

# WOMAN ABUSE AFFECTS OUR CHILDREN

The Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO) in an innovative partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Ontario Principals' Council and Springtide Resources has contributed to the development of an excellent workshop and resource, *Woman Abuse Affects Our Children*. CPCO also participated in the training of a group of principals as facilitators. The purpose of the training is to prepare them to lead their colleagues in a one-hour workshop designed specifically for principals to help raise their awareness and to assist them in identifying the signs of domestic violence and the impact it can have on student learning. A more in depth workshop is being delivered through OECTA to teachers.

Schools are a mirror of our communities and abuse against women is a reality that needs to be addressed. The goal of equal and healthy relationships connects with our initiatives for bully prevention and safe, healthy and caring schools. As Catholic school principals, we are well aware that schools are a reflection of the communities in which we live. We know that schools are often the only safe haven that some of our students experience. Educators can and do make a difference in the life of a child affected by violence. Our profound sense of social justice and the challenge to model responsible citizenship, calls us to respond with knowledge and resourcefulness to the injustice of abuse.

## Facts about Woman Abuse

- occurs in all age, racial, socioeconomic, educational, occupational and religious groups
- is caused by factors contributing to the dynamic of violence against women in society - inequality of women, gender stereotypes and attitudes condoning violence against women
- occurs within a current or past intimate relationship
- typically involves repetitive behaviour including different types of abuse - physical assault, psychological, emotional and economic abuse

## What Educators Can Do

- Promote the safety of students, parents and staff.
- Recognize and act on students' signals that they are experiencing difficulties.
- Use supportive strategies to assist students to cope in the classroom and on the playground.
- Teach a prevention curriculum that helps students understand violence against women is rooted in inequality and address gender stereotypes.

- Support and provide information to survivors about community resources.
- Understand that teachers can be the caring adults who make a difference in the life of a student experiencing violence at home.

*To book this free learning opportunity for your next principals' association meeting or to find out more about the resources available, please contact CPCO at 416-483-1556.*

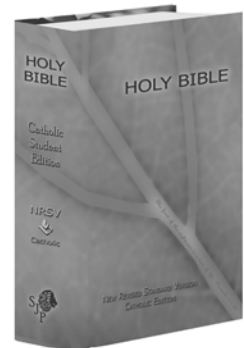
*Sessions will be available until January 1, 2009.*

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