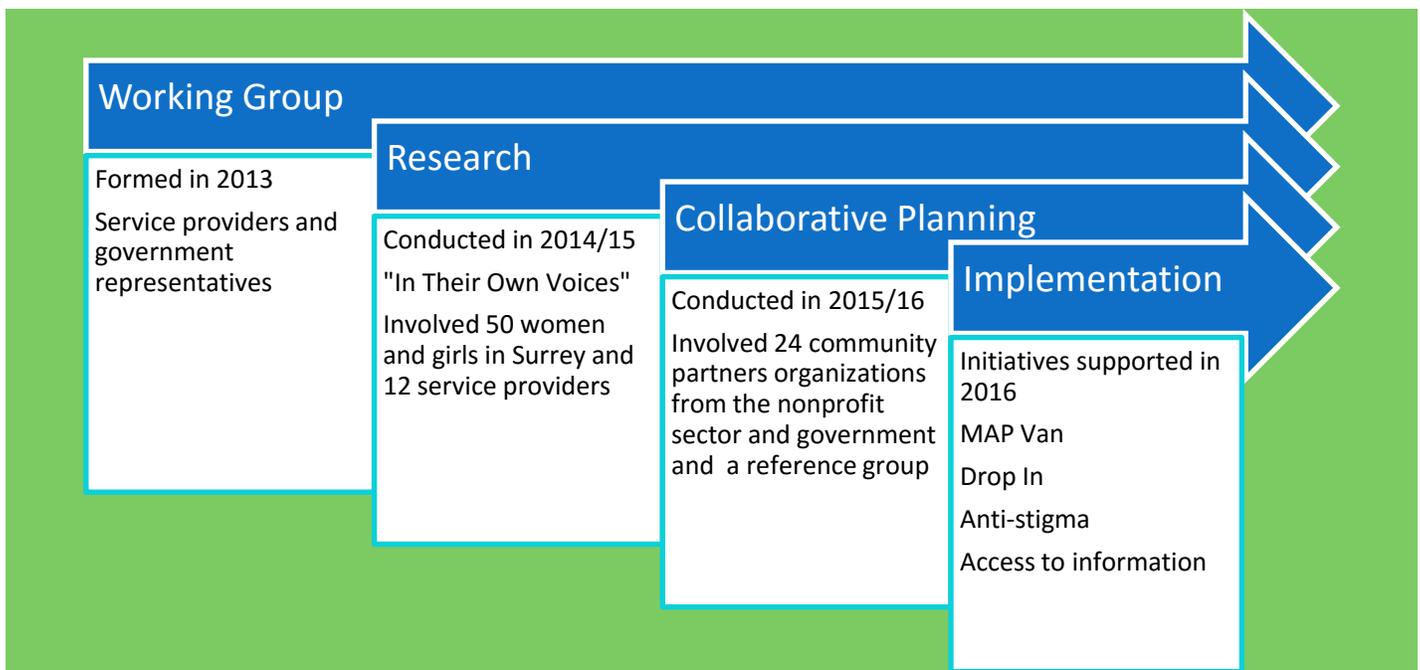


**Collaborative Planning Process: Improving the Safety of Street-Engaged Women and Youth in Surrey**



*Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group 2013 – 2016*

**SYNOPSIS**

In 2015 the Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls (SVWG) Working Group received funding from the BC Ministry of Justice to conduct a series of collaborative planning workshops aimed at improving the safety of street-engaged women and youth in Surrey. The SVWG Working Group organized and held three half day workshops during the year. We invited a broad cross section of government and non-profit representatives to sit down together and strategize. Over the course of the three workshops over 50 people representing 24 government and non-profit organizations met to discuss and plan for improving the safety of street engaged women and youth.

They reviewed recent findings from a research project called "In Their Own Words" <http://surreyhomeless.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SVWGWG-Final-Research-Report.pdf>, which captured the first hand experiences and ideas for community change from women and youth in Surrey. The workshop participants also listened to presentations

about best practices for improving safety for street-engaged women and girls and reviewed any relevant data that was available. They then set about identifying and defining some of the key projects which should be developed in Surrey.

The Workshop participants were supported by a Reference Group, a group of women and youth who have had street experience in Surrey. They met several times during the course of the project to provide input, ideas, and feedback to the collaborative planning process. They made sure that the proposed projects would be relevant and meet the needs of women and youth in Surrey.

