

for your information

Voices of Positive Women's newsletter

HIV+ women and the prison system

In Canada's federal prison system, the number of reported cases of HIV/AIDS rose from 14 in 1989 to 159 in 1996, and to 217 in 2000. These numbers are unlikely to be accurate since many inmates haven't disclosed their HIV status and many won't know if they are HIV+. The situation is much the same in provincial prisons. It is estimated that the rate of HIV infection is 10 times higher in prisons than it is in the general Canadian population.

Imprisoned women do not have the same access to clean drug syringes and needles, condoms, dental dams, tattoo needles and ink that women who are not incarcerated do. They also have poor access to education with a harm reduction component to it, as well as support, counselling, HIV testing and drug treatments. These factors alone add to a higher than normal HIV/AIDS infection rate compared to the general Canadian population.

Imprisoned women are at a greater disadvantage because society in general is not properly educated about how HIV is spread. The lack of education about HIV within the prison system hinders the ability of inmates to prevent HIV infection. This is a serious concern because punishment for a crime should not include an increased risk for HIV infection. Inmates already lose their rights to freedom and independence when incarcerated; they should not lose their right to maintain their physical and mental health.

As prison inmates have an increased HIV infection rate compared to the rest of the Canadian population, society fears that released HIV+ inmates pose a threat of infection to the general public. If inmates receive appropriate education, harm reduction materials, support, counselling, HIV testing and drug treatment, they pose less of a health risk to the rest of Canadian society once they are released. In addition, because imprisoned women have different experiences and risk factors than imprisoned men, they should have educational support, counselling and drug treatment personalized to their specific realities.

Last but not least, segregation must end. Many believe that isolating HIV+ women in prison prevents the spread of HIV. Unless HIV testing for all inmates is mandatory, segregation can cause a false sense of security among inmates and may even lead to an increase in transmission.

Agnes Kalinowski
Voices Student
Placement

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You are not alone: HIV and me

You are not alone is a support group that is dedicated to providing emotional support to women in prison who are affected by the HIV virus. I offer strong, emotional loving and caring confidential support through my letters. I firmly believe that it is important that inmates have someone that they can connect with on a personal level, to confide in, and to know that they are understood. And, to know that they are not alone. You are not alone is supported, funded solely by me and it is entirely confidential.

You are not alone. There is someone that cares. I know that it can be hard, I have been there. Here is my story.

Hi, my name is Mary Parisian. I am a 29 year-old Metis woman. I was 18 turning 19, confined in a little prison cell in a remand center. I was heavy into needles (drugs my only friend). There my life changed forever. While I was in the remand the girls would tell me Mary he's no good, yeah I know that. I thought they were just jealous. Until one day a friend told me I had better get tested. I did not think that I needed to, but I did it anyway. The days seemed to drag on and on. Until the day I was told that I tested positive for HIV, and Hep C. As hard as I try I would not die. My friends even my own brother turned on me because I have HIV. Jail was rough. And I was alone. HIV was a big thing back then—it was thought of as AIDS, and people were scared.

I am no longer alone. I have my friends that accept me for who I am. The way I see it, HIV is always going to be a part of me for the rest of my life. I am going to wake up with it, I am going to go to

bed without there will be no getting rid of it. It is like my best friend. To take care of myself. I need to take care of my best friend to ensure that I stay healthy. I have come to terms with living with HIV and accept it. We are now living a healthier and happier life together. We take care of each other!

It has been 10 years and I am doing great. I now run a support group that is for inmates that are faced with being HIV+. I started this support group while I was an inmate during my first federal sentence in 1996/1997. I am now expanding across Canada. I know that there are inmates out there that need to know that they are not alone. So when times get rough, do not give up. You are not alone, there is someone that cares.

This letter is the modified letter that was sent out for my support group.

This article has been edited from the original in the OKEMAH NEWS



Rebecca's story

My name is Rebecca Reid and I am 32 years old, serving my second federal sentence for armed robbery. I am now at Grand Valley and I am HIV positive.

