

Peer counselling most effective route

# Campus Connection looking for volunteers

Leala Birnboim  
The university experience is probably one of the most stressful situations in one's life. Those experiencing stress are usually advised to "talk it out". But finding a good person to talk to can be a problem. Karen Stewart, the coordinator of The Campus Connection, believes she has people who are willing to listen.

Stewart, who received her diploma in social work from Sir Sanford Fleming College in 1969 and worked for eleven years in child welfare, is at present working on her Bachelor of Social Work degree at York. She also recruits and trains volunteers for The Campus Connection. "The idea of The Campus Connection" says Stewart, "is one of students helping

students, peer counsellors (as they are called) are much less threatening than psychologists, psychiatrists or therapists. To come and speak to one of our volunteers, there is no need for the student to convince himself that he has a 'real' problem. And our counsellors are *not* therapists", she emphasizes. "If we think a student needs to see a professional, we will refer him to one."

The volunteers, who may range from undergraduate to mature students and who include both males and females, are first screened by Stewart in order to ensure that they understand what is expected of them --that is, that they be available "not to give advice, but to listen and be

supportive, and to suggest alternatives to people seeking help." "Total confidentiality", says Stewart, "is always strictly maintained, and all volunteers are trained in this respect." Volunteers receive 20 hours of initial training as well as ongoing training, and most have had previous experience with various forms of social work.

What kind of problems do students bring to the volunteers at The Campus Connection? "Previously", say Stewart, the emphasis was more on sexuality and birth control. Now we find people are also coming to us with problems involving personal and social relationships, academic pressures and all kinds of stress in general. We want to emphasize that we offer support in all of these areas."

Volunteers are needed now and



Karen Stewart, new co-ordinator of the Campus Connection.

Photo: Hmbura

those wanting to offer their services or those wanting to make use of The Campus Connection themselves can call Karen Stewart at 667-3509 or 667-3632 or come to room 026/027, Mc Laughlin College.

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## Ombudsman to act as lightning rod

J. Brett Abbey

In the aftermath of last year's conflicts between York resident students and the University's food services, the department of Ancillary Services has decided to hire a paid Food Service Ombudsman. The University Food and Beverage Services Committee passed a motion to create the position last April, after examining the success of a similar ombudsman at the University of Guelph.

The Ombudsman must become familiar with the operational and organizational functioning of York's food services, and must be aware of student concerns. The holder of the position will be an upper level

resident student, and will be directly responsible to the UFBS.

The Ombudsman will provide an open and easily accessible channel of communication between the UFBS and the York community. In an interview with *Excalibur*, Norman Crandles, York Housing and Food Services Manager, says the Ombudsman will essentially "act as a visible lightning rod", immediately available to receive and register justified grievances for thorough investigation by the UFBS.

In addition, Crandles believes, "the Ombudsman's first year in office will act as a trial stage, in

which to identify some of the major problems within the food services." According to Crandles, "the main success of the Guelph University Ombudsman relies heavily on his being accessible to students by maintaining a specified number of office hours."

At the present time, York's department of Housing and Food Services has no definite plans for the Ombudsman's office. Crandles did however, suggest that "large photographs could be taken of the Ombudsman and mounted in each of the dining areas on campus." This, he believes, would increase the Ombudsman's visibility.

## Women's Awareness Program

Organized by: CYSF and Women's Centre

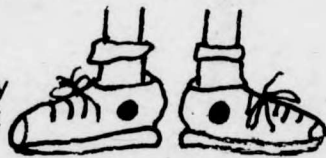
- September 28: "Battered Women"**  
12:00 Film "Loved, Honored and Bruised"  
Bear Pit
- September 29: "Rape"**  
12:00 Film "Why Men Rape"  
Karate Demonstration "Defendo".  
What can you do if you are attacked?
- September 30: "Pornography"**  
5:00 Film (free)  
Curtis Lecture Hall I  
Following the film a discussion on "Not a Love Story"  
**Moderator:** Johanna Stuckey, Advisor to the President on the Status of Women  
**Featuring:** Thelma McCormack, Chairperson of Sociology Department  
Judith Santos-Pilowsky, CYSF Women's Affairs

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