

Every door is the right door

Friday May 1 2009
Headwaters - Your Health Matters

Gone are the days when we could leave our front doors unlocked; when we did not need to look over our shoulders when we walked to our cars in the dark. As cynical and pessimistic as this may sound, domestic violence and sexual assault is a real problem in all communities, and Orangeville is no exception.

May is sexual assault prevention month and the Sunrise Program wants to remind survivors of sexual assault that help is available. The Sunrise Program provides information on services and community agencies at www.sunriseprogram.ca.

"No matter which door you choose to enter for treatment is the right door," says Tracey Vail, registered nurse and specially trained sexual assault nurse examiner at Headwaters Health Care Centre's emergency department.

When a woman, man, teen or child chooses to come to Headwaters' Sunrise Centre for the treatment of a sexual assault, they are met by a highly skilled triage nurse within our emergency department.

After consenting to see one of our trained sexual assault nurse examiners or sexual assault trained nurses, they are placed in our Sunrise Centre, which is a totally separate and secure area.

"We take our time and only go at the pace that the survivor is comfortable with," states Vail. "We respect that the survivor is always in control."

There are many choices the survivor will need to make, but with the guidance of one of our specially trained nurses every option is reviewed with care. Individuals receive crisis counselling, medical treatment for injuries and to prevent sexually transmitted infections, and forensic evidence is collected — for use at a later date if the survivor chooses to pursue legal action.

If you or someone you know needs help, please contact a Sunrise Program community agency:

- Headwaters Sunrise Centre, 519-941-2410, ext. 2214
- Family Transition Place, 519-941-HELP (4375)
- Dufferin Child and Family Services, 519-941-1530
- Caledon- Dufferin Victim Services, 519-942-1452
- Ministry of the Attorney General, 519-941-4471
- Ministry of Community Safety and Corrections, 519-941-4622
- Caledon OPP, 1-905-584-2241
- Dufferin OPP, 519-925-3838
- Shelburne Police, 519-925-3312
- Orangeville Police, 519-941-2522
- Trellis Mental Health, 519-941-0465
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, 1-800-265-7293, ext. 5666

Your Health Matters is a column dealing with health and healthy lifestyles in this community, which is submitted by various health-related organizations.