I grew up in Chelmsford, Ontario. I have two siblings and I am the oldest. My mother struggled with an addiction all her life with Valium and alcohol. My brother was kicked out of the house at an early age and my sister was taken away after my mother overdosed. I met my father a few years later in Toronto and remember him kissing and hugging me because he was so happy to see me. This made me feel very uncomfortable because I was a victim of sexual abuse. That weekend I spent with him he came home drunk and that scared me so I left and never saw my father again. I sensed from my mother that she was trying to make me live with my father because her addiction was getting worse.

My mother and I moved to Brantford, Ontario. I started to run away from home until my mom put me in a foster home, but that didn't stop me from running away. A decision was made between my mom and the social worker that they would put me in a facility called Children's Physical Research; I was there for about six months and went from foster home to foster home. I got into a physical fight with my mother and was charged with assault. I was sent to Hamilton, and served a year in an open custody group home. I started to attend high school met peers who were involved in drugs and criminal activity. At 14 years old, I was using hash on a regular basis and witnessing people shoot up heroin in front of me; quickly I progressed into heroin and shot up regularly for several years. I tried to escape from the group home I was in, got caught, and then sent into Sprucedale Training School.

After my stay, I started to live on the streets and used cocaine and heroin regularly.

When I was 16, I started to turn tricks to support my lifestyle, and at the age of 17, I found out I was four months pregnant. I went to get an abortion but the doctor scared me out of and I left the office. I had my son Nathan on Dec. 7, 1988; he was addicted to cocaine and to this day is challenged because I used drugs when I was pregnant with him. I haven't seen my son since he was a baby. I continued my drug use and the lifestyle that goes along with it, stealing, turning tricks, unsafe sex. I don't think I could ever forgive myself for what I did to my son Nathan, this pain I will take to my grave. In total, I have three boys. My second son, Cody, was adopted by a family in Richmond, B.C. My youngest son is three years old and he resides with my aunt. I've never had my children with me or watched them grow because I was so addicted to drugs. It's so painful to lose your children to drug addiction.

In 1997, I was convicted of an armed robbery and served three years in the Edmonton Institution for Women. While I was incarcerated, I married a man in the Edmonton Men's Institution and got pregnant with Chance, my youngest son. I then took my stat release to Toronto to live with my mother. I was going back after not living at home since the age of 10; it was the only way the court would let me out. I tried to live with my mother, I honestly tried the best I could, but with all the pressure of the conditions of my parole, my relationship with my mother and Children's Aid breathing down my back, I used again and left my son with my aunt. While I was relapsing, I was raped by a man who held a knife to my neck and demanded sex. A few months later, while at a treatment centre in Guelph called StoneHedge, I found out I was HIV positive.

Now I was living with HIV and I also had Hep C which I contracted nine years ago.

I guess I am still in the stages of grief because

there are some days I can keep my head up and and I tell myself to be strong, but the reality of the feelings inside come through when the door shuts in my cell and I am left with myself to think, to cry and to tell myself I am a survivor of many things and I know I can survive this.

I hooked up with the AIDS Committee of Guelph and I was asked to sit on the Board of Directors and I am also on the Speakers Bureau in Guelph. I have spoken a couple times on harm reduction and my health status and my life story. I have built a very good support system since I was diagnosed and I have become much closer to my support worker, Tom. He is very inspirational and one day I want to be just like him. He gives me strength and hope to go on another day with my head up. He shows me that even in the darkest days when I'm all alone I can still see a glimmer of light in what I sometimes feel is a death sentence. My health has not been that great. I have been told I need to start medication for my Hep C and I need a liver biopsy. The doctor told me I have a 20 per cent chance that it will work.

I was in a relationship with someone who was on parole at the time and bit by bit I fell apart and went from occasionally using drugs to smoking crack every day. The weekend I started smoking again, I committed another armed robbery. As a result, I sit here serving 3 years in prison and I blame myself for my partner going back to jail because of my actions.

Today I sit here trying to put all this in perspective. I've had a couple hard times in prison. I slashed myself one night and ended up in the hospital with stitches in my arm and then I was put in segregation on suicide watch.

