

WCWRC

WEST CENTRAL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE



ANNUAL REPORT 2012

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Since moving into 640 Ellice in late 2010, our new home has offered space, light and the ability to grow – all of which made 2011 a dynamic year. We're wrapping up the year with two additional programs (Parent Mentor and Women's Voices) and an incredibly busy Drop In.



WCWRC Staff of 2011

In addition to the integrity of our programming and staff, what has amazed me over the year is the ingenuity of community women. We built this new space for people to gather. Women have gathered, and, beyond that, taken initiative to use the space to meet their neighbours, develop strength and courage; get involved in community projects; heal and make change. It's amazing what some space can do!

On behalf of the Centre I would also like to thank the West Central community, and our partners and friends beyond the neighbourhood, for your collaboration and support over 2011. We're stronger together.

In solidarity
Jackie Hogue

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I have had the privilege of being the Chair of the Board of Directors of WCWRC for almost a year now. I have been humbled by the unwavering commitment that I see from our Executive Director, our staff team, our Board of Directors and the amazing community women that share so freely of themselves in our centre every day.

2011 was a year of settling into our beautiful new space; it also saw the expansion of both our staff and programming and an increased profile for the Centre in the community. As we look forward to a new three year strategic plan, we remain committed to deliver high quality programming that is responsive to the needs of the women in our community, to strengthen current partnerships and build new ones, to invest further in the good work that is already happening here at the Centre, and to continue to be a leader in the West Central area.

To the staff that work diligently, day in and day out to honour women, and to the women that engage in all that the centre has to offer, I say thank you – for your enthusiasm, your wisdom, your passion, your dedication and for being an example of the true strength of women everywhere.

Respectfully,
Lorie English

Our freshly painted building is
colourful and inviting





DROP IN

The Drop In is truly the heart of West Central Women's Resource Centre. Women of all backgrounds and experiences are welcomed here. Women let us know all the time that our Drop In is a friendly, safe, inviting, supportive and accessible environment for all who come in. Each day we're open, the Drop in is a hub of activity. In 2011 we welcomed women for over 17,000 visits to the Centre – that's over 3,000 more visits than 2010!

During those visits, women accessed phone, fax, computer, clothing room, personal care items and the Centre's new laundry and shower facilities. Our Drop In staff have built knowledge of the community, providing over 100 resource referrals every month.

In 2011, over 2,400 children were cared for on-site by trained childminders. This required nearly double the childminders and childminding hours than in 2010 and had the triple impact of providing a positive space for kids to play with each other, supplying additional income to Childminders and allowing caregivers to participate more fully in the Centre's programming.

HOW HAS THE CENTRE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

*"It has given me **courage** to keep going."*

*"**Learning** my **culture**."*

*"I decided to **change** my **life** around for the **better**."*

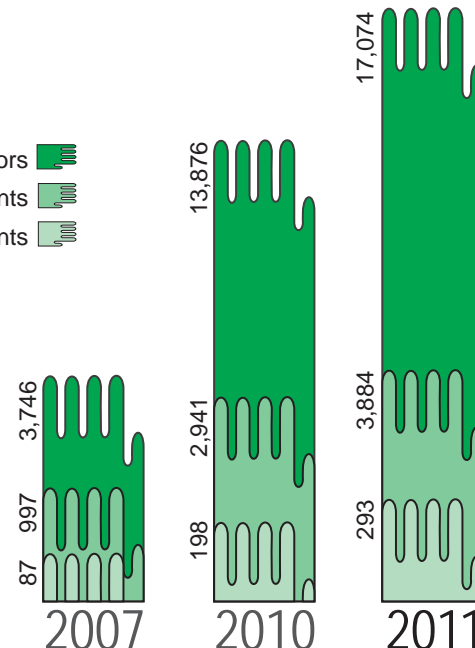
*"I find **inspiration** & **strength** here."*

*"[It] drew me to the **goodness** of people."*

*"It has given me the **strength** to cope and continue moving **forward** in my life."*

