

The 'war' rages on

Little
Warriors
fights the
good fight

Sepideh Saghafi
Examiner Staff

Child sexual abuse cases often appear in newspaper headlines, but they are rarely talked about elsewhere.

Little Warriors founder and chair Glori Meldrum hopes those attitudes change after the launch of a new public service ad campaign dubbed I am a Warrior.

The campaign features 13 adults who share their stories of being sexually molested at a young age.

Meldrum has experienced sexual abuse first-hand by someone she trusted. She was only eight years old at the time.

"As a society, when it's the creepy person in the van scouting playgrounds, everybody wants that person

penalized to the max," Meldrum says. "Ninety-five per cent to 98 per cent of the time, it's not a stranger you need to worry about, it's the people that have the trust of your children."

She says, other than herself, no one came forward to tell their stories last year. This year, however, 13 people came forward out of 40 cases.

Meldrum says often when a family member is suspected of child sexual abuse, the rest of the family does not respond properly.

"They do the worst thing – they cover it up," she says. "They put it in the closet, they don't talk about it and they do not stand up for their children."

She says she hopes more people come forward and get help through the program's resources because talking about it can lead to action.

Trista Anger, one of the 13 Warriors partici-

pating in the campaign, says more adults need to educate themselves on this topic in order to protect children.

"We're pushing for a call to action for adults to take part in prevention," Anger says.

Little Warriors is a charitable organization with a nationwide focus on educating adults about how to help prevent, distinguish and react responsibly to child sexual abuse.

For more information, contact littlewarriors.ca.