I am a firm believer in the saying that "things happen for a reason." The counselling that I have received while inside has brought me to a different phase in my recovery. I realized that I've been hurting that little girl inside me for so long who didn't heal from all the pain and I needed to hold her and embrace her and have her hold my hand to let her

know that the direction I'm going is the wrong one and lead her to the right one. It has finally sunk in that all the abuse and trauma I've had in my life, all the destruction, all the hate inside has to be dealt with before I can start to love myself. Everything in life is a process and with constant work I will be able to love myself and protect that little girl inside of me that didn't have anyone to protect her before.

I am here today to share my experience and pain, but most importantly my hope that even in the dark days, my angel guides me in the light and that it is my survival and my will to not give up inside no matter the turmoil I feel. Some days there's light at the end of the tunnel.

My dreams today are to be a support worker, working at an AIDS service organization in Toronto. I would like to help youth, share my life and experiences in hopes that they don't take the same long path I chose to take. I hope that who ever reads this will learn from my story and never give up on your hopes and dreams no matter how dark your world gets.

Sincerely
Rebecca Reid



What is the Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario?

The Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario (CEFSO) was established in 1952, initially meeting informally in the communities with member societies. CEFSO was formally registered as a non-profit corporation in 1985.

Council members consist of the nine Elizabeth Fry Societies in Ontario located in Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener (Region of Waterloo), Ottawa, Brampton (Peel and Halton), Peterborough, Toronto, Barrie (Simcoe County) and Sudbury. Each agency is represented at Council by the Executive Director and one member of their Board. Up to five individuals from the community at large also sit on Council.

The Council believes that there must be fair and equal treatment of women who are, who have been, or who may be, at risk of coming into conflict with the law, that the community has a responsibility to be active in the criminal justice system, and that the role of the voluntary sector is vital to the effective realization of these goals.

The Council monitors the conditions for both provincially and federally sentenced women in prison, through visits to jails and direct contact with prisoners, and advocates for improvements to those conditions. We are involved in several government task groups looking at issues involving the women with whom we work and the agencies we represent. Council also strongly promotes public education about women in the criminal justice system, giving talks at schools, universities and businesses.

Mission Statement

The Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario (CEFSO) is the regional voice in Ontario for women who are or have been in conflict with the law, or are at risk of conflict with the law. The Council promotes the following principles:

- There must be fair and equitable treatment of women who are or have been in conflict with the law, or are at risk of conflict with the law;

- The community has a responsibility to be active in the criminal justice system;
- The role of voluntary and non-governmental organizations is vital to the effective realization of this mission.

The purpose of the Council is to act on matters concerning women who are or have been in conflict with the law, or are at risk of conflict with the law, and to provide member agency support.

!!! New Program !!!

Social/Drop-In at Voices for Women who have been in Prison or Jail

Voices is partnering with PASAN (Prisoners AIDS Support Action Network) to start a social and drop-in program which will be held once per month, on the 3rd Wednesday from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Voices office. We want to be able to get together and talk, eat, and get information that is useful. Some of the things we might talk about at the drop in:

- how to get on ODSP
- replacing your ID
- HIV and Hep C coinfection
- getting housing
- getting health care
- harm reduction/safer drug use
- relationships and disclosure
- services in the community

If you want to come and would like more info, call Danielle at Voices at 416 324.8703 x 26 or Koshala at PASAN at 416 920.9567, or drop by the office on the 3rd Wednesday of each month between 2:3-4:30 pm.

The next program dates are:

- July 21
- August 18
- September 15
- October 20th

TTC tokens are available. Hope to see you there!

Women's Programming in Prisons: Unlocking Our Futures

In 2001, PASAN (Prisoners HIV/AIDS Support Action Network) started a national study to look at the needs and gaps in services for federally sentenced women on issues of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C (HCV) prevention, care, treatment and support. We visited nine of 11 prisons where federally sentenced women are held and we spoke to over 150 women.

The recommendations that came from the report, *Unlocking Our Futures: A National Study on Women, Prisons, HIV and Hepatitis C*, were not surprising to us but were necessary to outline for community-based HIV and HCV organizations, Health Canada and Correctional Services of Canada.

Although this report was widely circulated there has been little done to put the recommendations into action. This was the main concern of the women we spoke to. They suspected that they would give us this information and then nothing would be done about it. There has been no funding given to PASAN following the study, making it very difficult for us to continue advocating for the changes that the women recommended. Although PASAN continues to fight for the systemic issues presented in the report, including needle exchanges; a tattooing pilot project and increased access to bleach and safer sex materials, our work has not reached the level we would like it to.