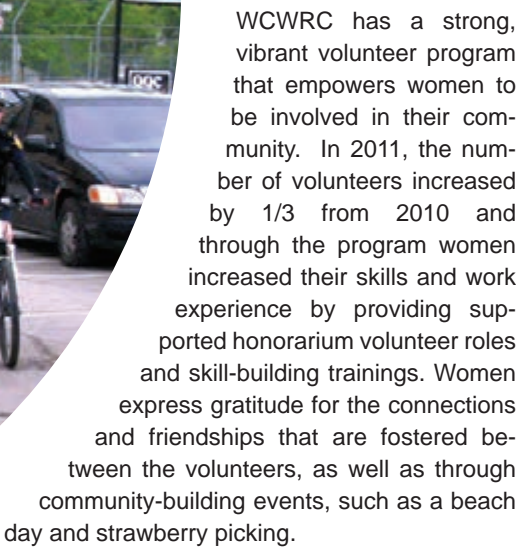
*"**Feeling loved, welcomed and needed**."*

Total Visitors
Number of Participants
Number of Events



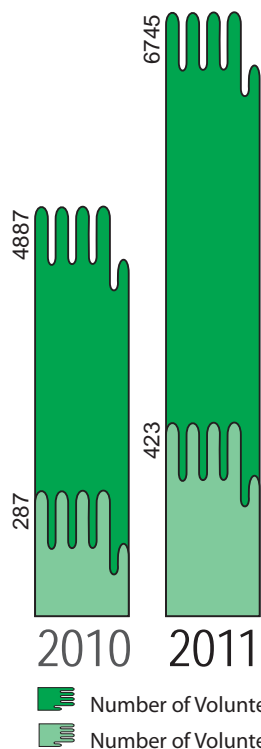
Quotes gathered from the 2011 Annual Survey"

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pressed that their confidence and feelings of self-worth increased, they developed positive and supportive relationships with new friends, they gained new work-related skills, their communication and conflict resolution skills increased and they realized their strengths.

*"I enjoy the **thrill** of meeting new people, and making a **difference** in Central Winnipeg."*



Diane is WCWRC's Food Preparation volunteer. She is continually working on her sobriety and currently lives in second stage housing. She initially came to the Centre to fill the Food Preparation position and is also now accessing the HOMES program for her housing needs. She receives \$200 per month for creating delicious lunches for the women in the drop-in and is saving money through the SEED savings program. Her goal is to buy furniture when she finds her own apartment. Diane is positive and giving, and brings a great energy to the drop-in area.



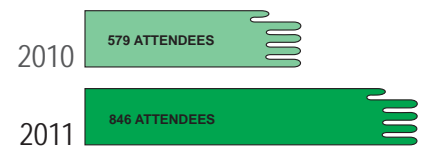
COMMUNITY SUPPORT

SEWING

The Sewing Program demonstrates weekly that women are building skills, relationships and becoming less isolated simply by attending the program. Women who were introduced to WCWRC through the Sewing Program are now becoming more involved in the Centre by volunteering or attending other programming opportunities. One attendee was hired as WCWRC's Housekeeping volunteer for a six month term; another very skilled attendee was offered the summer position of Sewing Instructor.

WCWRC is delivered in partnership with The Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker.

The goal of welcoming newcomers to WCWRC continues to be met through the sewing program with approximately 65% of the attendees being newcomers to Canada, as seen below:



*"I have been coming for many years here,
and I would not stop coming."*



COMMUNITY EVENTS IN 2011

Walk for West Central Women
Strawberry Picking
Beach Day
Holiday Party
Spring Clean up
Self Care Day
Halloween Party
Mother's Day
Volunteer Appreciation

HOMES



Now in its fourth year, the HOMES Program continues to see tremendous successes working with women on housing and income security. HOMES mentors supported 218 women and their families in 2011, helping **179 with housing** and **52 with income challenges**.

Great success was also seen in the Women's Empowerment groups where 26 women set and achieved personal goals and carried out group actions on community issues. Monthly workshops also lead to positive change with, for example, 6 women entering training and university programs after a workshop called, "You Are Never too Old to Go Back to School."

