HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS 101

An overview of school-based healthy relationship programs

CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

ABOUT THE CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

The Canadian Women's Foundation is Canada's public foundation for women and girls. We empower women and girls in Canada to move out of violence, out of poverty and into confidence. Since 1991, we've invested in over 1,100 community programs across Canada, and are now one of the ten largest women's foundations in the world. We take a positive approach to address root causes of the most critical issues facing women and girls. We study and share the best ways to create long-term change and bring community organizations together for training and to learn from each other. We carefully select and fund the programs with the strongest outcomes and regularly evaluate their work. We have a special focus on building a community of women helping other women. Helping women creates safer families and communities, and a more prosperous society for all of us. We invest in the power of women and the dreams of girls. For more information please visit www.canadianwomen.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all of the members of our Adult and Youth Advisory Committees
for their direction and support.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Canadian Women's Foundation has funded healthy relationship programs for more than fifteen years (see Appendix 1). This work is a key part of our overall strategy to help women move out of violence, and to prevent violence against women and girls.

In 2011, we secured funding from Status of Women Canada in order to advance our work related to healthy relationship programs. Thanks to this funding, we have developed a 24-month National Learning Strategy to disseminate and promote these initiatives.

Through the National Learning Strategy, we will:

- Build the field of practice of healthy relationship programming.

- Support community organizations to strengthen program delivery.

- Create systemic change by building alliances, addressing policy issues, and increasing public awareness of and support for these programs.

The National Learning Strategy is being launched at a three-day professional development event: The National Skills Institute on Teen Healthy Relationship Programming, to be held in Toronto from February 22nd -25th, 2012.

The National Skills Institute is the first national teen healthy relationships event of its size. It will bring together 100 organizations and 50 youth leaders from across Canada. The participants will include healthy relationship program representatives, school personnel, and policy makers. Participants will learn about best practices, develop new program strategies, and build their knowledge of healthy relationship programs.

The National Learning Strategy also includes:

- Funding for 10 healthy relationship programs.

- A document that shares best practices of healthy relationships programming (i.e., this document: Healthy Relationships 101).

- Webinars and other e-learning opportunities to support practitioners to build and enhance their work.

- An evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the learning transfer process.

We have developed the National Learning Strategy in collaboration with two unique Advisory Committees.

- The Youth Advisory Committee is comprised of fourteen engaged and insightful young people who have been instrumental in the development and delivery of healthy relationship programs across Canada. These youth are leaders in their communities, demonstrating the power and impact that teens can have in shaping their schools' culture and stopping the violence.

- The Adult Advisory Committee is comprised of eight research and program leaders in the field of teen violence prevention. Throughout the National Learning Strategy process, their expertise and insights will provide guidance in planning, presentation, program delivery, and follow up.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOU?	SEE…	PAGE
☑ I don't know much about teen dating violence or healthy relationship programs, and would like to read an overview.	INTRODUCTION	1
☑ I'm trying to convince my local school or school board to support our program, and need a summary of the latest research.	MAKING THE CASE	7
☑ I'm trying to improve our program, and need to know about best practices.	BEST PRACTICES AND TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR PROGRAM	13
☑ I would like to see examples of some of the best teaching material used by other groups.	APPENDIX 1	33

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INTRODUCTION

Healthy relationships are an essential part of a fulfilling life.

Relationships are especially important to young people – for many teens, their friends and romantic partners are the focus of their life.

Knowing how to create and maintain a healthy relationship is a basic life skill, but for too many of us, relationships are a source of struggle and even abuse.

VIOLENCE IN RELATIONSHIPS

In a healthy relationship between romantic partners, power is shared. In an unhealthy relationship, power is used to control and dominate.

Violence in relationships is a continuum, ranging from threats to controlling behaviour, from assault to murder. It is perpetrated with words that belittle and shame, with behaviour such as social isolation or stalking, and with tools such as fists and guns.

- Physical abuse: Slapping, choking, punching, using hands or objects as weapons, threatening with a knife or gun, committing murder.

- Sexual abuse: Using threats, intimidation, or physical force to commit unwanted sexual acts.

- Emotional or verbal abuse: Making degrading comments, bullying, forcing degrading acts, confinement, destroying possessions, threatening to commit suicide, threatening to kill.

- Financial abuse: Stealing or controlling money or valuables, forcing someone to work or denying their right to work.

- Spiritual abuse: Using religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate, and control.

- Criminal harassment/stalking: Following or watching in a persistent, malicious, and unwanted manner, cyber-stalking, invading privacy in a way that threatens personal safety.

THE PREVALENCE OF DATING VIOLENCE

Dating violence is defined as violence between romantic partners who do not live together. (Violence between intimate partners who live together, whether married or common-law, is called spousal violence.)

In 2008, almost 23,000 incidents of dating violence were reported to police in Canada. This is about 28% of all police-reported intimate partner violence.[1] However, since less than one-third of all incidents of intimate partner violence are ever reported to the police, the actual numbers are much higher.[2]

Research with Canadian adolescents indicated that 28% of high school students had been victims of abusive behaviours on at least one occasion.[3] A 2005 U.S. study found one in three teenagers knew a peer who had been physically harmed in a dating relationship.[4]

Dating violence is most common between the ages of 15 and 24. According to police reports, 43% of all victims of dating violence come from this age group. The rate of dating violence is much lower for those between the ages of 12 and 14, representing only 2% of all victims.

Just as in spousal violence, a large proportion of dating violence happens after the relationship has ended. More than half (57%) of all dating violence incidents in 2008 were perpetrated by an ex-partner.

Dating violence seems to be on the increase. Between 2004 and 2008, police-reported dating violence jumped significantly, up 40% for females victims and 47% for male victims. It is unclear if this increase is due to an actual increase in violence, a greater willingness among victims to report, or police being more likely to lay criminal charges.

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[1] "Police-reported dating violence in Canada," 2008, Tina Hotton Mahony, Juristat, Statistics Canada, Summer 2010. Available: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2010002/article/11242-eng.htm.

[2] According to the 2004 General Social Survey, only 28% of victims of spousal violence report the abuse to the police. Cited in Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2009, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, page 24. Available: http://www.uregina.ca/resolve/PDFs/Family%20Violence%20in%20Canada%20A%20Statistical%20Profile%20%202009.pdf

[3] "Child maltreatment: Risk of adjustment problems and dating violence in adolescence," D.A. Wolfe et al, Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Volume 40, 2001, pp. 282-289.

[4] "Teen Perceptions of Dating Violence, Help-Seeking, and the Role of Schools," Colleen Gallopin and Leila Leigh, The Prevention Researcher, Vol. 16(1), February 2009, p. 17.

THE IMPACT OF DATING VIOLENCE ON TEENS

The impact of dating violence among teens is very similar to the impact on adult victims, and can last a lifetime.

Besides the immediate risk of physical injury, victims are also at high risk of emotional and psychological trauma, including a sense of powerlessness and an undermining of their sense of self.[5]

Victims commonly experience fear, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.[6] They have higher rates of eating disorders, substance abuse, suicidal behaviour, and unsafe sex and pregnancy.[7]

Adolescents involved with dating violence as victims and/or perpetrators experience higher rates of internalizing symptoms (such as depression) and externalizing problems (including aggression and conduct problems).[8] They are also more likely to run away from home and drop out of school.[9] These impacts do not necessarily disappear as the youth enter young adulthood.[10]

GENDER DYNAMICS IN INTIMATE VIOLENCE

In our society, gender inequality is visible in many areas, including politics, religion, media, cultural norms, and the workplace. Both men and women receive many messages—both blatant and covert—that males are more important than females.

In this context, it's not surprising that many children grow up believing it's better to be a boy than a girl, and that it's okay for boys to tell girls what to do.

This context of gender inequality means we need to take a very critical look at understanding gender similarities and differences in dating violence among adolescent girls and boys.

What does research tell us about gender and adolescent dating violence prevalence?

On one hand, there is lots of evidence that girls and boys report perpetrating violence at the same rates. For example, if you ask boys and girls how often they slap, push, or belittle their dating partners, they are equally likely to report doing these things. In fact, in some studies boys report higher rates of victimization than girls.[11,12] These results have implications for providing adolescent dating violence prevention programming to both boys and girls. Clearly, both boys and girls need to learn how to create healthy relationships.

However, research on intimate partner violence for adults clearly shows *context* is critical. Acts of physical violence can range from an almost playful slap that the recipient does not consider aggressive, to a severe physical assault that leaves a victim emotionally and physically harmed.

The meaning of the violence can also differ from one situation to another, both in terms of impact and intentions.

In addition, self-reported rates of dating violence do not capture who is the primary aggressor. For example, many adolescent girls primarily use physical violence in self-defence.[13]

When you consider context, significant differences emerge between boys and girls. For example, indicators of *severity* demonstrate that girls are much more likely than boys to be victims of severe dating violence. According to police reports, rates of dating violence in Canada were higher for female than male victims at a margin of nearly ten to one for those 15 to 19 years of age.[14] Similarly, a large national study with adolescents in the U.S. found that for incidents that involved weapons or that

[5] The Road to Health: A Final Report on School Safety, Julian Falconer, Peggy Edwards, and Linda MacKinnon, Toronto School Community Safety Advisory Panel, 2008, p. 375.

[6] "Prevalence and correlates of dating violence in a national sample of adolescents," K. B. Wolitzky-Taylor et al. Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Vol. 47, 2008, pp. 755-762.

[7] "Dating violence against girls and associated substance use, unhealthy weight control, sexual risk behavior, pregnancy, and suicidality," J. G. Silverman et al. Journal of American Medical Association, Vol. 286, 2001, pp. 572-579.

[8] "Relational aggression in peer and dating relationships: Links to psychological and behavioral adjustment," W. E. Ellis et al, Social Development, 18, 2009, pp. 253-269.

[9] "Peer Group Influence on Adolescent Dating Aggression," Jennifer Connolly and Laura Friedlander, The Prevention Researcher, Volume 16(1), February 2009, pp. 8-9.

[10] "Patterns of intimate partner violence victimization from adolescence to young adulthood in a nationally representative sample," C.T. Halpern et al, Journal of Adolescent Health, Vol. 45, 2009, pp. 508-516.

[11] "What accounts for demographic differences in trajectories of adolescent dating violence? An examination of intrapersonal and contextual mediators," V.A. Foshee et al, Journal of Adolescent Health, Vol. 42, 2008, pp. 596-604.

[12] "A universal school-based program to prevent adolescent dating violence: A cluster randomized trial," D. A. Wolfe et al, Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 163, 2009, pp. 692-699.

[13] "High school students' responses to dating aggression," J.M. Watson et al, Violence and Victims, Vol. 16, 3, 2001, pp. 339-348.

[14] "Police-reported dating violence in Canada, 2008," p. 7.

resulted in serious physical injury, the rates of female victimization were five times higher than for males.[15]

Research also shows that boys and girls tend to use dating violence with different *intentions*. Notably, girls are more likely to commit relationship aggression as a means to demonstrate anger or to retaliate for emotional hurt, whereas boys use aggression as a means to gain control over their partners.[16,17] Girls also report using abusive or violent tactics against their dating partners in an attempt to tease or engage,[18] as well as to fight back in response to partner aggression.

At higher levels of severity, girls who use aggression or violence against a boyfriend are more likely to be acting in self-defense, while "boys tend to commit more serious acts of physical aggression intended to exert control over their dating partner."[19]

> "Typically, young men use physical force to assert control while young women use it to protect themselves, to retaliate or because they fear that their partner is about to assault them. Some women live in terror of such attacks. In contrast, young men rarely fear assault from young women, considering women's use of force to be innocuous."[20]

The gender balance also shifts depending on the *type* of violence being reported. Girls and boys seem equally likely to be emotionally and verbally abusive, but boys are much more likely than girls to use physical violence: girls experience five times as much of this level of violence as do boys.[21]

Because the severity, intentions, and types of violence differ for boys and girls, it is not surprising that the *impact* also differs. Female victims of dating violence are more likely than males to experience fear, anxiety, hurt, and to express a

desire to leave the situation for self-protection. Male victims, in contrast, report being amused or angered by female aggression.[22,23] Similarly, when asked about their response to the worst episode of violence they experienced, adolescent males typically reported that they laughed it off, while females reported responses of crying (40%), fighting back (36%), running away (11%), and obeying their partner (12%).[24]

Boys and girls even define dating violence differently. Focus groups with students in Grades 9 and 11 have found that although boys and girls agree that it is the context that determines whether a behaviour is abusive, they differ in terms of their criteria for determining context.[25] Specifically, boys described behaviours as abusive if the *intent* was negative (i.e., if there was anger or an intent to hurt behind it), whereas girls described behaviour as abusive based on *impact* (i.e., if it caused uneasiness, physical or emotional hurt or fear).

On a final note, it is important to remember that research can only report on group averages and patterns, and that each individual case is different. There are boys who are victims of severe dating violence, just as there are girls who inflict serious injury to their dating partners. Furthermore, dating violence of all severity levels occurs in same-sex relationships in similar forms as in heterosexual relationships.[26]

All of these research findings indicate that we must keep the context of dating violence in mind, or we risk comparing apples and oranges. Unless you understand and measure dating violence with a gender lens, you cannot create effective prevention programs.

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[15] "Prevalence and correlates of dating violence in a national sample of adolescents," pp. 755-762.
[16] "Sex differences in motivations and effects in dating violence," D.R. Follingstad et al, Family Relations: Journal of Applied Family and Child Studies, Vol. 40, 1991, pp. 51-57.
[17] "Young people's views on the causes of violence in adolescents' romantic relationships, M.H. Gagne and F. Lavoie, Canada's Mental Health, Vol. 41, 1993, pp. 11-15.
[18] "Violence and sexual coercion in high school students' dating relationships," S.M. Jackson et al, Journal of Family Violence, Vol. 15, 2000, pp. 23-36.
[19] "Peer Group Influence on Adolescent Dating Aggression," p. 8.
[20] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual (2005 Revision), Leslie Tutty et al, RESOLVE Alberta, p. 169.
[21] "Police-reported dating violence in Canada," 2008.

