



The 2011 Representative's Award of Excellence: Lifetime Achievement Tracy Porteous

Tracy Porteous has been working to improve the lives of children, youth and families in B.C. for more than 30 years. In her career she has paid special attention to the safety and security of those that are marginalized – Aboriginal women, immigrant and refugee women, women of colour, gay/lesbian and transgendered victims of domestic and sexual violence.

People have described her as the most innovative, passionate and principled advocate they have met – dedicated to improve the safety of women and children. Focused and steadfast are other adjectives that have been applied to Tracy.

From 1995 to the present day she has worked as the Executive Director of the Ending Violence Association of B.C. This provincial organization works on behalf of B.C.'s sexual assault centres, community based victim service programs, stopping the violence counselors and outreach workers.

Prior to that she worked at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre - first as a school based educator and publications development coordinator; then manager of the crisis line and emergency response program and volunteer coordinator; and finally as executive director. During all this time she provided direct support to women and girls who had been sexually assaulted and their families. She worked closely with police, the Crown and child protection services; raised funds; developed policy and new programming; and as the media contact and subject matter expert, was often called upon to speak about these issues to the public.

She has had direct involvement at a provincial and national level in the development of government policies on violence against women in relationships, sexual assault and child abuse, and education and training to support those policy implementations.

She has persisted in bringing forward difficult issues and standing up for unpopular ones such as the impact of cuts to services or lack of coordinated policy response to violence against women. She has overcome these challenges by being positive, diplomatic, engaging and presenting evidence based research supporting her concerns.

Tracy is one of women and children's strongest allies and her work is a testament to that dedication and passion.

From the very beginning Tracy's vision has been to engage various community partners and individuals in order to create social change and impact policy to improve the lives of women and children. She is a born leader and a strong advocate who is respected across B.C. for the support she and her organization provide.

Tracy has and continues to participate in discussions with governments, service providers and other provincial initiatives to advocate for systemic changes and improve the lives of British Columbians. Ending Violence Association of B.C. has developed resources, training and has excellent initiatives, public awareness campaigns and created links to a world of information. Ending Violence Association of B.C. has succeeded in this with her leadership. We owe her a debt of gratitude and I hope she will be honoured for her tireless efforts.