## KEY PROJECTS

The project ideas that were reviewed and developed by the Workshop Group are:

1. **A Mobile Access Project (MAP) Van:** a mobile outreach service that operates as a low-barrier access point to reach street-level sex workers throughout the city. Surrey MAP staff include outreach and community-based victim support workers, most of whom have exited the sex trade themselves. Surrey MAP will connect women with a network of existing service providers including, police and victim services, housing and addiction services, and hospital and nurse practitioners; operating at night – after normal business hours when most social service agencies are closed.
2. **A Night-time Drop In for Women:** The women only Drop -In provides full bathroom and laundry facilities, lockers, personal care items and clothing, internet, telephone, drinks and snacks and occasional hot meals, access to medical and legal help, and support workers and counsellors.
3. **A Night-time Drop In for Youth:** A welcoming space for youth that is open at night-time providing full bathroom and laundry facilities, lockers, personal care items and clothing, internet, telephone, drinks and snacks and occasional hot meals, access to medical and legal help, and support workers and counsellors.
4. **Anti-stigma Initiatives:** Project ideas include sensitivity training for people who come into contact with sex workers in the course of their working day and a public awareness campaign.
5. **Improving Access to Information:** Project ideas include improving and co-ordinating on line resources and improving computer access for street-engaged women and youth.

**PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS**

The following organizations and representatives participated in the 2015/16 collaborative planning workshop series:

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Representatives</b>
Atira Women’s Resource Society	Glenda Klassen, Candice Quesnel, Erin Pawliw, Sara Shaan, Maryam Sarwari
BC Housing	Sairoz Sekhon, Danielle Scott
City of Surrey	Councillor Judy Villeneuve, Councillor Vera LeFranc, Aileen Murphy and Marlis McCargar – Social Planning Dept, Colleen Kerr and Jacki Tokaryk– Crime Reduction Unit
Community Living BC	Sharon Rose
Correctional Services Canada	Jodi Harbour , Treena Smith
Fraser Health Authority	Meryl McDowell – Mental Health & Substance Use, Tracy Savoy and Nav Sharma – Substance Use, Dina Lambright – Aboriginal Health, Melissa Strong – Mental Health
Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association	Wagella Hunt – HPP, Tanya Toma - AHOP
Elizabeth Fry Society	Bonnie Moriarty, Niru Turko
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	Lisa Monchalin
Lookout Emergency Aid Society	Monika Verma, Darin Froese, Susan Bhatti, Jodi Sturge, Lisa Mock
Ministry for Child and Family Development	Diane Bruce, Erin Harvie, Fiona Pardy
Ministry of Justice	Jamie Lipp, Karen Golding and Cheryl Sunder – Surrey Probation, Emily Arthur - Policy
Ministry for Social Development and Social Innovation	Morten Bisgaard, Leah Campo
Moving Forward Families	Gary Thandi, Katrina Omysk
Network to Eliminate Violence in Relationships	Balbir Gurm
Options Community Services	Christine Mohr, Lori Dennis
Pacific Community Resource Society	Michelle Shaw, Erin Harvie
Public Safety Canada	Marion Cook, Michelle Gaudet
RCMP Division E, Provincial Prostitution Unit	Corporal Katharine Jackson and Sergeant Joanne Callens
Status of Women Canada	Thea Bracewell

Organization	Representatives
Surrey RCMP	Sergeant Holly Turton – Vulnerable Persons Unit, Corporal Barb Creighton – Missing Persons Unit, Sergeant Beth McAndie – Major Crime, Corporal Paula Mann – Special Victims Unit
Surrey Women’s Centre	Sonya Boyce, Corrine Arthur, Sarah Rehimi
YWCA	Nina Abizadeh, Jessica West

**NEXT STEPS:**

The SVWG Working Group will actively support the non-profit sector and government to develop the key projects identified above and see them start up as soon as possible. We will also continue to engage women and girls with lived street experience to inform these projects as they are developed. The SVWG will continue to engage the network of government and non-profit organizations that were involved in the initial collaborative planning workshops. It is our hope that we will also be able to hold future planning workshops to discuss housing and transportation for street-engaged women and youth and also support specific projects for youth and Aboriginal women in Surrey.

**About the Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls Working Group**

The Surrey Vulnerable Women and Girls (SVWG) Working Group formed in 2012 to collaboratively understand the challenges and needs of vulnerable females in Surrey and find workable solutions. In 2014/2015 the working-group undertook **“In Their Own Words”** a research project about the challenges/barriers vulnerable women and youth experienced and the services and housing they need.

**The following organizations are represented on the SVWG Working Group:** BC Housing, City of Surrey – Crime Reduction & Social Planning, Elizabeth Fry Society, Fraser Health Authority – Surrey Mental Health and Substance Use Services, Lookout Emergency Aid Society, MCFD, Options Community Services, Pacific Community Resources Society, Public Safety Canada, Surrey RCMP, Surrey Women’s Centre, and the YWCA.

For more information about the SVWG Working Group contact Co-Chairs Michelle Shaw at [MShaw@pcrs.ca](mailto:MShaw@pcrs.ca) and Bonnie Moriarty at [Bonnie.Moriarty@elizabethfry.com](mailto:Bonnie.Moriarty@elizabethfry.com).