[22] "Sex differences in motivations and effects in dating violence."
[23] "Violence and sexual coercion in high school students' dating relationships."
[24] "Factor structure and convergent validity of the conflict tactics scale in high school students," M. Cascardi et al, Psychological Assessment, Vol. 11, 1999, pp. 546-555.
[25] "'If it hurts you, then it is not a joke': Adolescents' ideas about girls' and boys' use and experience of abusive behavior in dating relationships," H.A. Sears et al, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, Vol. 21, 2006, pp. 1191-1207.
[26] "Prevalence of partner violence in same-sex romantic and sexual relationships in a national sample of adolescents," C.T. Halpern et al, Journal of Adolescent Health, Vol 35, 2004, pp. 124-131.

WHY TEACH TEENS ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS?

While it has become commonly accepted that it's a good idea to offer anti-bullying programs in schools, there is not the same widespread acceptance of healthy relationship programs.[27]

However, there are several strong arguments in favour of these programs.

Research into intervention programs for adults who abuse their partners shows this behaviour is extremely difficult to change.[28]

Intimate partner violence must be stopped before it can begin. Prevention is key, and the earlier in life this intervention can occur the better.

Research also shows that teens' attitudes predict their future behaviour. One study of male teens showed that groups who used "hostile and disrespectful" language when talking about girls were more likely to use aggression against their dating partners several years later.[29]

If a person is being abusive while in their teens, without intervention their behaviour is very likely to continue into adulthood, and to escalate. Dating violence is one of the strongest predictors of violence in adult relationships.[30]

The adolescent years are the ideal time to learn about healthy relationships.

Young people are highly interested in relationships, both friendships and romantic partners, and are eager to talk about them.

They are also open to new ideas and new learning.[31] Since healthy relationship programs challenge powerful stereotypes about boys and girls, it's best to do this work as early in life as possible, before

these ideas become too deeply ingrained to be unlearned.[32]

This "window of opportunity" is also a good developmental fit, since people at this age are in the process of "learning autonomy and control, and shifting (their) emotional dependency from parents to peers."[33]

Youth are already learning about relationships, but unfortunately many of their most powerful lessons come from an increasingly violent and sexist popular culture, including TV shows, movies, video games, and advertisements. It is essential to provide them with alternative messages that present positive models of healthy, respectful relationships.[34]

Teaching young people about healthy relationships not only protects their physical and emotional health, but it also helps protect them in other ways.

Violence is one of the three most important risk factors for adolescent health: substance abuse and sexual behaviour are the other two.[35] These three behaviours have been called an "important triad" for the health of young people, and are linked together.

One of the best protective factors for reducing all three is for young people to be in healthy relationships.

The stronger their relationships with friends, romantic partners, teachers, and family, the more likely young people are to make healthy life choices.

WHY TEACH VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS?

Unfortunately, violence is a reality in many of today's schools. Teachers must regularly deal with bullying, personal conflicts, violent behaviour, and sexual harassment. Many children no longer feel safe at their school. Their physical and emotional health is at risk, as is their ability to learn.

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[27] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, Second Edition, Claire M. Renzetti, Jeffrey L. Edleson, Raquel Kennedy Bergen, Sage Publications, Inc., 2010, p. 335.

[28] Batterer intervention systems: Issues, outcomes, and recommendations, E. W. Gondolf. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002.

[29] "Aggression toward female partners by at-risk young men: The contribution of male adolescent friendships," D.M Capaldi et al, Developmental Psychology, Vol. 37, 2001, pp. 61-73. See also: "Peer Group Influence on Adolescent Dating Aggression," p. 9.

[30] "A School-Based Program to Prevent Adolescent Dating Violence," David A. Wolfe et al, Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, Vol. 163, August 2009, p. 692.

[31] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 332.

[32] Promoting Gender Equality to Prevent Violence Against Women, World Health Organization, 2009, p. 5.

[33] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 171.

[34] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 333.

[35] Adolescent risk behaviors: Why teens experiment and strategies to keep them safe, D.A. Wolfe, P.G. Jaffe, and C.V. Crooks, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.

Rather than being reactive and working to solve violence once it has begun, it is more efficient to invest that time in prevention, and schools present the ideal venue for this learning.

Schools are already where children do much of their learning, and are the best opportunity to teach young people about healthy relationships.

Since learning healthy relationships is no different from learning any other type of skill – it's largely a matter of breaking things down into steps and offering guided practice[36] – the topic is presented in much the same way as any other school subject. From a student's point of view, this makes the information credible.

The basic premise behind violence prevention programs is: "if violence is learned, it can be unlearned."[37]

THE BENEFITS OF SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS[38]

FOR STUDENTS…

- All youth learn about healthy relationships.

- Students do not feel stigmatized by being singled out for help.

- Students with weak relationship skills or previous negative experiences can learn from peers with stronger skills.

- Students may earn academic credit.

FOR SCHOOLS…

- Improved sense of safety in the schools, which is linked to higher outcomes for students and better school performance.

- A more positive school climate.

- Enhanced teacher-student bonds; teachers can apply enriched strategies and skills to their relationships with students.

FOR SOCIETY…

- Makes a strong statement about the value of healthy relationships.

- Helps youth build leadership skills.

- Produces future leaders that use positive, non-violent behaviour.

- Develops positive bystander skills and a sense of responsibility among youth.

ANATOMY OF A TYPICAL PROGRAM

Most healthy relationship programs are designed for students in Grades 7 to 12.

A typical program includes information on:

- The continuum of violence: Different forms of violence (physical, sexual, emotional, financial, spiritual, criminal harassment/stalking).

- Stereotypes: Revealing gender inequality and challenging stereotypes.

- The dynamics of dating violence: Control and power in intimate relationships.

- The dynamics of healthy relationships: Respectful behaviour, healthy boundaries, and assertive communication.

- Media literacy: Sexism, racism, and violence in popular media.

- Skills Building: Learning conflict resolution, critical thinking, and managing disappointment and anger.

- Community Resources: Where to go for help.

Facilitators usually present this material in a developmental sequence, starting with definitions, facts, and other basics, then moving into skills building, personal reflection, and critical thinking.

Many programs also discuss issues of interest to teens that may not immediately appear to be related to healthy relationships, such as substance abuse and eating disorders. However, these issues are strongly related to healthy relationships, since a healthy relationship with others begins with a healthy relationship with oneself.

In addition, research shows that "violence prevention programs that address a variety of risk and resilience factors are more likely to be successful than those that address only a few."[39]

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[36] Adapted from The Fourth R After School Program module.
[37] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 11.
[38] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 332.

[39] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 9.

The Importance of 'Role Play' Activities

Learning new skills is an active process.

The best programs allow students to go beyond passive listening, to talking and writing, and to doing.[40] This active involvement helps them to translate new information into real-life skills.

> "Simply being instructed in skills, discussing them, or even writing out responses are not likely to increase skills and self-efficacy."[41]

For example, it is not enough for students to hear about a skill like assertive communication, they must also have the chance to practice it.

One of the best ways to do this is through a role play – acting out a planned scenario with other students, usually in front of an audience.

Role plays work best when they present realistic situations that mean something to the participants. For teens, this usually involves topics such as "dating and peer conflict, pressure to use drugs or alcohol, and pressure to engage in sexual behaviour."[42]

However, role plays must be "carefully planned, introduced, and debriefed." Handled poorly, a role play can be embarrassing or even detrimental. Being in a role play is a skill in itself, and educators must teach students how to take part in them.

Facilitators must ensure students remain physically and emotionally safe[43] throughout the role play, and that their personal boundaries are respected. Students should also have the opportunity to debrief after each role play.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

When it comes to healthy relationship programs, finding the 'right' level of parent involvement can be a challenge.

In fact, many programs simply don't involve parents. One study of school-based healthy relationship programs found that less than half offered a parent information session.[44]

Family is the primary place where students learn how to behave in intimate relationships. If family members have healthy relationships, it reinforces the lessons that students learn in the program.

However, when family dynamics are negative or abusive, students' ability to learn new approaches are jeopardized. Given the high incidence of domestic violence, it is very likely that at least some parents are experiencing violence in their own relationships. Programmers need to find ways to engage parents that do not place youth at risk of harm.

The appropriate role for parents may vary depending upon factors such as culture, family dynamics, and student age. For example, the younger the students, the more need there is to involve parents. Teenagers are at the stage of life where they are beginning to develop an identity separate from that of their parents. For them, too much parental involvement may lead to conflict.

In general, parents should be informed about the program and made aware of key activities. This can be achieved through meetings, orientation sessions, workshop presentations, handouts, invitations to school activities, etc. One program did a parent presentation when the program began, then sent them regular program newsletters.[45]

It is important to let parents know what their children are learning about relationships, and to provide them with the tools to continue the learning process at home.[46]

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[40] <u>Sourcebook on Violence Against Women</u>, p. 334.
[41] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," Claire V. Crooks et al <u>IPC Review</u>, Vol. 2, March 2008, p. 115.
[42] Ibid, p. 114.
[43] For more information, please see "Student Safety and Managing Disclosures" on page 72 of this document.

[44] <u>School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual</u>, p. 173.
[45] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 115.
[46] <u>School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual</u>, p. 19.

MAKING THE CASE

THE SUCCESS OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP PROGRAMS

Recent research has resulted in strong evidence that carefully planned and implemented healthy relationship programs can be highly successful in reducing violence and promoting positive behaviours and attitudes.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

The key findings of recent longitudinal studies on school-based teen violence prevention programs include:

1. Students report less physical violence and emotional abuse in their dating relationships, even months or years after attending the programs.

2. Students learn to recognize an unhealthy relationship, and how to get help.

3. Students use their new skills in negotiation, communication, and assertiveness to create better relationships in all areas of their lives.

4. Adults observe long-term positive changes in students' behaviour.

5. In programs where youth play an active role in developing and/or delivering the curriculum, students report increased leadership skills, even among those who do not play an active leadership role.

6. Schools that offer the programs report less bullying and a more tolerant school culture.

7. Some programs report increased civic-mindedness amongst students.

8. Students rate the program experience as positive and relevant, a key factor in motivation.

These findings have been summarized from research on the following programs:

1) The Fourth R[47]

This healthy relationships program is delivered at over 1,500 high schools across Canada by trained high school teachers as part of the regular school curriculum.

The program meets provincial education guidelines, and includes student committees. (For more details on this program, please see Appendix 1.)

A randomized controlled study found that students who attended the program significantly reduced dating violence perpetration, increased their use of condoms, and demonstrated better interpersonal skills in role play scenarios than youth in a regular health class. In addition, the Fourth R has been demonstrated to provide a protective impact in the form of reduced violent delinquency among those who have experienced multiple forms of child maltreatment. The study was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

2) Safe Dates[48]

This program to prevent dating violence was delivered in a primarily rural area of North Carolina. Activities included a theatre production, a 10-session curriculum, and a poster contest.

A total of 1700 Grade 8 and 9 students completed questionnaires.

Students who attended the program reported 25% less psychological abuse and 60% less sexual violence than students who did not attend the program. The study was funded by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

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[47] Please see: "Observations of adolescent peer resistance skills following a classroom-based healthy relationship program: A post-intervention comparison," D. A. Wolfe et al, Prevention Science, 2011. See also: "Impact of a universal school-based violence prevention program on violent delinquency: Distinctive benefits for youth with maltreatment histories," C.V. Crooks et al, Child Abuse and Neglect, Vol. 35, 2011, pp. 393-400. See also: "A universal school-based program to prevent adolescent dating violence: A cluster randomized trial." See also: "Understanding the link between childhood maltreatment and violent delinquency: What do schools have to add?" C.V. Crooks et al, Child Maltreatment, Vol. 12, 2007, pp. 269-280.
[48] See: "An Evaluation of Safe Dates, an Adolescent Dating Violence Prevention Program," Vangie A. Foshee et al, American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 88 No. 1, January 1998, pp. 45-50.

3) Healthy Relationships Program[49]

This program was a community-based intervention for teens who had already experienced family violence, and so were at a high risk of violence in their own relationships.

In 18 sessions, the teens learned about healthy and abusive relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills, and took part in social action activities. The study found the program to be "effective in reducing incidents of physical and emotional abuse over time..." In addition, the teens reported less emotional distress and trauma, even though the program wasn't specifically designed to address these feelings.

4) The Canadian Women's Foundation Teen Violence Prevention Program[50]

This program provides funding to four healthy relationship programs in Canada (For more details on this funding program and the healthy relationship programs it supports, please see Appendix 1).

In total, 489 students, former students, teachers, and community members participated in an impact evaluation through quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups and interviews.

Ninety percent of the students who attended the program reported they learned how to keep their relationships healthy. Eighty percent of adults witnessed positive long-term changes in the students' behaviour.

In addition, sixty percent of respondents said the programs changed their school culture for the better, and fifty percent of students improved their leadership skills – this positive "leadership affect" was even experienced by students who did not take on a formal leadership role in the program.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

Evaluation is essential for program development and plays a critical role in demonstrating the impact of the programs to school boards, community partners, and funders.

Evaluation is the process of measuring how well a given program did what it was supposed to do. A good evaluation can also reveal which aspects of an activity are working well, which aren't, and how those might be improved.