The HOMES Community Mentor also facilitated and participated in coalition work on issues related to housing, poverty reduction, equity and social inclusion. In 2011, participation in the EIA network saw the provincial government committing to implement 51 of the 68 Manitoba Ombudsman's recommendations on EIA.

Empowerment group with guest speaker Wab Kinew



"I can make changes in my neighbourhood"

"If it wasn't for you we would be homeless"

"[Being a mentor] really boosted my self-esteem..."

"It gave me the will to want to work and keep moving forward. I left feeling totally motivated."

GOALS ACHEIVED THROUGH THE EMPOWERMENT GROUP

- GET A DRIVERS LICENSE
- FIND A NEW PLACE TO LIVE
- CONTINUE TO NURTURE MYSELF
- FOCUS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES
- ATTEND AA MEETINGS
- GO BACK TO SCHOOL
- EARN/SAVE MONEY FOR A HOME IN THE WEST END



2011 mentor trainees

CHILD MINDING

Childminders caring for children at the Centre



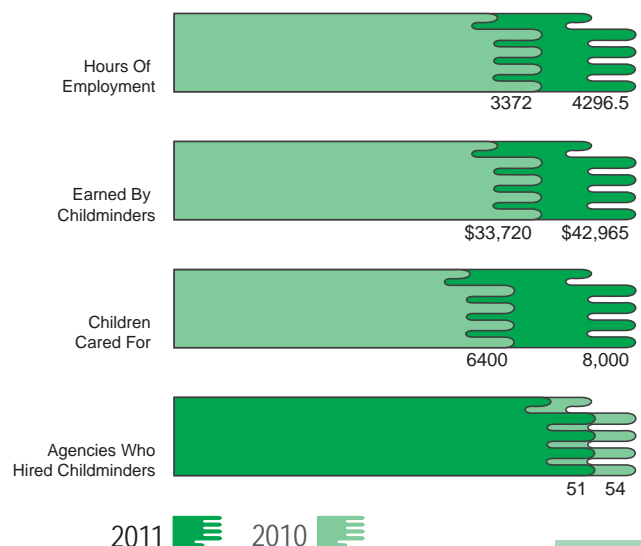
Our Childminding Program continues to increase the economic security of low-income women through the building of skills, confidence and income and employment opportunity. For the first time this fall we offered a Child Care Assistants (CCA) course in partnership with Red River College with 13 graduates. In the last 5 years the program has seen 192 childminders trained with the success of having almost 50% of trainees moving on to more permanent employment or education. In 2011, 23% found permanent employment, including one CCA grad, and 25% transitioned to further education and training.

*“This training has **changed** my mom’s life and given her **hope** for the future”*

Marie* came to Canada and connected with the Centre after experiencing great personal trauma and violence during the civil war in Rwanda. At WCWRC, we counseled Marie and gave advice about supports for newcomers. In 2010 Marie took the childminding training and went on to complete the Child Care Assistant course, receiving top grades from Red River College. She talks about the positive skills she has learned through child minding and wants to give back to her community. She hopes to work in a daycare or set up her own home daycare.



