote?

Research using an intersectional analysis:

- Engages girls/women/people in their community
- Has a consultation process that goes beyond "representation"
- Uses participatory methodology
- Permits reshaping the research question and methodology because of the input
- Builds capacity of the individuals and the communities
- Builds on solutions/strengths and not just the negative aspect of a lived experience
- Assesses the limitations of both quantitative and qualitative approaches and does not apply an either/or approach
- Attempts to achieve concrete change

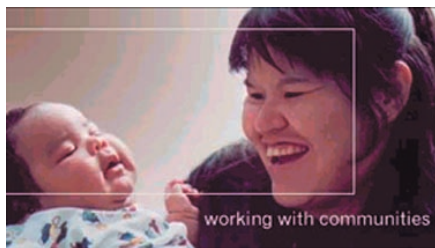
While an intersectional analysis allows us to connect with a wider range of girls and women and allows us to use our research in campaigns to influence policy in a way that reflects diversity without having girls and women reduced to "interest groups", it also presents

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Findings from the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children Community Consultation Process

The Process

Last spring, the staff and Advisory Board of the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children



(CRVAWC) looked to the community for feedback as we celebrated ten years of work to prevent and end violence against women and children. To facilitate the feedback process, we put together a very brief overview of centre work over the past 2 years and invited over 90 individuals in the community to fill out a survey and attend some focus groups.

Sixty-four individuals, who are connected to the CRVAWC through schools and school boards, community agencies, research projects, and the University of Western Ontario, participated. We held focus groups in June as a follow up to this survey and as part of our community consultation process. Nine individuals from the community participated in the focus groups which included a discussion of the CRVAWC mission statement, research priorities, and centre objectives.

A Gender and Diversity Analysis

Most participants said that it was crucial or essential that projects supported by the centre attempt to include a gender and/or diversity analysis as part of their focus. The Centre's commitment to this kind of analysis is explicitly expressed in the Research Priorities. (see http://www.crvawc.ca/research_priorities.htm)

Community Perceptions and Expectations

The findings from the CRVAWC survey revealed that the Centre is generally doing well as a research centre but needs to redefine and expand community perceptions of what a research centre is.

The CRVAWC is a forum for the generation and exploration of ideas. It is a vehicle for promoting innovative and creative thinking on violence against

women and children. Although the CRVAWC is not a resource centre/library for researchers or community agencies, it does share and loan resources that are collected through work and interest in specific areas.

Significant Contributions of the CRVAWC to Violence Prevention

Respondents identified some significant contributions that the CRVAWC has made to the prevention of violence against women and children in the local community and beyond. These included:

- 1) inclusion of diverse communities in the research and successfully engaging marginalized partners (working with the aboriginal community, fathers, and the Muslim family safety project to name a few),
- 2) The Girl Child Project,
- 3) school board partnerships and anti-violence initiatives (specifically The Fourth R project),
- 4) sexual and workplace harassment research and training,
- 5) information-sharing initiatives including workshops, seminars, publishing policy reports and educational materials/manuals,
- 6) raising community awareness of issues and bridging a gap between the community and academia,
- 7) economic analysis of the health costs of violence against women.

Resources Accessed Through the CRVAWC

With the goal of increasing research collaboration and knowledge sharing, the CRVAWC was interested in examining what resources respondents have accessed through the centre. The most accessed resources were:

- 1) the opportunity to share ideas and receive feedback;

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Communities - continued

- 2) collaboration opportunities;
- 3) assistance in conducting research;
- 4) Scotiabank Community Grants and Awards.

Also utilized by many respondents were:

- 5) the Research Networking/Collaboration lunches;
- 6) the seminar series;
- 7) the speaker series/presentations;
- 8) grant writing support. See the chart on page 5 for a graphical representation of the number of respondents who accessed each CRVAWC resource.

Unexplored Areas: Suggestions for Future Priorities

Respondents had many ideas about areas of work that they would like to see happening through the CRVAWC. These included:

- 1) exploring the Canadian (vs. US) practice of imposing gag orders on women who come forward re: clergy sexual abuse of women and girls;
- 2) development of action research projects by educators to promote cross-curricular integration of violence prevention;

Which, if any, of the following resources did you receive from the CRVAWC?



