

# The Fundy Network

International Institute Restorative Practices Conference

Halifax, Nova Scotia

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## **HEALING APPROACH TO SENIOR ABUSE**

# RESPONSES TO SENIOR ABUSE

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1980-2000 - establish senior abuse as an issue

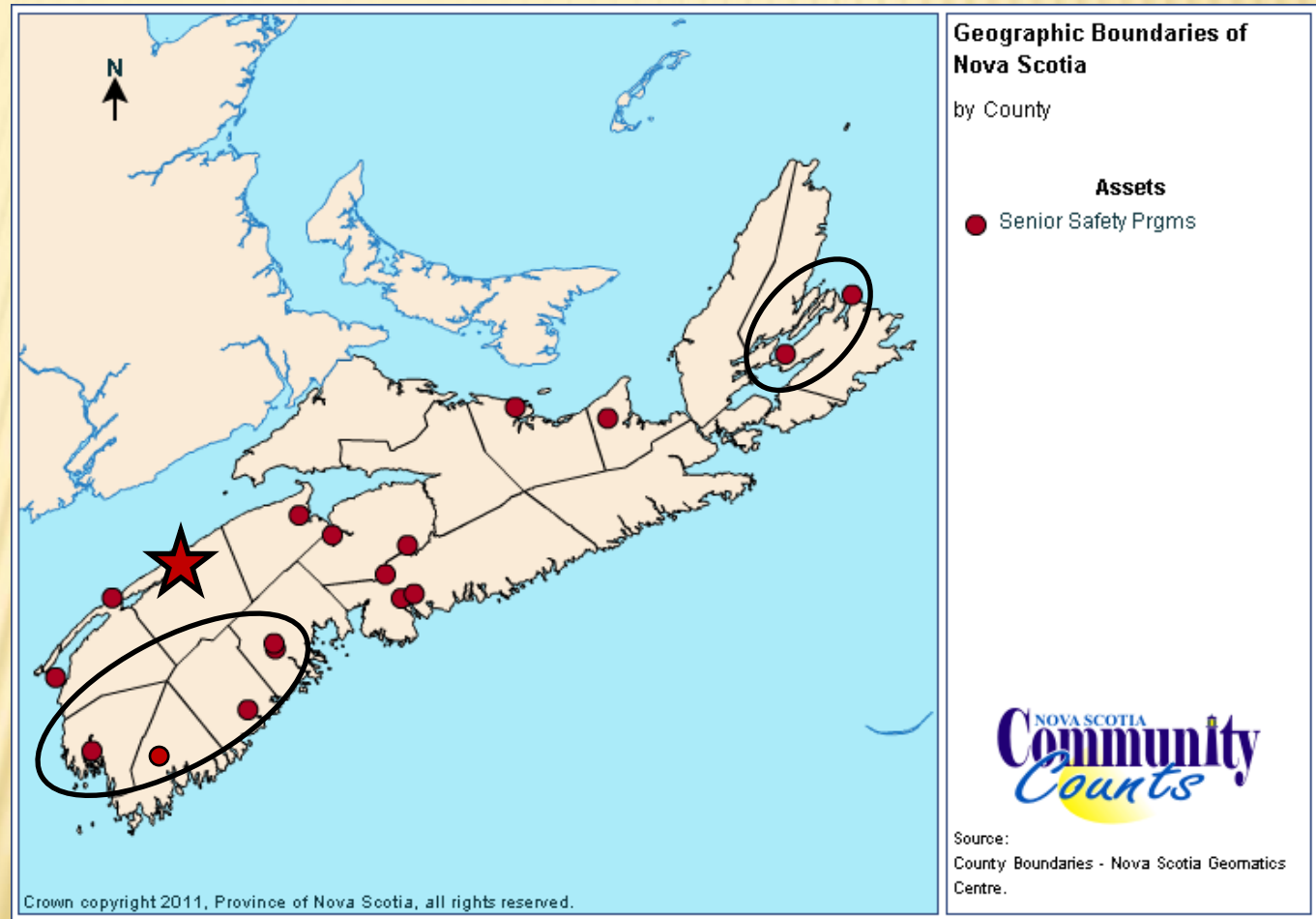
2000-2010 - create a formal provincial plan to prevent senior abuse through awareness

2010 and on - continued prevention and awareness, but also develop senior focused responses

