

**For Immediate Release**

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**COBOURG POLICE RECRUIT CORNERSTONE FOR VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
RESPONSE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT**

Northumberland County - Cobourg Police recruits Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre to help develop the Violence Against Women (VAW) Response Enhancement Project; a collaboration in which the Police invite Cornerstone to assist in the review of sexual assault, domestic and intimate partner violence cases. The Project is based upon the National Framework for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) to transfer knowledge and skills, in order to increase advocacy on behalf of victims, as well as promote a better understanding of crime prevention through social development.

Twenty-five thousand dollars was allocated last fall by the police board for this initiative with the intention of having a designated Cornerstone staff member to review files and cases with the intent of offering feedback and suggestions to provide more responsive service to victims, as well as helping to incorporate elements of risk mitigation. Cornerstone staff will also make contact and offer assistance to victims. The VAW Response Enhancement Project is different than pre-existing programs in that it provides those who are assisting victims to view police reports, enabling a new level of collaboration which will enhance advocacy on behalf of victims.

“We have always had a great relationship with the police service, and we are excited to be involved in this project,” says Executive Director, Nancy Johnston. “Cornerstone is happy to bring our expertise to the table to enhance the standard practices of VAW cases and to facilitate services to victims to help break the cycle of family violence”

The VAW Response Enhancement Project is very unique. Assault reporting is low nationally, calling police forces to the forefront to update practices to better meet the needs of victims. Cobourg Police is aware of the lack of victim advocacy in small police services, like Cobourg’s, and recognizes the need to bring in the expertise of a third party agency. It is 1 of 5 services provincially to express openness to having a program like this in place; thus, partnering with Cornerstone provides a higher level of understanding and training, as well as a direct link to the immediate services available to victims, ultimately increasing a feeling of safety and non-judgment to those reporting.

“I am pleased that we are able to tap into the expertise of Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre to provide enhance support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault,” says Chief of Police, Kai Liu. “This partnership lends the appropriate support to develop a more sensitive, victim-centered response to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault cases.”

For more information please contact Deputy Chief Paul VandeGraaf, [paul.vandegraaf@cobourgpolic.com](mailto:paul.vandegraaf@cobourgpolic.com), or Community Services Manger Jane Lang at [klang@cornerstonenorthumberland.ca](mailto:klang@cornerstonenorthumberland.ca).

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