- 3) child welfare responses to cases of woman abuse and what impact it is having on families;
- 4) research on elder abuse;
- 5) barriers preventing abused women from minority communities from utilizing woman abuse services;
- 6) earlier intervention for high risk students;
- 7) how victims can proactively gain/regain their personal power;
- 8) sexual violence;
- 9) outcomes measures for women's experiences accessing anti-violence services;
- 10) gender neutral vs. women –centered services;
- 11) educational needs of abused women,
- 12) violence across the lifespan (infants to elders);
- 13) collaborative research with the Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Centre;
- 14) research linking local issues to global issues;
- 15) engaging men and boys in preventing violence;
- 16) prevention work with young women;
- 17) prevention work with children-at-risk for becoming perpetrators;
- 18) the unique situation of woman abuse and pet abuse in rural communities;
- 19) sexual violence against children and criminal sentencing.

We have begun to address some of these areas and will consider addressing others as resources become available.

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Workplace Harassment and Violence Report

The Ontario Ministry of Labour should tighten occupational health and safety regulations to better protect victims of workplace harassment and violence, according to a major new study.

The report released Oct 6, 2004, documents the experiences of women in workplaces across Ontario. The 117 page report is a collaborative initiative of four authors: Barb MacQuarrie, The University of Western Ontario's Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children (CRVAWC); Sandy Welsh, University of Toronto; Audrey Huntley, independent researcher and filmmaker; and Jacquie Carr, CRVAWC and daughter of Theresa Vince, a woman killed by her supervisor at the Sears store in Chatham in 1996.

The death of Vince was the impetus for beginning this research into the problem of workplace harassment. The work was funded by Status of Women Canada and sponsored by the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres.

"We believe the complaints process, as it exists, is dangerous to women," says MacQuarrie.

The report cites examples of women filing complaints of losing their jobs or careers, experiencing damaged relationships with co-workers, being labeled as troublemakers, losing friends and undergoing stress with family members. "Loss of sleep, nervousness, loss of financial security, loss of self esteem, guilt, fear, self-blame were all named as health-related and personal consequences of harassment." It recommends increased government funding for support services.

Women in a wide range of unionized and non-unionized workplaces across the province shared detailed accounts of sexual and non-sexual harassment in the workplace with the authors. The report offers an intimate look at the problem and documents its effects on relationships and impact on health; how women cope; and why women chose to report or not and what happens when they do.

While sexual harassment is the most commonly reported form of harassment, the report reveals women can also be targets of harassment based on race, disability, religion,

sexual orientation, language, country of origin or other factors that put them in a less powerful position than their bosses or co-workers.

It is the first study to include such a diverse array of women and to examine the multiple factors that make them vulnerable in the workplace.

The report contains 10 pages of specific recommendations. Among these are:

- Document all experiences using logs and tape recorders;
- Gather information and resources you can consult;
- Seek supplemental advice from family, physicians, counselors, lawyers, legal aid clinics and employee assistance programs;
- Employers and human resource managers are urged to recognize and act upon complaints;
- Unions and employee groups are urged to be supportive of complainants and to work with them;
- Recommendations for professional, unbiased mediation and investigation of complaints.

Ontario Minister Chris Bentley called the report helpful and said its recommendations would be taken under consideration by the Ministry.

The full 117 page report is available on the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children web site. Check www.crvaawc.ca/documents/WorkplaceHarassmentandViolencereport.pdf.



By Jim Anderson, Canadian Press

Protecting Children is Everybody's Business



An Update on "Protecting Children is Everybody's Business" Report

*Alan W. Leschied, PhD, C. Psych.
Psychologist and Professor
The Faculty of Education
The University of Western Ontario*

The report "Protecting Children is Everybody's Business" was released in the fall of 2003. This report funded through the United Way of London and Middlesex and authored by a research team at the University of Western Ontario focused on possible reasons to explain dramatic increases of child admissions to the care of the London and Middlesex Children's Aid Society. Increases in referrals and admissions to care to child welfare have been experienced virtually throughout the province of Ontario, in many cases reflecting a doubling in the rate of children accepted into care since the mid 1990's. This is a summary of activities by the London community since the release of that report.

Community focus groups. Throughout the winter and spring of 2004, 299 people participated in 24 focus groups throughout the London community focusing on issues that cause children to be removed from their homes. Four goals were articulated: providing prevention within the community; advancing meaningful economic improvements; encouraging community collaborative projects; and promoting sensitive, responsive and accessible systems of support to persons in need. Four strategic directions were summarized from this vast input; building on strengths and empowering families, making the protection of children truly everybody's business, improving accessibility and the participation of families and children in their communities, and making prevention, early intervention, and collaboration a shared value across all service sectors.

Action committee co-chaired by the directors of the United Way and Children's Aid Society. This committee representing members from London's community resources provides a forum to monitor activities related to the original report. Monitoring through this committee insures that the findings from this work remain alive and progress is made in a timely way.

