

# West Central Women's Resource Centre

## 2009 Annual Report



~Empowering women, families and the community~

## Message from the Chair

---

This has once again been a year of great growth and excitement for the West Central Women's Resource Center (WCWRC) and it has been another proud year for me to be a part of the Board of Directors for the organization.



Our successful programs continue to serve women by tackling issues like child care, housing, safety, and gang violence while providing training, work and volunteer opportunities as well as a safe place to hang out. Along with other community organizations, we now support a new Neighbourhood Settlement Program, which supports new immigrants in our community. There are more details about the many programs offered at the WCWRC in the pages of this annual report.

The WCWRC continues to work with the women of our community to provide a voice on issues of concern. This year the centre has continued to be vocal about women's right to adequate, safe housing, working to raise the provincial income assistance levels, and providing training and work experience for child minders.

The WCWRC continues as well to work in partnership with the many excellent community services in the west central area. Working in collaboration with organizations is an important part of our centre's philosophy and we recognize that it is through cooperation and collaboration that real changes for women will occur.

The biggest and most exciting news for our organization is that we have purchased a new building on Ellice, which will be the women's centre's new home. This new building will allow us to have accessible, street access, more space for our existing programs, and increase the potential for new needed programs and services. We are currently in the middle of renovations and we look forward to moving in to our new location by August of this year. We are excited about our future potential growth as an organization because this means that we will be better able to provide services to women in our community.

Thank you to all of the staff, volunteers, board members and community members who are a part of this organization. Your commitment, energy and enthusiasm are what make this place so great.

Heidi Wurmman,  
Board Chair

## Message from the Executive Director

---

I'm thrilled to say that 2009 has come and gone, leaving behind a larger, stronger WCWRC. Community survey results show that WCWRC continues to be a welcoming place of safety, friendliness and support to our community. We can be incredibly proud of this. In addition to the numerous benefits of our programming, we are doing our part to break down the isolation that many in our community face.

This past year also marked an amazing accomplishment: we bought a building! Our relocation process has consumed much of our time in 2009 but not without great gains. WCWRC launched a successful capital campaign (thank you Nan Colledge), which included the very fun *Walk for West Central Women*,

and we raised enough funds to purchase 640 Ellice Ave. Everyone is looking forward to our move in 2010.

I'm continuously amazed by the incredible women who give their time to WCWRC and make the Centre what it is. The women who make up the staff, volunteers and Board have proven to be strong, dedicated people, committed to good change. It's been my pleasure to work with each of them over 2009.

In Solidarity,  
Jackie Hogue  
Executive Director

## Program Reports

### Childminding Program Report

---

It has been a busy year with a lot of growth and expansion in child minding services. The Childminding Program has been very successful throughout its third year in operation. Over the year I have been active in the recruitment of participants, developing and enhancing the training, promoting the program, seeking funding, keeping statistics, scheduling work and follow-up, and evaluating and networking with Childminders.

Throughout 2009 I developed contacts and built relationships with hiring organizations. By the end of 2009, over 41 hiring agencies hired childminders from our program, allowing agencies to provide more and better services to families. Many hiring agencies continued to use our service from past years while there were also new hiring agency brought on board, such as L'entre temps and Post Secondary Education Community Outreach Program. One agency representative found our program "fantastic and very accommodating".



Highlights of 2009 include:

- 3 Childminding Trainings held, training 44 new childminders (February, May and September).
- Childminder hours increased from 2185 hours in 2008 to **3018** hours in 2009.
- Childminders increased their income from \$19,665.00 in 2008 to **\$27,161.50** in 2009.
- Over \$2, 716.00 in administration fees were generated for the child minding program
- 120 childminders trained in the last 3 years, 22 (18%) have found more permanent jobs and 28 (23%) have returned to school or further training. 60 childminders (50%) are still active childminders.
- Great workshops were held including Setting Limits on Bullies, Sock Monsters with Art City, Brain Gym for increased attention, Storytelling with Joe McLellan, Nature Games, Aboriginal Headstart and Using Art with Children.
- Parents are able to attend more activities in the neighbourhood because of child minding services. One parent said "because of this program I can get the training I'm really interested in."

