



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

## 2011 Annual Awards Program

### Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

**Deadline for Nominations: March 11, 2011**

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

#### SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- Community Health and Safety
- Community Partnership
- Community Sustainability
- Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: Intimate Partner Violence

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Fredericton, Canada

Jurisdiction population(s): 50,535

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented by or before January 31, 2010, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: March Year: 2009

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 2011. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Paul R. Stapleton

Title: Chief Administrative Officer Jurisdiction: City of Fredericton

Name: Chris MacPherson

Title: Assistant City Administrator Jurisdiction: City of Fredericton

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact**

Name of contact: Don Fitzgerald

Title: Executive  
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## **Problem Assessment (Challenge or Need)**

Over the past three decades Police Forces and society in general have come to the understanding that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a serious and complex social and criminal issue. IPV occurs in all social classes, in all professions, races and cultures. It can range from psychological to physical abuse and lead to homicide and suicide. It is without a doubt one of the single most damaging acts that insidiously creeps beyond the walls of privacy and literally “bleeds out” into our communities with great human and financial costs for local governments.

## **Program Implementation & Costs**

In late 2005 the Fredericton Police Force (FPF) set out to respond to the factors they could control with respect to IPV. The goal was to improve the quality of enforcement interventions with particular focus on the complexities of dealing with special victims and offenders based on ethnicity, disability and same sex relationships. We recognized that many of the drivers of IPV had their roots in social issues, and so FPF reached out to the Muriel McQueen Fergusson Foundation (MMFF) a local charitable trust, who has a history of funding research into the causes of family violence.

Together we developed a training program for police officers to assist them in dealing with the unique barriers presented by the above mentioned target groups. The training examines police officers’ intervention from receiving a 911 call, to charging and

assessing the risk of lethal violence, to report writing. The training also focuses on how police officers are impacted by their interventions.

The program is comprised of 5 modules: The dynamics of IPV; Recognizing Unique Diversity Barriers; Impact of IPV on Children; Recognizing Viable Charges and Assessing IPV risk; IPV and its Effect on the Workplace.

The program, *Understanding the Impact of IPV: Helping Police Officers to Better Intervene*, was designed to be delivered in the Train-the-Trainer format. There were several reasons for this. Train-the-Trainer is an economical distribution method but in this case the more important consideration was believed to be the peer aspect of the interaction. This peer approach enables officers to share experiences, practicalities and criticisms of current practices.

Development of the program took approximately 18 months and in December 2006 the pilot training took place. (Training is available in English and French) During the pilot phase 30 officers were exposed to the program. In June of 2007 training the entire Force began.

In 2008 FPF had the University of New Brunswick facilitate focus groups with the officers who had taken the training. In summary, the focus groups confirmed the validity of the content, the delivery of the program and identified areas for improvement.

The total development and delivery costs of the IPV training were in the order of \$240,000 CDN. However, we were able to significantly reduce our net costs. By agreement MMFF holds the intellectual property rights to the training and they covered the program development costs of \$150,000 CDN. FPF shouldered the costs of time and materials for the delivery of the training to the pilot group (\$40,000 CDN) as well as the materials for the delivery of the training to the balance of the force for a total cost of \$51,000 CDN. The remaining \$40,000 represented officers' training time that would have been directed to other areas in the absence of IPV training. In summary, we delivered the IPV program to 90% of the Force for a net cost of \$51,000 CDN. The 16 hour IPV training is now incorporated into basic police orientation for new officers which must be completed before they commence patrol duties.

In an environment of fiscal restraint and high expectations it is incumbent that local government leaders select their strategic priorities very carefully and weigh the cost and value of new initiatives and direction. It is our view that an IPV training program and comprehensive IPV strategy is well worth the initial and ongoing financial commitment to make our community safer.

### **Tangible Results\Measurable Outcomes**

In 2009 a quantitative comparative study of FPF IPV files between 2007 and 2008 was undertaken. This represented the first year pre and post training.

This analysis revealed that post training, the average time spent investigating incidents increased by 7%, and the number of publication bans increased by 300%. In addition, when officers were investigating IPV cases the number of arrests increased by 25% and crown prosecutors' acceptance rate of charges referred to them increased by 5% over the previous period. In the second year after the training was delivered FPF responded to 11% more IPV incidents which suggests that victims are more disposed to reach out for assistance.

One of the unintended consequences of our involvement in this new approach is the recognition of Fredericton as a best practice jurisdiction and subject matter expert with respect to IPV. Presentations on this program have been made locally and internationally as well, and published in three recognized publications including: *The Canadian Police Chief Magazine*; *the International Association of Women Police Magazine* and in the *International Journal of Police Strategies and Management*. It will also be the foundation piece for a presentation scheduled for the National Humanities and Social Science Congress in May 2011.

As stated previously the causes of IPV are complex, however, the creation of a comprehensive training program and identifying the issue as a top organizational priority for FPF is not only an effective intervention mechanism, but part of a larger crime reduction strategy and in extreme cases, a domestic homicide prevention plan.

Through training and research, police officers are exposed to this fact as the strategic focus of the Force is directed to a fundamental community safety issue.

### **Lessons Learned**

- The partnership with MMFF made grant and research funding available to the program that FPF would not normally be able to access. This allowed us to significantly reduce the cost to the taxpayer of the program;
- The municipality's various operating units "living laboratories" have significant value to other community groups and can be used to create value for both parties;
- The social scientists contribution, particularly their understanding of the interconnections of the wide range of contributing factors to IPV brought significant value to the project;
- There remains considerable work to be done in the policing culture and the public in general around cultural diversity and homophobia;
- The train-the-trainer delivery method was critical in creating the best atmosphere for the program content to be accepted;
- The program content will need to be continually tweaked to respond to trends in the overall justice system;
- There is a direct correlation between time spent on a call and the victim's willingness to accept help from victim services agencies.