

Barbara McInnes
President and CEO
Community Foundation of Ottawa

October 10, 2008

Dear Ms. McInnes,

The Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) would like to extend a thank you to the Community Foundation of Ottawa for including violence against women in your publication of *Ottawa's Vital Signs 2008: The City's Annual Checkup*.

OCTEVAW is a coalition of agencies and individuals working together to end violence against women in our community. We are comprised of area women's shelters, sexual assault agencies, community and counselling agencies working with women and children, university researchers, victim services, the police and other concerned community members.

Prioritized under your 'Safety' section was a paragraph highlighting the heartbreaking reality that many women and children are turned away from Ottawa women's shelters because of a lack of beds. This situation, although known to us in the sector, came as a complete shock to many in the community, including the media who featured stories on the lack of resources. Publicizing this type of information is important to educate the community and to raise the attention of provincial policy makers.

OCTEVAW has just received project funding from the Ministry of Community and Social Services to collect and compile violence against women statistics in the Ottawa area. We hope to find out similar information about the state of woman abuse in our community and to bring together data that already exists within different sectors, such as women's shelters, hospitals and the police. Our hope is that once our report is complete, it will be a useful tool to highlight the scope of violence against women in Canada's capital city.

Once again, thank you for your inclusion of violence against women data. If you are interested in finding out more about OCTEVAW and our mandate, please feel free to visit our website at www.octevaw-cocvff.ca or contact our office at any time. It would be great to connect with you.

Sincerely,

Erin Williams,
Executive Director, OCTEVAW