



Women - Mayor's Task Force on

*Mayor's Task Force
on the Status of
Women in Toronto*

newsletter

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ABORTION REFERRAL SERVICES INVESTIGATED BY TASK FORCE

Some abortion referral services were described as potentially "dangerous to the life and health of women," in a report to the City's Board of Health released on Friday, June 21, 1974.

The Mayor's Task Force on the Status of Women in Toronto said in the report that the City should licence agencies that provide counselling services on abortions for pregnant women.

The Task Force studied abortion referral services in Metropolitan Toronto for 6 months. Its findings show that some services advertised in Toronto newspapers have referred pregnant women to doctors whose practices are currently under investigation by law enforcement agencies.

The Task Force report also documents the experiences of Toronto women who have used abortion referral agencies.

"Any agency which gives advice on medical problems should be controlled by law", says the Task Force.

Total fees for some abortion referral services are \$450. For that money some women have been sent to motel rooms across the border for operations.

The Task Force report also lists criteria for abortion services that would protect women from unscrupulous "abortion mills".

The Local Board of Health decided to refer the report to the Attorney General for Ontario, the Minister of Health, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, the Division of Obstetrician and Gynaecology of the Ontario Medical Association, for specific comments, with the request that they respect the confidentiality of this material; and to advise them that the Board views this matter with grave concern and would appreciate receiving their comments as soon as possible.

TORONTO WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP

In the second issue of the newsletter we reported on postpartum discussion sessions which were being planned by the Toronto Women's Health Group.

The sessions have begun and are being held every Friday from 10:00 am to 11:30 am at the Western YWCA, 3179 Dundas Street West.

The Toronto Women's Health Group welcomes interested women to join them in these discussions. For further information call Cathy Brown at 763-6966.

CANADIAN HOUSEWIVES REGISTER

An organization formed for housewives may seem somewhat passé these days with more and more women joining the work force, but the Canadian Housewives Register is growing in size and strength. Besides, its not exclusively for housewives but is open to any "lively minded" woman who wants to join other women for intelligent conversation, informative lectures, stimulating social and cultural activities.

The idea of a Register for Housewives originated in England in 1960 to help housewives combat stagnation and to assist in finding friends of similar outlook; especially when tied by a family or moving to live in a new location. There are now over 700 groups in Great Britain today.

The first CHR was formed in Montreal in 1967; there are now over 25 groups in Ontario and Quebec.

It is a national, voluntary, non-profit organization, concerned with providing housewives the opportunity to find people of similar outlook, quickly and easily, in their community and join in intelligent conversation and stimulating social and cultural pursuits with like-minded friends.

A means whereby the housewife can retain her own personality and identity, while rearing her family, outside the home.

A Toronto group started about 3 years ago, is growing and includes both housewives and working mothers.

If you want to know more, please write to:

Rita Eggleton, Publicity Chairman-CHR
60 Southport Street, Apt. 219,
Toronto, Ontario

WOMEN CROWN EMPLOYEE OFFICE

The Women Crown Employee Office exists to stimulate and facilitate career opportunities for women Crown employees and maintain a watching brief on equal opportunity for women in the employment policies and practices of the Civil Service, Public Service and Crown Agencies.

A few of its objectives are: to raise from present levels the number of women Crown employees selected, promoted, trained and appointed to positions in the public service, boards, commissions and agencies of the Crown; to provide leadership as an employer to other employers in the province; and to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

The Women Crown Employee Office has the Status of a branch of the provincial department of Labour. It has been established to assist the government as an employer to increase career opportunities for its women employees.

This branch will play a program development and coordinating and monitoring role. It is intended that deputy ministers and Crown Agency heads will be responsible for implementing an equal opportunity program for their own employees through the assignment of specific responsibilities to staff in their own ministry or agency.

For further information call the office at 965-0564.

PROPERTY LAWS MAY REFLECT
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

A report on property law by the Ontario Law Reform Commission recommends that the principle of co-ownership of the matrimonial home be made applicable retroactively to all marriages in Ontario. The recommendation was one of 165 contained in a report released in March.

It was recommended that spouses share equally in the proceeds from any sale of the matrimonial home and that the right to the use of household goods should remain with the spouse occupying the home until a court determines otherwise.

Most of the changes recommended by the Commission would apply to marriages contracted after new legislation is passed unless couples already married choose to sign documents agreeing to the new terms. The exceptions are those dealing with the matrimonial home and support obligations to children, parents and incapacitated spouses which would apply to all marriages.

The report also recommends that spouses should own separately assets brought to the marriage or acquired during the marriage as gifts, inheritances, etc. In case of death or divorce or upon application to the court the value of property acquired during the marriage would be calculated and the spouse with the greater estate would make payment to the other to equalize their economic positions.

(Women at Work, April, 1974)

PHN'S SUCCEED IN REPRESENTATION
AT TORONTO BOARD OF HEALTH

The Local Board of Health at its June 21 meeting approved in principle that Public Health Nurse representatives from the eight District Health Offices should attend Board of Health Meetings.

The Board also approved in principle similar representation from other Divisions of the Department of Public Health.

The Board requested the Medical Officer of Health to report at its next meeting to be held on July 11 on the implementation of these proposals.

It was pointed out that arrangements had been made for the distribution of agendas and minutes of the Local Board of Health to all District Health Offices in Toronto.

Public Health Nurses employed by the City have worked through the Task Force on Projects including venereal disease, cancer detection, and sexual discrimination.

PHOTOGRAPHY LESSONS FOR WOMEN

The Baldwin Street Gallery is sponsoring a summer course in basic photography for women. Cost is \$30 for 4 lessons, once per week. It is anticipated that there will be 2 sets of lessons, the first beginning in mid July, the second in August.