The most effective evaluations are not one-time events: they are a continuous learning process, where information is regularly gathered, analyzed, and used to create improvements.

Many different things can be evaluated – a single activity, an entire program, a partnership, a strategic plan, an organization, etc.

WHY EVALUATE?

A strong evaluation process adds tremendous value and depth to program development. It helps to plan your work, can deepen your relationship with partners and participants, and helps to reveal creative ways to keep the program fresh and relevant to the participants.

Depending on what kind of evaluation you use and what you measure, an evaluation can help to:[51]

- Learn more about your communities' needs.

- Describe goals and articulate assumptions.

- Decide which specific activities should be done.

- Assess your ability to do these activities, identify staff training needs, and explore opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

- Test and adapt activities (e.g., their design, implementation, cost-effectiveness, etc.)

- Measure the results of your activities.

- Help identify if any activities should be expanded, changed, or discontinued.

- Communicate results to partners and funders.

- Enhance the program's public image.

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[49] See: "A School-Based Program to Prevent Adolescent Dating Violence." See also: "Dating violence prevention with at-risk youth: A controlled outcome evaluation. David A. Wolfe et al, Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Vol. 71 No. 2, April 2003, 279-291. See also: Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 341.
[50] See: Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, Leslie M. Tutty, Canadian Women's Foundation, 2011.

[51] List adapted from: Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach, United Way of America 2002.

- Defend specific methods or approaches.

- Generate new knowledge.

- Educate Board Members about program issues.

Another critical reason for evaluation is this: Even well-intentioned prevention programs can have unanticipated negative impacts. For example, one early study of dating violence education that used an adult-oriented power and control model found that boys endorsed more negative attitudes following the presentation. At follow-up, this negativity had become even more entrenched.[52]

THE CONTINUED NEED FOR EVIDENCE

Evaluation is also critical for winning support for healthy relationship programs from school boards, community partners, and funders. Many practitioners say that providing regular evaluation reports is essential to ensuring ongoing support and funding.

Over the past two decades, funding for most schools across Canada has been reduced and there is a new emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Many programs that were once considered part of the core curriculum – like music and physical education – are now seen as 'extras.'[53] In this funding climate, proving that a program has a positive impact is essential to securing ongoing support.

Before agreeing to offer a healthy relationship program – even on a trial basis – most school administrators and teachers expect to hear clear answers to many questions, such as:[54]

- Is the program based upon sound educational theory and best practices?

- Does it complement the curriculum?

- Are the teaching methods suitable to students' varying ages and developmental needs?

- Can the program be adapted for different ages, or for different cultural and ethnic communities?

- Can it be delivered by teachers, rather than outside facilitators?

- Is it easy to teach?

- What are the long-term implications for offering it more broadly?

Most importantly, school administrators want to know if the program will actually change student behaviour over the long term. In other words, will it actually reduce dating violence?[55]

Just a few years ago, it was difficult to answer any of these questions. There was hardly any longitudinal research on healthy relationship programs. Part of the problem was there were only a handful of healthy relationship programs, and most of those being offered did not have the funding to conduct an evaluation. To make matters worse, the few early studies that did exist seemed to show the programs didn't work very well.[56] Although students did learn new information about healthy relationships, they didn't seem to retain this new knowledge over time or actually change their behaviour.

Today, research is beginning to provide high-quality data that shows positive results and long-term impacts.

Funders are highly interested in these types of evaluations because they can use the results to demonstrate the positive impact of their investments. And without strong supporting data, they are much less likely to renew or expand their funding commitment. Evaluation is key for program growth.

Given the high demand for empirical evidence, healthy relationship programmers must continue to ensure their work includes evaluation.

TYPES OF EVALUATION

There are three basic types of evaluation - each serves a different purpose and gathers different types of information.

- **Needs Assessments:** These collect Information about the process/people/community that the activity is supposed to serve in order to learn more about them. These evaluations are conducted before a program starts.

[52] "An evaluation of a secondary school primary prevention program on violence in intimate relationships," P.G. Jaffe et al, Violence and Victims, Vol 7, 1992, pp. 129-146.
[53] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 333.
[54] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 112 and p. 124.

[55] Ibid, p. 123.
[56] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 173.

- **Process Evaluations:** These measure Outputs, such as the number of people served or the number of activities conducted. They also examine ease of recruitment and implementation from the perspective of different stakeholders, the challenges faced, and the adjustments along the way. These evaluations are conducted during a program or at the end of a program.

- **Outcome/Impact Evaluations:** These measure Outcomes, such as new knowledge, increased skills, changed attitudes or values, modified behaviour, improved condition, or altered status. These evaluations are conducted during a program, at the end of a program, or later.

An easy way to remember the difference between an output and an outcome is this saying: "It's not how many worms the parent bird feeds its young, but how well the young birds fly!" The number of worms is an output, and how well the young birds fly is an outcome.

EVALUATING PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Thirty years ago, when prevention was still an emerging field of social science, one researcher famously called prevention evaluation "an impossible science."[57]

This is no longer true. It is possible to measure prevention programs, but they do present more challenges than other kinds of services.

Prevention is harder to measure because:[58]

- **It can be difficult to establish reasonable outcomes.** The 'right' outcomes will vary according to the age of the participants, the issues they are dealing with, and the intensity of the program intervention. It also depends upon the general approach. For example, in a drug prevention program, is the preferred goal abstinence or harm reduction?

- **Choosing a timeframe.** Are the hoped-for changes likely to happen while the program is

still running? Immediately after it ends? Or will they take a while to emerge? Can you measure the impact of a dating violence prevention program if youth are not yet dating?

- **Measuring strengths VS problems.** If the desired outcomes include both 'prevent harm' and 'build assets,' which one is more important to demonstrate? For example, is a bullying prevention program working if youth have better coping skills, but still engage in bullying?

Most evaluations of prevention programs measure changes in knowledge and attitude, not actual behaviour.[59] However, just because someone learns something new doesn't mean they actually apply this knowledge. For example, just because teens learn it's wrong to verbally abuse their partner doesn't mean they will stop doing it.

It is especially difficult to measure for something (like dating violence) that you hope won't happen.

> "If the prevention strategy is successful, the problem will not occur; but neither can one say with any certainty that the problem would have developed."[60]

It's also hard to know why a certain change happened. A change in attitude or behaviour may have nothing to do with attending a program.[61] Evaluators refer to this challenge as a difficulty with attribution.

EVALUATION EXAMPLES

To help clarify the different types of evaluation, here are a few examples of evaluations conducted by "The Fourth R," a national healthy relationship program.

Process Evaluation: As programs are developed and piloted, data is gathered through feedback surveys, focus groups, and interviews. Focus groups are held with youth when programs end, and teachers complete feedback forms. Interviews are held with youth, educators, and administrators in order to identify strengths and challenges from different perspectives. Process evaluation data has been critical for making revisions to program materials, activities, and delivery mechanisms. These types of

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[57] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, Leslie M. Tutty, Canadian Women's Foundation, 2011, p.5
[58] Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers, 2nd Edition, Claire V. Crooks, Debbie Chiodo, Darren Thomas, Shanna Burns, and Charlene Camillo, 2010, Trafford Publishing, p. 124.

[59] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 339.
[60] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, p.5
[61] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 339.

evaluations are also conducted after facilitation training sessions with teachers or community staff.

Outcome Evaluation: A major Randomized Controlled Trial study was conducted with 20 schools, and included a follow-up after 2.5 years. Over 1,700 youth completed surveys to measure a variety of attitudes and behaviours. Observation data were collected by videotaping responses to a role play scenario acted out by older student actors; the role plays were coded by researchers and teachers in order to measure specific behaviours. The study showed an increase in condom use and a decrease in dating violence, and demonstrated that the program decreased the likelihood of violent delinquency for youth with multiple experiences of child abuse. The study also clearly demonstrated that youth had increased communication and peer resistance skills.

Implementation/Sustainability Evaluation: Two surveys were conducted with teachers who deliver Fourth R materials, from a national sample. The first survey was conducted in 2008 with 50 teachers, and the second was conducted in 2010 with 200 teachers who had been trained from 2 to 8 years prior. The studies provided important information about sustainability: the majority of teachers felt it was effective and continued to use the program. At the same time, some challenges were identified. For example, videos are quite costly, and tend to become outdated very quickly. As a result, the latest version of the program does not require commercial videos.

EVALUATIONS THAT EMPOWER

A good evaluation does more than enhance program development, answer internal organizational questions, or meet the needs of funders – it also empowers the participants.

Evaluations have traditionally been done by outside experts but there is a trend towards participatory evaluations, which involve the people who are attending the program or doing the work.

These evaluations are designed to empower the participants, not simply use them as a source of information about how well the programs are doing. They are a collaborative learning experience. Together, the participants decide what to measure and how, they identify and analyze the successes and failures of the program, and decide for

themselves what needs to be changed.
This approach is especially empowering for groups that typically do not have much social power, such as racialized groups, women, people living on a low income, and other marginalized groups.

It is also very empowering for youth. In a participatory evaluation, youth can play an important role from start to finish. They can ask their own questions rather than simply respond to those posed by teachers or outside experts. They have the option of creating their own solutions rather than staying with the status quo. They can also help to communicate the findings to other youth, to the school boards, partners and funders, and to the community. This process not only helps students feel empowered, it actually transfers decision-making power into their hands.

Evaluations should also be designed with cultural relevancy in mind. For example, one program is currently conducting a longitudinal evaluation of its Aboriginal programming, and has invested significant resources to develop culturally-appropriate data collection methods.[62,63]

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO EVALUATION

Standard evaluation tools include surveys, questionnaires, semi-structured interviewing, and focus group discussions.

However, some evaluations use creative and arts-based tools such as personal journals (written, audio, or video), photography, painting and other visual arts, creating historical timelines, creating various kinds of community 'maps,' and doing popular theatre.

Young people usually find these arts-based activities much more fun than filling out a survey. These tools also take into account different learning styles and literacy levels, so that more people can participate and give their own unique interpretation of the program outcomes.

Many culturally-appropriate evaluation methods, such as talking circles with Aboriginal youth, also promote participation and tend to produce richer results.

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[62] From: The Fourth R.
[63] Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers, 2nd Edition.

TIPS ON PROGRAM EVALUATION

- To gather student opinions when a program concludes, use focus groups to encourage reflection. Offer the option to respond in writing, too, so students can choose for themselves how to participate.

- Ideally, get feedback from students and teachers separately.

- Ensure student confidentiality is maintained.

- Keep student surveys short and simple – if they are too long, their answers will become shorter and less thoughtful, or they will simply skip the questions entirely.

- Make sure all survey questions relate directly to your program objectives.

- Mix matrix-style questions (those that provide ranges such as 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree') with short answer, open-ended questions.

- Ensure your evaluation methods and models are culturally relevant and appropriate. Be cautious using surveys with a population that they were not designed for.

- Share the results of your evaluation with the people who provided the data. One program put the highlights into a zine and handed it out to students, who found it informative and fun to read.

- Share the results with schools, partners, funders and other supporters.

- Look for opportunities to publish your evaluation results so it reaches a wide audience, such as newsletters, journals, and media opportunities.

- Look for opportunities to enhance your program evaluation skills, through seminars, on-line tutorials, etc.

- Consider partnering with a researcher at a local academic institution.

- Familiarize yourself with research ethics through the Tri-Council Policy Statement-2nd edition. There is an online tutorial on the TCPS-2 website that explores critical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, and data storage. http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf.

BEST PRACTICES & TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR PROGRAM

This section includes best practices gathered from the latest research on school-based healthy relationship programs, along with tips from practitioners.

The best practices discussed in this section are:
- Use a gender lens.
- Engage youth.
- Use culturally-appropriate materials.
- Work in partnership with schools/school boards.
- Work in partnership with the community.

USE A GENDER LENS

WHY TALK ABOUT GENDER?

The roots of violence spring from inequality – the belief that the needs, feelings, or beliefs of one person or group are more correct or more important than those of another person or group.

Since gender inequality is present in our society, any discussion about violence in a dating relationship must include an analysis of the impact of gender – otherwise, the cause of the problem will never be fully understood. In fact, the World Health Organization now states that violence against women can be prevented if schools, the community, and the media were to "challenge stereotypes that give men power over women."[64]

However, talking about gender can create challenges for educators who work with teens.

Gender roles in high school are typically very rigid. Boys and girls both have clear ideas about what is appropriate for each gender. In this environment, values that are already present in society tend to be magnified:

> "The typical high school environment rewards behaviours consistent with the male 'jock' ideal, while devaluing activities seen as more feminine, leading to an aggressively homophobic culture." [65]

Teens are often "hypersensitive" to the idea that gender is related to dating violence, seeing such claims as "boy bashing."[66]

> "Most girls and boys reject a gendered analysis, with girls being protective of the boys and boys often reacting defensively."

Girls like to see themselves as strong, as people who can fight back – not victims. And not surprisingly, boys reject being presented as "the problem" and are likely to turn around and blame the girls. in fact, some studies have found that, for boys, attending a violence prevention program can actually make their attitudes worse.[67,68]

> "(T)here is some evidence that for men, programmes presented to mixed male and female groups are less effective in changing attitudes than those presented to all-male groups."[69]

Educators need to tread a fine line – they must clearly state that females are victimized more often, but that males are also victimized. Boys must be approached as part of the solution and given appropriate leadership roles. [70]

> "Gender analysis requires simultaneous attention to the lives of women *and* men, girls *and* boys."[71]

Most importantly, educators must not assign blame. Instead, they must emphasize the power of socialization on both females and males – this is the dynamic that sets the stage for dating violence.

GENDER SEPARATE PROGRAMMING

One promising practice to address the challenge of discussing gender issues is to offer gender-separate classes, at least for some program material.

