



ANNUAL REPORT 2006-2007

Cette publication est disponible en français

ISBN 978-1-55471-148-2

Chairperson's Message

Upon reflection on the past year, it has been a time of considerable activity with many high points and many challenging moments during that same period.

The year's activities started off as usual.

We had a very successful launch of our bi-annual report card that was published in March 2006. The data that was collected has captured a picture of many issues that face women in our society. We saw certain areas that have demonstrated much improvement and in other areas significant change is still needed.

The report card is a valuable tool that allows us to bring these issues to the attention of the public and government.

We continue to strive to work within the guidelines of our Action plan that was adopted by Council members. In doing so, we continue to work on many issues of concern such as pay equity, access to affordable and quality child care, violence against women, women in politics, access to abortion services, Aboriginal women's issues, etc.

In the past year, the Council has made a concerted effort to go out within the communities and meet the local women and bring to them information of interest. The use of Lunch and Learns has been an effective vehicle to reach many women and it has also allowed us to raise our visibility especially within rural New Brunswick.

2006 was then overshadowed by the announcement of the changes to Status of Women Canada. We worked tirelessly to help groups and individuals mobilize themselves and to speak out against the drastic changes to

the Status of Women Canada, the cut of the Court Challenges program and more.

In fall 2006, the Federal Government announced changes to the Women's Program by removing the advancement of women's equality from the mandate of the Program, barring organizations accessing funding through the program for lobbying of government and advocacy, eliminating research as an eligible activity for funding. The justification for the changes, as said by the Minister responsible for the status of women at the time was: "the Government of Canada fundamentally believes that women in Canada are equal".

When these announcements were made the gears shifted significantly. The Council, with many other local, provincial and national groups from across Canada organized different events in protest and to denounce what we perceived to be an attack on women and the advancement of women's equality.

Women of the province took up the challenge and clearly sent a message to the Federal Government that we would not be silenced.

We have come to realize that we must continue more than ever not to take anything for granted and we must continue to work towards our goal for a better society for women based on our values of justice and equality.

The fight continues!

Ginette Petitpas-Taylor

Chairperson

March 31, 2007

WHO WE ARE

The members of the Advisory Council in 2006-2007 are:
Ginette Petitpas-Taylor, Moncton, Chairperson, appointed March 2005
Odette Richard, Westmorland Kent, appointed June 2004, (Vice-Chairperson March 2005)
Karla Dawn Reynolds, Kings/Albert, appointed April 2006
Dorothy Hamilton, Restigouche, appointed April 2006
Brenda Murphy, Greater Saint John, appointed April 2003
Jackie Matthews, Charlotte, appointed March 2002
C. Anne Cummings, Carleton, appointed March 2002
Christine Augustine, Miramichi, appointed March 2003
Nathalie Boivin, Chaleur, appointed January 2003

WHAT WE DO

The Advisory Council was created by provincial legislation to advise the Minister on issues of concern to women and to bring these issues before the public and the government. The Mission of the Advisory Council is to promote equity for women in all sectors of New Brunswick society. The Council meets four times per year to study issues and adopt recommendations for action. On matters of interest to women, the Council:

- advises governments
- recommends laws, policies and practices to the N.B. government
- facilitates networking amongst women's groups
- gathers, researches and disseminates information
- increases awareness on issues, programs and services.

HOW TO CONTACT US

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COUNCIL MEETINGS

The members of the New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women held three meetings in 2006-07, each in a different part of the province, as well as two conference call meetings. Quarterly meetings usually include a public session as well as board and member development activities. Members report on their activities and on the concerns of women in their region and decisions are made on priority issues and actions.

August 24-25, 2006, Bouctouche, N.B.

Government's Equal Opportunity Program

A representative of the New Brunswick government's Equal Opportunity Program presented an overview of the program, which aims to encourage the hiring of Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities and visible minority groups in Parts I and II of the public service.

Council members expressed concerns about the limited scope of the program, the fact that no targets are set and no statistics collected to measure the representation of each of the designated groups among provincial employees. The Advisory Council decided to advise the government of these concerns, to raise the problem of women's under representation in some non-traditional jobs in the public service, and propose a provincial employment equity program.

