

# SAVIS lobbies government to tackle abuse of women

By Angela Blackburn  
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

The Province of Ontario needs to Step it Up! to end violence against women.

The Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Services of Halton (SAVIS) delivered that message to Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn recently calling for better, faster government action on a number of fronts.

Flynn was front row centre at a May 3 press conference at SAVIS' Hopedale Mall office where SAVIS — backed by nearly a dozen other local organizations, and not just women's groups — sat across the table from Flynn and the audience to outline a 10-point list on how to do it.

The 10 points include:

- understanding that violence against women is an equality rights issue.
- recognizing that male power is upheld by rape and sexual harassment.
- stopping racism/oppression; make Ontario accessible.
- ending poverty now.
- creating and maintain housing, non-profit childcare, training now.
- providing fair access to justice for women.
- holding violent men accountable for their actions.
- stopping the criminalization and psychiatrization of women.
- demanding secure funding for women's organizations.
- listening to survivors and women's advocates, they are the experts.

Step It Up! kicked off May as Sexual Awareness Month.

"I didn't feel like I was being picked on," said Flynn, who expressed disappointment other Halton government officials were not present. "This message is for Big G government of all levels who have ignored this issue."

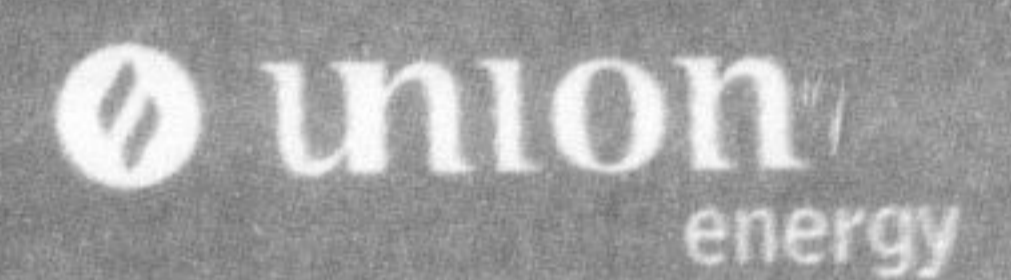
SAVIS and many of the associated groups at the conference recognized Flynn as a supporter for their cause.

The press conference was preceded by a breakfast sup-  
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**CHEQUE IT OUT:** Lorraine Waugh of WHAM presents a cheque to Jaqueline Benn-John of SAVIS and Ruth Sheridan of Canadians In Support of Afghan Women (C SAW). WHAM raised \$20,000 of which \$10,000 was each donated to SAVIS and C SAW.



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