# SENIOR SAFETY PROGRAMS

★ **First Seniors' Safety Program created in Annapolis County in 1996.**

○ **New Programs since 2008**



# SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To ensure that seniors continue to feel safe in their homes.



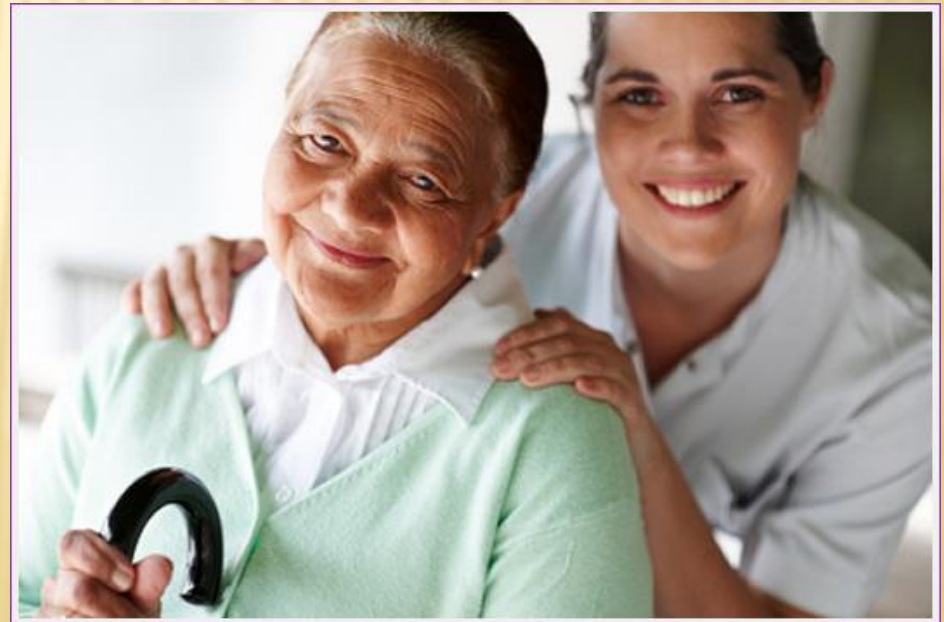
# SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To work in strengthening the lines of communication between our seniors and the police.



# SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To enhance the well being of our senior population through education and awareness of health and safety issues.



# SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

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To increase crime prevention practices and decrease potential senior abuse among seniors in their communities.



# CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS

- Adult Protection
- Care Coordinators
- Police
- Health Clinics
- Mental Health
- Friendly Visitors
- Recreation
- Nurse Practitioners
- Affordable Housing





# WHO ARE WE SEEING

- Living alone with Dementia
- Living with Mental Illness
- Lonely, Isolated, Depressed
- 911 Calls
- Widows/widowers
- General Fears
- Victims of Abuse



# THE REALITY OF SENIOR ABUSE

## Seniors:

- Are not aware what they are experiencing may be a crime
- Feel fear or shame that a family member is hurting them
- Need the abuser for errands, appointments, to maintain independence
- Do not want the abuser to get in trouble with police



# THE REALITY OF SENIOR ABUSE

## Seniors:

- Just want abuse to stop
- Isolated and just want to have friends
- Does not want to cause family friction
- Blame themselves
- Afraid to be labeled “senile”



# SENIOR ABUSE

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## Family:

- Caregiver fatigue, lack of resources
- Disagrees with seniors judgment
- Feels entitled to the money, might hope to pay it back
- Addictions to drugs or gambling



# SENIOR ABUSE

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## Police:

- Lack evidence
- No crime
- Senior doesn't recognize the situation as abuse
- Civil matter not criminal matter
- Futile Charge

# WHAT OUTCOMES DOES THE SENIOR SEEK?

- The harm to cease
- Support - a voice
- Respect
- Accountability
- Relations back to a good place
- Support and guidance to resolve problems
- Support to proceed with more formal actions



# WHAT CAN A RESTORATIVE APPROACH OFFER IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES?

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- A safe and managed process for difficult discussions
- A chance for accountability
- A future focused plan of support
- A chance to explore underlying issues and seek solutions
- Support for all parties



# WHAT PARTIES ARE INVOLVED?

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## **Adversarial System**

The Victim, offender and community members have a limited role in the resolution of the offence.

## **Restorative System**

Each is given an active role in the resolution of the offence.



# HOW IS SUCCESS MEASURED?

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## **Adversarial System      Restorative System**

Success is measured by how much punishment has been imposed.

Success is measured by how much harm has been repaired or prevented.

# THE NOVA SCOTIA RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM

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## **All restorative models provide an opportunity to:**

- Hold the offender accountable in a more meaningful way
- Repair the harm caused by the offender
- Reintegrate the offender
- Achieve a sense of healing for the victim and the community
- Includes facilitator, co-facilitator, offender, supporters, victim, victim supporters, community representatives, investigating officer

# WHAT DOES A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SESSION LOOK LIKE?

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## A Face to Face Meeting To:

- Talk about the impact of the crime
- Identify what steps are needed to make amends
- Make an agreement outlining how the offender will make reparation
- Examples: victim-offender mediation; family group conferencing; sentencing circles

# OUR TEAM IN THE FUNDY REGION

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Service Providers

First Nations

Representatives

Seniors

Researchers



Elder Law  
Specialists

Government  
Representatives

Acadian  
Representatives

African Nova Scotian Representatives

# OUR VALUES

Connections

Community Building

Healing



## SHARED VALUES

- Humility
- Compassion
- Open Mindedness
- Fairness
- Justice

- Respect
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Listening
- Trust
- Love

- Wisdom
- Accountability
- Helpfulness
- Non Judgment
- Everyone has a story

# GOALS OF THE FUNDY NETWORK:

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- Develop a shared vision for a healing response to senior abuse and pilot program model
- Build awareness and commitment to a healing approach to senior abuse through outreach and knowledge sharing
- Outline a cross organizational approach for restoratively grounded responses to elder abuse
- Create a program that is culturally safe to all Nova Scotians and respects diversity

# OPPORTUNITIES

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*Healing*

*Advocacy*

*Accountability*

*Reconciliation*

*Peace*

*Forgiveness*

*Relationships*

*Support*



# HOW TO REACH US

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Today's presenters from the Fundy Network :

- ❖ Dawn Thomas: dawn.thomas@rcmp-grc.gc.ca
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- ❖ Pat Gorham: gorhampm@gov.ns.ca
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Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

~Mark Twain