On a more exciting level, however, what we have been able to do at Grand Valley Institution is to focus on the recommendations that the women identified for community-based organizations. PASAN has partnered with Voices to provide education and support to women affected by HIV/AIDS.

While the entire report is vital to women's programming in prison, I will take this opportunity to outline just a few of the recommendations that community-based organizations can put into practice while servicing women's prisons.

The following are only a few of the elements of good practice and the recommendations:

1. Written materials on HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C must be discreet. The content should not be disclosed on cover.
2. Provision of information on the risk of HCV/HIV transmission via crack and or cocaine use must be increased.
3. The scientific literature demonstrates that, especially with respect to HIV and AIDS, there is a lack of communication and trust amongst prisoners and prison officials. Therefore, correctional officers should not be present during HIV/HCV prevention programs.
4. Community-based HIV and HCV organizations must increase the provision of prevention education services to incarcerated women.
5. CSC and community-based organizations should develop and make accessible information on safer slashing/cutting and other forms of self-injury, as well as safer alternatives to self-injurious behaviour.
6. Maximizing confidentiality and privacy should be addressed as a central element in the design and implementation of both correctional and community-based programs.

7. CSC and community-based HIV/HCV organizations should provide accessible medical information to women prisoners living with HIV and/or HCV to increase their ability to participate in decision-making about their health care.
8. CSC and community-based HIV/HCV organizations should provide accessible information on pain management to women prisoners living with HIV/HCV to increase their ability to participate in decision-making about pain management options.
9. CSC and community-based HIV/HCV organizations should provide greater information on complementary and/or alternative therapies, particularly for those women living with HIV and/or HCV.
10. CSC and community-based HIV/HCV organizations should provide accessible information on diet and nutrition to women prisoners living with HIV and/or HCV to increase their ability to participate in decision-making about their diet.
11. CSC, Health Canada, public health departments/ community health centres, and community-based organizations should ensure that all support and counselling services are expanded to meet the identified needs of incarcerated women.
12. Community-based HIV/HCV organizations must ensure that they accept collect calls from prisoners.
13. Elders should seek to expand their knowledge on HIV and HCV in order to meet the needs of Aboriginal women living with HIV and/or HCV.

These are only a few of the recommendations and elements of good practice made in this report. I have chosen to outline ones that community-based organizations can focus their attention on. We all have a role to play in creating accessible services to women in prison.

It takes time to build relationships with people in prison and it is necessary in the prevention, treatment, care and support of prisoners living with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C. Listen to what the women are saying, even when it doesn't directly relate to health issues. Sometimes we need to focus our attention on what is presently happening with the women before they can talk about their health. Be consistent, honest and non-judgmental.

Try to work with prisoner run groups, for example: Lifers Group, Sisterhood, BIFA (Black Inmates and Friends Assembly). It is important for community-based organizations to be friendly to CSC staff but you do not have to be their partner in providing programs.

Should you have questions about providing programs to prisoners please do not hesitate to contact our office at:

489 College Street, Suite #500
Toronto, ON, M6G 1A5
Phone: 416 920.9567
email us at info@pasan.org
web address is www.pasan.org

In Strength and Solidarity,

Giselle Dias
Federal Community Development Coordinator

HIV and Hep C Continue to Rise in Canadian Prisons

Mon., Dec. 1, 2003 HIV continues rise in jail—Stony among worst

The number of federal inmates who have tested HIV-positive has steadily risen in the past decade according to a local AIDS expert. There were 22 inmates who were HIV-positive as of 2001, up from 24 a dozen years earlier, said Daryn Bond of Manitoba AIDS Co-operative. The numbers, taken from a 2001 study of infectious diseases, show that injection drug use among inmates continues to be a problem, said Bond.

NEEDLES PASSED AROUND

"We've heard stories where needles have been passed around 200 times from inmate to inmate," Bond said yesterday. "The infection rate within a men's prison for HIV and hepatitis C is 10 times that of the normal population, and it's 41 times the normal rate in women's prisons."

