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- School Sexual Health Education
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Highlights this Year



Sex and the Law

poster and pamphlet explain the laws of Canada in four different languages.



OPTIONS FOR SEXUAL HEALTH

A society that celebrates healthy sexuality, its diversity of expression, and a positive self-image for individuals throughout life.

President's Message

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Our Icons



Our Vision

A society that celebrates healthy sexuality, its diversity of expression, and a positive sexual self image for individuals throughout life.

President's message

"In the past five years the number of clients served in OPT's clinics has grown by close to 50%, and the number of clinic locations by another third. "

2004-5 was a year of groundbreaking activity for Options for Sexual Health, as we moved into the research and consensus building activities of our campaign to improve the quality of school sexual health education in BC.

I was excited by the wisdom and passion of the people and organizations who joined us in the process; it was also disappointing, however, to find that some found it threatening to open the topic up for discussion. The most rewarding aspects of the work for me were the creative spirit and intelligence that youth brought to the question, and the deep commitment of my fellow Board members to express a clear and challenging vision of the changes needed.



The Board of Directors also turned their energies inward this year, to explore the complex question of how to develop and apply a meaningful set of expectations for Branch boards made up of volunteers with busy lives and other commitments, so that the whole organization functions consistently and "in good health" with respect to its legal obligations. A set of "minimum criteria" presented to members at the 2004 Annual General Meeting received general support, and Branches set about reviewing their practices with them in mind.

In the past five years the number of clients served in OPT's clinics has grown by close to 50%, and the number of clinic locations by another third. The fact that we have managed this growth is a testament to the dedication and skill of our clinic supervisors, physicians, volunteers in the clinics and Branch boards, and our provincial office staff. As the year came to an end, the Board prepared to review the implications of further growth and how it should occur. There is no question that our services are needed, and that our clinics are a safe and popular place to go, but we are nearing the limit of the current organization's ability to absorb more growth.

With this report I am moving into my final year as President. I am grateful to OPT's members, staff, volunteers and donors for their part in making 2004-5 so successful and productive, and the past year so rewarding for me.



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Our new Icons**Our Vision**

A society that celebrates healthy sexuality, its diversity of expression, and a positive sexual self image for individuals throughout life.

Executive Director's report

"In a time of static government support for public health agencies such as OPT, this diversity kept us healthy."



OPT's experience in 2004-5 illustrated several strengths of the organization. Although our organization has grown by nearly half over the past five years in terms of clients served, budget resources and our presence in communities, the core staff of the Provincial Office stood at 13 full-time equivalent positions in 2004-5, one higher than five years previous. This is a small number for such a diverse and dispersed organization, and it reflects the quality and intensity of the people who work for OPT, clearly one of our strengths.

Another strong point is the diversity of our revenue base. In 2004-5 just over 50% of our revenue was generated by our service activities, one quarter came from contracts with government health agencies, and one quarter came from grants, donations, memberships and other fundraising. In a time of static government support for public health agencies such as OPT, this diversity kept us healthy.

From a management perspective 2004-5 was a year of significant transition, intended to maintain our strength. Three particular initiatives were involved.

All staff of the Education Services Program were centralized under the Education Services Director, as part of a move to enhance the skill base of staff so they could meet the increasing diversity of education requests, to accelerate the implementation of revenue generation, and to introduce effective marketing strategies to the function. The results were quick in coming, and dramatic: among other things, requests for service jumped and the Program nearly achieved break-even status financially.

With the shortage of physicians in some locations, Clinic Supervisors and Branch Boards have faced some stiff challenges to maintain services to our clients. Several changes occurred in the Clinical Services Program to address the situation. Some clinics were able to convert some nursing hours to salary for a receptionist or clinic coordinator position. As well as distributing the work, these arrangements saved money. OPT arranged for several nurses to be trained at the BC Women's Health Centre so they could do Pap tests in the absence of a clinic physician. Although the service could not be billed to the MSP, our nurses performed over \$40,000 worth of Pap testing service in 2004-5. The Sunshine Coast Branch achieved a very effective arrangement with the local hospital that sees residents rotating through the OPT clinic on a regular – and guaranteed – basis.

OPT began the process of building an on-line training program for front-line

volunteers, to cover most, but not all aspects of the skills required (some "soft skills" will still need to be taught face-to-face). When completed, the program should relieve Branch Boards and Nurse Supervisors of some of the task of training, and should greatly increase the flexibility available to volunteers for initial and refresher training.

Although the transition from Planned Parenthood to Options for Sexual Health was delayed somewhat in terms of broad public awareness, it was clear through the year that the new name resonated very favourably with clients, funding agencies and others. For example, as the year ended, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada was preparing to change its name - to the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health.