Visit to Allegheny County Pennsylvania. Most child welfare agencies throughout North America have been challenged with increasing demands for service over the past decade. Contact through the Annie Casey Foundation in Baltimore Maryland identified Pennsylvania's Allegheny County as the most progressive system in reducing the numbers of children in care without compromising the child's safety. The concept of removing the risk with out removing the child was witnessed first hand by a group from London. This visit has served as a basis of encouragement to know what is possible within one community's successful approach in promoting child and family welfare.

The Ministry of Children and Youth's Child Welfare Secretariat. During the spring of this year the newly developed Ministry of Children and Youth convened the child welfare secretariat. Directed by the current director of the Toronto CAS, Bruce Rivers met with representatives of the London community to review the original research and the approach our community was taking to look at community-based alternatives to admissions to care. Some of the approaches our community will be taking may require special accommodations approved by the province. Additionally, there is the potential for London and

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Intersectionality continued

challenges. The way people define their experience may not fit into our research categories and the way that we develop our research may be challenged for bias at every level of the research process. On the other hand, government, organizations and we ourselves may construct our identity in ways that compartmentalize our experience in order to belong. As researchers, we may encounter resistance in ourselves as we are asked to reshape our understanding of the world and asked to examine our privilege. The length of time it takes to do this sort of research and the funding needed to carry it out are practical problems that must be addressed. Finally the lack of writing and theory to support an intersectional analysis calls upon us to break new ground in our work and sometimes to learn by making mistakes.

The Relationship between Feminism and Intersectional Analysis

The purpose of using an intersectional analysis is to explore and question “normative” systems. Feminism, as an established system of thought, must also be subjected to an intersectional analysis. As feminists, we will always want to examine and understand the gender dynamics of oppression. An intersectional analysis calls upon us to be sensitive to other sites of marginality, even as we take responsibility for focusing on the impact of policies and practices on women and girls.

In asking questions about different forms of oppression, we can explore the different forms of feminism. Through questions and discussions we will come to an evolving consciousness that allows our understanding of an intersectional analysis to change and our definitions of feminism to expand.

As feminist researchers, we design processes to include girls and women. Each woman brings the experience of being part of several communities. The insight and consciousness she provides through sharing her experiences of the intersection of these communities will offer policy makers the opportunity to understand our lived experiences in a truer fashion.

Findings continued

Priorities for future community-development oriented work:

CRVAWC has set the following priorities for expanding its community development work:

- 1) explore links between violence against women and children and other social problems such as Racism, Immigration Status, Ableism, Homophobia, Poverty, Ageism;
- 2) collaboration with ethno-specific communities and faith based organizations;
- 3) develop more culturally sensitive research models;
- 4) strengthen connection with community-based agencies and schools;
- 5) training with community groups;
- 6) work with students;
- 7) continue to develop relationships with academic researchers;
- 8) critique gender neutral approaches to research and services addressing violence;
- 9) pursue international relationships with researchers and community groups working to address violence against women and children.

Increasing Collaborative Research Opportunities

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who helped us to reflect on our priorities and think about future directions for our work. At the heart of this community consultation was the goal of increasing collaborative research opportunities with you and your organization. The results of the process have provided suggestions for ways that we can work more effectively with community and academic partners and ideas about directions in which the Centre can move.

We will continue to focus on improving our communication strategies as we build relationships in the community with individuals and organizations. Although the consultation process offered a specific opportunity for those with an interest in the work of the Centre to have input, we remain open to hearing your thoughts, inquiries and suggestions.

See a full summary of the consultation process on our web site at www.crvawc.ca.

Spotlight on Our Associates

Preventing Woman Abuse Through Building Partnerships

Mohammed Awadh Baobaid,
M.A. (Criminal Science and Forensic Psychology),
Ph.D. (Psychology and Criminology)

Mohammed's doctorate in Psychology and Criminology from the Erlangen-Nuremberg University, examined family socialization and juvenile delinquency in Yemen. During this time, Mohammad earned the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Scholarship award. Prior to acquiring his doctorate in 1997, Mohammad obtained an M.A in Criminal Science and Forensic Psychology which focused on the characteristics of juvenile psycho-sociological growth in Yemen.



Mohammed has extensive experience working with young offenders and coordinated relevant programs that centered around the protection, prevention, and early intervention of delinquent youth. Dr. Baobaid was the head of the Department of Women Studies for Empirical Research and Women Studies at the University of Sanaa, Yemen. At the University of Sanaa he lectured to both undergraduate and graduate students in the areas of criminal, forensic, and family psychology. In 1999 Dr. Baobaid established and is currently the Chair of The Centre for Youth Research and Development in Yemen.

