

Helping to end the cycle of wife assault

by Darren MacDonald
Staff

Wife assault is as much a problem in Schreiber and Terrace Bay as it is anywhere else, says outreach worker Donna Mikeluk.

"The stats are saying that one out of every six women is abused, and I think those stats are typical right across the board, wherever you live," she says.

Mikeluk is the outreach worker for Schreiber and Terrace Bay. That means her duties include providing assistance to women who have been abused; acting as a link to Marjorie House, which is a shelter for abused women and their children; and educating the public on the plight of these women.

November was Wife Assault Prevention Month, and as part of the month's activities, videos on the subject of wife assault were played on the community channel in Terrace Bay. Also, a billboard with Marjorie House's phone number has been erected in Terrace Bay, and one is being planned for Schreiber as well.

"At our last meeting, the Director's Report said we have had over 100 per cent occupancy for over two months," says Jeannine Pineau.

Pineau is a member of Marjorie House's Board of Directors, which consists of two representatives from Manitouwadge, Marathon, Terrace Bay and Schreiber.

Marjorie House itself is located in Marathon, and is named after a woman who took refuge there but has since died. The house provides shelter for a maximum of six weeks.

"The house is full every night—it's a tough time of year," says Pineau.

"In the fall freeze up and during the spring thaw, I would say there's more cases," says Mikeluk.

Many woman may wait for the change of seasons before finally leaving an abusive spouse, she says.

"A lot of woman may leave at the end of a school year, because they don't want to disrupt the children while they're in school," she says.



From left, Outreach Worker Donna Mikeluk with Marjorie House Board Members Cathie Smith, Jeannine Pineau, Elizabeth Singleton and Doris Walton.

Holiday times are also busy because of the added stress, says Mikeluk.

"Abuse is a cycle," she says. "It starts off with a lot of stress and tension building up until there's an explosion where the actual physical abuse takes place," she says.

"Some of the expressions woman use to describe this time are 'I feel like I'm walking on eggshells,' and 'No matter what I do, it's not good enough.'"

After the explosion, Mikeluk says there's a period called the 'honeymoon phase'.

"The batterer will say things like 'I'm sorry for what I've done, I'll never do it again,'" she says. "They'll give gifts and do anything they can do to try and smooth things over."

But the cycle begins all over again as the stress and tension in house builds up toward another explosion.

"The cycle can take place anywhere from a couple of times a year to a daily basis," says Mikeluk. "It's a learned way of behaving and dealing with stress."

Marjorie House has its origins in 1982 when a study showed that there was nowhere for victims to go for help in the North Shore.

Funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Municipalities, the North Shore Family Resource Centre opened in May of 1986.

It was renamed Marjorie House because, as Jeannine Pineau says, the original name "was a mouthful."

"And most of the other homes are named after people as well," she says.

The centre is always in need of items they give to woman for "start up," which is the period after they leave both their abusive spouses and Marjorie House.

"When a women comes to the house, often times they won't have had time to pack, so they have nothing with

them," says Mikeluk. "So in the basement we have a large storage room where we keep clothing for them."

Other items they always need include bedding, dishes and towels, she says.

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The McCausland Hospital's Cash Calendar winners Week: Forty-Eight

Nov. 23: Knights of
Columbus, Terrace Bay, \$10
Nov. 24: Sylvie Angus,
Terrace Bay, \$10
Nov. 25: M.E. Bouchie,
Terrace Bay, \$10
Nov. 26: E. MacKay, Terrace
Bay, \$10
Nov. 27: D'Arcy Wilson,
Terrace Bay, \$10
Nov. 28: Linda Speziale,
Schreiber, \$50
Nov. 29: Fern Luke, Terrace
Bay, \$10

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Terrace Bay/Schreiber News

TOWNSHIP OF SCHREIBER

The Township of Schreiber will be
awarding prizes for the best
Christmas decorated home.

First Prize \$100.00
Second Prize \$75.00
Third Prize \$50.00

Judging will be done
December 23 to 31, 1991.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Fred, Lucy & Stephen Figliomeni are thrilled to announce the
safe arrival of their new addition,

MIRANDA MARIE,

born November 12, 1992, weighing 5 lbs, 12 oz.

Proud grandparents are Vincenzo Figliomeni and Giuseppe &
Melina Costa. Special thank you to, Dr. K.W. Wilkes and
Dr. Lisa Hicks and all the nurses at the McCausland Hospital
for the excellent care we received.