Workplace Bullying

Council members studied a draft position statement on workplace bullying and decided that, before it could adopt recommendations, it would hold focus groups to ask women targets of bullying about possible solutions - whether complaints-based legislation would be effective given bullying targets' fears of coming forward and whether mediation services should be an option.

2007-2008 Workplan

The members discussed the issues and activities of the Council's workplan for the period ending December 2006 in anticipation of the development of a new 18-month workplan for 2007-2008 at the next quarterly meeting. Members suggested devoting more efforts to the issue of poverty, organizing more Lunch & Learns on key issues, as a way of raising public awareness and informing policy-makers.

Nancy's Award

Members discussed the Advisory Council's Nancy's Award, which they helped present in Regional Heritage Fairs throughout the province; they expressed concern that there were too few women-focused history projects to choose from in some of the regional competitions. Plans were made to address this situation.

Members viewed the film by the Beauséjour Family Crisis Resource Centre on partner violence.

The Council renewed the Executive Director's contract for the next 5 years.

Public presentation and reception - August 24, 2006, Bouctouche

Local women came for a presentation by Nora Saucier, president of the organizing committee of the upcoming general forum of Acadian women, *États généraux des Femmes en Acadie du N.-B.*, which is intended as a think tank on the future of the women's movement in New Brunswick and on the type of organization that would best represent Acadian and Francophone women.

November 16-17, 2006 - Edmundston

Members discussed their participation in activities protesting the federal government's recent elimination of funding for any projects involving advocacy for women's equality.

Action Plan 2007-2008

A facilitator assisted the Advisory Council in developing a new Action Plan for the period January 2007 to May 2008 and in brainstorming about strengthening the Council's impact. It was decided that success indicators would be developed.

Leadership Training

An introduction of the "Courage to Act - A Leadership Program for Women" was provided by Kathleen Howard of Fredericton.

Public presentation - November 16, 2006, Edmundston

About 20 people attended a reception and presentation on Women in Politics in N.B. with Madeleine Dubé, MLA for Edmundston/Saint Basile and former minister.

Conference call meeting - December 13, 2006

Location of Next Meeting

The location of the March 2007 quarterly meeting was changed to Moncton instead of Fredericton, in order for the Council to participate in a major event being organized there to mark International Women's Day.

Finalization of the 2007-08 Action Plan

Council members finalized and adopted the new action plan.

COUNCIL MEETINGS (continued...)

March 1-2, 2007 - Moncton

Workplace Bullying - Report from the Focus Groups

The results of focus group sessions with 45 bullying victims, conducted by Bissett Matheson Communications in four locations in the province in February 2007, were discussed. Members adopted recommendations and instructed the Executive Director to work to raise awareness of the need for action.

Non-Profit Task Force Submission

Consultant Sue Calhoun presented a draft summary Position Paper for the Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force. Members adopted a revised version of the document, adding recommendations for the approval of multi-year funding for non-profit groups who receive government funding and the establishment of a work exchange program for the civil service. The Council decided to assist non-profit groups, particularly those that do advocacy, to ensure their voices are heard.

Civil Legal Aid

The Advisory Council discussed its commissioned report on possible incremental changes to improve civil legal aid services in New Brunswick. Consultant Lise Maze-rolle provided an overview of her research findings, based on a literature review and interviews with Legal Aid lawyers and other resource people. Council decided it needed additional time to consider decisions on this issue.

Self-Sufficiency Task Force

Members discussed notes prepared for a presentation to the Self-Sufficiency Task Force. Concerns about the

task force include the hurried and non inclusive process being followed; the vagueness of the objectives and the need for consensus on criteria to choosing a path to self-sufficiency, and for that criteria to include favouring equality. Members decided to make a submission to the Task Force and to make the Council position public.

Bubble Zone Protection

In view of escalating anti-choice protest aimed at abortion service providers and patients at the Morgentaler Clinic in Fredericton, and the colleagues and patients of the physician providing the service, members discussed options for public safety: access zone, also called bubble zone, legislation and civil injunctions. Members decided to support a legislated solution and to urge the use of criminal harassment section by police.

Participation in a Public Celebration for International Women's Week, March 1, Moncton

The members joined about 175 people for an event organized by United Way and women's groups to mark International Women's Week. Council Chairperson Ginette Petitpas-Taylor delivered the speech, highlighting gains and current challenges of the women's movement given recent federal cuts to equality-seeking initiatives.