Childminders are gaining support, income and job skills through the program and many agencies appreciate the special service we provide. One childminder said, "I'm finally able to live my dream of working with children." Childminders are also getting very involved in other aspects of the centre such as

advocacy, HOMES training, volunteering in the centre and getting to know more about services we offer. We are excited to see so much learning and growth between staff, women at our centre, childminders, children and community agencies.

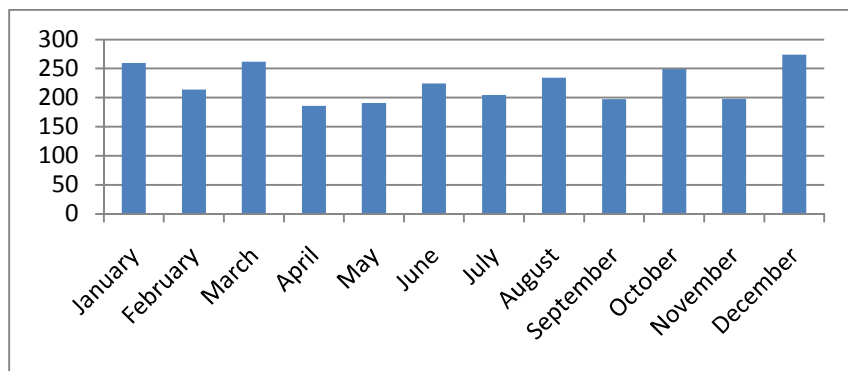
Respectfully Submitted,  
Fiona Muldrew  
Childminding Coordinator

## Community Cupboard Report

---

The Community Cupboard, after a fruitful 7 years of operation, closed its doors on December 23, 2009. Through a fall 2009 community consultation, it was determined that the Community Cupboard was no longer meeting the needs of the women at WCWRC or its intended goal in the community. A party was held during the Cupboard's final day to celebrate 7 wonderful years of service and to thank the volunteers and Ma Mawi for making the cupboard what it was.

In 2009 the total sales in the Community Cupboard were \$2,693.67. Please see the below chart for a breakdown of monthly sales. The profits, as always, went back into the functioning of the Community Cupboard. As of December 2009 there were a total of 1653 members of the Community Cupboard.



A huge thank you goes to Ruth and Ralph Erb, who dedicated countless hours to operating the Community Cupboard, and were there since the very beginning. Your time and loyalty is much appreciated! Thank you also to Ma Mawi for partnering with us over the years by providing vouchers to make the Community Cupboard accessible to all community members.

Submitted by  
Jess Klassen  
Community Support Coordinator

## Drop-In Program Report

---

As the Drop-in coordinator for over two years now, I, Nana-gale Fagnan, would say the centre has done so much for the women and people in the community. We have created a safe, healthy environment for all. We know that the ladies who come to the centre say they feel safe and comfortable in the drop-in because of staff support and our code of conduct based on Respect. We work hard to show respect and be respected.

People used the drop in as a safe place to be or as a place to wait for programs, the clothing room or to speak to staff. There's always pleasant conversation, sometimes with light music, to go with your coffee, juice or snack. We also make things fun with weekly draws and occasional song and dance!

Resource referral and listening are a large part of the work of the Drop-In Coordinator. A lot of time women come into the drop-in wanting to share their personal stories with the Drop-In Coordinator. Trained volunteers provide much needed relief at those times, allowing the Drop-In Coordinator to provide support. It gives me great satisfaction to know I can help ladies, even if it's just listening and being able to hand out the right resources of them.



I've seen many positive changes in the women who come through the Centre, we' doing empowering things. I've provided over 5,000 referrals throughout 2009. Some examples of the resources include: Oytate Tipi Cumini Yape, Laurel Centre, Addictions Foundation, Victim Services, and House of Opportunities

Our programs are great. The staff are caring and the ladies are awesome. Buy coming together we're enriching each other's lives more then we could ever image.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nana-gale Fagnan  
Drop-In Coordinator

