

Carlyle Observer

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Headline: Envision supports Carlyle and area families with counselling needs

By Rustam Dow

The Envision Counselling and Support Centre was established in 1994 to support victims of sexual assault and abuse in-and-around Estevan and Weyburn. Since its establishment, the non-profit community-based organization has been expanded its services in order to better address the needs of these victims; one example is the Centre's 24-hour Abuse and Sexual assault line (1-800-214-7083), which is run by a group of 25 dedicated volunteers. In addition to maximizing the impact of existing services, the Centre has been expanding both in terms of scope and geography.

Most recently, the Centre has opened an office in Carlyle specifically to support families going through tough times. The Family Intervention Program "allows individuals and families to face the emotional pain of the crisis and move forward in healthy ways to cope with the stressful situation," in the words of Envision's Executive Director, Patt Lenover-Adams.

Lenover-Adams has recently been chosen to receive the prestigious Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. Commenting on this achievement, Lenover-Adams said "These services are so important to the people of Southeast Saskatchewan. It is hard at times to see how far and how many different lives we (Envision) have touched. This medal emphasizes just how important the work Envision does and the need to keep growing." Lenover-Adams will be attending the award recognition ceremony on Nov. 16.

Linda Coffey, a Family Intervention Program Counsellor with Envision's Carlyle office, described some of the ways in which families going through trying situations can benefit from the Family Intervention Program. Acting as a neutral party in a family crisis such as a marital breakdown or parent-child conflict, Family Intervention Program counselling provides: an impartial and immediate assessment of the conflict, practical solutions and depending on the situation, guidance for accessing additional services. For more details about the Family Intervention Program visit <http://www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com/fip.html>

Coffey and her colleague Alana Clow, another Family Intervention Program Counsellor with Envision, also discussed why the Family Intervention Program addresses some of the gaps in southeastern Saskatchewan's social services system. Up until now, families facing difficult situations have not had adequate access to immediate support and crisis counselling according to Coffey and Clow; law enforcement and prolonged social services contracts have been the main options.

Facilitating communication is an important part of being a Family Intervention Program Counsellor, according to Coffey and Clow. During their conversation with The Observer, they touched on some of the various tools at their disposal for enabling parties in a conflict to empathize with one another; often, it is not a matter of right or wrong, but envisioning different cognitive realities. A unique aspect of the Family Intervention Program is the way it sees crises as opportunities for learning and development.

Costs associated with the Family Intervention Program are covered by the Ministry of Social Services and can be accessed directly through self-referral. Envision's Carlyle office can be contacted at 453-2405 or caryle.envision@saktel.net.