

# How

## Anti-violence crusader has message for schools

By Wilma Blokhuis  
BEAVER FOCUS EDITOR

Mohan Anand is taking his fight against violence one step further. He was named the White Ribbon Campaign's education outreach co-ordinator at its Toronto office. The White Ribbon Campaign is a men's organiza-

tion which aims to end violence perpetrated by men.

A Glen Abbey resident, Anand is a long time volunteer with this organization which encourages men to end the violence against women and children.

The White Ribbon Campaign was founded in 1991 as men's response to an increasing number of reports of violence against women. It has grown into the world's largest volunteer organization of men and boys working to end violence. It receives no government support and must raise its own money from events and donations.

The catalyst for its formation was the Montreal Massacre, the murder of 14 female university engineering students by a lone gunman in 1989.

"A number of men got together and said something has to be done about it," explains Anand, who was involved with the White Ribbon Campaign from the beginning.

"Men cannot keep quiet about violence. Men's silence must be broken."

A retired vice-principal at a Toronto high school, Anand has been asked to promote the use of the White Ribbon Campaign's 120-page resource manual at more than 2,500 high schools across Canada and the United States.

He will begin with contacting all of the school boards across Ontario and Canada, "to sell them on the idea of a harmonious society which is against violence." Once he's met the challenge in Canada, he will approach the American boards.

Among the aims of this new education campaign is asking each school to declare a White Ribbon Campaign Week, that anti-violence activities be promoted within schools year round, spread the word about this campaign within the community and to different ethnic groups, ask businesses and unions to provide anti-violence training at workplaces, and contact others in the community who may be in a position to assist the White Ribbon Campaign in its endeavours.

In seeking the new volunteer position, Anand stated in a letter he was interested in the job "because the issue of violence against women and children is so very close to my heart and mind."

"I strongly believe that this is an issue not just for the women, but it is a very significant issue for the society as a whole."

An individual's cultural background, and societal beliefs in general, continue to be barriers in the fight against violence.



Mohan Anand

"In most cases, men commit violence because of their cultural background and the pre-conceived notions about the roles of women in society," he wrote in his letter.

"At schools, the youngsters need to be taught that those roles are changing world wide, including their own country of origin. They cannot afford to follow the practices of their parents. Those practices should be discussed in the classroom as part of curriculum."

Anand feels the rights of women and children to live in a violence-free environment should be emphasized throughout the year. He adds the United Nations has declared the year 2000 as the International Year of Elimination of Violence Against Women.

"If you notice something, you shouldn't keep quiet about it - you should report any violence you see," says Anand, adding saying nothing allows the abuse to continue.

"Violence is an issue for women, particularly those who are not familiar with the laws and culture of Canada."

Many new-immigrant women who don't know their rights "suffer all kinds of atrocities because their partners know they don't know where to go. They misuse their abuse because they know the woman doesn't know her rights." And, nor do they care about laws forbidding such violence."

Anand also criticized the education system for its treatment of female students.

"In schools, even today, girls are treated in a manner that promotes the subservient role for them and a macho role for the boys," his letter states. "Most girls, for example, do not pursue courses related to mathematics and science. This is not a coincidence."

"Attitudes of the teachers, the guidance counsellors, along with that of many parents, have a lot to do with this."

"Such practices promote values that, in many cases, are causes of violence against women. In my opinion, this attitude itself is a subtle form of violence committed against the women, by the school and the community."

"Women of all ages should be taught not to take this. They should be made aware of the help available to them, if and when they experience violence. Teachers and educators need to modify their attitudes and practice strategies of teaching that would promote 'equality of sexes' throughout the school curriculum."

Anand took early retirement as principal at a Toronto high school in 1995, but has been far from idle when it comes to education.

Shortly after his retirement, he went to northern Ontario to Moose Factory and Fort Hope and spent 20 months helping the First Nations People set up their own schools.

"The federal government has given them the OK and the money, but provided no help." He was told money was not an object in accepting the position permanently, which would have required him to move.

What he finds in Moose Factory and Fort Hope is deplorable.

"The kids, since age eight, are sniffing gas and going bonkers."

"It's a very bad situation. They've moved away from their old traditional values and the kids have no roots to hang on to," - no thanks to the residential schools run by churches.

"The church has done them a great disservice. In Fort Hope, for example, there is a population of 800 people and eight churches, and since their congregations are new converts, they hate each other. For example, the Catholics, Anglicans and United Church members don't talk to each other, leaving a community that's divided eight different ways. Plus, there's the group which has remained traditional."

"The old ways have disappeared. The kids are suffering. There is no decision making toward the betterment of the community as a whole. It's a pathetic situation and I'm deeply hurt by it (as a person who chose to be Canadian)."

"The church is about spreading love and affection, brotherly and sisterly togetherness, but instead it's tearing the community apart."

"They have not been healed from the residential school abuse."

Anand, an Indian, says the First Nations People trust him "because my skin colour matches theirs - I look like them."

"They don't trust fair skinned people. I tell them it's not about skin colour, there are a lot of people willing to help. We have to remove this distrust."

"They don't have their own nurses, doctors or teachers on the reserve, and anyone who becomes a professional doesn't want to live there."

Anand, a 59-year-old married father of three, was born in India. He came to Canada in 1968.

"This country has been good to me," he said when interviewed late last year when he sought, and won, the Liberal nomination for Halton in last June's provincial election.

"Despite my physical disability, I was able to work and progress in my job. I feel therefore, that is my duty to repay the community in a larger way."

He walks with a limp, the result of childhood polio.

Although he was speaking politically at the time, Anand has given back.

He is founder of Halton Men Against Violence Against Women and Children, was a director on the Glen Abbey Residents Association and the Oakville Public Library Board, launched the White Ribbon Campaign in Halton, and served on the education committee of the Halton Rape Crisis Centre.

## OAKVILLE GALLERIES WANTS YOU!

...because you are interested in art...

...have a desire to learn more about art...

...have good communication skills...

...are committed to making culture a vital part of your community...

## Become an Art Guide/Docent. Training session starts October 18.

The rewards are endless:

you'll talk to others interested in art, participate in art events and openings, hear talks about artists and lectures about art, meet new people, and provide a valuable public service to your community.

Contact Sarah Woodhouse, Special Projects Officer  
Oakville Galleries, 1306 Lakeshore Rd. E., Oakville, Ontario, L6J 1L6  
Call 905-844-4402 fx: 905-844-7968 e-mail: ogpublic@idirect.ca

**oakville galleries** adult art classes  
a different approach to art

**Painting and Drawing with Anda Kubis**  
October 19, 26, November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, December 7  
Tuesday afternoons from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm  
Fees: member \$110, non-members \$125

For further information or registration, please call 905-844-4402



# "I wanted someone who was rich."

## "We connected immediately."

With COGECO@Home you can experience all the exciting multi-media of the Internet, including rich graphics, vibrant sound and streaming video. And there's more. COGECO@Home also has an incredibly easy-to-use custom browser that arranges information into categories so surfing and finding what you want is a cinch. And at up to 100 times faster than conventional dial-up service, COGECO@Home has a wealth of speed too.

Everything about it is rich, except the price.

Plus, right now  
you can save \$100  
on installation.

**\$39.95**  
A MONTH\*  
HIGH SPEED INTERNET ACCESS  
over cable

Go further. Go faster. Go...  
**COGECO @ Home**

**Call 1-877-8-ATHOME**  
www.cogeco.ca/home

\*For basic cable subscribers.  
\$49.95/month for non-subscribers.  
Full installation charge  
for laptop computers.

# Do