Greg Smith
Executive Director

School Sexual Health Education

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Useful Links

[OPT Advocacy](#)

[Don't Just Do It!](#)

Don't just do it.

School sexual health education: Building the case for quality

Options for Sexual Health (OPT) moved forward on the 2003 decision by the Board of Directors to advocate for improved sexual health education in BC, with two important initiatives.

We completed a province-wide assessment study of the quality of school sexual health education, using the Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education (Health Canada). Our report, [Hit and Miss](#), summarizes the findings.

In May 2004, OPT hosted a consensus conference of parents, youth, educators, public health workers, government policymakers and others, to discuss the characteristics of effective sexual health education. Among the consensus positions adopted was strong support for the right of youth to receive comprehensive sexual health education, as part of their right to health care. Participants also reinforced the need for supports for parents and teachers in their roles as sexual health educators. The results of the conference are being used to guide the advocacy campaign through its subsequent phases.

In the fall we commissioned two Ipsos Reid polls of adults to determine their support of youth influence in the sexual health curriculum they receive. In both polls, 77% of adults supported youth having "a great deal" or "a moderate amount" of influence; only 6% opposed youth having a voice.

Through the research, many youth were particularly expressive of their frustration about the education they receive. They had ideas of what they should be taught, and when, but have no voice in the process. On the suggestion of youth we set up the [dontjustdoit.com](#) web site, a youth-driven forum for collecting and discussing ideas for sexual health curriculum.

[2004 AGM](#)

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THE 2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We recognized some of our special people at the Annual General Meeting in 2004.

Vivian Mitchell, the driving force behind our presence in Revelstoke and the strong community support we have there, received the Dorothy Shaw Award for volunteer leadership.

Dr. Keith White received the Jeffrey Dolph Memorial Award, for his outstanding dedication and compassion as a physician in the Grand Forks Branch. Dr. White was one of the founding members of the Branch and continues to provide wise leadership, very generous support, and deeply caring services to our clients. Dr. White's remarks on acceptance of the award were typically self-effacing, funny and warm.

Lenore Riddell received the Education Award for her leadership and professional excellence in the development of training for nurses, and particularly for a superb program for building nurse competencies in Pap testing. Lenore is at the BC Women's Health Centre.

Jane Shadley, from Whistler, and Dr. Ruth Brighthouse, from Salmon Arm, received the Volunteer of the Year Award for their dedicated volunteer effort over many years in their respective Branches. Nominations for this award come from fellow volunteers as well as staff, so they speak to the great respect and affection of their colleagues in the Branch.

Linda Douglas and Rae McDonald received the Executive Director's Award of Excellence for staff members who have made an exceptional contribution to the quality of our services and the performance of the organization. Both have been builders and innovators in their respective Branches. Linda steered the process of knitting together the support of several communities in the East Kootenays to create the new East Kootenay Branch, and her leadership attracted a phenomenal amount of start-up funding. Rae led her team of staff and volunteers to the

creation of our first staff-run Branch in Whistler, after the Branch Board dissolved. She has been a force of creative leadership, good sense and unshakeable confidence as this experiment unfolded.

Members and guests were treated to a most informative presentation by Joshua Goldberg on transgender issues. From his personal and professional experience, Josh gave his audience valuable insights and understanding. He also provided his audience with important perspectives on how OPT services should be responsive to transgender clients.

The other speaker at the AGM was Kyla Kaun, from PEERS Vancouver. PEERS is an organization that provides multiple supports for individuals wishing to leave the sex trade. Kyla briefed her audience on the current characteristics of the sex trade in Vancouver and BC, including the tactics being used to recruit young women. As well, she described the training and other supports offered by PEERS.

Program Funding



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Our Funders



Ministry of Health



Lower Mainland,
Fraser Valley,
Campbell River &
District, Castlegar & District,
Comox Valley, Cranbrook, North
Okanagan Columbia Shuswap,
and Nelson & District United Way



Columbia Basin
Trust



Vancouver Foundation

PROGRAM AND PROJECT FUNDING

Ministry of Health funding for the Facts of Life Line continued through 2004-5, at the same level as the previous year. OPT also continued to receive program funding from the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), also unchanged.

OPT was well funded from the Direct Charitable Access program of the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch of the Ministry for Public Safety. The bulk of gaming funding was used to subsidize the cost of OPT's education programs for school students, parents and others.

OPT acknowledges as well the core and program support we received from the United Way of the Lower Mainland, the United Way of the Fraser Valley, the Campbell River and District United Way, Castlegar District United Way, the Comox Valley United Way, United Way of Cranbrook, the United Way of the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap, and the Nelson and District United Way. The organization also benefited from funding from the Columbia Basin Trust and the Vancouver Foundation.

