



Peel School Board program helps to stereotype boys as “perpetrators” and girls as “victims” of violence

By Mike March, Justice Reporter

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As if boys were not already facing enough daunting challenges within an education system in which boys are falling behind the girls at alarming rates, things have taken yet a further step backwards for them in the Region of Peel.

Recently, a parent visiting his children’s school was shocked to see brochures of a program being promoted in the schools by the Peel District Board of Education which unfairly targets only one gender as the perpetrator of domestic violence while completely ignoring the other. Men of course are the ones labelled as the bad guys in this ill conceived program which appears to be geared into indoctrinating children to accepting the anti-male agenda of radical feminist and women’s shelter groups.

The program is called, “Breaking the Silence”, is being promoted with the assistance of Interim Place and the Salvation Army Honeychurch Family life Resource Centre, both of which are shelters for women only. No battered or abused men welcomed in these places, of course.

Brochures being distributed to students and teachers are biased and deal with only the issue of woman abuse while totally ignoring the issue of domestic violence against men. Rather than dealing with the issue of domestic violence in an accurate manner and recognizing that domestic violence is a problem affecting both genders, the program refers to domestic violence using the term “woman abuse.”

The gender bias and stereotyping of men as abusers is glaring in the program’s brochure. In bold letters one title reads, “Women abuse is about control.” A second heading reads, “Women abuse is a serious crime.”

In the body of the brochure there are other statements intended to twist the truth and to influence young mind about the issue of domestic violence. One statement for example reads, “one out of two men who beat their partners were abused as children.”

Another statement reports that six women are killed each year in Ontario by their current or former partner. No sources of these claims were included and no figures were included about women who have physically or psychologically abused their partners or women who have killed their husbands and children.

The producers of the brochure appear to be so blinded by their own agenda that they even contradict themselves. In the brochure it describes that one sign of a child who has witnessed domestic violence is one who has learned rigid gender roles – “men are mean and strong, woman are weak and helpless”. Yet the writers of the brochure are teaching the same rigid gender roles by attempting to indoctrinate children into believing that men are perpetrators of violence and that the only form of domestic violence is “women abuse.”

Promoting this type of program and distributing this sort of misleading information in the schools can actually promote violence by contributing to an environment in the community which makes it more difficult for children and fathers to get help from community agencies when they are the victims of female perpetrated violence.

Many school age children in Ontario, including many young girls, have reported during videotaped interviews that not only have their mothers assaulted them, but assaulted their fathers and siblings as well. What was very disturbing was that many of these children reported that nobody in the system would do anything to help them or their family members and as a result, nothing was ever done about violence being perpetrated by their mothers. Some of these children reported being forcefully taken back to their abusive mothers by police and children’s aid workers who refused to believe that their mothers were abusing them.

Many children living in mother controlled households would have second thoughts about reporting abuse by their mothers as literature in the

schools is telling them that support agencies in the community take the position that only boys and men do the abusing.

Children and fathers often report that authorities will seldom take action against mothers because of the perception amongst many workers with agencies in the community, including police and children's aid society workers, that men are the only perpetrators of domestic violence.

An officer with the Halton Police once reported to a father of a teenage girl who had been chased out of the house by her mother who was brandishing a butcher knife, that it was politically incorrect for police officers to lay charges against mothers, especially when police have to have children testify against their own mothers. In that case, the officer said that police could only help the teenage girl if she was to come back to them with physical injuries to prove that her mother had actually assaulted her.

Contrary to the false information that women shelters try to pass off as the truth to mislead the public, there are numerous credible studies which show that domestic violence is a two way street and men are indeed victimized by their female partners in significant numbers. Statistics Canada itself publishes statistics which show rates of domestic violence between partners are very similar when it comes to gender.

A recent (January 2007) compilation of scholarly studies specifically relating to the issue of women on men violence was done by Martin Fiebert Ph.D., a researcher with Department of Psychology at the California State University. Dr. Fiebert has published a bibliography of the reports in a publication called, *“References Examining Assaults By Women On Their Spouses Or Male Partners: An Annotated Bibliography”* which can be downloaded on the internet at <http://www.csulb.edu/~mfiebert/assault.htm>. This bibliography examines 196 scholarly investigations: 153 empirical studies and 43 reviews and/or analyses, which demonstrate that women are as physically aggressive, or more aggressive, than men in their relationships with their spouses or male partners.

Jeremy Swanson, a father's rights activists from Ottawa, Ontario said that the literature being used to promote this program at Peel schools was nothing more than hate propaganda which clearly was out to smear and label a clearly identifiable group – men and boys.

“It is an example of how radical feminist groups are spreading their hate of men into our schools and into the minds of our young children,” said Swanson.

One teacher with the Peel Board who asked not to be identified said that Peel's “Breaking the Silence” campaign is misleading and fails to recognize the truth about the dynamics of domestic violence

“The program and the materials being circulated to students and teachers is definitely not the calibre of educational materials that the Board should be exposing to young, impressionable minds.

“Spoon fed enough of this kind of indoctrination children will eventually develop the unhealthy view that only men and boys are responsible for domestic violence,” he said

If the Peel Board of Education is concerned about protecting children from abuse, then why does it not promote materials which deal with all forms of abuse?

For example, the vast majority of child abuse is perpetuated by mothers and statistics clearly support this. But the Peel Board of Education chooses instead to focus in on only one form of violence, “woman abuse” while ignoring other forms of abuse which affects children. All forms of violence and abuse are wrong.

Publicly funded schools should be places where children receive an education, not get indoctrinated with an ideology being pushed by the women shelter movement. Tax dollars should not be used to bend young minds into believing that every woman as a victim and every male as a perpetrator of woman abuse.

Painting all men as the cause of domestic violence will not help the problem but only make it worse by promoting distrust between boys and girls and intensifying the gender wars being fuelled by the radical feminists.

How many of our young male children have been adversely affected by this program? How many young, impressionable male minds now view themselves as worthless and see a bleak future after being taught that the rest of the world has labelled them as abusers as part of that group of society called males? It's no wonder why the male suicide rate in Canada far outstrips that of women.

Hopefully, the Peel District Board of Education will see the light and return to the job of educating our children professionally without gender bias as the community expects.

The Peel Board must stop being an accomplice to the anti-male, hateful programs being pushed by radical feminists and local women's shelter organizations such as Interim Place and the Salvation Army Honeychurch Family life Resource Centre.