Conference call meeting - March 28, 2007

Civil Legal Aid Research

Members discussed the summary of the legal aid research, developed recommendations and adopted the report.

ISSUES

Women In Elected Positions

In meetings with ministers and in other venues in 2006-07, the Advisory Council raised the need for action on women's representation in elected positions and for follow-up on the excellent recommendations by the Commission on Legislative Democracy. In June 2006, the Advisory Council issued a media release applauding the New Brunswick government's proposed electoral changes, several of which could have a positive impact on the representation of women, but noting the proposals did not address the lack of commitment by political parties in running female candidates and did not propose limits to the financing of nomination campaigns. New Brunswick has the second-fewest number of female legislators in Canada.

The Advisory Council has recommended that government:

- create financial incentives that reward parties for recruiting and electing women.
- require political parties to adopt a plan to bring about gender balance. The plan should cover the candidate search process, riding nominations and proportional representation lists. An initial goal of 30% female representation reached within 3 elections, to be increased to 50%.
- fund training and mentoring initiatives to prepare women to run for office;
- reduce spending limits for party nominations, leadership contests and general elections;
- implement a fairer and more transparent appointment process to provincially appointed agencies, boards and commissions, including advertising vacancies, developing job descriptions and encouraging greater representation of women and minorities.

Violence

Government's Action Plan On Violence Against Women - The Advisory Council briefed the minister responsible for the status of women on the concerns of members about the government's 5-year plan on violence against women. While commending government for the changes brought about in this issue since 2001, including the domestic violence court project in Moncton, and continuing our participation of the Minister's Working Group on Violence Against Women, the Advisory Council fears that services developed through the current plan will not be consistent throughout the province. Communities that are organized or vibrant enough to submit proposals will develop services further, but services in other communities will not improve. The Advisory Council considers that the plan should ensure that the same basic services are provided throughout New Brunswick. Members also noted the need for more focus on prevention, on programs aimed at men, at youth and at

attitudes about the use of violence.

The Advisory Council paid part of the translation costs of a publication by Support to Single Parents of Moncton, Start-up Guide for the Peer Support And Social Action - Women Helping Women Break the Cycle of Violence, and added it to our website.

The Advisory Council and various groups collaborated to bring to New Brunswick a play by Québec's Théâtre Parminou, *Lost in Traffic*, dealing with human trafficking. At the presentations of the play, before over 250 people in September 2006 in Moncton, the Advisory Council Chairperson said that interveners in New Brunswick are aware of people affected by trafficking, mostly in the sex trade. The Advisory Council recommended that multi-disciplinary domestic death reviews be conducted to potentially help reduce domestic violence and homicides. New Brunswick has a higher-than-average rate of spousal murder-suicides and significant spousal homicide and gun death rates. Following a meeting with groups and researchers working on the issue of domestic homicides, the Advisory Council hired a legal researcher to focus on the risk factors associated with domestic homicide cases in New Brunswick and potential solutions.

A Lunch & Learn was held in collaboration with Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre on Family Violence and with the participation of New Brunswick's Ombudsman, on what men can do to reduce violence.

Labour Force

The Advisory Council organized a panel on women in non-traditional trades as part of a provincial conference on career counselling being held in Saint John, as well as a Lunch & Learn in Fredericton with the same resource persons.

In March 2007, the Advisory Council released its brief to the provincial government's Self-Sufficiency Task Force, calling on it to include in its study the changes made necessary by women's massive participation in the province's paid labour force. The brief states that concern for having as many people as possible benefit from economical development should be among the criteria used to select the province's path to self-sufficiency. A definition of self-sufficiency should be put forward, and it should recognize that social growth and the protection of the environment must be part of the measure of success. Better integration of women into non-traditional fields would help solve the skill shortage in certain occupations, and adoption of a family policy so that workers can better combine paid work and family. The Advisory Council also recommended that the provincial government adjust the process underway to allow for more inclusive dialogue with the public and called for a central public dialogue office and a framework for meaningful consultations.

ISSUES (continued...)

First Nations Women

Equality For First Nations Women, a paper adopted in early 2006 to provide direction to the Advisory Council to support First Nations women's efforts to improve their situation, was sent to the women who participated in working session for feedback.

