

# **NATIONAL ELIZABETH FRY WEEK**

***May 7 to 13, 2007***



The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) celebrates National Elizabeth Fry Week annually. Elizabeth Fry Societies across the country organize public events in their communities throughout the week.

Our goal is to enhance public awareness and education regarding the circumstances of victimized and criminalized women involved in the criminal justice system.

We hope to gradually break down the negative stereotypes that exist about women who are imprisoned and institutionalized.

National Elizabeth Fry Week is always the week preceding Mother's Day. The majority of women who are criminalized and imprisoned are mothers. Most of them were the sole supporters of their families at the time they were incarcerated.

When mothers are sentenced to prison, their children are sentenced to separation. We try to draw attention to this reality by ending Elizabeth Fry Week on Mother's Day each year.

By focusing on "Meeting Women's Needs in the Community and Alternatives to Institutionalization", our 25 member societies encourage Canadians to examine some productive and responsible means of encouraging community responses to addressing criminal justice matters from coast to coast.

Our hope is that, particularly in this time of fiscal restraint, this sort of proactive focus will encourage the development of and support for community-based alternatives to costly incarceration.

CAEFS challenges Canadians to reach behind the walls and bring women into our communities, so that they may take responsibility and account for their actions in ways that make sense to them and to us.