

Envision Receives Grant to Enhance Parenting Support FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southeast, Saskatchewan – Envision Counselling and Support Centre has received a funding boost from the Canadian Women’s Foundation for a new program entitled Growing Together. The local agency was one of just two Saskatchewan organizations to receive a Violence Prevention Grant from the Canadian Women’s Foundation, and one of just 20 in the country.

“We are so thrilled to be recognized by the Canadian Women’s Foundation, as an organization that can provide this specialized program, and that can follow through with the requirements of the grant itself,” says Christa Daku, Executive Director of Envision Counselling and Support Centre.

The Growing Together program is for families that are enrolled in the Children Exposed to Violence program, where the parent is also involved with Envision Counselling in some way.

“When a child enters the Children Exposed to Violence programming, Envision Counselling will also involve the parents with the therapy, through mini-meetings, phone calls and email contact. The goal of Growing Together is to improve parenting skills of our clients by providing parents with tools and information to maximize effectiveness of the counselling sessions,” says Daku. “Parents will reinforce themes that were discussed during session to offer greater opportunity for healing of the children, and of the child/parent relationship, which is often in crisis when there is violence in the home,” she says.

There are four Envision Counselling offices in the Southeast, but just one Children Exposed to Violence counsellor. All clients coming into the Growing Together program will need to travel to the Estevan office, however, Daku says there are some funds to help with transportation if this is a barrier to accessing service.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the programs at Envision Counselling and Support Centre, find them on Facebook or visit www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com.

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For more information, or interview requests, please contact:

Christa Daku

Executive Director

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BACKGROUND: Children Exposed to Violence Program: Growing Together

Children do not experience violence in the home in isolation of their other family members, specifically their mother. It makes little sense, then, to provide counselling services only to the child, without participation of the remaining members of the family. Through this program, we can reach beyond a single child and impact the entire family: siblings, grandparents and step-parents.

So often in domestic abuse scenarios, mothers are solely consumed with the domestic violence relationship and parenting skills do not develop as they normally would. However, the Growing Together program provides tools, resources and support for the mothers, so the sessions are not an isolated counselling fix, with limited long term success.

Levendosky, Lynch, and Graham-Bermann (2000) suggest that there is a range of effects on parenting for mothers victimized by domestic violence, such as being constantly afraid for their children, feeling that they have no authority as a mother, or abusing drugs/alcohol as a way to cope with the violence. The authors found that many mothers experience reduced emotional energy or time to devote to their children and increased anger at their children. Children who have witnessed violence have been found to use and experience more violence in their relationships as adults, as it is a learned behaviour. With the goal to provide healthy skills, these children and mothers will be better equipped to behave and parent without violence in the home. By funding this program, the Canadian Women's Foundation will help to break the cycle of violence for these mothers and children, and offer the opportunity to enhance Envision programming to assist more families in crisis recovery and healthy skill development.

With only one counsellor serving 56,000 individuals, we do not have the capacity to provide services to all families in need of intense support. By funding the Growing Together program, the entire CEV programming will be enhanced, because Growing Together will offer a step-by-step guideline for the counselling process, the counsellor will be available to see a greater amount of clients on a yearly basis.

Envision supplies court-mandated family support programming for families in this corner of the province, which provides administration and infrastructure support to the organization, but also opens a window into many of the at-risk families in our region. These families often seek help through the CEV program and are able to become productive community members through Envision Counselling's programming. By enhancing the CEV programming to include parents, many of them identified through our Family Support Program, Envision is able to bring the two separate pillars closer together and offer individuals the opportunity to live in a happy, healthy environment.

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