Home Support Services

After the release of the final report of the Labour Force Adjustment Committee on recruitment and retention of home support workers, on which the Advisory Council had a representative, the Council organized 4 public sessions around the province with Linda Nugent, researcher and committee member. The N.B. Home Support Association is heading the follow-up to that report, with some provincial funding over a 2-year term. On the topic of home support, the Advisory Council also organized a lunch & learn in Bathurst and in St-Stephen and a day-long session in collaboration with the St. Thomas University Third Age Centre in Fredericton.

Civil Legal Aid

The Advisory Council met with representatives of Legal Aid NB to discuss changes needed to expand civil legal aid, and hired a contract researcher to look into ways to incrementally improve civil legal aid. The research concluded that there was consensus around the need for a greater range of services for low and moderate income people who are not victims of violence, for alternative ways of delivering services, and for building new service options gradually on existing structures, through pilot projects. Current service gaps in New Brunswick include legal aid for low-income individuals dealing with housing, workplace, employment insurance and social assistance problems and woman not victims of violence who face family law issues. The Advisory Council recommendations are:

That coverage provided by legal aid be extended to include more family law cases and poverty law issues. To this end, it is recommended:

That innovative service options that are adapted to women's needs be introduced: community clinics, early intervention, referral to counselling, mental health assessment, employment counselling, etc.

That a financial test based on the poverty line be considered with the goal of providing more legal aid services to more low and middle income persons.

That innovative financial options be developed, such as payment of a reasonable contribution to the legal aid cost, once appropriate tools have been adopted to evaluate ability to pay, with the goal of making legal aid services accessible to persons who have

income above the poverty line but for whom hiring a lawyer would represent a financial hardship.

While priority should still be given to persons who are victims of violence, that civil legal aid services be provided to other groups in need;

That resource persons and interveners who work with women in the community be consulted when developing and implementing new service options;

That additional human resources be allotted and that training be provided on the multidimensional aspects of women's problems, particularly women in violent situations;

That the coordination of services, the monitoring of case progress and the evaluation and monitoring of the quality of services be part of the administration of civil legal aid, and that statistics on requests approved, the reasons for refusal and the needs of clients be kept.

Pay Gap

The Advisory Council, which participates in the Minister's Forum of Women's Groups on the Wage Gap, submitted concerns about the thrust of the government's strategic framework to the Forum and to the Minister in mid 2006. The Council recommended that, for overall progress to be deemed satisfactory, government should require progress in each of four strategic area, so that for example, if progress is noted in 12 of the 14 indicators, but not in the 2 indicators that deal with pay equity, then progress would be deemed unsatisfactory. The Advisory Council also expressed concern that it has not yet seen the proposed methods to bring pay equity to those who work in female-dominated fields where there are no male-dominated comparator positions.

The Advisory Council reiterated the conditions under which it had agreed to support the Roundtable proposals:

That new resources, expertise and tools, notably for those responsible for employment standards, enforcement of equal pay for equal work and of the voluntary pay equity process, be provided for the implementation of the changes.

That all recommended measures be implemented into Parts 1 to 4 of government.

That, given that access to affordable quality child care is directly related to the issue, a comprehensive multi-year development plan for developmentally appropriate child care services be adopted by the provincial government, which includes plans to provide for pay equity for child care workers.

That independent monitoring of the implementation of voluntary process is required.

ISSUES (continued...)

Workplace Bullying

The Advisory Council hired a firm to conduct 5 focus groups in Fredericton, Saint John, Moncton and Tracadie-Sheila with targets of workplace bullying, to help develop viable solutions. Women responded in large numbers to newspaper ads inviting participants to these sessions. The Advisory Council considered the results of this research and adopted recommendations:

Government should amend legislation to recognize workplace bullying as a workplace health issue, provide protection and assure redress for victims, including advice to victims, complaint procedures, tough penalties for employers who tolerate it and follow-up to ensure the problem is rectified.

Government should ensure that enforcement and public education are supported by adequate human and material resources.

Government should assist employers to develop prevention policies and codes of conduct, and to provide information and support to victims.

As an employer, government should investigate extent of bullying in public sector and take measures to eliminate.