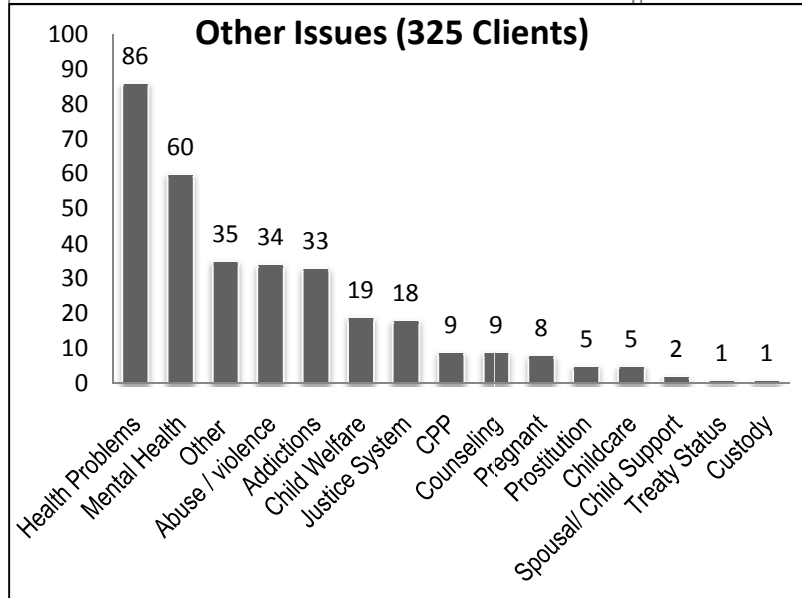
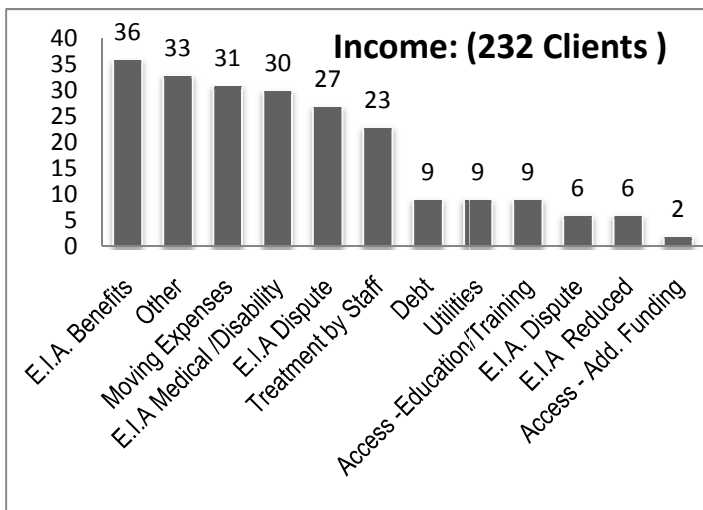
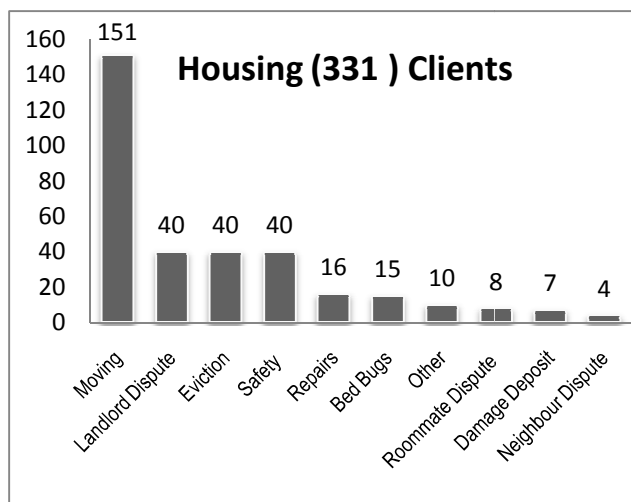
## HOMES Program Report

---

The HOMES Program completed our second full year in December of 2009. We continue to work in three areas; 1) one-to-one support on housing and income issues; 2) the Women's Empowerment Groups and monthly Community Workshops and 3) affecting systemic and policy change by working in network with other agencies.

