



December 17th

International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers

Tomorrow, December 17th, is International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers. WISH supports an average of 350 women each day in Vancouver's street-based sex trade; arguably the most dangerous form of sex work with the least amount of choice. This is a group of women who are particularly marginalized – targeted with an alarming amount of violence *because* they are women and *because* they are sex workers.

“Sex workers work in the most dangerous environments and experience by far the highest homicide rates of any occupational group. Studies have shown that 98% of female sex workers on the Downtown Eastside have been victims of violence as a result of “bad dates.”

A 30-year study of female sex workers in Colorado Springs, Colorado identified...the workplace homicide rate for female sex workers was found to be 50 times higher than that of the next highest occupational risk group...¹

The Bad Reports we collect, for example, show the extent and severity of targeted violence against women in street-based sex trade. The work of WISH is difficult and often frustrating but it is with your support that we are able to further our vision that every woman should have access to opportunities to make free, healthy and positive choices.

When you support WISH, you directly increase women's health and safety opportunities.

Give a Gift that Changes Lives

¹ Lisa Gibson and Tiah Goldstein, *Living in Community: Balancing Perspectives on Vancouver's Sex Industry* (Vancity Community Foundation, 2007)

BAD DATE REPORTS: WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

A big part of what WISH MAP Van, Drop-In, and office staff do is facilitating the collection and distribution of information about “bad dates” amongst sex workers who access WISH’s services (and hopefully beyond).

Vancouver’s Bad Date Sheet used to be compiled by DEYAS (the now defunct Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Society) until 2005, when WISH took over compiling the reports.

We currently collect “bad date” reports from women and circulate the renamed, weekly **Red Light Alert** to over 180 sex workers, outreach and support workers, organizations and law enforcement agencies across the Lower Mainland. Sex workers can let WISH know when they have had a bad date by either ‘formally’ reporting a bad date (i.e. filling out a bad date form either with a staff member or on their own to be included in the Red Light Alert) or sometimes, folks prefer to informally share a warning with the staff to communicate amongst the women we see out working.

Letting WISH know about bad dates and predators, by any means, helps sex workers communicate potential threats to their peers and thus improving their safety while they work. Hopefully, the mechanism of reporting bad dates deters some potential attackers. It’s also an additional mechanism for law enforcement to spot trends and further investigate complaints and reports about perpetrators and predators.

When women come to WISH and tell us they have had a bad date we listen in a supportive, non-judgmental way; really exercising our sensitivity and focus as support workers.

The image shows a 'Bad Date Reporting Form' with the following sections:

- Staff Name/Contact on:** _____
- Date of incident:** _____
- State of incident:** _____
- City/Village/Town/Other:** _____
- Gender:** _____
- Age:** _____
- Time of incident:** _____ AM _____ PM
- Vehicle picked up:** _____
- Vehicle of incident:** _____
- Location of vehicle:** _____
- Vehicle type:** Taxi Cab Truck Other _____
- Color:** _____
- Make/Model:** _____
- Year:** _____
- License Plate:** _____
- Other info:** _____
- DOB / New:** _____
- Number of vehicles:** _____
- Anything on the seat:** _____
- Other info of vehicle:** _____
- Other details about the car:** _____
- Height:** _____
- Weight:** _____
- Build (Slender/Stocky/Lean):** _____
- Hair Color:** _____
- Eye Color:** _____
- Build (Slender/Stocky/Lean):** _____
- Other info of suspect:** _____
- Address:** _____
- Phone:** _____
- Other info:** _____
- What happened:** _____