In recent years, Mohammed has worked as an Integration Counselor at Success Resources London at the Thames Valley District School Board. Currently, he works as a men's counselor at Changing Ways in London Ontario and is the Coordinator for the Muslim Family Safety Project. Mohamed was awarded a grant to investigate access to woman abuse services by Muslim women in London Ontario. Mohammed is also on the board of the Children's Aid Society of London.

Along with organizing and facilitating a diverse range of community presentations on culture, violence against women, juvenile delinquency, and human rights, Dr. Baobaid has published a wide range of articles including *women in conflict with the law*, *children in conflict with the law*, *the attitudes of police toward violence against women*, and *the causes and prevalence of suicide*.

Mohammad's expertise is further extricated by his fluency in English, Arabic, and German.

Research Associates

The vision behind creating this designation is to create a virtual community of researchers, both community-based and academic in order to share relevant work, with each other and with the world at large.

These research associate positions provide an official affiliation to the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children, and to the University of Western Ontario. These positions formalize the relationship between those who contribute to anti-violence research and prevention efforts, and the Centre. They also recognize the many contributions to the work of the Centre made by diverse community members and academic researchers.

For more information on the Research Associates refer to the CRVAVC website.

Community Research Associates

Ms. Cathy Hird
Dr. Mohammed Baobaid
Ms. Mandy Bonisteel
Ms. Janet Izumi
Ms. Catherine Burr
Ms. Elaine Vitali
Mr. Larry Marshall
Ms. Anna-Lee Straatman
Dr. Peter Jaffe
Mr. Tim Kelly
Ms. Jacquie Carr
Ms. Nora Shanahan

Academic Research Associates

Dr. Alan Leschied
Dr. David Wolfe
Dr. Claire Crooks
Dr. Sandy Welsh
Dr. Myrna Dawson
Dr. Yasmin Jiwani
Dr. Helene Berman
Dr. Lori Haskell
Dr. Paul Tremblay
Dr. Roma Harris
Dr. Gail Hutchinson
Dr. Anne Cummings
Dr. Beverly Leipert
Dr. Gloria Mulcahey
Dr. Sue Rodger

Thursday, January 20, 2005

**Windemere Manor
200 Collip Drive, London, Ontario**

9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

This Research Day is an opportunity for The Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children to introduce our Academic and Community Research Associates; as well as to show case some of the recent feminist research relevant to stopping violence against women and children.

Presenters

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9:30-10:15 | Dr. Helene Berman, Yasmin Hussain, Romy Poletti
<i>Violence in the Lives of Girls in Canada: Looking Back and Moving Forward</i> |
| 10:20-11:05 | Dr. Alan Leschied
<i>The Implications of Increasing Numbers of Children Coming into the Care of the Children's Aid Society</i> |
| 11:10-11:55 | Dr. Paul Tremblay
<i>Alcohol-Related Aggression at Six Canadian Universities</i> |
| 1:00-1:45 | Mandy Bonisteel, Jude Fairweather
<i>Respect At Work</i> |
| 1:50-2:35 | Dr. Mohammed Baobaid
<i>Muslim Men's Perception of Family Violence</i> |
| 2:40-3:15 | Dr. Myrna Dawson
<i>Examining the Link Between the Availability of Domestic Violence Resources and the Victimization of Women</i> |

To register for the Research Day, please contact Joy Lang at: jang5@uwo.ca or 519-661-2111 ext. 81133. Lunch will be provided. **Registration is limited and will be on a first come first serve basis.**

Send the Registration Fee of \$10.00 payable to:

The Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children,
1137 Western Road, Room 1118,
Faculty of Education Building,
The University of Western Ontario,
London, Ontario N6G 1G7.

Please address to the attention of Joy Lang.

About Us

Update continued

Middlesex to become a pilot site for innovations in child welfare that could be used by other Ontario jurisdictions.

Development of a Business Plan. Innovation in the human services is a complex endeavor. It involves numerous partners from many levels of government as well as individuals outside the traditional service sectors. In recognition of this fact, a consultant has been engaged to work with an advisory committee to compile a set of recommendations. Within the context of the original research findings, the work of the action committee and the conclusions emanating from the focus groups, the business plan will provide a structure to proceed to develop an innovative community process to promote child and family safety through community supports while reducing the reliance on child welfare admissions.

Summary. Since the release of “Protecting Children” many within the London and Middlesex community have been engaged in setting a course to find solutions to this set of complex individual, family and societal issues. The original research helped focus this discussion, serving as a springboard on which to promote the safety of children and families. Progress in moving toward realistic solutions is being made.



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