Government should launch social marketing campaign and provide 1-800 number, web site, etc.

The Advisory Council should conduct a public campaign to raise awareness of the need for action.

Child Care

The Advisory Council presented its concerns and recommendations on child care, especially child care in non urban areas, at various venues including a provincial conference on early childhood.

Access to Abortion

In spring 2006, when it became known that the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital in Fredericton would no longer provide abortions, the Advisory Council issued a media release to highlight that this decision put the focus on the provincial government's obligation under the Canada Health Act to make abortion accessible to women from all regions of the province without the current requirement of approval by two physicians and without the prohibition against general physicians performing abortions. The Advisory Council also reiterated its call for a comprehensive initiative on sexual health, with improved access to contraceptive information and resources including emergency contraception as well as public access to abortion services.

The Advisory Council worked with other pro-choice groups to organize various activities, including a meeting of physicians and pro-choice groups with the Health Minister and a public session in September 2006 in

Fredericton. At this public session, attended by about 100 educators, health professionals and community intervenors, the Advisory Council Chairperson spoke on the current situation in the province being one where women with means and social supports manage to get abortions, but other women are more likely to find motherhood forced upon them. The session served to discuss solutions to the abortion access problem and concluded on the need for court action to challenge the restrictions imposed by regulation.

In December 2006, the Advisory Council joined with physicians and other pro-choice groups to issue a media release about the fact that access to abortion had become critically limited, due to holidays and workloads of the two physicians who provide abortions, and calling on the provincial government to provide alternate arrangements. The Advisory Council called on the government to create access points for women who have no family doctor, who have an anti-choice doctor or who are faced with impossible waiting times for a hospital abortion.

In February 2007, the Advisory Council issued a media release to highlight the results of an independent poll by Omnifacts Bristol Research which showed that only 6% of the 450 New Brunswickers polled said women should never have the right to choose and the majority, 57%, think that abortion should be available in clinics to provide greater access to all women, including those who live outside of large urban centers.

Women's Groups and Advocacy

Following federal government decisions in the fall of 2006, projects and groups that advocate change on behalf of a vulnerable population no longer qualify for funding under the new Status of Women Canada mandate, which also no longer includes "equality" among its goals. The Advisory Council participated in the organization of a media conference for national and provincial women's groups in October 2006 in Saint John to denounce these changes, the reduction of Status of Women Canada's staff by half; and the abolition of the Court Challenges Program.

New Brunswick groups participated in the national campaign against the Harper government cuts in December. The Council helped organize a Rally in Moncton and the publication of a full page newspaper ad to raise awareness about the impact of the cuts on work to effect change.

In October 2006, the Advisory Council issued a media release saying that New Brunswick will be much affected by federal measures to restrain women and other equality-seeking groups and questioned why the government was trying to end activity, in the public arena and

ISSUES (continued...)

in the courts, to improve the status of women and minorities

In conjunction with three New Brunswick groups hard hit by recent changes to Status of Women Canada, the Advisory Council issued a media release in January 2007 following a meeting with Greg Thompson, Regional Minister for New Brunswick in the federal Cabinet, to deplore the new Status of Women Canada funding rules. New Brunswick groups advocating on issues like poverty, wage discrimination for traditional female work, violence prevention and access to quality child care will no longer be eligible for federal grants.

In March 2007, the Advisory Council issued a brief to the Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force, stating that the greatest "bone of contention" that the non-profit sector has with government is the perception that their

work is not recognized and they are not listened to. The Council recommended that the provincial government create a central public dialogue office and a civic engagement fund to support groups engaged in consultation activities, and adopt guidelines for meaningful consultations. The method of financing non-profit groups that governments have used over the past decade was also criticized: governments have largely moved to providing only project funding, so non-profits must "re-invent" themselves to get funding, which results in them drifting away from their mission. The lack of co-ordination among government departments on complex common issues, such as poverty was also mentioned and it called for the provincial government to develop funding guidelines for non-profit groups involved in advocating for change.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

INFORMATION SERVICE

The Advisory Council office regularly receives requests for information from hundreds of groups and individuals, mostly through a toll-free telephone line and email. For example, women dealing with situations in their family or workplace, or wishing to launch an initiative in their community, contact us for referral or information. Groups request advice or support, invite us to partner, or inform us of events for inclusion in our internet Events Calendar. Businesses or municipalities contact us for information relating to pay equity, workplace bullying or family policies.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NB Women's News / NouVELLES - This weekly email bulletin about women's issues is sent by request to over 2,600 New Brunswickers and is archived on the Council internet site.