The problem is especially bad at Stony Mountain, which was ranked the second-worst prison in the country last year by the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network when it comes to the spread of HIV and hepatitis C behind bars, said Bond. "A judge refused to send a young offender to Stony Mountain not too long ago because of the high rate of hepatitis C and HIV within the prison population," said Bond. Manitoba AIDS Co-operative members will be at Stony Mountain Institution this afternoon to attend a candlelight vigil marking World AIDS Day. The group will also hold a press conference at the prison to lobby the federal government to introduce needle exchange programs and make anonymous HIV-testing available to inmates.

Prisoners currently are offered bleach kits, condoms, and methadone in an effort to stop the spread of disease behind bars. Those are good initiatives, said Bond, but more needs to be done. "We know bleach isn't foolproof when it comes to stopping the spread of HIV, and it's not effective at all in protecting against hepatitis C," he said.

Kevin Engstrom, Winnipeg Sun

*Reprinted courtesy of PASAN Cell Count newsletter
spring edition #33*

I had the great opportunity to go to the Grand Valley Provincial Correctional Institution for Women and talk to a group of inmates. I was nervous about the reactions I might get from the women, seeing that I may not have much in common with them. I had no prior experience being incarcerated, and I thought that they might just write me off as some goodie-goodie who has no idea how tough life can be. But instead I was welcomed with opened arms.

I spoke about my personal experience with HIV and offered to answer any questions they might have around HIV/AIDS. I also had the opportunity to sit and talk with an HIV positive woman who was in solitary. We shared encouraging words with each other and I offered to support her in any way I could to prepare her for when she leaves Grand Valley.

It was wonderful to see women communicate with each other in a supportive community they've formed for themselves. Watching these wonderful women play a game of volleyball, dance to the music they had playing, and for a split second, forget about all the chaos in their lives and smile and joke around with each other is something that I will remember for the rest of my life.

This was the greatest example to me of the power within women to survive, and the instinct that women have to build supportive communities. And no matter what harsh moments life throws at them, the light in their eyes still shines bright. It reminded me very much of how HIV positive women have done the same, with the same unity I witnessed while everyone held each other and sang Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive".

It's at these times I count myself blessed that I am able to witness this spirit of female empowerment!

Claudia Medina

Freedom Preparation Checklist

You get your pills from a nurse on a regular basis. You see a doctor and get your tests for viral load and CD4 counts when you're inside, you may even go to support groups regularly. But what is going to happen when you are free? Who do you see? Where do you go?

Voices of Positive Women has a list of HIV specialists who welcome new patients and are taking appointments in Ontario. Call us at 1 800 263.0961. We also have connections with other organizations like Elizabeth Fry Society and the People with AIDS Foundation that can help you apply for ODSP so you can get back on your feet! Your local AIDS Service Organizations should also have connections with organizations that can help you out. Getting prepared while you are behind bars can mentally prepare you for dealing with your HIV status once you are free.

Here are some things you can do to prepare for living with HIV on the outside:

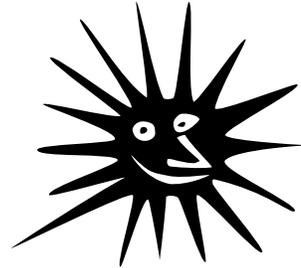
Get copies of the following:

- ✓ Birth Certificate, Social Insurance Card, Drivers License applications
- ✓ Ontario Disability Support Program assistance applications
- ✓ Contact your local Metro Housing or Co-op Housing Connections and ask them to send you an application
- ✓ Medical records, your latest T-cell counts, viral load, list of medication that you are on and opportunistic infections that you've had. These medical records should be sent to the doctor who will be seeing you on the outside.

Connect to services on the outside:

- ✓ Contact local and provincial HIV/AIDS service organizations
- ✓ Talk to community outreach workers that come into your institution—they may be great links!
- ✓ Ask about volunteering at local HIV/AIDS service agencies. This can be a great way to help you connect with your community

Claudia Medina



Women's Retreat

Coming Up: September 10-12

OK, ladies, that time of the year is here again... it's the annual Women's Healing Retreat! This weekend away is an amazing opportunity for new and old members to connect with each other, to talk with other HIV+ women about our lives and experiences, and to get outta the town or city we live in and relax!!! This year we will be returning to the Mansfield location about one hour outside of Toronto. We have a bunch of both fun and informative workshops planned for the weekend, and since we are just catching the end of the summer, the pool will be open. If you are not the swimming type, there are also lots of places to go on nice walks or just sit in the sun.

