



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2007 Police Activity Report Missing Extent of Violence Against Women

The Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW) was disappointed that the 2007 Activity Report issued by the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) on March 31, 2008 did not highlight, in text and in the display of statistics, the extent of domestic violence and sexual assault in our city. This was despite the fact that in 2007, a total of 1239 partner and sexual assaults were investigated by police and warranted charges being laid. Over 80% of those cases involved a male perpetrator (OPS Stats, 2007).

For the past twenty years, the Justice Committee of OCTEVAW has made good progress in addressing and calling attention to the severity of the problem by bringing together the police, the court system and women's agencies. Currently representatives from the Partner Assault Unit, the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Unit and the Victim Crisis Unit sit around the table.

OPS Chief Vern White noted: "While the 2007 Activity Report does not highlight the specific data related to the issue of violence against women, our police officers fully recognize the seriousness of these crimes. Our commitment to working with the community and key community partners is unwavering." The Activity Report typically provides an at a glance view of violent crimes. Chief White added that next year's Activity Report will have a feature on the issue of violence against women.

Joan Gullen, the founder of the coalition, states: "This year's report is a missed opportunity to educate and sensitize the public about the extent of the woman abuse problem in our city. We welcome Chief White's support and recognition of the seriousness of violence against women."

For more information about the 2007 Police Activity Report, contact OPS Corporate Planning at 613-236-1222, ext.5456 or visit the website at ottawapolice.ca.

For more information about OCTEVAW and local initiatives to highlight May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month, contact Erin Williams, Executive Director of OCTEVAW at 613-725-3601 ext.105. Join us on Saturday, May 24th from 11-5pm in Minto Park for the annual Clothesline Project celebrating the voices of women and children survivors of violence.

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