In 2009 HOMES worked with 123 new participants, who, along with returning participants totaled over 220 women throughout the year. Mentors assisted women through coaching, information sharing, faxing, phone calls, resource referral and attending meetings or hearings. Some of the most prominent housing issues include disputes with landlords, moving, safety, and eviction. Some of the most common economic security issues include being cut off of EIA, moving expenses, and accessing EIA medical and disability. At least half of the participants we work with identify physical and mental health as serious issues (see HOMES Program Stats below).

## HOMES Program Stats



Two 10-week Women's Empowerment Groups were held with a total of 115 participants. We worked on conflict resolution, building healthy relationships, and self esteem. Social Work students, Samantha Tracey and Arlene Thiessen have co-facilitated this group.

Through the year there were 8 *community workshops* with a total of 103 participants. The most popular workshops were: Residential School Adult Survivor Claims, Self Esteem, Women and Addiction Treatment Options, and the Portable Housing Benefits. A total of 22 participants attended the Volunteer Mentor training workshops held in both June and October. Two of the current Volunteer Mentors were hired following the latter training.

HOMES is part of the Winnipeg Rental Network which launched a interactive website in 2009 to aid both tenants and landlords in finding housing suitable to them. We're also members of the Advocacy Network, and through the network filed a systemic complaint to the Manitoba Ombudsman's office

regarding the administrative policies and regulations of the Manitoba EIA. This complaint has resulted in a full-scale investigation by the Ombudsmen's office. The results of the investigation will be made public in 2010.

The HOMES program was coordinated by Marianne Cerilli (January to August), Chris Tetlock (interim September to October) and Jen Porter (November to December). Deidra Murdoch was the Assistant Community Mentor from April to December. Volunteer Peer Mentors for 2009 include Caroline Woolston, Rachel Thomas, Samantha Tracey, Lynne Somerville, Katherine McGregor, Louise Petron, and Phyllis Anderson. Emeline Stevenson is the current Homes Volunteer and Women's Group chef. Many thanks to all of you who have helped to create this supportive and informative environment! The HOMES program would like to make special mention of Volunteer Mentor Rachel Thomas who we lost to illness in 2009. Rachel was a bright, dedicated person and she is missed.

Respectfully Yours,  
Jen Porter  
Interim HOMES Community Mentor

## Relocation Report

---

Back in 2006 the WCWRC recognized it would eventually outgrow its rented location at 583 Ellice. At the same time we were longing for natural light (windows!) and increased visibility and accessibility. During 2007 and 2008 work was done to investigate possible new sites for the Centre however increased resourced and time were dedicated to this work in January 2009, in part with appointment of Prospex Consulting. Throughout 2009, the hard work of WCWRC staff, Relocation Committee of the Board and Capital Campaign Committee has seen amazing results.

In June 2009 we launch our Relocation Capital Campaign with the first annual 'Walk for West Central Women'. Over 50 'walkers' gathered with pledges and took to the streets shaking noisemakers, calling for windows, and raising over \$6,000. Meanwhile the Relocation Committee, with the initial direction of consultant Nana Colledge, embarked on a remarkable fundraising campaign, securing over \$650,000 in 6 months.



By the fall of 2009 WCWRC was in the position to purchase 640 Ellice Ave, a 5,400 square foot store front building on Ellice, just a 2 blocks away from our current site. On November 24, 2009 we held a press conference and office key handover, attended by over 60 people, including many community women, partners and funders of WCWRC and government representatives. It was a joyful and exciting day.

We spent December of 2009 planning for the work that lie ahead in designing, renovating and eventually moving into 640 Ellice. In that time we hired architect Gerry Korzenowski and held community consultations to get input on the eventual floor plan of the new site.

The women of WCWRC are ready and waiting to move!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jackie Hogue  
Executive Director

## RESPECT Program Report

---

Continuing to build on the successes of past programming, the West Central Women's Resource Center has operated the RESPECT Program throughout 2009. RESPECT supports individual, family and community safety with a focus on parenting and support for gang involved families. Kathy Downs was the RESPECT Program Coordinator during 2009.