You will find a registration form (bright yellow) along with your FYI newsletter. Registration is on a first come first served basis, and there are only 40 spots, so please fill out your form and mail it ASAP to:

Voices of Positive Women
attention Danielle
66 Isabella St. #105
Toronto, ON M4Y 1N3

This year we are not sending out pre-addressed envelopes, but if this is a problem for you, you can call the office at 416 324.8703 or 1 800 263.0961 and fill out a form with staff over the phone or visit our web site and download the form, then email it to Danielle at dlaymanp@vopw.org

Dialogue Conference IV:

HIV+ Women and our Health Care Providers

Voices is working on planning a conference for early 2005 to address the health concerns of HIV+ women, and we want to know what YOU think! Since 1993, three conferences have been held in the Dialogue series. The Dialogue I one was held in 1993. Women met with each other and their doctors to discuss symptoms, treatment and social issues for women living with HIV. They identified gaps in research and treatment, and began to develop a plan to address common issues. Dialogue II was held in 1995, just before many antiretroviral therapies emerged, and mainly focused on what we now call alternative treatment options, such as supplements and naturopathy, as well as social issues for women with HIV. The most recent Dialogue conference was held in 1997 and again addressed a range of topics but focused on all of the new drug therapies that became available around 1996. But it has been a while since 1997 and a lot has changed in health care and treatment for HIV, so we are planning a fourth conference—Dialogue IV—to take place early next year.

The Dialogue IV conference will be broken into two related parts: one day will focus on discussion of health care issues between HIV+ women and health care providers, and the next day will be peer discussion among HIV+ women only. We aim to create a space for HIV+ women to get information that will help us meet our own health care needs, and also to give health care providers information that will help them to provide effective health care for us as HIV+ women. Through open dialogue and discussion, we hope this conference will be a place for participants to share knowledge and work together towards increasing access to effective health care for HIV+ women.

Once again, we want to know what YOU think! There are a few ways Voices members can get involved and have your say in how the conference should look. You can join the planning committee, or

volunteer during the conference. You can also fill out a survey to let us know what kind of things you want to talk about with other HIV+ women and health care providers. To find out more, call Danielle at Voices, extension # 26 or email: dlaymanp@vopw.org

Voices Intern: profile

Ronnie Cano is an intern from Arizona, where she is a Health Educator/Outreach Specialist for the Southern Arizona AIDS foundation. Ronnie provides outreach and education to at-risk youth in the Latin and African American communities in Tucson. She works primarily with adolescents between the ages of 12-15 yrs.

Ronnie will be touching base with you on a regular basis about our upcoming nursing clinics. She looks forward to speaking to you all and is assisting Claudia in doing outreach for the clinic.

Her long-term interest is providing advocacy for women's issues, in particular women living with HIV. She hopes to complete her graduate studies here at the University of Toronto with a Masters in Social Work with a Women's Studies component.

Memorial

Voices would like to hold a memorial for our members who have passed away this year. We feel it's important that members have the opportunity to share stories and be open about their status at this memorial. We would like to hold it before the retreat for those women who are not able to attend this year. Keep posted for the date, time and place of event in our next newsletter.

If you would like to help organize the memorial, please contact Claudia at Voices extension # 25.



Voices of Positive Women needs a Better Space...We need your feedback

As many of you know, Voices operates a small office in downtown Toronto. While Voices has well utilized the space at 66 Isabella St, it has become an issue for discussion.

Our membership has grown by leaps and bounds. In May, alone, we gained 19 new members, bringing our membership total to approximately 650. Many of these new members are from Toronto. As well, we must begin to build our staff capacity to meet the provincial challenges that we face...that takes more resources, more space and more people. Voices of Positive Women must maintain our grass roots integrity in our service to each other and those yet to come.

