

A graphic illustration of six black silhouettes of people of various ages and genders holding hands in a circle. The background is a warm, textured orange and red gradient. The silhouettes are positioned around a central area where the text is located.

Closing the Circle
An Innovative
Community-Government
Partnership

The Transition House Association of Nova Scotia and the NS Department of Justice



Transition House Association of NS

- Province-wide association for member organizations that provides transitional services for NS women experiencing violence and abuse
 - 1st shelter opened in 1978
 - 11 organizations with 13 locations to serve population of 1 million people
 - Training, advocacy, liaison with other equality-seeking organizations research and government departments,
 - 20 years of successful Feminist ally-based collaboration
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Department of Justice

- The Department of Justice is committed to the fair and effective administration of justice and to excellence in service to the people of Nova Scotia.
 - Justice is a shared responsibility of governments, communities and individuals. We believe we can best achieve our mission by entering into partnerships with citizens, organizations and other jurisdictions.
 - Related to Domestic Violence, the Department of Justice administers:
 - Victim Services
 - Domestic Violence Intervention Act
 - High Risk Case Coordination Protocol
 - Leading Partner
 - Deputy Minister's Inter-departmental Committee on Domestic Violence
 - Domestic Violence Prevention Committee
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The Context

- 1995: The Framework for Action Against Family Violence
 - 1996: The Family Violence Prevention Initiative (FVPI)
 - 1997-1998: Justice Outreach Pilot Projects
 - 1999: NS Government cancelled FVPI
 - 2000: Maxwell-George Murder/Suicide Review
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THE GAP

- Department of Justice working without input from THANS
 - Framework was in name only
 - Response to Maxwell -George recommended initiatives that were exclusive of THANS
 - Russell Report
 - Domestic Violence Intervention Act
 - Need for more adherence to the concept of “*entering into partnerships with citizens, organizations and other jurisdictions*”
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Elements of an Inclusive Domestic Violence Strategy

- Acknowledgement of Feminist Principles
 - “Power With,” instead of “Power Over”
 - Open transparent process
 - Resources for full participation by all parties
 - Access to all activities and materials
 - Participation, problem-solving and decision-making processes are in place and followed
 - Accountability
 - Relationships are built and maintained
 - Identified shared vision, common direction and priorities
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DECREASING THE GAP

- 2001: Review of the Framework: The Russell Report; Justice Learning Centre for ongoing training of Justice workers; Domestic Violence Intervention Act (implemented April 2003); Domestic Violence Case Coordinators
 - Domestic Violence Prevention Act
 - Domestic Violence Prevention Committee
 - Integrated Domestic Violence Strategy
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CLOSING THE GAP

- DVIA Evaluation
 - Family Violence Tracking Project
 - Safer Streets and Communities Task Force
 - Crime Prevention Strategy
 - Domestic Violence Educators Conference
 - Quarterly THANS-DoJ Meetings
 - Ongoing Direct Communication
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Working as Allies

- Follow-up evaluation and monitoring of policy activity
 - Relationships and joint agreements
 - Communication and network strategies
 - Educational sessions
 - Advocating for improved and ongoing participation
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RECOGNITION

- Doug Keefe, Deputy Minister of Justice 2002-2006
 - Ministers of Justice Michael Baker, Murray Scott, and Cecil Clarke
 - Marian Tyson, Deputy Minister of Justice 2006-present
 - Ken Winch, Valerie Pottie Bunge, Angela Poirier
 - Stephanie MacInnis Langley
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CLOSING THE CIRCLE

“...Feminism is ...about insisting that our women’s experience , our vision and values become incorporated into every institution, policy and practice that affects our communities, province and country.”

~ Joyce Hancock~