The Provincial Office hosted a site visit team from the United Way of the Lower Mainland, for the purpose of reviewing the key challenges we face as an organization, and how our relationship with the United Way could be enhanced. The exercise was valuable for both parties; the United Way representatives in particular benefited from a better understanding of what we really do, as opposed to what our critics claim.

Our Clients

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What our clients say

"You all do a tremendous job. And I speak for many women (and men) when I thank you for all that you do!"

"It would be nice to see this clinic open more frequently during the week."

"Everyone here is so nice and friendly; they have never made me feel uncomfortable for whatever reason I was here. I first came here due to a pregnancy scare and I didn't know anyone in BC at the time. The girls/Doctors here made me feel like I had tons of family/friends here – thanks SO much guys – you are all why I keep coming back!"



OUR CLIENTS

"This is a fabulous organization, without it I probably wouldn't be able to afford pills, or use them regularly. All the information that is provided, the care taken in examination and professional, friendly volunteers help make an uncomfortable situation much easier to deal with!" ~ a satisfied client~

Our clinic clients continued to come to us in 2004-5 for the quality of our services and the confidence they have in our staff, physicians, and volunteers. Some clinic clients complained of waiting times for service, or the price of contraceptive products, but in the main, client satisfaction was strong. Word of mouth continued to be a popular means of learning about OPT's services.

On the education front, we enjoyed deepening relationships with a number of clients. In Squamish, for example, the school organized coordinated education sessions with students, parents and teachers, all delivered by OPT. The Vancouver School Board requested OPT's services beyond the classroom, to provide curriculum advice, and to help intervene in a delicate situation in one school. Other school districts moved from "one-off" requests to negotiating contracts for delivery of a year-long program.

Working with Others



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Highlights this Year



Native
Courtworkers
and

Counsellors Association front-line workers collaborated with OPT in sexual health training.



Vancouver Health Authority and OPT partner on North Van Youth Clinic.



New Regional Branch

opened in the East Kootenays providing service to four communities.



WORKING WITH OTHERS

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." -- Margaret Mead, anthropologist

The OPT Board of Directors approved the creation of a new regional Branch in the East Kootenays, covering the communities of Creston, Fernie and Kimberley, with our existing clinic in Cranbrook as the hub. The development team read like a "who's who" of service providers in the region, and the new Branch received generous start-up support from all the communities involved. The new clinics were scheduled to come on stream through 2005.

In September 2004, OPT entered into an agreement with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA) for operation of a youth clinic formerly run by the Health Authority. The arrangement is a pilot project, and may eventually lead to wider application. OPT continues VCHA's policy of distributing free contraception to youth, and we are reimbursed the full price we would normally charge. The deal is cost effective for VCHA, and financially beneficial for OPT. We also saw a significant increase in clients, indicating that OPT is running a very youth-friendly service.

OPT collaborated with the Native Courtworkers and Counsellors Association to deliver a seminar on sexual health for front-line workers dealing with aboriginal youth in the justice system. It was a useful way of promoting sexual health as a component of the life skills training these youth receive as part of their encounter with the justice system.

OPT is a member of the "Partners Group", a coalition of four agencies reviewing the future of the BC Alliance Concerned with Early Pregnancy and Parenting. The Alliance has served community agencies well with information and networking, but its informal status and lack of funding put its future in jeopardy. The Partners Group organized a provincial survey of the needs of young parents and their children, and of the agencies serving them, as the basis for assessing options for



Sex and the Law

created and distributed

in four languages



OPT and Oh Yeah! Productions are creating classroom aids for sexual health teachers to be distributed via DVD.

serving these communities in a more sustainable way. The Group submitted an action plan to the Ministry for Children and Families: by year-end no response had been received.

With funding from the Law Foundation of British Columbia, and with the support of a multicultural advisory committee and several lawyers, OPT produced a brochure and poster promoting understanding of the interaction of the law and sexual behaviour in Canada. Although specifically intended for new arrivals to Canada who may not be familiar with their rights and obligations in their new home, the information is relevant to all residents of the country. The package is available in four languages.

One element of the advocacy campaign on school sexual health education involves the development of classroom aids for teachers charged with teaching the subject. OPT entered into a cost and revenue sharing agreement with Oh Yeah! Productions for the creation of a DVD-based kit, due to be completed in 2006. The project is supported by an advisory panel of educators.

The Iron Horse Clinic in Maple Ridge got a boost with first-time funding from the Fraser Health Authority, covering about a third of the clinic's common operating costs. The clinic continued to be a thriving centre for youth health in a community where, soon, nearly a third of the residents will be under 19.