2011 CCA graduates



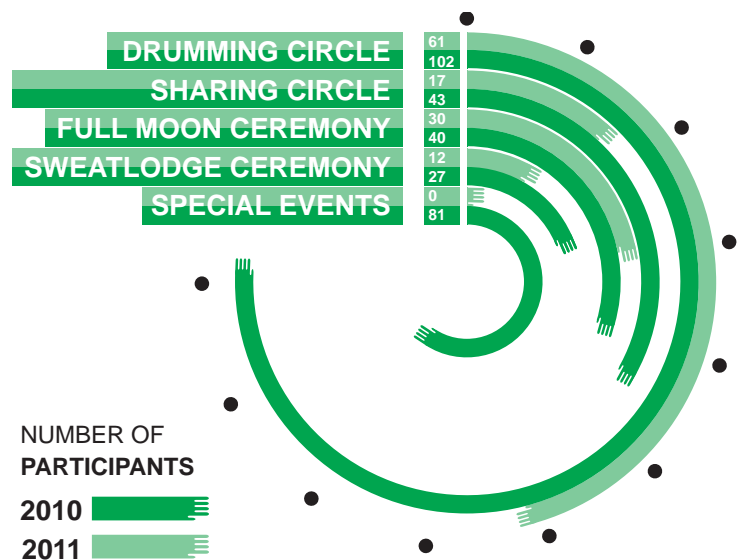
TRADITIONAL TEACHING

As a result of the activities of the Traditional teachings program, many Aboriginal women have expressed an increased sense of community and pride in themselves and their heritage. Participants have shared teachings and songs with their families. All participants have had opportunity to experience ceremonies and events that they have not had opportunity to take part in previously.

The Traditional Teachings Program has empowered women to take leadership roles in their community by providing opportunity to learn about their heritage and the significance of their roles as Aboriginal women in the community.



Dancing Spirit Drumming Group performed throughout the community in 2011



*"I don't know anything about my **culture**... now I have a chance to **learn** what I couldn't as a child. This is a **part of me**."*

*"It feels **good** inside"*



EVENTS HELD BY THE TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS PROGRAM IN 2011

- DRUM MAKING WORKSHOP
- FEASTING OF THE RELATIVES
- TEACHINGS FROM THE STAR NATION
- WOMEN WARRIORS SERIES
- WINTER GATHERING

*"I am **sharing** the songs with my grandchildren"*

RED ROAD TO HEALING



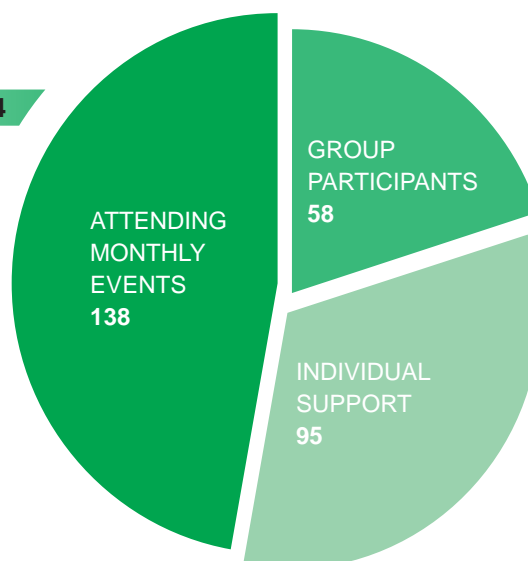
2011 training-for-trainers participants

Based in both traditional and western teachings, Red Road to Healing provides support and knowledge to women and their families to promote healing from violence. Over 300 women and their families have participated in this healing. As a result of the program's group work, individual support and ceremonies, 95% of participants expressed having an increased knowledge of domestic violence issues and Traditional Aboriginal culture and teachings. Seeing the value of this program design, a training-for-trainers was offered and 13 representatives from 11 province-wide agencies participated.

RRH is offered at WCWRC in partnership with the Red Road to Freedom Ad Hoc Committee.

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS 304

Cat,* a young Inuit woman with a 2 year old daughter sought 1-1 support after being in an abusive relationship for many years. After a few months of individual support, Cat felt ready to attend the Red Road to Healing Group. Through this, Cat realized that she was not alone. Because of the support she found in the group she was able to find the strength to end her relationship.



*"The **support group** has **helped** me to get the trauma out of my system that I have had to take in from the abuse of others."*

*"One thing I learned about the **culture** and **traditional** way of life is that women are **important** because they give life."*

At the RRH Retreat at Windy Hill

PARENT MENTOR

New in 2011, The Parent Mentor Program offered support to women involved with the Child Welfare System (CFS) by increasing parental skills and support, making referrals and hosting community workshops.

Women reported that the program made them more aware of their rights within CFS, more knowledgeable of the system, more comfortable discussing their case with their CFS worker, and less helpless about their situation. Women also reported connecting with more positive supports and feeling more connected to their children who are in CFS care. At the same time 18 community agencies are excited to begin a new collaborative network around child welfare issues.