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[64] Promoting Gender Equality to Prevent Violence Against Women, World Health Organization, 2009, no page numbers.
[65] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 118.

[66] Ibid, p. 118.
[67] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, p.7
[68] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 172. However, one university program, the Mentors in Violence program, demonstrated better improvement for males. See pp. 181-182.
[69] Promoting Gender Equality to Prevent Violence Against Women, p. 5.
[70] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 335-6.
[71] "Violence Prevention and the Canadian Girl Child," Yasmin Jiwani, Helene Berman, Catherine Ann Cameron, International Journal of Children, Youth and Family Studies, Vol. 1 No. 2, 2010, p. 137.

Many healthy relationship programs are delivered in mixed-gender groups, however, research shows that girls and boys may benefit from having at least part of the material delivered in gender-separate sessions.

Research shows that girls know more than boys about healthy relationships even before attending a program. Research also shows that girls are more able to resist peer pressure than boys.[72] Girls also show greater knowledge increases over time, and faster improvements in attitude change – even though sometimes there is little room for improvement (the 'ceiling' effect). For example, in one study, girls were more likely to be emotionally abusive before the program began, but afterwards they demonstrated a greater reduction in this behaviour. These gender differences seem to indicate that girls and boys may benefit from different learning materials.[73]

Gender-separate training also creates space for more participation, since it is often easier for girls and boys to speak more openly in their own groups.

Properly handled, gender-separate sessions can increase understanding between the sexes. Most gender-separate sessions are followed by a session where the groups come back together again to listen to the concerns and comments raised during the separate sessions. Properly facilitated, this increases communication and empathy.

INCORPORATING LGBTQ[74] ISSUES

Many healthy relationship programs include material on sexual orientation and gender identity, and position homophobia as a form of violence.

For many youth, this is often the first classroom conversation they have ever had – sometimes the first discussion ever – about gender diversity.

It is an important start, but as one program coordinator notes:[75]

> "...I feel like we have a lot of work to do in making programs more inclusive for youth who

identify as LGBTQ. This is a program adaptation we are working on. It involves more than teaching about terms and tolerance – it involves a deeper challenge to a heteronormative culture."

One strategy for incorporating LGBTQ issues is to develop role plays or written examples that involve same-sex couples. Besides normalizing their relationships, this strategy has the added benefit of showing students that most of us share the same kinds of struggles in our intimate relationships, no matter who we are.

Tips For Developing A Gender Lens

- Examine your program materials for gender balance in language, images, ideas, etc. Is the everyday reality of both women and men equally represented?

- Create role plays or scenarios that challenge gender stereotypes.

- Take the lead in naming gender issues. For example, state that there is a 'double standard' when it comes to dating. Typically, girls who engage in sexual activities are negatively labelled as 'easy,' while boys who behave the same way are usually admired.

- Does your program material assume that everyone in the class is straight? Avoid always saying 'boyfriend' and 'girlfriend.' Encourage the use of the gender-neutral term, partner.

- If a student makes a sexist statement or perpetuates a gender stereotype, don't let it pass unremarked or unchallenged. Do not excuse the use of stereotypes because you think the students are too young to understand the implications or because "they are just having fun." Use the opportunity as a teaching moment.

- Teach students how to explore stereotypes through self-reflective discussion. Tap into their curiosity. Ask them how and why these stereotypes may have emerged, and about what social or economic purpose they may serve.

- Position 'critical thinking' as a sophisticated and important skill. Challenge their thinking by asking unexpected questions such as: "When guys get dressed for a party, do they worry that what they wear might make them look promiscuous?"

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[72] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 173.
[73] Ibid, pp. 14-15.
[74] LGBTQ stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Questioning.
[75] Comment from staff at the Healthy Relationships for Youth program in Nova Scotia.

- In group discussions, monitor the gender balance in the students' participation. Are the boys speaking more than the girls?

- Take special care to ensure that female students have a strong voice in issues that particularly affect them, such as the media portrayal of women and girls. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings. Don't speak for them, and don't allow male students to belittle their concerns.

- Use both female and male facilitators. Ensure that power is shared equally between them and that they are modeling a healthy relationship.

- Gender-separate modules must be led by female and male facilitators.

ENGAGE YOUTH

The strongest healthy relationship programs engage youth by actively soliciting their input, training them to deliver part of the program content, or involving them in other meaningful ways. When youth are truly engaged, they can no longer be considered 'recipients' of a program, but decision-makers and leaders.

For youth, there are several benefits to becoming engaged in the delivery of a school healthy relationship program. They develop self-confidence, learn skills in leadership and mentorship, are viewed as leaders by their peers, and enjoy the satisfaction of making a difference in the world by contributing their skills, talents, and perspectives.

Having consistent and meaningful input from youth is also highly beneficial to the programs: it keeps the content fresh and relevant, and therefore more effective. Adult facilitators can learn a tremendous amount from actively working with youth, and sometimes find themselves re-energized and renewed in their work.

Genuine youth engagement takes time, effort, and resources, but leads to greater learnings for the youth and better results for the program.

The Ladder of Participation*
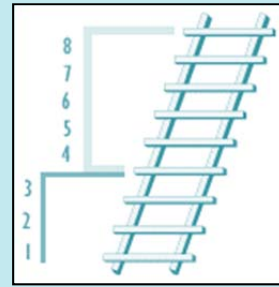
8.   YOUTH-INITIATED/SHARED DECISIONS. Youth initiate the program, and youth and adults share in decision-making. This model empowers youth while also providing an opportunity to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

7.   YOUTH-INITIATED/YOUTH DECISIONS. Youth initiate the program and make the decisions. Adults play supportive roles.

6.   ADULT-LED/SHARED DECISIONS. Adults initiate the program, and youth share in the decision-making.

5.   INFORMED/CONSULTED. Youth give advice on projects or programs that are designed and run by adults. The youth are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.

4.   INFORMED/ASSIGNED. Youth are assigned a specific role, and informed how and why they are being involved.

3.   TOKENISM. Youth appear to have a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

2.   DECORATION. Youth are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.

1.   MANIPULATION. Adults use youth to support adult causes, pretending the causes are inspired by youth.

Adapted from: Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation, Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, UNICEF.

LEVELS OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The 'Ladder of Participation' illustrated on this page shows eight different levels of youth participation.

- Rungs 5 to 8 have the highest levels of youth involvement, and describe true participation.

- Rungs 1 to 3 have the least amount of youth involvement, and are not considered true participation.

TYPES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

When it comes to healthy relationship programs, there are several ways to engage students:

Youth Co-Facilitators

Trying to change young people's behaviour through warnings or scare tactics is fundamentally "ill-suited to this stage of cognitive development."[76]

One of the best ways to motivate or inspire a teen is through a respected peer. Teens want to fit in, and are strongly influenced by what their friends do and say. At this age, this focus is entirely appropriate.

Research shows the strongest dating violence programs have a major role for students, often as co-facilitators. To make this work, they require training and ongoing support.

Several programs train students to co-present the material along with adult facilitators. Research shows these student leaders deeply value this opportunity.

> "The excitement and sense of accomplishment from these young individuals who took ownership of the materials they provided to their peers was (sic) clear."[77]

Their participation was also a major benefit to the programs.[78] Having young leaders involved in program planning or delivery makes it much more likely the material will be seen in a positive light by other students.

In addition, the experience of seeing a fellow student being given important responsibilities seemed to help other students to develop leadership skills, even when they themselves were not co-facilitating.

Using youth facilitators has benefits and challenges :

Benefits:

- Peer role models are a powerful example for other youth.

- Research in other areas of prevention have demonstrated an added benefit for including youth co-facilitators

- Great opportunity for youth co-facilitators to develop leadership skills.

- Youth bring a perspective that engages other youth.

- Youth become leaders in violence prevention at their school.

Challenges:

- Facilitators require significant training and supervision.

- Only a small number of youth facilitators can be trained, and others might be disappointed.

- Scheduling conflicts for youth.

- Potential for other youth to be disillusioned if youth facilitator makes unhealthy choices.

Youth Committees/Clubs

Some programs create student advisory committees, which play an active role in planning and delivering the program material. Committee members are often chosen through a peer selection process.

The committee should have clear ground rules, be offered appropriate training for their roles, share decision-making, be encouraged to take part in teambuilding exercises, and have unstructured time to get to know one another.

To keep the committees effective and relevant, it is essential to encourage ongoing feedback and adapt the activities in response to feedback from students. This strengthens the authenticity of the youth voice and fosters the leadership of its participants.

Some committees have complete decision-making authority over one or two aspects of the program (such as a contest, for example) – this strengthens the team's cohesion and their leadership skills.

An effective committee can help students to learn new skills, connect with like-minded youth, have fun, and develop personal leadership.

Teen leaders can conduct warm-ups and icebreakers, and brainstorm on other ways to create safe spaces where students feel connected and comfortable to

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[76] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 116.
[77] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, p.112.
[78] Ibid, p.112.

share their opinions. Their role and presence is critical for energizing participants and ensuring engagement levels are strong.

School Contests & Community Projects

Educators can tap into the power of peers through student forums, leadership award nights, art and poster competitions, and similar strategies.[79] These activities keep students informed and motivated.

FINDING STUDENT LEADERS[80]

Before deciding which students to invite to serve on a youth committee or be trained as a co-facilitator, get agreement with your program partners on how you each define 'leadership potential.'

For example, the 'best' students to take on these roles may not necessarily be those with the highest marks.

Generally, you should select students who:

- Are most likely to commit to the process.

- Are most trusted by other students.

- Hold power positions in a variety of social groups.

- Are interested in social justice issues.

- Are willing to explore their role in sexism, racism, homophobia, and bullying.

- Are willing to receive constructive criticism.

- Represent diversity (gender, race, etc.).

Since boys are less likely to volunteer, you may need to extend a special invitation to encourage their participation.

Tips For Youth Engagement

Here are some tips for creating an authentic youth voice in your program.

- Offer a range of opportunities for students to take on leadership roles (co-facilitating workshops in the classroom, co-presenting at events, mentoring younger students, etc.)

- Address barriers to student participation. Send reminders of after-school activities, and

encourage their guardians to sign permission forms. Provide honorariums or travel funds to make their involvement more possible and more inclusive.

- Respect their scheduling constraints just as you would those of an adult colleague. As much as possible, plan activities around important school events, student work schedules, etc.

- Have a signed contract that outlines expectations for youth participation and provides honoraria for fulfilling contract agreements.

- Provide training on leadership and how to mentor effectively.

- Provide snacks

- Sit in a circle – this equals the playing field, encourages participation, and helps all students feel valued.

- Use small groups – they encourage participation.

- Offer choice. For example, develop several different role play scenarios, and allow students to pick the one that best reflects their own reality.

- Stay connected. If you know a student has experienced an important life event, check in with them individually.

- Offer non-monetary compensation, such as course credit and letters of reference.

- Ensure the program materials reflect all students, especially those from minority cultures.

- Involve youth in every aspect of your program, from development to delivery to evaluation.

- Be prepared to share or even give up your leadership position.

- Build in opportunities for youth to give continual feedback.

- Invite youth onto planning teams. Then listen to what they say, and use their ideas. Ensure they are adequately represented - one youth and five adults on a committee is not equal representation.

- Ask youth to take on responsibilities at training meetings such as leading the check-in or energizer.

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[79] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 116.
[80] Adapted from: Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, p.26.

- Ask youth to bring news items that interest them to the training meetings for discussion.

- Don't involve youth unless you are willing to implement some of their ideas.

- Encourage open discussion, a free flow of ideas, creativity, and artistic solutions.

- You may need to earn their trust first. They will notice how well you follow through on their ideas.

- Spend time doing things that build relationships between adults and youth. These should include both informal unstructured time as well as planned activities like icebreakers, team building games, and small group discussions.

- Share the program objectives with youth, and let them help you figure out how to meet them.

- Educate the adults involved with the program on how to work effectively with youth, so they will be less likely to dominate conversations or otherwise disempower the youth.

- Ask youth how the program could benefit from using social media, then let them take the lead on implementing their ideas.

- Evaluate your program by using youth-friendly tools like short online surveys, video stories, games, etc.

USE CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE APPROACHES

Culture is about our values, norms, practices, and ways of life.

There are two basic levels of cultural sensitivity:

Surface Sensitivity
- The material and messages match obvious characteristics of the target community. (Similar to the 'packaging' strategies described on the next page.)

Deep Sensitivity
- The cultural, social, historical, environmental, and psychological forces that influence a groups' behaviour are incorporated into the material.

- Cultural norms are woven into every stage of development and delivery of the program. For example, since Elders are culturally important in Aboriginal culture, a role for Elders is created in the program.

WHY SHOULD PROGRAMS BE ADAPTED?

Students feel the most comfortable and are most likely to learn when the program material reflects their reality, is relevant to their life, and makes them feel included.

Culturally-appropriate materials also help students to feel more connected to the program facilitators; these programs are also more likely to be supported by the community.

Offering students culturally-appropriate material can be tremendously valuable – even healing.

For example, research shows for Aboriginal students, learning about their culture plays a protective role. The research suggests that the more that Aboriginal peoples are connected to their own culture, as opposed to the mainstream culture, the higher their resiliency against adversity.

Although this research is still quite new, cultural connectedness seems to be linked to:[81]

- Higher pro-social behaviour among adolescents.

- Increased sense of belonging, competence, independence and generosity in youth.

- Lower rates of risky health behaviours.

- Stable and positive health practices.

- Protection against stress and negative health outcomes.

- Protection against alcohol use, the impact of discrimination, and suicide.

CLARIFY WHO YOU ARE ADAPTING FOR

Before attempting to adapt a program for a specific group, it is essential to know exactly WHO you are adapting the program for.

