



November 7, 2005

2005 - 2006 Board of Directors

Kerry McKinstry, President
Kathie Gavin, Vice President
Brandy Luedemann, Secretary
Donna Wickins, Treasurer
Barb Gordon, Past President
Debbie Coulter
Karen Fantin
Peggy Gilchrist
Bette Gray
Marilyn Kingdon
Mai Anh Le Van
Kerry McKinstry
Shelley Ruis

Programs and Services

Community Visions Program
for Adults with Disabilities
Counselling Services
Family Services for Children
with Disabilities
One Woman One Vote Initiative
Volunteer Services
YoWoChAs Outdoor
Education Centre

Special Events

Tribute to Women of
Distinction Awards
Week Without Violence

**100, 10350 124 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
Canada T5N 3V9**

(780) 423-9922
(780) 425-7467 - FAX
email: information@ywcaofedmonton.org
www.ywcaofedmonton.org



Honourable Jack Layton
New Democratic Party of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Layton,

We are writing to you and the other party leaders to inform you that the timing of election dates impacts women differently than men. We are requesting that this be taken into consideration when deciding when Canadian voters will go to the polls for the next federal election.

YWCA Edmonton's One Woman One Vote nonpartisan initiative works to assist women in becoming active participants in shaping the public agenda by increasing their participation in election activities and in seeking public office. For the YWCA, encouraging women to vote doesn't mean encouraging them to vote in a certain way. It means helping women to be informed about their choices and the political process, encouraging dialogue regarding candidates' positions on public policy, and encouraging women to get involved.

Research shows that women's ability to vote is inversely proportional to the number of children they have at home under age 18 (the more kids, the less time they have to participate). (Conway, M. et al, p. 88) Conversely, this same factor does not appear to affect men, reflecting an imbalance to women's political participation that could be easily avoided, with consideration. YWCA Edmonton believes that *"Equity and equality for women require that women's perspectives help shape society's direction"*.

For example, the last federal election was held June 28, 2004, which also happened to be the first weekday that the majority of Canadian children were out of school. During the campaign period, YWCA One Woman One Vote received feedback from many working women with school-age children that voting in the federal election on Monday June 28 would be low on their priorities that day. June 28 was the first day of summer holidays so it meant new childcare arrangements for their school age children. Going to vote would be dependent on the emotional and physical state of their child(ren) at the end of the workday and the success of their childcare arrangements.

Therefore, the timing of the future federal election, the actual voting date and when that date falls during the calendar year and the school year cycle are major considerations for many women voters. We ask all of you to consider this when making decisions about the date of the next federal election.

Sincerely,

Kelly Sloan
Executive Director
YWCA Edmonton

Janet Buckmaster, Coordinator
One Woman One Vote
YWCA Edmonton