One of the activities of RESPECT was the Peace Begins at Home sharing circles. This parenting program model is offered to mothers and female caregivers on a weekly basis to support those caring for at gang involved at risk youth. Some of the topics the circles addressed were: safety, isolation, advocacy and communication. In 2009, 36 sharing circles were held. Over 15 women shared their lives and honored the community of sharing within the peace circles every week. During circle evaluations some of the comments the participants told us that; "the circle offered strength from each other", "a safe space, "a sense of caring and belonging". We've successfully created a space for the women to share their stories in a trusting atmosphere.



Through RESPECT we were pleased to continue to offer the adolescent girl's group "Liking Me" through 2009. The girls group addressed: safety/bullying, esteem, communication and coping strategies. In 2009, 36 sessions were held. Approximately six adolescent girls came weekly to the group to share, laugh, bond and learn.

As well, throughout 2009 RESPECT offered monthly safety workshops to the community. Topics ranged from community safety, for example *Protection Orders through Victim Services- Manitoba Justice to personal safety, for example a "Healthy Relationships" discussion*. The workshops were well received in 2009 with 10 to 20 participants at each workshop.

Finally one-on-one support was provided to women through RESPECT on a regular basis. Over the year, an average of 500 women came in through the RESPECT program for individual advocacy and support. Some of the community resources the women were referred to from the RESPECT program in 2009 was: Osborne House, Victim Services and Legal Aid.

Helping women and families has successfully met the overall objectives of the RESPECT program in 2009 with their safety and parenting concerns. Thank you to both Freda Whiteway and Karen Pahpasay, both committed co-facilitators for RESPECT. The program supports and honors the strength of the West End neighborhood families.

Respectfully Submitted  
Kathy Downs,  
RESPECT Coordinator



## Sewing Program Report

---

The Sewing Program continues to grow and attract new women to WCWRC. It is a great opportunity for women to gather together for conversation, skill building, and fun! In 2009, an average of 16 women (with their children) attended the Sewing Program each session. A large percentage of these participants are newcomers to Canada, as one of the goals of the program is to welcome newcomers into the Centre.

In 2009, the Sewing Program partnered with the Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker to increase the sewing workshops from twice monthly to weekly. Women appreciate having more opportunities to get together and sew practical items for themselves and their family. Over the year projects have included: bag holders, slippers, laundry bags, table cloths, cushions, tea towels, cloth bags, tea cozies, mittens, and much more!

The Sewing Program could not happen without our wonderful volunteers Simone Bisseck, Sandra MacKinnon, and Shelly Burnell. Thank you for your commitment and expertise!

Submitted by  
Jess Klassen  
Community Support Coordinator

## Volunteer Program Report

---

The volunteer program at WCWRC continues to provide opportunities for community women to develop skills, gain a sense of ownership, make friends, be involved, gain confidence, and share their knowledge. It is a rewarding process to see women's journey's as volunteers. A woman who is initially shy to come to the Centre may eventually move into a volunteer position of greeting new faces and making women feel welcome. A woman who was involved with the justice system may, through her volunteer work, experience warmth and a feeling of belonging for the first time.



In 2009 volunteers contributed approximately 4,343 hours to WCWRC. This high number does not include the many hours that volunteer board members put in, which total over 800 hours in 2009! Approximately 80 women volunteered their time in 2009, with 30 of these women being regular volunteers.

It is not an overstatement to say that WCWRC could not run without our volunteers. They help in so many capacities that help the Centre to continue to run smoothly. They prepare food, sit on the board, answer phones, advocate and mentor women around housing and income issues, clean the Centre, sit on committees, make coffee, coordinate the Clothing Room, do administrative work, prepare the newsletter, assist with our relocation, plan workshops, go to Winnipeg Harvest, run the Sewing Circle, do outreach, and much more!

WCWRC also offers practicum placements to students. In 2009, we hosted students from Opportunities for Employment, Red River College's CD/CED Program, and University of Manitoba's Faculty of Social Work.

To thank women for their generous contributions to the Centre, monthly volunteer events are held to provide skill building or community building. Some skill building events held in 2009 were reception training, conflict resolution training, and Food Handling certification training. Some celebration events that were held were a beach day, strawberry picking, massages, and a trip to a Goldeyes baseball game. Celebrations for the Centre were also planned, such as a Halloween party and a Winter Holiday Volunteer Appreciation event.