For example, the term 'Aboriginal' does not describe one particular cultural group. It is a legal term, defined in the Canadian Constitution to include people of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit backgrounds.[82]

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[81] Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers, 2nd Edition.
[82] Ibid.

Each of these groups is very different from each other, in terms of culture, history, language, and beliefs. In Canada, there are over 600 registered bands and about 50-60 indigenous languages.[83] To think of this as one culture is highly misleading. Even the term 'Aboriginal' is not one that indigenous people chose for themselves – many prefer to use a more specific term.

The same type of diversity is found in almost every other cultural group. Since you are likely working with a mix of various cultural backgrounds, it is not always practical or possible to gear a program to one specific culture.

It is also essential to understand which specific communities you are working with, so you include the right traditions, stories, and teachings. If you 'mix and match' traditions and teachings, you must be clear about where they come from – even then, it might not be appropriate. For example, it is disrespectful to treat all 'Aboriginal' traditions as belonging to one large, mythical pan-Aboriginal cultural tradition.[84]

Still, some traditions are more universal and will resonate with a wider range of people. For example, many Aboriginal communities share the 'Seven Grandfather' teachings (Wisdom, Respect, Love, Bravery, Honesty, Humility, and Truth).
These values are so universal they can usually be safely presented to all youth, whether they're Aboriginal or not.

STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADAPTION

Cultural adaptation occurs along a continuum, from surface changes to deep changes.

Minor 'Packaging' Changes

Some program materials appear culturally appropriate because they include photos of diverse groups or uses statements such as "A Guide for African Canadians." However, while this may make the materials seem more familiar and comfortable to some groups - and perhaps increase their credibility

with these groups - on its own, this strategy does not constitute "cultural appropriateness."

Addressing Language

In its most basic form, addressing language issues mean translating the materials into the dominant or native language used by the target group.

However, if the program's underlying cultural assumptions, materials, or delivery methods do not fit a certain culture's norms and values, a simple translation will not produce a culturally appropriate program.

Going Beyond Language

In general, different role plays, scenarios, or other materials will also need to be changed in order to be culturally appropriate.

For example, girls from some newcomer communities may not be allowed to date boys, and some school boards have policies that prioritize abstinence.

To address these realities, healthy relationship programs can offer alternate role play scenarios that allow these students to practice communication skills through a 'friendship' role play.

Involving the Community

One of the best strategies to properly adapt a program for a specific cultural group is to draw upon the expertise and experience of that community.

This can be achieved by creating a steering committee, hiring staff or co-facilitators from the community, or recruiting volunteers from the community to help organize or deliver the program. For example, you might ask a community Elder to reinforce a particular learning by sharing a traditional story with the students.

Reflecting Social-Cultural Values

Only members of a given cultural group can provide the necessary insight into cultural characteristics that go beyond language, food, clothing, and so on.

When a group's cultural values, beliefs, and behaviours are recognized, reinforced and built upon, the program then reflects the inner workings

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[83] This figure is taken from the National Resources Canada atlas website and is based on 1996 data. Available at: http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/maps/peopleandsociety/lang/aboriginallanguages/bycommunity. For a more complete report on trends in Aboriginal languages based on 2006 Statistics Canada data see http://www.visions.ab.ca/res/ablangincanada2007.pdf.
[84] Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers, 2nd Edition.

of a culture, rather than just its outward appearance.

OTHER FORMS OF ADAPTATION

In some cases, you may also need to adapt your program for reasons other than culture:

- **Age.** All program content and delivery methods should be geared towards the age and development of the students.

- **Alternate Learning Styles.** Ensure the program material meets the needs of students of different learning abilities, by developing activities that allow you to teach the same material in different ways (for example, hands-on versus paper and pencil) to allow for varying literacy levels, etc.

- **Geography.** Distant and remote communities can be reached through technical strategies such as webinars and conference-call assisted training.

Tips For Cultural Adaptation

- Cultural adaptation works best when you have developed strong relationships with leaders from the cultures you wish to work with. This relationship should be a true partnership, one that is collaborative and respectful.

- Work with these partners to identify which specific cultural methods or traditions are most appropriate to incorporate into your program, such as circles, traditional stories, etc. Show them your program materials and ask for their input. Ask them about the key priorities in their community, and look for opportunities to incorporate these issues (in role plays, stories, etc.). Make changes based on their feedback.

- Consider adding some historical perspective. For example, with Aboriginal students it may be appropriate to include discussions on the links between residential schools and the intergenerational trauma and substance abuse problems observed in Aboriginal communities today.[85]

- To work with very specific communities, create a local partnership. For example, one program in Yellowknife convened a committee of Aboriginal leaders to make recommendations on adapting a healthy relationship program for a Grade 9 class of Dene students.

- Broaden your definition of 'culture.' For example, one group developed different versions of their program for urban Toronto youth, French-speaking students in Ottawa, and Aboriginal youth living on reserve. They also adapted their sexual health modules using an abstinence-based approach; these lessons have been widely adopted by Catholic and other Christian schools.

- Given the limited funding available for healthy relationship programs, you may need to find creative ways to secure the necessary resources to pay for the extra costs related to adapting your program. Find allies who understand the importance of cultural appropriateness, and work together to develop a strong case that will convince decision-makers and/or funders. Become an 'adaptation champion.'

- Be ready to challenge your own power and privilege. Personal reflection can be a powerful tool for developing increased self-awareness of bias and cultural dynamics.

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[85] "Strengths-based programming for First nations youth in schools: Building engagement through healthy relationships and leadership skills," C.V. Crooks et al, International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, Vol. 8, 2009, pp. 160-173.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL BOARDS[86]

If you'd like to start a healthy relationship program in your school – or improve an existing one – you need to work in partnership with your school and school board.

This is true whether you're a teacher, a student, a parent or school volunteer, or someone who works in a community organization.

Here are the basic steps to creating a strong partnership with a school or school board:

1. Understand how the organization makes decisions.
2. Align your program with their work.
3. Clarify who will deliver the program.
4. Clarify the roles of school personnel and students.
5. Create a written proposal.
6. Identify champions.
7. Present your proposal.

1. Understand how the organization makes decisions

Schools and school boards are complex, highly structured organizations. The first step to creating a good partnership with them is to know how they make their decisions.

The pyramid shown below illustrates a typical decision-making hierarchy for schools, although smaller school boards may have fewer levels. Also, depending on where you live, the specific titles may differ. For example, some communities use District instead of Board, or Director instead of Superintendent.

The higher-up someone is on this pyramid, the more power they will have to make decisions. That's why even though someone may believe in your program, they might not have the authority to decide whether to run it.

2. Align your program with their work

The next step to creating a successful partnership with a school or school board is to study what they're already doing and how they're doing it. The more your program fits, the more likely they will be interested.

Ministry of Education (or Department)

School Board Trustees

Executive Superintendent / Superintendents / Directors

Board Office Learning Supervisors, Consultants, Learning Coordinators, Safe Schools Coordinators, Research Staff

Principals/ Vice-Principals

Teachers, Support Workers, Frontline Staff

Parents, Parent Organizations, Students, Student Council

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[86] This section is adapted from Crooks et al. 2010.

Policies:

- Read the policies from your Ministry of Education, school board, and specific school. Is your program allowed under these policies? If not, can you align your program objectives to match the policy statements?

- Read any strategic documents and/or curriculum guides published by these organizations. Does your program help to achieve any of the long-term goals described in these documents?

- Does the school or school board have any major projects underway that your program might help them to achieve?

- Do the relevant teachers' federations have any mandates or requirements that might affect your program?

Links to Curriculum:

- Have you decided which grade levels and areas you will be targeting with your initiative?

- Does your program match the Ministry's curriculum expectations?

- Can you utilize recognized literacy strategies in your materials or the follow-up activities?

3. Clarify who will deliver the program

There are three basic models for delivering a healthy relationship program in schools:[87]

- Integrated Program: Delivered by teachers during class time.

- Community-Based Program: Delivered by staff from community-based organizations, either during class time, lunch hours, after-school, or on weekends.

- Hybrid Program: Delivered by external staff, with follow-up from teachers.

The 'best' model for your particular program depends on many factors, including:

- What is allowed under the relevant school board policies. For example, if a school board has a

policy that restricts people from outside the school from teaching during school hours, the program will have to be delivered by teachers.[88]

- The community partnerships and resources that are available.

- Whether your program is designed to provide opportunities for youth leadership.

Each approach has its own strengths and challenges, as shown on the following page.

Long-Term Sustainability

The long-term success of each approach depends upon different factors.

For example, the sustainability of an Integrated Program depends upon: the teachers' perception of its effectiveness; continuous revision and updating; and ongoing training and monitoring.

The sustainability of a Community-based Program would depend upon: ensuring ongoing funding; a strong partnership with the school(s); and the expertise of the community partner.

Since Hybrid Programs contain aspects of both approaches, their sustainability depends upon a combination of these factors.

4. Clarify the roles of school personnel and youth

Once you know who will deliver your program content – teachers, community experts, or a combination – the next step is to consider who else might play a role.

For example, even when programs are delivered by community groups, teachers can play an important supporting role, perhaps as co-facilitators, advisors, or supervisors. One approach is to develop follow-up activities to be delivered by teachers. Ideally, these activities would help the teachers to achieve specific curriculum expectations. Teachers may need training and/or resources to deliver the content effectively; if so, your plan should specify who will pay for these costs.

A role for students should also be considered. (See the 'Engage Youth' best practice.)

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[87] This is different from a one-time community event, such as when staff from a community agency presents at an assembly. These types of events can be part of a larger school-based dating violence program, but on their own there is no evidence they lead to long-term behavioural change.

[88] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 336.

INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
• Cost-effective because it is delivered by teachers. • Linked to curriculum outcomes and seen by educators as part of the core curriculum and not an "add-on."[89] • Can be integrated into each grade level to meet age needs and curriculum expectations; can incorporate cutting-edge differentiated instruction strategies. • Includes all students. • The experience of implementing the program can create change among educators. • Presents an excellent opportunity for school-community partnerships. Experts from different community organizations can help to deliver modules that relate to their specific areas of expertise.	• Programs need to be revised when ministry curriculum or outcomes change. • Teachers do have power over students, which may make it harder for youth to feel able to disclose personal stories. • Teachers may require specialized training; current programs offer "from none to about 20 hours" of training.[90] Just like students who are learning a new skill, teachers need the opportunity to practice and receive feedback.[91] • Individual teachers vary in their interest in or comfort with the subject material. Some may feel it is outside the scope of their job, while others may have strong personal opinions or a personal history of violence.[92] • Teachers may need appropriate training to learn how to manage students' disclosures of personal violence. • Youth may not have the same sense of a transformative experience that they get from programs delivered by an external organization.

COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
• Taps into community expertise: Community facilitators have strong knowledge of dating violence and the dynamics of healthy relationships. • Creates a bond between community organizations and schools. • Makes students more aware of where to find help in the community. • Students see the program as something special and desirable. • May be easier to create an environment where power is shared with youth participants. • Community-based facilitators may bring new perspectives and/or new learning approaches.	• More expensive. New funding is required each year for each new group of students. • May be difficult to get school / teacher approval. • Sustainability is an ongoing challenge because schools have limited funds for programs not directly aligned with their curriculum. • Staff turnover in community organizations can be high; this is especially a problem if a particularly strong facilitator takes a new job or goes on leave. • Difficult to scale up. • Community facilitators may need training on developing lessons for different age groups that include a variety of activities, handouts, and interactive teaching strategies.[93] • Does not build capacity for classroom teachers. • Loss of a school-based champion can create uncertainty, especially for new programs.

HYBRID PROGRAMS

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES
Accesses in-depth community knowledge, creates a strong school-community partnership, and is likely integrated into the core curriculum.	Generally more expensive because it requires teacher training as well as sustainable funding for the community partners.[94] It is also intensively collaborative, requiring significant time for planning and logistical coordination.

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[89] For example, in Ontario, Ministry of Education guidelines require 25 or 30 hours of class time. "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 125.
[90] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 172.
[91] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 117.
[92] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, p.7.
[93] "Development, Evaluation and National Implementation of a School-Based Program to Reduce Violence and Related Risk Behaviours: Lessons from the Fourth R," p. 133.
[94] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, pp. 12-13.

5. Prepare a written proposal

The next step is to prepare a written proposal for your partnership with the school or school board.

Administrators are very busy and probably won't agree to meet with you to talk about your idea unless you have first sent them a written proposal. They expect you to be organized and have all the relevant facts at hand – creating a written proposal is the best way to do this.

For some boards, you will have to fill out specific forms. If they don't have a formal proposal template, make sure your proposal answers all of the following questions:

1. Cost of program
2. Description of program
3. Duration / times – will students miss instructional time?
4. Frequency
5. Space requirements
6. Target audience
7. Recruitment / referral process
8. Program promotion (with parents, students)
9. Goals of program
10. How does the program support student learning?
11. Links to the provincial / territorial curriculum (what levels and subjects)?
12. Qualifications of staff delivering the program
13. Program evaluation / research considerations
    a. Is the program evidence-based?
    b. Are there evaluation opportunities?

Your written proposal must also clarify who will deliver the program - teachers, outside experts from community-based organizations, or both in collaboration.

6. Identify Champions

The next step is to find champions - people who support your proposal and will help you to move it through the different stages of approval.

Ideally, your champions should be as high on the decision-making pyramid as possible.

To find champions, consider the following questions:

- Is there anyone at the school or school board who is already known to be strong supporter of violence prevention projects?

- Is there a local school board committee responsible for your partnership initiative? If so, can you present your ideas to this committee early in the process to assess interest, feasibility, and potentially identify appropriate partners?