2006 Report Card on the Status of Women in New Brunswick - Throughout 2006-07, this biannual report, published in March 2006, was distributed to groups, politicians and civil servants and presented at various meetings and conferences, including at a Research Day by the UNB Faculty of Nursing.

Internet Site - The Advisory Council internet site, www.acswcccf.nb.ca, provides all current Council documents. Individuals can also subscribe to the e-newsletter, submit their name to the Talent Bank, add their group to the list of women's groups from the site and check what equality-related events are occurring. Several thousand visitors use the site each month, with the most popular texts being recent columns, the Events

Calendar, the Report Card on the Status of Women and publications on sex, pregnancy and living common law.

Nancy's Award - The Advisory Council sponsors Nancy's Award to recognize student projects on New Brunswick women's history. Named in honour of Nancy Morton, a woman who challenged her enslavement to a York County Loyalist in 1800, is one of the awards to be won by middle-level students participating in regional Heritage Fairs, a project of the Heritage Branch of the Culture and Sport Secretariat, Historica and the Department of Education. To be considered, the project must deal with some aspect of New Brunswick women's history and highlights an aspect of women's lives, their individual or group accomplishments or their individual or group struggle for equality and must be based on historical research. This year, the Advisory Council drafted articles on history of women for use by organizers of Heritage Week 2007 and for promotion of our Nancy's Award.

Events - The Advisory Council organizes numerous public events around the province in both official languages. The information from these sessions is made available to others through our e-newsletter and internet site, and this year, a few presentations were recorded and the audio made available from our internet site.

The Advisory Council organized a public session in August 2006 in Bouctouche on the topic of the upcoming general forum of Acadian women, *États généraux des femmes en Acadie du N.-B.*, with Nora Saucier, president of the organizing committee.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS (continued...)

The Advisory Council and pro-choice professionals and groups, including the National Abortion Federation and the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, organized a public information session on access to abortion in September 2006 in Fredericton.

The Advisory Council and various groups collaborated to bring to Moncton a play by Québec's Théâtre Parminou, *Lost in traffic*, dealing with human trafficking. It was presented in both official languages before several hundred people.

The Advisory Council organized a public presentation on Women in Politics in November 2006 in Edmundston, with MLA and former minister Madeleine Dubé.

The Advisory Council collaborated with numerous women's and community groups and unions to organize a provincial Rally in Moncton in December 2006 to denounce the federal government's decision to prevent groups receiving federal funds from advocating for change to cut Status of Women Canada's staff by half, to remove "equality" from its mandate, and to abolish the Court Challenges Program.

We organized a one-day session on home support services in Fredericton in collaboration with the St. Thomas Univ.'s Third Age Centre.

The Advisory Council operated kiosks at a few fairs and conferences and gave presentations at several conferences, meetings and workshops.

Lunch & Learns - The Advisory Council organized these noon-time sessions in numerous locations, with about 800 persons attending:

Code Blue for Child Care! - Fredericton.

Year of the War Brides - Perth Andover, Dorchester and Bathurst.

Home Support Services - Moncton, Miramichi, Saint John, Bathurst and St-Stephen.

Secret Remedy For Trades Shortage: Girls, The Nova Scotia Experience - Fredericton.

Why Do So Few Women Breastfeed In N.B.? - Campbellton and Dalhousie

Models for Building Non-profit Child Care in N.B. - Fredericton

What Men Can Do To Reduce Violence, in collaboration with Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre on Family Violence and the Ombudsman - Fredericton.

RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS

The Advisory Council met with several Ministers to discuss issues of concern to women relevant to their department. The Advisory Council has advised officials within provincial government departments that it is available for consultation or partnership on issues of concern to women.

Several meetings related to the findings in the Advisory

Council's 2006 Report Card on the Status of Women in New Brunswick.