We sincerely thank all of the women who freely give their time to WCWRC. Your donations of your time and skills are humbling and very much appreciated. Thank you!!



Respectfully submitted by  
Jess Klassen  
Community Support Coordinator

## Our Partners and Friends

---

We were grateful for the opportunity to work with many partners and friends during 2009. Partners and Friends are those we work together with on events, programs or activities.

Abinotci-Ayawin	Rosebrook House
Aboriginal Headstart Program	Sage House
Addictions Foundation of Manitoba	Skills Bank
Amnesty International	Snowbird Lodge
ANCRR	Social Planning Council
Art City	Spence Neighbourhood Association
Big Brothers Big Sisters	St. Mathew's Maryland Community
Canadian Diabetes Association	Take Back the Night
Canadian Mental Health Assoc. Winnipeg	Thomas Sill Foundation
CEDNET	Tomboy Tools
CEDTAS	UMFM
Child Guidance Clinic	University of Winnipeg
City of Winnipeg (MERC)	Urban Studies U of W
CKUW	Victim Services
Community Financial Counseling	Welcome Place
Community Legal Education Association	WENDO
Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthew's Community Assoc.	West Central Neighbourhood Immigrant SEED
Elizabeth Fry	Settlement Worker
Faculty of Social Work, UofM	West End Biz
Food Fare	West End Cultural Centre
Healthy Child	Winnipeg Harvest
Ikwe	Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Income Advocacy Network	Winnipeg School Division
Independent Living Resource Centre	Wolseley Family Ministry
John M King School	
Klinik Community Health	
Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata	
Make Poverty History	
Manitoba Family Services and Housing	
Mary Jane's Cooking School	
Mediation Services	
Mother of Red Nation	
North End Women's Centre	
Opportunities for Employment	
Osborne House	
Pregnancy and Family Support Services	
Pritchard House	
Pro Bono Law Students RAY (Resource Assistance for Youth)	
Red River Community College	
Rental Housing Registry Advisory Group	
Right to Housing Coalition	

## **Our Supporters**

---

We would not be able to do the work that we do without partnering with our funders and supporters. We thank them for all of their support!

### **Programming and Operations**

Assiniboine Credit Union  
Daniel MacIntyre/St. Mathew's  
Community Association  
Employment Manitoba  
Healthy Child Manitoba  
Individual Donors  
Jewish Foundation  
LITE  
Manitoba Community Services Council  
Manitoba Labour and Immigration  
National Crime Prevention

Neighbourhoods Alive!  
Price Waterhouse Coopers  
River East MB Church  
Spence Neighbourhood Association  
Status of Women Canada  
United Way  
Winnipeg Child & Family Services Central  
Area Council  
Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness

### **In-Kind Support**

Prairie Oven Bakery  
Winnipeg Harvest

### **Relocation Project**

Assiniboine Credit Union  
City of Winnipeg  
Great West Life  
Individual Donors  
John and Maria Salgueiro  
Lulu Lemon  
Manitoba Labour and Immigration  
Neighbourhoods Alive!  
Pledgers in the Walk for West Central  
Women  
Province of Manitoba  
St. Mary's Road United Church  
Thomas Sill Foundation  
Wawanesa Insurance  
Winnipeg Foundation

## Appendix 1

### Centre Usage Stats 2009

<b>Services</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sept</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Drop In	610	667	918	934	985	1,283	999	1028	955	900	1190	718.2	<b>11187</b>
Clothing Depot Clients	83	102	152	118	117	620	126	96	113	160	191	82	<b>1960</b>
Community Cupboard Clients	70	59	51	43	50								<b>273</b>
<b>Programs</b>													
No. of Prgms/Wrkshps/Events	16	17	16	17	16	16	13	7	20	15	6		<b>159</b>
No. of Participants	202	160	181	237	263	193	193	114	227	182	97		<b>2049</b>
<b>Volunteer Program</b>													
No. of Volunteers	16	21	18	20	22	21	21	17	19	18	22	22	<b>237</b>
No. of Volunteer Hours	208	281.25	376.75	298	705.00	457.00	325.50	235.00	311.50	290.50	406.50	448.00	<b>4343.3</b>