

HELP AVAILABLE FOR NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS STRUGGLING WITH  
FAMILY MAINTENANCE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM

Nanaimo, BC (November 23 – 2007) – Ravenna McColgan, at the Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre is helping men and women who don't understand or who are having challenges dealing with the BC Government's FMEP (Family Maintenance Enforcement Program). FMEP was set up in the late 1980's to enforce the payment of monthly family maintenance for child support. Ravenna worked for FMEP for six years as an Inquiry Representative and now works at the Men's Centre helping people find the resources needed to deal with their particular challenges.

"Sometimes people feel intimidated by the bureaucratic red tape involved in solving FMEP problems when they can't afford to make payments," says McColgan, "Some people have even had their wages garnished or have had their drivers license or passport taken away by FMEP officials. But FMEP is not out to get people.

Over time many people have accumulated debts which they can't afford to pay any more. When people call FMEP, officials don't always explain all of the options available to them. We can explain how the FMEP system works so that they don't think of it as a brick wall."

"One of our clients, Robert at age 60 was facing a court order of \$900 bi-weekly in maintenance payments." says McColgan, "He was left with a minor portion of his pension and had lost all his RRSP savings in the divorce. Going back to work to try to get ahead would mean that FMEP would garnish up to 35 of his gross wages. As well, his driver's license had been cancelled. Dealing with the complexities of court orders, FMEP, and long lines of red tape is what stops people like Robert in their tracks.

We assisted him in preparing a Supreme Court application to alter his ongoing support payments and arrears. After appearing before the judge, Robert now stands free of debt from his court order and has his driver's license back.

Here at the Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre, we provide a safe environment where people can find a sympathetic ear and some solid advice and assistance. Frequently, people have to learn to be patient with the frustrations and difficulties. We can help by being their advocate and helping them find the necessary resources to resolve the situation."

For more information about these services at the Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre call 250-716-1551 or log on to their website at [www.nanaimomen.com](http://www.nanaimomen.com) .

The Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre is a non-profit organization offering support, referral and educational services to men and their families. The centre promotes community awareness of men's needs and provides programs for individuals and groups. Information and programs are available for divorce and separation, domestic violence, anger management, legal support, family maintenance, parental alienation, family maintenance and personal growth.

-30-

CONTACT: John Westwood – Programs and Communications Director - Email: [johnw@nanaimomen.com](mailto:johnw@nanaimomen.com)  
Ravenna McColgan – FMEP Support Program coordinator  
Email: [ravenna@nanaimomen.com](mailto:ravenna@nanaimomen.com)  
Nanaimo Men's Resource Centre  
Email: [info@nanaimomen.com](mailto:info@nanaimomen.com)  
Phone: 250-716-1551