Although the Gallery is closed for the summer, it will be open for classes, and the darkroom facilities will be available to students on a 24 hour per day basis.

For further information, contact Laura Jones, Baldwin St. Gallery - 364-2630.

UNWED MOTHERS UNLIMITED

Unwed Mothers Unlimited (U.M.U.) is a group of concerned individuals involved in the organization of a social service program designed to assist unwed mothers in adapting to their new way of life.

The UMU program will deal specifically with mothers falling into 3 categories: Working Unwed Mothers, Expectant Unwed Mothers, and Unemployed Unwed Mothers.

Their primary goal is to deal with the motivation, education and stimulation of women in this difficult situation and to supplement the actions of existing programs. They will also provide child care facilities while mothers attend classes and try to act as a buffer mechanism to relieve the strain of the child caring experience.

The result will be a concentrated effort to help the mother maintain herself in this new change of lifestyle. However, they will only offer supportive assistance, not psychological counseling. Persons requiring such specialized assistance will be referred to professionals, under guidance of one of their resource personnel.

For further information about the program, please phone Joanna Anaquod or Cathy Ainsborough at 782-5486.

AMAZON WORKSHOP

Amazon Workshop has opened on 12 Kensington Avenue (near Dundas and Spadina). They are a feminist bookstore, a press, and a self-defence centre.

The bookstore carries literature by, for and about women, non-sexist children's books, and posters.

The press does general offset printing and xeroxes, and will be offering printing courses.

The self-defence centre offers basic 6 week courses in self-defence, and one extended course.

It is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights (5-10 pm) and Thursday and Saturday (10 am - 8 pm) for workouts, a drop-in and classes. The centre is also being used for a Tai-Chi class (Friday at 7 pm). The bookstore and press are open on weekdays and Saturdays.

Donations of money or equipment (desks, chairs, carpets, gym equipment) are much needed. Drop by or phone 862-0414 or 5.

KNOW YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

Are you interested in discussing married women's property rights? The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women has arranged for several informed individuals to be available to address interested groups.

If you would like to have a speaker or resource person attend a meeting to discuss your rights under the existing law, as well as under the recommended changes, please write or call:

The Ontario Committee on the
Status of Women,
511 - 300 St. Clair Ave. W.
Toronto. (920-3366)

DID YOU KNOW ?

Did you know that Executive Orders in the USA prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex by federal contractors and sub-contractors?

It specifically requires that government contractors and sub-contractors institute affirmative action programs designed to insure hiring without regard to sex. This encompasses over 225,000 firms doing business with the government.

The Executive Orders are administered by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance (OFCC) which is an agency within the Department of Labor.

The OFCC has the strong enforcement option of cancelling contracts where sexual discrimination or lack of affirmative action has been found. In addition to private firms, the OFCC through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, has authority over institutions of higher learning.

Some traumatic confrontations have occurred between universities and HEW on affirmative action for women. Because of its strong enforcement option, the OFCC has probably exerted greater pressure than any other agency.

"Full Utilization of Women in Employment: The Problem and an Action Program", by Dennis Slevin; Human Resource Management, Spring, 1973.

NELLIE'S

A new hostel for women, managed by the Board of Women's Hostels, Inc., and funded by Metro Social Services, opened on June 7th. Located at 275 Broadview Avenue, the hostel provides beds for 30 women aged 16 and up, and 2 full meals a day for a maximum 7 day stay.

The Hostel has been named for Nellie McClung, well known suffragette, and it provides accommodation for women in emergency situations. Because of limited staff (6 members) for the number of accommodations available, women who use the facilities are asked to leave between the hours of 10:00 am and 5:00 pm to facilitate cleaning, cooking, etc.

Proving the need for this type of service, there has been a good response to the hostel since its opening.

For more information phone 461-1084.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

The Task Force would like to hear your comments or suggestions about its newsletter.

Also, if you or your group have any articles you would like us to include in the Newsletter, please mail them to:

The Newsletter
Mayor's Task Force on the
Status of Women in Toronto,
8th Floor, East Tower,
City Hall, Toronto.

Submission deadline is the first of the month. We look forward to hearing from you.

BOOKS

The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women has a pamphlet explaining the existing law regarding marriage and property rights and the changes recommended by the Law Reform Commission. Write to the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women, 511-300 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto. Enclose 25¢ per copy.

A small publication with a lot of good advice for women who live, walk, or drive alone is "Self Protection for Girls and Women". It contains an introduction by Prof. J.W. Mohr, Reform Commissioner of Canada and its contents have been authorized by a number of Canadian police associations. Recommended for readers ages 13 and up. Copies 25¢ each - multiple rates available on request. Summerhill Press, Box 156, Station Q, Toronto.

Women at Work contains news and views about Canadian women. It is published bi-monthly by Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour, 340 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa.

Options for Women is a group associated with the Alberta Women's Bureau, working under a Priority Employment grant to establish a women's newsletter. To contribute articles or information, or to subscribe, write to SOURCE, Alberta Women's Newsletter, 10006 - 107th Street, Edmonton, Alberta.

"Films by Women", a catalogue produced by the Canadian Filmmaker's Distribution Centre, gives a brief synopsis of each film and outlines the conditions governing film rental. Further information may be obtained from the Centre at 406 Jarvis Street, Toronto.

Alert is the idea filled newsletter of the Federation of Organizations for Professional Women in the USA. Personal and group memberships are available for \$10.00 up. Send to 3336 Broad Branch Terrace NW, Washington, D.C. 20008.