

You Are Not Alone

Signs

Videos For The Peer Anti-Violence Education Project (PAVE)

The idea for this project came from women of the DTES. They reported an urgent need for both written and non-written resources for peer educators and advocates to be able to support women in staying safe and protecting themselves. In particular, they wanted to reach those who have low literacy levels, are inadequately housed, involved in the sex trade, are substance using and facing complex health issues.

At their request, the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA) produced a plain language safety planning kit and two videos, written and performed by the peer group themselves, that made safety information useful to women in the DTES.

I had the opportunity and the honour to be the video mentor on the project.

You Are Not Alone dramatizes and gives information on planning for personal safety. *Signs* portrays messages that the peer group wanted to express about their own values and experiences. Working with Rose, Darcy, Sandy, Terra and all the others in the PAVE Working Group was a great experience. We mostly hear the media, the politicians, or the “experts” talking about “marginalized women in the DTES”. In these two pieces we hear them in their own voices, --powerful, real, speaking out of their own lives!

This project was funded by The Vancouver Foundation, The Tula Community Fund, and the Canadian Women’s Foundation. It ran between August 2008 and May 2009 and was headed by Tracy Porteous the Executive Director of EVA and developed with Project Facilitator, Hayely Sinclair and Story Consultant, Deblekha Guin.