Options for Sexual Health was part of the organizing team for a large walk for women's reproductive rights held in downtown Vancouver in April 2004. The "Celebrate Choice!" walk attracted hundreds of participants from a wide range of organizations, in an atmosphere of celebratory strength. OPT staff also took part in the Missing Women's March in February 2005.

OPT was also a founding influence in a still-emerging organization to be called the Society for Human Sexuality, Gender and Culture. While the founding group was primarily busy with defining vision, mission and scope of the organization, it also prepared an in-depth response to the Vancouver Sun's editorial series on the sex trade. OPT's interest in the organization is related to the potential for professional and public engagement in areas complementary to OPT's own mission and vision.

In collaboration with our auditors, Manning Elliott, OPT organized the second annual seminar on gaming funding for not-for-profit organizations. The popular seminar gave registered charitable societies the opportunity for in-depth consultation with officials of the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch of the Ministry for Public Safety, prior to submitting applications for funding.

Our provincial office became the new meeting place for the Vancouver Post Abortion Support Group.

OPT began a partnership with PEERS in Vancouver to be a supporting agency of the organization's PEAK Program. This program provides confidential and supportive transitional employment opportunities for individuals exiting the sex trade. We also provided six preceptorship positions for nursing students at Kwantlen College.

Strength in Numbers



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OPT appreciates...

Our Members...

301 British Columbians support OPT through an active membership

Our Donors...

610 people donated generously to further the work of OPT

Our Volunteers...

318 clinic volunteers worked a total of 3034 hours in 49 clinics throughout BC

THANK YOU!

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

"We won't always know whose lives we touched and made better for our having cared, because actions can sometimes have unforeseen ramifications. What's important is that you do care and you act." --Charlotte Lunsford

We are very grateful to the members who supported and encouraged us through 2004-5, and to the wonderful teams of volunteers who serve on our Boards at the Branch and Provincial level, serve clients in our clinics week after week, build public awareness and knowledge at community events, and work with our nurses on the Facts of Life Line.

We received generous financial donations from many individuals, employee groups, businesses and other community service organizations. Two organizations – the **Ladysmith Eagles** and the **Ladies Auxiliary 2726 of the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Abbotsford** – two of our physicians, and two other individuals each donated \$1000 or more to OPT. As well, the **Ian F Manning Memorial Fund** donated \$1907 for the support of education programs: this Fund has been a consistent supporter of our education efforts for years.

Our clinics received 40,543 clients in 2004-5, a 7% increase over the previous year. We began to measure one other indicator for clinics, the clinic wage cost per client visit. This indicator tells us about the efficiency of our service delivery, both within the organization and in comparison with alternate delivery systems. It was, for example, an important consideration in the decision by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to turn the operation of one of its youth clinics over to OPT.

In 2003-04 we devoted a lot of energy to building the marketing skills of the Education Services Program staff, and instilling the importance of cost recovery as a strategy for maintaining the program. In 2004-5 the benefits of this effort were seen in a dramatic improvement in the financial performance of the program. This in turn allowed OPT to deliver more, and more varied, programs in a sustainable manner.

Financial Report

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When we began...

The first family planning clinic was opened in Vancouver in 1965 by Medical Advisory and dedicated nurses. The clinic was financed through donations and a small charge for services. Held in the basement of a house near 10th and Laurel, the clinic was attended by 176 patients by the end of that year.

FINANCIAL PICTURE

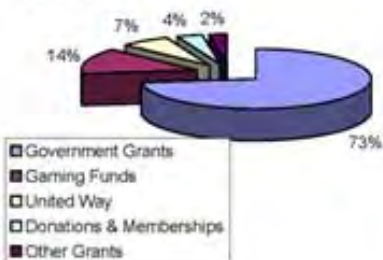
Extracted from Audited Financial Statements

REVENUE SOURCES
OPTIONS FOR SEXUAL HEALTH
April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005



BREAKDOWN OF REVENUE TYPES

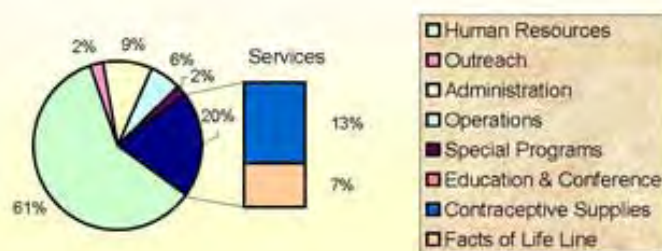
Fundraising



Services



EXPENSE SUMMARY
OPTIONS FOR SEXUAL HEALTH
April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005



Learn more