RELATIONS WITH WOMEN'S GROUPS

The Advisory Council collaborated in 2006-07 in numerous joint ventures with women's and equality seeking groups, including collaboration on publication and translation of resources and organization of events, such as the play, *Lost in Traffic*, dealing with human trafficking, the information session on access to abortion and several of the Lunch & Learn sessions. On several occasions in the past year, we joined with New Brunswick or national groups to issue joint media releases on issues of concern.

The Advisory Council brought groups together who were potentially affected by the federal government decision to disqualify projects and groups that advocate change from funding under the new Status of Women Canada mandate. A joint media conference, meeting with the Member of Parliament and a Rally were organized together.

In October 2006, the Advisory Council issued a media release saying that New Brunswick will be much affected by federal measures to restrain women and other equality-seeking groups and questioned why the government was trying to end activity, in the public arena and in the courts, to improve the status of women and minorities. On a few occasions, the Advisory Council brought groups and researchers together before launching initiatives, such as a study on domestic homicides and research on workplace bullying.

The Advisory Council internet site is offered as a clearinghouse for general news about New Brunswick women and women's groups. It includes documents from several other equality-seeking groups in the province.

The Advisory Council organized meetings of regional and provincial non-profit groups that do advocacy to alert them to the importance of the work of the Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force and to assist in having them participate in this consultation. In March 2007, the Advisory Council released its brief to that Task Force, stating that the greatest "bone of contention" of the non-profit sector with government is the perception that their work is not valued and their voice is not heard. The Advisory Council participated on the organizing committee for the États généraux of Acadian/francophone women held in September 2006 and on the follow-up committee that is organizing the foundation meeting of a new group provincial feminist group.

MEDIA

Several dozen media requests for interviews, background information and names of potential resource persons were received in 2006-07.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS (continued...)

The Chairperson published a weekly column in the Moncton Times & Transcript, and for part of 2006-07, also coordinated a bimonthly column in the French daily newspaper Acadie Nouvelle.

A print ad campaign aimed at youth was conducted to promote subscriptions to our e-newsletter and use of our internet site.

In October 2006, the Advisory Council issued a media release on the federal measures to restrain women and other equality-seeking groups from doing advocacy.

In August 2006, the Advisory Council joined with the Coalition for Pay Equity and the New Brunswick Child Care Coalition to denounce the fact that no leaders' debate on women's issues would be held before the September 18 provincial election, due to Premier Bernard Lord's unavailability. The invitation had been issued to hold a debate to find out what parties propose to improve the quality of child care, to bring pay equity to workers in the private sector and to increase the number of women in politics.

In December 2006, the Advisory Council issued a media release, in collaboration with physicians and other pro-choice groups, to denounce the lack of access to abortion, due to holidays and workloads of the two physicians who provide abortions, and to call on the provincial government to provide alternate arrangements, as required by federal legislation. In conjunction with three New Brunswick groups hard hit by recent changes

to Status of Women Canada, the Advisory Council issued a media release in January 2007 following a meeting with Greg Thompson, Regional Minister for New Brunswick in the federal Cabinet, to deplore the new Status of Women Canada funding rules, that exclude groups that do advocacy or lobbying and the removal of the words 'women's equality' from the program's mandate. In February 2007, the Advisory Council issued a media release to highlight the results of an independent poll by Omnifacts Bristol Research which showed that only few New Brunswickers say women should never have the right to choose an abortion.

In March 2007, the Advisory Council issued three media releases:

- to release two reminder lists for people who think women have reached equality and for those who think women have not made any gains.
- calling on the provincial government's Self-Sufficiency Task Force to include in its study the changes made necessary by women's massive participation in the paid labour force.
- on our brief to the Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

No complaint concerning the Advisory Council was filed with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2006-07.

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED IN 2006-2007

The following publications can be consulted at www.acswcccf.nb.ca or can be ordered from the Advisory Council:

Women's Groups in the Non-profit and Voluntary Sector - brief presented to the Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force, March 2007

2006 Report Card on the Status of Women in New Brunswick - a biennial publication that gathers available statistics on New Brunswick women and income, health, violence, education, paid and unpaid work, positions of influence and justice.

Reminder lists: For those who think women have reached equality and For those who think the status of women has not improved, March 2007.

Workplace Bullying - Position statement, March 2007.

Civil Legal Aid and Women - Brief, Spring 2007.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

March 31, 2007