- Have you met with school administrators about the school's current programming? Are they on-board with your program, and will they support their teachers and staff in these initiatives?

- Is there a particular superintendent/consultant with a portfolio for your program? Can you get in touch with this person early in your planning?

- Can you recruit an educator to be on your advisory committee or project development team? This individual will be able to assist you with the alignment process throughout all phases of development and delivery.

- Are there other community organizations already successfully partnering with the school board that you could use as a resource or mentor? Be sure to ask them about their failures in school-based programming as well as their successes – sometimes, the greatest lessons come from analyzing what went wrong!

7. Present your proposal

The final step is to present your proposal to the right people at the school or school board.

Even though all school organizations have some things in common, they are still unique. For example, some school principals want all program requests brought to them first, while others may be more open to teachers bringing a proposal forward. That is why it's important to know how decisions are made in your own particular school or school board.

Part of creating an effective partnership is clarifying what each party needs to know and when, and having a communication plan that meets these needs.

KEY DETERMINANTS OF SUCCESS

Be clear about costs: Clear statements of costs, along with practical strategies for finding the necessary financial resources.

Be clear about benefits: Clear statements of how the program directly benefits students, by enhancing their learning (academic, social, and/or emotional) or by improving the overall school culture.

Align your program: Clear demonstrations of how the program aligns with the curriculum expectations and initiatives of the school/school board, and the vision and strategies of the Ministry of Education.

Use evidence: Empirical evidence of positive program outcomes through a formal evaluation OR a thorough presentation of anecdotal evidence, along with plans for future evaluation. Even if your program has been rigorously evaluated in other settings, schools may still expect evidence the program will deliver positive outcomes for their specific student cohorts.

Take a 'whole-school'[95] approach: Everyone – students, teachers, other school staff, and parents – shares a common understanding of violence. Violence is understood to be learned behaviour that takes many different forms, but it is always an abuse of power and not to be tolerated. Teachers and parents model non-violent behaviour, and know how to de-escalate conflict using positive alternatives to "shaming, intimidation or physical force."[96]

Tips For Working With Schools And School Boards

- For each grade you intend to work with, study the curriculum objectives and learning outcomes related to your program content.

- Find out what is happening in the schools and what people are interested in and concerned about. Read the school newsletters, and talk to parents, students and teachers.

- Learn about any policies related to violence prevention, and look for ways your work helps to advance them.

- Learn about any outside organizations that are already working within the schools.

- When promoting your program within the school hierarchy, start at the top and work your way down. You may need to make several different presentations.

- Recruit teachers to volunteer with your program. Offer appropriate recognition.

- Identify your allies and proactively build a relationship with them.

- Treat your school partners with respect. Express your gratitude for their support and participation, in both public and private ways.

- Share your program evaluation results with the schools in an easy to read format. Give copies to the students, teachers, administrators, and related organizations.

- Give school board members annual updates so they understand the great work you are doing in their schools.

- Proactively ask the school administrators to include your program on teachers' lists of supplementary resources or course curriculum. This gives teachers a mandate to use your materials and/or access your program.

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[95] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, pp. 17-18.
[96] Ibid, p. 17.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY

In many communities across Canada, healthy relationship programs are delivered through some type of partnership between a school and a community organization.

These types of partnerships can offer the best of both worlds by combining the teaching expertise of educators with the deep subject knowledge of community experts.

WHY PARTNER?

Even when teachers deliver all of the content, there can still be an active role for community organizations. For example, subject experts can help to develop the material, and possibly co-lead some modules.

Partnerships may open doors and create opportunities that otherwise would not have happened if you were working in isolation.

Your organization will benefit from the skills and expertise brought by your partner organization. You will likely gain access to new contacts, new volunteers, and new resources.

A well-managed partnership will increase your credibility, create stakeholder buy-in, and possibly pave the way to program expansion and more funding. Most funders are highly interested in partnerships. They see them as a way to maximize their investment and ensure the long-term sustainability of a program.

WHO TO PARTNER WITH

When you consider the range of potential partners, it becomes clear there are endless opportunities to be creative:

- Women's Shelters and Transition Houses
- Sexual Assault Centres
- Other Women's Community Organizations
- Counseling Agencies
- Police Services
- Faith Communities
- Sports Teams
- Arts Organizations
- Educational Theatre Groups
- Colleges and Universities
- First Nations Communities

- Teacher's Unions
- Parent Groups
- Trustee Associations
- Government Departments and Ministries
- Health Agencies (sexual health, public health, hospitals, etc.)

PARTNERSHIP EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of successful partnerships:

- One program developed media violence lessons for grades K-12 in partnership with a consortium that included teacher unions, police, public health, boards of trustees (all at a provincial level). The resulting curriculum has been implemented provincially. By working with key provincial partners, they paved the way for wide-scale implementation.

- One program partnered with a university educational program to develop curriculum for students training to become teachers. The university's Bachelor of Education program now includes a course on Safe Schools[97] that helps future teachers to develop the awareness and skills in healthy relationships and violence prevention.

HOW TO PARTNER

In many ways, creating a strong program partnership is similar to creating any other kind of relationship.

Partnerships thrive on assertive communication, shared values, honesty, trust, respect for differences, realistic expectations, and patience. You must follow through on your commitments, and work proactively to resolve conflicts.

And just like personal relationships, partnerships need to be nurtured. Remember to express gratitude for your partners' efforts and to publicly acknowledge their contributions.

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[97] Safe Schools: Essential issues and skills for educator, by R. Hughes, P. J. Jaffe, and C. V. Crooks. This course was developed in 2006 for the B.Ed. program at the Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, London, ON. For more information, please contact Peter Jaffe at pjaffe@uwo.ca.

Tips For Community Partnerships[98]

- When starting a new program, build on your existing partnerships.

- Research whether there are any youth-serving community organizations currently working in the school(s), then investigate ways you might collaborate with them.

- If you are new to partnerships and collaboration, start small.

- Partnerships can be time-consuming. Don't over commit by creating more partnerships than you can handle. Better to have one solid partnership than several that are floundering because you don't have enough time to manage them.

- Choose your partners carefully. Look for organizations that have credibility within their own communities and that add specific value to your program. Be strategic.

- What can you offer a potential partner? How will their participation strengthen or enhance your program? Look for win-win outcomes for both partners.

- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of your program or organization, and be prepared to let your partner take the lead in certain areas. If you give up control of some things, you may open up resources to strengthen others.

- When starting a new partnership, choose face-to-face meetings over phone calls, especially at the beginning. It is essential to get to know one another. This may take more time, but builds deeper relationships and will strengthen your collaboration in the long run.

- Before finalizing a partnership, talk about your similarities and differences, in organizational mandate, program goals, working styles, attitudes to deadlines, and other issues that are important to you. While there will always be some bumps along the road, it's best to be aware of any warning signs as early as possible.

- If you approach an organization with an invitation and they say no, stay connected anyway. Send them your newsletters, invite them to events, welcome their feedback, etc. This keeps them informed and keeps the door open to possible future collaboration.

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[98] Adapted from Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers, 2nd Edition, Claire V. Crooks et al, 2010, pp. 77-80.

MOVING FORWARD

School-based healthy relationship programs lead to many benefits for students, schools, and the broader community.

However, for the full promise of these programs to be realized, two key challenges must be addressed: the need for sustainable funding, and the need for more coordination.

Across North America, researchers on healthy relationship programs report that finding sustainable funding and working in collaboration with other providers remains "a dream" for most programs.[99]

THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Healthy relationship programs are struggling to move forward in a time of significant funding cutbacks, during an era when school curricula have been shrinking, not expanding.

As a result, as one researcher has noted:

> "Even the most celebrated programs must reapply for funding year after year, and patch dollars together from several sources."[100]

The lack of reliable and adequate funding has numerous implications, including inconsistent delivery, lower quality content, a failure to fully understand the problem due to the lack of gender analysis, a lack of culturally appropriate content, and an inability to fully engage the community.

Inconsistent Delivery

Schools sometimes find it difficult to allocate enough classroom time to properly fit the content into their schedule: the allocated time is often very short.

> "(M)ost programs struggle to be implemented in a consistent manner, and they are rarely comprehensive and integrated into schools or other community institutions." [101]

Some community organizations experience high staff turnover due to a lack of reliable financial resources, which may disrupt services to students.

Since it is impractical to rely on volunteers to deliver these complex programs in a consistent manner, new staff must frequently be recruited, hired, and trained.

Lower Quality Content

Content providers can rarely afford to revise and update the course materials in order to reflect learnings from evaluation, incorporate new approaches, or update videos, role plays, or other program materials so they remain relevant to students.

There is also little funding to conduct evaluation, which means there is very little information available on how the program might be improved. And without evaluation, it is very difficult to demonstrate the impact of the program to school boards or advocate for increased funding.

Since funding is scarce and time-limited, program staff often spend a lot of time seeking out new funding sources, making funding applications, and writing reports to multiple funders, rather than spending time with students, updating their program content, or investing in professional development.

Lack of Gender Analysis

In recent years, most school-based violence prevention strategies have focused on bullying and gun violence, which rarely explore issues related to gender.

In a recent report to a Toronto panel on school safety, one respondent explained why governments and school boards need to incorporate a gender lens into their anti-violence work:

> "We've been very disappointed with... (the) focus on gangs, guns, male violence and it has not seen the connection between gender, masculinity, gender-based violence, gun violence and drugs...(Funder) simply don't include gender as part of the problem. They don't get it. It seems that they are not prepared to address the full extent of the problem and the intersections between poverty, race and gender."[102]

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[99] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 344.
[100] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence: Executive Summary.
[101] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 344.

[102] The Road to Health: A Final Report on School Safety, p. 411.

Lack of Culturally Appropriate Content

When it comes to offering programs that are culturally appropriate for different populations, most programs have "barely scratched the surface."[103]

For example, there is very little funding designated for programs designed for young Aboriginal women, despite the fact that they experience much higher levels of violence than the national average, and that the needs of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women are very different. This lack of resources also contributes to the difficulty in recruiting strong young adult leaders from First Nations and other racially diverse communities.

Lack of Community Engagement

In the absence of community education or awareness initiatives, it can be a challenge to secure support for healthy relationship programs from the broader community. When parents' own knowledge of healthy relationships is low, they are less likely to support the programs.

In the same way, there is little funding for community education and awareness programs for young women that could supplement and support the messages being delivered in the school programs.

THE NEED FOR COORDINATION

The lack of sustainable funding is linked to the second major challenge facing healthy relationship practitioners: the need for coordination.

Without enhanced coordination, practitioners will continue to struggle to respond to emerging trends, develop their field, and find practical solutions to the many linked ways in which young people experience violence.

Many of the strategies used in healthy relationship programs are based upon learnings from bullying prevention programs – the two share many of the same principles.[104] However, there are few opportunities for practitioners and researchers to learn from one another.[105] Too often, they work in silos and have a specific focus – such as bullying, sexual harassment, gangs, or dating violence.

Although age, gender, race, and other life circumstances tend to change the types of violence people are most likely to experience, there are strong links between all of these form of violence.

While they may look different, playground bullying, sexual harassment, gang attacks, homophobic slurs, violence from intimate partners, racial discrimination, workplace harassment, and elder abuse all share certain commonalities.

> "For example, to what extent is the bullying seen on the playground in Grade 3 connected to the sexual harassment beginning in Grade 6 and dating violence in Grade 9?"

Healthy relationship programs present the ideal opportunity to acknowledge these links and address different types of violence experienced at different ages in a coordinated way. Students would learn basic relationship skills such as assertive communication at an earlier age, and would better understand the root causes of abuse and violence.

To be effective, anti-violence programming must recognize the "fundamental similarity between all form of abuse: one person (or a group of people) exercising power and control over another."[106]

The programs must also adopt a clear gender analysis, and consider the impact of other forms of violence – such as racism and homophobia, and related risk factors such as substance abuse.

National and international groups can play a strong leadership role in promoting this kind of cross-disciplinary, unified approach.[107]

CHALLENGE AND PROMISE AHEAD

As one researcher noted, healthy relationship programs show great promise:

> "These programs have the power to keep young people safer in their relationships, to build their self-confidence and empower them to take leadership, and to create safer schools and communities."[108]

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[103] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 344.
[104] Ibid, p.327.
[105] Ibid, p. 345.

[106] School-Based Violence Prevention Programs: A Resource Manual, p. 13.
[107] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 345.
[108] Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence: Executive Summary, p. 14.

However, given the scope of violence in our society, the chronic lack of sustainable funding for healthy relationship programs, and the numerous barriers to effective program implementation, the top researchers in the field say they are "cautious" about saying that any progress is being made.[109]

Still, there are signs of hope.

There are many excellent examples of creative partnerships between schools, community organizations, and community leaders – all who share a commitment to the work. While meeting the many funding challenges will not be easy, it does require organizations to be flexible and deeply creative, and to work together.

Perhaps the best sign of hope comes from the hundreds of young leaders who are passionate about creating healthier relationships and a more peaceful world.

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[109] Sourcebook on Violence Against Women, p. 344.

APPENDIX 1: THE CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION TEEN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Since the Canadian Women's Foundation was founded in 1991, we have funded community programs that help women and their children to escape violence, as well as violence prevention programs.

In 2011 alone, we invested over $2 million in this area, in communities across Canada. This funding was invested in over 450 emergency shelters and 53 violence prevention programs.

We fund the following types of violence prevention programs:

- HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS — These school-based projects help to stop the intergenerational cycle of violence by teaching young people about dating violence, gender stereotypes, sexual harassment, and how to create safe and healthy relationships.