The Parent Mentor Program grew out of our past Respect Program, which ran until May 2011.

Mom and kids are happy to be living together again



*The Parent Mentor **supported** me by helping me find **resources**, by **listening** to me and others.*

*I liked the Parent Support Group; it makes **good sense** out of situations by telling how things really are.*

JOY* HAS THREE CHILDREN AND IS EXPECTING HER FOURTH. JOY HAD BEEN HOMELESS FOR OVER A YEAR AND CFS APPREHENDED HER CHILDREN. THE PARENT MENTOR OFFERED REGULAR COUNSELING AND SUPPORTED JOY BY HELPING HER GATHER INFORMATION FROM CFS, HER LAWYER, AND SEVERAL OTHER COMMUNITY SUPPORTS. JOY IS NOW ABLE TO COMMUNICATE PROACTIVELY WITH HER CFS AGENCY. SHE SOUGHT ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND FOUND HER OWN APARTMENT. AS A RESULT, CFS HAS AGREED THAT JOY CAN PARENT HER NEW BABY, DUE ANYTIME. THEY ARE ALSO HELPING HER PLAN TO REGAIN CUSTODY OF HER OTHER CHILDREN BY THE SUMMER OF 2012.

CHANGES MADE IN INDIVIDUAL CASES



Parent Mentor Coordinator Lisa Spring and Co-facilitator Deanna Moose

37 Articulated goals for parenting and CFS involvement

29 Achieved understanding of case with participant

21 Obtained relevant documentation with participant

5 Increased parent-child visits

13 Increased parent participation in CFS case planning

37 Steps made towards reunification objectives

09



WOMEN'S VOICES

At work at the Soup Bee

Women's Voices was created in 2011 with the goal of supporting women to become decision-makers and community leaders.



Nine women completed 8 days of training, focusing on computer skills, self-care, community building, resource and neighbourhood awareness, decision making and communication skills. Each participant was then matched with an opportunity at a partner organization and spent 2-10 hours per month learning and contributing to that organization. Women reflected that it feels good to give back and be part of something bigger. All participants said they have learned new skills and gained valuable experience due to their placements.

"Women's Voices empowered me to reach out and get involved"

One participant wanted to buy a computer – but believed this would take a long time. Following computer training, she registered for further classes and upon completion received a free computer. Later, through her placement with West Broadway Development Corporation's Good Food Club, she was interviewed for a position and is now an employee of the social enterprise, The Soup Bee; earning a supplementary income. Both of these outcomes reflect how a participant's ability to make decisions and to use available resources can positively affect their life.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS WHERE WOMEN HAVE THEIR PLACEMENTS



Computer training at Wii Chiwaaknak Learning Centre

Spence Neighbourhood Association's Community Conversations Committee

John Howard Society's board

University of Winnipeg's Institute for Women and Gender Studies

Daniel McIntyre St. Mathews Neighbourhood Associations' Oral History Project

Circle of Courage

Council of Women of Winnipeg

West Broadway Development Corporations' Good Food Club

NEIGHBOURHOOD IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Settlement worker Warda Ahmed (Centre Right) showing a family around the city

In 2011, the Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker (NISW) continued to support newcomers successfully settle into our West Central neighbourhood. Program offerings such as community workshops and one-on-one support helped newcomers gain skills, navigate systems and access basic critical services. Both the Sewing Program and Conversation Circle helped break social isolation and build connections between newcomer and their community. Families have shared that being involved with NISW gave them the support they needed and made them feel valued.



2011

NISW WORKED WITH **96 FAMILIES**

After living in Canada since 2006, one woman, a mother of 3 children, came to NISW feeling isolated and disconnected. Through the program, she was connected to English classes and was able to get her children into daycare. One of her children was also diagnosed with autism and because of her new awareness of community resources, she found the supports she needed for her son's treatment. She now reports feeling independent and happy for all she has done for herself and her children.