The Board of Directors has decided to find larger space that would be shared with like-minded agencies that are serving similar members and clients but maintain their own unique way of doing so. The agencies invited to research these possibilities; along with the board and ED of Voices are ACHES (African Community Health Services), APAA (Africans in Partnership Against AIDS) and BlackCAP (Black Coalition of AIDS Prevention).

Each of these agencies reflects both the dignity and diversity that must remain paramount in the work we all do.

THIS IS NOT A MERGER!

It is merely an agreement to cooperate and share resources. We will all have our own unique space to serve our members and would maintain our own individual agency feel.

We would share rent, utilities, photocopiers, other office items, meeting rooms etc...The important thing is that it would give us more space in a way that all of our budgets can accommodate. As members of Voices, the Executive Director and Members of the Board would like to invite your comments, suggestions, concerns or questions regarding this matter.

Below are some questions that will help us when looking and planning the space we will eventually be in:

- 1) When planning the Voices office space what things would you like that would make this space comfortable?
- 2) When planning the common spaces that all agencies share, would what would make this space a comfortable space to be in.?
- 3) Pleas include other comments, concerns or questions.

You can respond by mail or call Janet Rowe, ED at
416 324-8703/1 800263.0961 or

Email: jrowe@vopw.org or emails directed to the Board can be sent to: voices@vopw.org

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing your suggestions or concerns!

Upcoming events at Voices:

Tele-link:

- July 19th — HIV & Travel Can you visit other countries when you are HIV positive?
- August 16th — Opportunistic infections particular to HIV positive women.
- September 20th — Not on meds? What's your secret? Talk about complimentary/alternative therapies that work for you.
- October 18th — HIV and Pregnancy

Health Voices:

(nursing clinic for HIV positive women)
Wednesday July 28th, 2004 - 2:30 to 4:30p.m.

Come to a free information session with Daniel Adler, Zen Shiatsu Therapist at the Kokoro Do Jo Zen Shiatsu and Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic.

Trans-women welcome. Tokens, beverages and snacks are provided at each clinic, children are welcome!
Needle exchange and kit distribution.

Women's Support Group:

Thursday July 29th and August 26th from 6 to 8 p.m.
Come meet other women living with HIV/AIDS in a confidential environment. Share your thoughts/ideas and experience about living with HIV.

Tokens, food, beverages, and child care are provided at each support Group.

Call Kaddu for more details.

Resources

Elizabeth Fry Society in Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener & Waterloo, Ottawa, Brampton/Peel and Halton region, Peterborough, Toronto, Barrie and Simcoe County and Sudbury.

T: 416 924.3708

F: 416 924.3367

info@efrytoronto.org

215 Wellesley St. East, Toronto, Ontario, M4X 1G1 (Toronto East — Parliament St. & Wellesley St. E.)

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30

* after hours telephone answered Mon-Sun 24 hours

Toronto People with AIDS Foundation

T: 416 506.1400

399 Church St. 2nd Flr

www.pwatoronto.org

rburbyko@pwatoronto.org

Voices of Positive Women

T: 416 324.8703

T: 1 800 263-0961

66 Isabella St # 105

Isabella & Church

www.vopw.org

cmedina@vopw.org

Homeward

T: 416 462.3334

F: 416 462.3383 or 416 462.1727

deseree@hward.ca

www.hward.ca

125 Danforth Ave, Toronto, Ontario, M4K 1N2

(Toronto East — Broadview Ave & Danforth Ave))

PASAN

T: 416 920.9567

489 College Street Suite #500

www.pasan.org

info@pasan.org

Women's Prisons in Ontario

Federal Prison

Grand Valley 613 545.8210

Provincial Prisons

Kenora Jail 807 468.2871

Central East Correctional Centre 705 328.6000

Vanier Centre for Women 905 876.8300

North Bay Jail 705 472.8115

Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre 519 376.0435

Central North Correctional Centre 705 549.9470

Sarnia Jail 519 337.3261

Thunder Bay Jail 807 345.7364

Owen Sound Jail 519 376.0435



Voices of Positive Women

66 Isabella St., Suite 105

Toronto, ON M4Y 1N3

T 416 324.8703

F 416 324.9701

www.vopw.org

Voices of Positive Women

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for your information

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Layout and Illustration: Beverly Deutsch

Editor: Kerry LeClair