- REBUILDING LIVES – Counselling, legal advice, and safety planning services to help women and children rebuild their lives after escaping domestic violence.

- SECOND STAGE – Safe housing facilities which provide temporary housing for women who have escaped domestic violence, often for up to a year. Includes affordable apartments and on-site services such as job search workshops and counselling.

- LOAN FUNDS – Small interest-free loans that help women who have escaped domestic violence to pay first and last month's rent, cover security deposits for heat, hydro, and phone, or cover other essential costs.

- EMPOWERMENT – Programs that help women and girls who are at risk of violence or sexual assault to improve their safety and build their confidence.

- SEXUAL EXPLOITATION / SEX TRAFFICKING — Programs for young women who are being sexually exploited to improve their safety and make lifestyle changes. Also includes funding for

public awareness and community partnerships.

- COMMUNITY BUILDING — Networks and resources to support community organizations to coordinate services delivery, share promising practices, research new approaches, and collaborate on strategies to end violence against women and girls.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEEN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

We have funded violence prevention programs for teens for more than fifteen years, and have been instrumental in helping the field to develop.

In 2005, we brought together twelve of the top academics and researchers from across Canada to identify best practices, strategize on how to enhance the field, and discuss future directions. At the time, these experts noted that while there is good evidence about what makes healthy relationship programs work in the short-term, there was little longitudinal research on long-term change.

In response, in 2006 we launched the Teen Violence Prevention Program, and since that time we have invested almost $2 million in healthy relationships programs, capacity building, dissemination, and evaluation.

The Teen Violence Prevention Program includes the following components:

- Grants to four of the top school-based healthy relationship programs in Canada.

- Grantee meetings to share learning.

- Participation in a common evaluation system.

- A learning strategy to share expertise, experience and best practices with other community organizations.

In 2010, we published a comprehensive evaluation of these program: Healthy Relationships: Preventing Teen Dating Violence, written by Dr. Leslie M. Tutty of the University of Calgary.

In 2011, the Canadian Women's Foundation secured funding from Status of Women Canada to advance its work in healthy relationship programming. Through this funding, the Foundation has launched a 24-month National Learning Strategy, which includes the production of this overview report.

OVERVIEW OF THE FOUR PROGRAMS

Respectful Relationships

Begun in 1998, Respectful Relationships (R+R) is delivered to youth from Grades 7 to 10.
The program includes forty-eight workshops (12 per grade level) that are delivered by a team of community-based facilitators (male and female) over each of the four grades, during class time. The workshops cover topics such as dating violence, systemic violence, bullying, racism, homophobia, influence of the media, peer pressure, and sexual harassment.

Approach

The workshops actively engage youth in a collaborative learning process through activities, personal story telling, and writing. The curriculum focuses on social competence and emotional learning in an atmosphere where youth are encouraged to take greater responsibility for themselves as well as the group as a whole. Social behaviours and attitudes are explored and differences in opinions encouraged and valued as opportunities to articulate, share and become more competent in hearing other people's perspectives.

Youth Team Leadership

Youth Team members co-deliver the sessions. Students on the Youth Team are trained in facilitation, social activism, self awareness and leadership. They receive ongoing mentoring, and attend regular team meetings throughout the course of the program. They also play an important role by participating in curriculum development and program evaluation. Youth Team members receive school credits and an honorarium for their participation and are supported by the schools to miss classes to co-facilitate workshops.

School partnerships

Since 2000, R+R has been delivered through a written partnership agreement between SWOVA and the Southern Gulf Islands School District #64. This partnership means that workshops are delivered during regular class time. Curriculum goals are matched with the B.C. Ministry of Education's prescribed learning outcomes (PLOs). School personnel act as program advisors. Schools donate the use of facilities for meetings.

Recognition

The R+R program has received a number of provincial and national awards. In 2003, it received the BC School Superintendents' Association Award of Recognition for the program's contribution to public education. It received a Women's Safety Award in 2004, under the auspices of Femmes et Villes in Montreal and Status of Women Canada; this was one of twelve awards given out to projects across Canada, chosen by an independent international jury. In 2007, it was cited by United Nations Habitat as a Good Practice in youth violence prevention, as part of world-wide Best Practices to Improve the living environment, as one of 329 practices chosen from around the world. All of the practices chosen are featured on their UN-Habitat Best Practices Database, so that others can extract lessons and incorporate them into their own work. Most recently, the program was endorsed by UNICEF Canada.

Delivery Organization

R+R is developed and delivered by SWOVA Community Development and Research Society, a non-profit society and registered charity in Canada. (SWOVA stands for: Saltspring Women Opposed to Violence and Abuse.)

For nearly two decades, SWOVA has been working to prevent violence in all forms, serving as an incubator where strategies and solutions for violence prevention are created, nurtured and shared. Its work is based on solid research and evaluation.

www.swova.org

http://respectfulrelationships.swova.org/

The Fourth R

Launched in 2001, the Fourth R is a school-based program for Grade 9 students that addresses dating violence, substance abuse, and risky sexual behaviours. The Fourth R refers to Relationships (the subjects commonly referred to as 'The Three Rs' are: Reading, wRriting, and aRrithmetic) .

The Fourth R is delivered by teachers as part of the Health and Physical Education high school curriculum.

Students learn about conflict resolution, decision making, active listening as well as clarifying myths and facts of relationships and drug use, discussing peer pressure and bringing personal and group responsibility into play. There is an emphasis on skill development fostered by interactive strategies and role plays.

The various programs meet the provincial education guidelines for English or Health and Physical Education. There are specific versions that meet the curriculum guidelines of most provinces and territories. There are additional school-wide, teacher training, and parent information components. Some of the programs are available in French, Spanish and Portuguese. Other translations are underway.

There are some curricula that have been expanded and adapted to include an Aboriginal Perspective. Adaptations were undertaken in conjunction with community partners. The Aboriginal Perspectives Fourth R has been adapted for specific areas (e.g., as a Cree-informed version for Saskatchewan and a Dene version for Northwest Territories).

Students are encouraged to form a Safe School Committee to complement the classroom component.

Approach

The Fourth R program is based on strong empirical evidence and was developed by well-known experts.

The program applies a youth-focused, harm-reduction strategy that encompasses knowledge, positive relationship skills, and decision-making. It uses best practice approaches to target multiple forms of violence, including bullying, dating violence, peer violence, and group violence. A harm-reduction approach empowers adolescents to make healthier decisions about relationships, substance use and sexual behaviour.

Students learn to analyze issues, solve problems, and apply ideas while developing the skills of effective communication such as speaking, listening, and presenting. Whole-class, small group, and dyadic discussion help students to process the issues; opportunities to examine individual values, beliefs, boundaries and limits are also provided.

Youth Committee

The Youth Safe Schools Committee is a key school-wide component that makes this program special.

Students who serve on the Committee create media displays, provide information, connect to parents and community services, and work with teachers to deliver the lessons. Their work helps to ensure that students receive a consistent message about preventing violence and promoting healthy relationships both in the classroom and in the school and community.

School Partnerships

The Fourth R program meets Ontario and selected other provincial Ministry of Education Learning Expectations, includes clear and concise lesson objectives, and provides extensive teaching and learning strategies for each lesson.

A Fourth R Small Groups program has been developed for community organizations. This program is delivered by two co-facilitators over a period of 12 sessions. There is a Part 2 that focuses on developing youth leaders who will then be equipped with the skills to co-facilitate Part 1.

Teachers and community partners in school boards who are implementing the Fourth R can also take advantage of the range of training opportunities offered both at the central site in London, Ontario and throughout Canada by a team of Master Trainers.

Recognition

This program has been listed on numerous National Registries as an effective prevention program, including:

- In Canada: Ontario Bullying Prevention Database, Canada National Crime Prevention Registry, Curriculum Services Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada Promising and Best Practices Portal, Public Safety Canada Promising and Model Crime Prevention Programs, and National School-Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse Consortium.

- In the United States: SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices, U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice

Programs Crime Solutions, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Programs Guide (MPG), FindYouthInfo.Org / BullyingInfo.Org Evaluated Program Directory, Idaho Government Curricular Materials Adoption, and Indiana Government Curricular Materials Adoption.

Delivery Agency

The Fourth R began as a research project by Dr. David Wolfe, Dr. Claire Crooks, Dr. Peter Jaffe, and Mr. Ray Hughes. It was piloted in 2001 in London, Ontario in partnership the Thames Valley District School Board.

The Fourth R is now a consortium of researchers and professionals who develop and evaluate programs, resources and training materials for educators and other front-line professionals who work with youth.

http://youthrelationships.org

Making Waves

Launched in 1995, Making Waves is a province-wide initiative that educates teens about dating violence prevention.

The program begins its delivery as a Weekend Intensive Retreat. Every school in New Brunswick is invited to participate, on a rotating basis, at least once every three years. Each school is invited to send at least four students as well as teacher(s) to participate in workshops, activities and facilitated group discussions. The final weekend workshop is the development of an action plan and schools are supported during the year in order to implement their plan.

Approach

The program content includes healthy relationships, recognizing abuse, media awareness, gender stereotypes, self-esteem, helping others, prevention of sexual assault and effective communication.

A key element of the program occurs after the weekend retreat: awareness-raising activities held at the schools throughout the year. These activities are developed by student-teacher teams, who agree on an action plan during the retreat.

Examples of school action plans include: voluntary lunch-time discussions on positive and negative representations of relationships from popular media, followed by the creation of a Wall of Shame/Wall of Fame; inviting community experts to do presentations at the school; presenting a series of school announcements with information about relationship issues; and, writing articles about abuse prevention in the school paper.

The program encourages, develops and promotes very high student engagement. Students are invited to represent their schools at the retreat and then become responsible for implementing the school action plan. Teachers or guidance counsellors are supporters at the school.

Some of the participating youth are also invited to join the Student Action Committee, an organizational body of students from schools across NB that prepares the retreats, facilitates many of the training sessions, and recruits its own members, assuring succession. This group has established a presence on Facebook and uses digital media to remain in touch and sustain its work between the weekend retreats.

School and Community Partnerships

In order to establish a provincial network for violence prevention and establish a sustainable healthy relationship model for the province, Making Waves has created teams of community champions in various regions. These teams are led by young women who have participated in the program.

Community members from various agencies also take part in the training weekend retreats; from this pool of individuals, a Community Action Committee is being created to support and complement the work of the Student Action Committee.

Recognition

Our programs have been lauded on provincial, national, and international levels.

Delivery Agency

Partners for Youth Inc. is a not-for-profit organization built on a community partnership model that assists youth and at-risk youth to learn, grow, develop positive self-esteem and gain the skills to make positive life choices. Their work is primarily

adventure-based programming, offered in a safe, supportive, and fun environment.

www.partnersforyouth.ca

http://www.partnersforyouth.ca/en/programs/46-project-1

Healthy Relationships for Youth

In the Healthy Relationships for Youth (HRY) program, youth leaders are trained to deliver twelve sessions that build relationship skills, knowledge on violence prevention and critical analysis around the roots of violence. Subjects range from conflict resolution, support and help-seeking skills to sexual orientation and social justice. The program is delivered to Grade 9 students during their Healthy Living course. In Grades 10 through 12, they have the chance to become trained as a youth leader.

Approach

HRY focuses on developing and maintaining healthy relationships. The program is based on the belief that sexism, racism and homophobia are forms of oppression which contributes to violence. Students learn the warning signs of unhealthy relationships, can practice skills in conflict resolution, assertive communication and maintaining healthy boundaries, have opportunities to express their thoughts and emotions, and learn how to find or offer support, leaving them better equipped to make positive decisions about their own behaviour and reduce violence.

The program content is delivered in the classroom by pairs of trained youth leaders with support from the Grade 9 Healthy Living teacher. The program combines separate gender and mixed gender sessions.

School Partnerships

The program is offered in all ten high schools in the Strait Regional School Board, in a partnership between the Strait Regional School Board and the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre. The curriculum achieves the learning outcomes for many of the grade nine Healthy Living outcomes as required by the Nova Scotia Department of Education.

HRY evolved from the Rural Youth Leadership Program, first established in 2002, which was initially based on the R+R model (see above). The HRY program was launched in 2007.

Youth Leadership Role

Youth have a critical role in the planning, delivery and evaluation of HRY.

In Grade 9, they participate as students. At the end of this year, an open call for Youth Leaders is made.

Interested students take part in a two-day training session on leadership, facilitation, and issues discussed in the HRY curriculum. These new Youth Leaders also receive ongoing mentoring from older students. They meet regularly with the classroom teacher and program coordinator throughout the duration of the program.

The youth leaders and Grade 9 teacher make decisions on content revisions, facilitation practices and how to engage their peers, and plan school events.

Recognition

Internal and external evaluations of the HRY program demonstrate improvements in student communication, relationship building and self-esteem. For example, 89% of students surveyed expressed having an increased understanding of diversity and racism.

HRY has also played a strong role in promoting understanding and acceptance of LGBTQ students.

HRY is committed to community education and taking an active voice regarding student equity. In 2010, the program presented *Speak Up (Students Promoting Equity and Acceptance through Knowledge, Understanding and Prevention).* Youth Leaders, with support from teachers, developed and hosted this full-day conference of workshops and speakers; the presenters included Youth Leaders, who presented workshops on 'Media and Stereotyping' and 'Privilege and Oppression.'

Delivery Organization

The Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association (AWRC & SASA) is a

feminist, community-based women's organization
which opened in 1983.