*"I became an **independent** man who is not only able to **support** his own **family** but also able to support and work for the **community** I live in"*

*"I wouldn't have ever known that I could go to **school** which has a **daycare** if it wasn't for the **assistance** I got"*

ISSUES NISW SUPPORTED NEWCOMERS WITH IN 2011



Saturday morning Conversation Circle

- EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT
- HOUSING
- HEALTH CARE
- DAYCARE
- BANKING
- EIA
- DOCUMENTATION

11

DONOR/PARTNER LIST

OUR PARTNERS

We are grateful for the opportunity to work with many partners during 2011.

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba
 ANCR
 Child and Family Services
 Children's Advocate
 CCPA
 CEDA Pathways
 CEDNET
 Circle of Courage Committee
 City of Winnipeg (MERC)
 CKUW-FM
 Community Financial Counseling
 Community Places
 Daniel McIntyre/St. Matthew's Community Association
 Diane Foese; Yoga Instructor
 EIA Advocacy Network
 Gordon Bell High School
 Healthy Child Manitoba
 HIFIS Homeless Data Base
 John Howard Society
 John M. King School
 Kani Kanichihk
 Klinik Community Health
 Legal Aid
 Legal Help Klinik
 Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata
 Make Poverty History Manitoba
 Manitoba Family Services and Housing
 Manitoba Securities Commission
 Manitoba Justice POD office
 Mediation services
 Métis Family Resource Centre
 Mount Carmel Clinic
 Native Women's Transition Centre
 New Directions Parenting Centre
 North End Community Renewal Association
 North End Women's Resource Centre
 Norwest Health Cooperative
 Ombudsman Manitoba
 Opportunities for Employment
 Post Secondary Education Community Outreach Program
 Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence
 Pregnancy and Family Support Services
 Pritchard House
 Pro Bono Law Students
 Public Interest Law Centre
 RAY (Resource Assistance for Youth)
 Red River Community College
 Right to Housing Coalition
 Sage House
 Salvation Army Community Services
 SEED
 Sexually Exploited Youth Coalition

Siloam Mission
 Skills Bank
 Snowbird Lodge
 Social Planning Council
 SPARK
 Spence Neighbourhood Association
 SNA Research Hub
 St. Matthew's Maryland Community Ministry
 Tec Voc High School
 The Council of Women Winnipeg
 Thunderbird House
 UMFM
 Union Gospel Mission
 Uniter



University of Manitoba Faculties of; Medicine, Social Work, Kinesiology, Recreation and Centre for Health Policy
 University of Winnipeg Institute of Women and Gender Studies
 UNPAC
 Urban Circle Training Centre Ltd.
 Victim Services
 West Broadway Development Corporation
 West Central Neighbourhood Immigrant
 West End Biz
 West End Cultural Centre
 WiChiwaakanack Centre
 Winnipeg Copwatch
 Winnipeg Harvest
 Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
 Wolseley Family Centre

2011 FUNDERS LIST

Assiniboine Credit Union
 Canadian Heritage
 Canadian Women's Foundation
 Community 4 Families
 Community Places
 Cross-Department Coordination Initiatives
 Hilary Druxman Design
 Labour and Immigration Manitoba
 LITE
 Manitoba Community Services Council Inc.
 Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade
 Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
 Manitoba Healthy Living
 Manitoba in Motion
 Mennonite Central Committee
 National Crime Prevention
 Neighbourhoods Alive!
 Red River College
 Status of Women Canada
 The Banff Centre
 United Way
 University of Manitoba
 Winnipeg Foundation
 Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative

2011 IN-KIND DONORS

Arts Junction
 Brenda Johnstone & Friends
 Circle Design
 Circle Theft
 CKUW-FM
 David Pensato
 Debbie's Growers Direct
 Hilary Druxman Jewelry
 Kendrick Quality Printing
 Keri Latimer / So Forth Studio
 Kimberly Patchell
 Mindy's Jewelry
 Powerland Computers
 Sarah Michelson
 SPARK
 Sexual Education Resource Centre
 WCWRC Volunteers
 Winnipeg Harvest
 WRENCH

WCWRC is also very grateful for the support of individual donors as well as those who participated in our annual Walk for West Central Women and our Fund-raising Concert.