The Centre was formed by women in the community
who wanted to provide woman-centered services
that supported women in making positive changes in
their lives. The Centre takes an integrated approach,
addressing multiple issues, social change, and
service provision for women and their children.

www.antigonishwomenscentre.com

http://www.antigonishwomenscentre.com/ryep/you
th.html

THE FOUR PROGRAMS IN THE TEEN VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECT

Name	Respectful Relationships	The Fourth R	Making Waves	Healthy Relationships for Youth
Main Location	Salt Spring Island, BC	London, Ontario	Fredericton, New Brunswick	Antigonish, Nova Scotia
Scope	Provincial	National/International	Provincial	Local
Number of Sites	4	1500+ schools in Canada	26 (rotating schedule)	10
Targeted Grades	Grades 7 to 10	Grade 9	Grades 10 and 11	Grade 9
Annual Number of Teens Reached	1500	200,000	104 direct 7,500 indirect	600
Annual Hours of Student Instructor	24 hours	21-33 hours	20 hours	12 hours (Grade 9 students 14 hours (Youth Facilitators)
Program Length	12 weeks	21 -33 weeks	weekend retreat, followed by school and community activities	12 weeks
Delivered by…	Delivered by two adult community facilitators (male and female) and trained youth facilitators.	Delivered by teachers. Small Groups version delivered by two adult co-facilitators at community agencies.	Co-delivered by female/male teams of community facilitators, trained youth, and trained volunteers (mainly teachers)	Co-delivered by teachers, community facilitators, and trained youth facilitators.
Delivery agency…	SWOVA Community Development and Research Society (non-profit), in partnership with the local school district and partner agencies.	Schools (developed by a team from the University of Western Ontario and CAMH Centre for Prevention Science) Community agencies	Partners for Youth Inc. (non-profit)	Antigonish Women's Resource Centre (non-profit), in partnership with 10 schools.
Delivered during…	Regular class time	Regular class time (Health and Physical Education) (Small group component also available)	Non-school time	Regular class time (Healthy Living)
Role of Youth	Youth Co-facilitators Youth Team	Youth Safe Schools Committee Opportunity for youth to co-facilitate Part I of the Small Groups program	Community Action Committee Student Action Committee (provincial; organizes the retreats)	Youth Co-facilitators
Link to Provincial Curriculum	Program adheres to provincial learning outcomes.	Program adheres to provincial learning outcomes across the country.	N/A	Program adheres to many of the province's educational outcomes for the Grade 9 "Healthy Living" curriculum.

APPENDIX 2: TEACHING TEENS ABOUT HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS - SAMPLE CLASSROOM MATERIALS

This section presents six examples of learning modules currently being used in healthy relationship programs across Canada.

The modules are presented as a developmental progression, with each building upon the knowledge gained from the one before.

Each module includes:
- What facilitators should know
- Learning objectives
- Materials needed
- Activities
- Instructions and Handouts

NOTE: Since the six modules are taken from different programs, they are not meant to be delivered together as a complete program.

This section also includes basic information on how to ensure student safety and manage disclosures of personal experiences of violence (see page 79).

The learning modules are:

1. Relationships 101

An introduction to the concept that our ideas about relationships are influenced by family, friends, the media, etc.
Module Title: Shaping Our Views
Program Name: The Fourth R

2. Gender Stereotypes

Exploring the roots of violence through separate gender discussions on how gender and gender stereotypes affect our lives and relationships.
Module Title: Separate Gender
Program Name: Healthy Relationships for Youth

3. Understanding Dating Violence

Basic information on the different forms of abuse in dating relationships.
Module Title: The Ties That Bind
Program Name: Making Waves

4. Understanding Healthy Relationships

What a healthy relationship looks like.
Module Title: Challenges in Healthy Relationships
Program Name: Respectful Relationships

5. Skills Building

Practicing the skills that allow you to create and maintain a healthy relationship.
Module Title: Boundaries
Program Name: Healthy Relationships for Youth

6. Anti-Oppression

Expanding our definition of "violence" to include racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination.
Module Title: Heteronormativity and Homophobia
Program Name: Respectful Relationships

Sample Module 1

RELATIONSHIPS 101

Module Title: Shaping Our Views
Program Name: The Fourth R

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

1. Be aware that youth may have prior or current experience with violence.

At times, this material may be difficult or distressing for some of the group members.

Some of the students will likely have experienced violence themselves, witnessed violence (perhaps between friends or in their parents' relationships), some may be perpetrators of violence, and some may be both victim and perpetrator.

Some students may attempt to cope with their distress or discomfort in the material by distancing or distracting themselves. For example, they may chat with friends, doodle, or otherwise seem not to be paying attention.

You can help by giving them a job that allows them to distance themselves from the material without disrupting the group (e.g., record notes on the chart paper, tape up posters, etc.). You may also need to initiate a discussion with a youth who seems distressed.

2. Children and teens cope more effectively with difficult situations when they are better able to recognize their feelings and the feelings of others.

Recognizing, naming and acknowledging feelings are very difficult skills for most youth, particularly for those with a history of abuse or neglect. However, we know that these skills are extremely important for a teen's ability to express his or her feelings in a healthy way.

In this session, many of the exercises and discussion questions ask students to consider feelings (their own and those of others). Many may struggle with this aspect of the session and over-emphasize what someone might be thinking, instead of what someone might be feeling.

Facilitators can help by pointing out the difference, and by helping students to become more aware of their own and others' emotions.

3. Teens are the best experts on being a teenager.

You do not have to know all the answers.

If students ask questions you don't have the answers to, ask other students for their ideas, or tell them you will do some research and get back to them next time.

This approach teaches students that it's okay to ask for help.

4. Facilitator behaviours matter.

You are a role-model for the group! As you facilitate, you must model non-power based approaches to relationships and conflict management, otherwise students will find it difficult to believe they are possible.

Most likely, you will experience some conflict during the course (e.g., a day when the youth are horsing around, talking, interrupting, etc.) How you manage this conflict needs to be a reflection of how you encourage youth to

manage conflict in their relationships (i.e., describing the problem, telling your group members how you feel, and outlining your expectations for change).

5. **There are no wrong answers.**

Every comment and response from a student reflects the day-to-day problems or realities they are facing.

For example, if they insist that it's impossible to end a relationship in a respectful way, that simply reflects the fact that – so far – they've never seen it done. It's not surprising they have difficulty believing it's possible.

6. **Room set-up is important.**

The input and interaction of the students is just as important – if not more so - than the content you present.

The group space should be set up to make it easy for them to talk. Set up chairs in a circle to let students know that everyone's input is important and valued.

7. **Provide support and structure for youth co-facilitators.**

Having a youth co-facilitate the program is a positive experience for the group and a wonderful growth opportunity for the young leader.

However, they must be properly supported. At a minimum, you should de-brief after each session, and plan together for the next session. They should be assigned specific, manageable tasks that are within their comfort level. They also benefit from specific positive and constructive feedback after each session.

<u>Total Time</u>
- 50 minutes.

<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- Students will identify influences that affect how they think about people, relationships and friendships.

<u>Materials</u>
- Pen/pencil for each student.
- Enough chairs for all students and facilitators, set up in one circle.
- Poster board or chart paper (at least 6 pieces), and markers.
- Masking tape.
- A different color of marker for each group.
- Graffiti activity – five pieces of flipchart paper, each with one word written in the middle: Parents, Friends, Media, Sports Images, and Culture/Community.

<u>Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators</u>
- It's expected that each activity will be co-facilitated by adult and youth facilitators.
- Youth facilitators may wish to take the lead on activities 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

ACTIVITY 1.1 - "NAME WAVE" WARM-UP (5 MIN)
Teaching strategy for this activity was adapted from: Reaching All By Creating Tribes Learning Communities, Jeanne Gibbs, 2006

Have students sit in the circle.

Tell them you are going to play a game using each person's name.

Explain that you are going to make a gesture and say your name, and each person in turn – starting with the person on your right - will repeat the same gesture and your name. Once it comes back to you, the person on your right will make their own gesture and say their name, and the group will go around the circle in the same way. The goal is to go around the circle as quickly as possible.

Make the gesture and say your name. The person on your right will make the same gesture and say your name, then the next person will do the same, and so on all the way around the circle. When it gets back to you, make your action and say your name one last time, then pass it to the person on your right.

Continue in the same way until everyone in the group has made an action that goes with his/her name, and everyone around the circle has repeated it.

ACTIVITY 1.2 - GROUP DISCUSSION (5 MIN)

Ask students to think about a situation where a stereotype affected how someone was treated by others.

Start by sharing your own example, then ask a few students to share their examples.

Have a discussion based on the question: "What can you do to make sure you treat people with respect and without labelling them?"

ACTIVITY 1.3 - "STAND ON THE LINE" GAME (10 MIN)

Tape a line onto the floor and ask students to stand on either side of the line, about one giant step away from the line.

All students should be one step away from the line, about half of them on one side and the rest on the other side.

Explain that you are going to read a number of statements. For each statement, they should stand on the line if the statement applies to them.

Read each statement below, and encourage them to stand on the line if the statement applies to them.
There is no discussion on each statement. Once the students have stood on the line, ask them all to move back to their starting place, then read the next statement.

STAND ON THE LINE IF…
- Stand on the line if you like to eat food with curry in it.
- Stand on the line if you like to play sports.
- Stand on the line if you like to act and sing.
- Stand on the line if you go to a place of worship (ie. Church, Synagogue, Mosque, etc.)
- Stand on the line if you like to eat a lot of junk food.
- Stand on the line if you like to go to concerts.
- Stand on the line if you spend time with family (other than immediate family) at least once a month.
- Stand on the line if you have a curfew.
- Stand on the line if you speak a language other than English.
- Stand on the line if you mostly get along with your parents/guardians.

After you've read all the statements, ask them if they know why you chose these particular statements.

You may need to explain that each statement has something to do with an outside influence on them.

For example, if you like sports, it is probably because your parents or another family member encouraged your participation when you were younger. If you regularly go to a place of worship, it is probably because it is part of your culture and the expectations within your family. If you speak another language, it is probably because of your family background, or a course you took in school.

Most of what we do and believe is based on these types of outside influences - this is natural.

In the same way, we also learn about relationships from outside influences. This shapes how we choose our friends and how we behave in dating relationships.

ACTIVITY 1.4 – WHAT SHAPES OUR RELATIONSHIPS? (5 MIN)

Ask students if they can identify outside influences that shape our relationships with others.

Explain what you mean by "relationships" – it includes relationships with their friends, parents, siblings, teachers, and dating relationships.

Explain you'd like them to use the "Think/Pair/Share" strategy, which has the following steps:
- THINK: Students first think about the question themselves for 30 seconds.
- PAIR: Next, they tell their ideas to a partner for 30 seconds.
- SHARE: Finally, they share their ideas with the larger group.

Break them into pairs.

Ask them to think on their own for 30 seconds about what kinds of outside influences may have shaped how they think about relationships.

After 30 seconds, ask them to share their ideas with their partner.

After 30 seconds, ask them to come together in the large group to share their ideas.

As they name influences, list them on flipchart paper.

For now, ask them to simply name the influences. They will discuss how these influences have shaped their thinking about relationships in the next activity.

ACTIVITY 1.5 - GRAFFITI (15 MIN)

Tape the five pieces of prepared flipchart paper for the Graffiti activity around the room.

Divide students into five groups, roughly equal in size. Within each group, assign duties for 1) materials person, 2) recorder, and 3) speaker, using numbered heads. The materials person should come and get a marker from you, and give it to the recorder.

Ask each of the five groups to stand in front of one of the pieces of paper.

Ask them to look at the topic on the page in front of them and brainstorm ideas about how that particular topic shapes their views of relationships.

Ask them to consider the following:

How am I influenced by _____?
What messages am I sent by _____?
How does _____ affect my life and my choices?

The recorder should write down all of the ideas. Groups will have 30 seconds at each paper, and then they will move to the next paper.

Students should rotate to all five papers in the same way, taking their markers with them.

ACTIVITY 1.6 - REVIEWING GRAFFITI TOPICS (5 MIN)

Once students return to their original topic sheet, ask them to group similar ideas together.

Then ask each group to choose the three ideas they think are most important about their topic.

Next, ask the speaker in each group to share their three points.

Possible responses may include:

Parents:
- If a parent is controlling, then you think that is how you get what you want.
- If parents fight a lot, you might think this is normal.
- If parents take on traditional roles, then you might think this is how it is supposed to be in your own relationships.
- Parents sometimes tell you who you can be friends with or date.

Friends:
- Friends sometimes want you to ignore certain people/form cliques, etc.
- Sometimes they make you think that everyone is doing a certain thing (i.e. drinking, having sex, etc) and that there is something wrong with you if you don't.
- They can make us think that no one gets along with their parents, when in fact this is not the case.
- They can create stereotypes of men and women, making us feel like the opposite gender is just an object without thoughts, feelings, etc.
- Sometimes they act like relationships are just about quickly falling in love, followed by having sex.

Sports Images:
- Make us believe that women are just there to be used and abused and that you can get away with this as long as you are a good athlete.
- Teach us that violence is acceptable and desirable to get what you want.

Culture/Community:
- Some views may make us believe that one gender is superior to the other.
- Marriage is arranged.
- That you must get married in order to be a valued member of society.
- You must do everything you can to make a relationship work, and if it isn't working, it is your fault.

Summarize by saying that outside influences may shape our ideas about relationships in both positive and negative ways. Also, we must own our own actions and choices – just because we learned a behaviour from somewhere doesn't give us an excuse for bad behaviour in a relationship.

ACTIVITY 1.7 – CLOSE (5 MINUTES)

Close the group by asking each person to name one person who has had a <u>positive</u> influence on their relationships.

It is important for the facilitator to model this first by saying:
"Someone who has had a positive influence on my relationships is (name) because…"

Once everyone has had an opportunity to speak, thank everyone for attending.

Sample Module 2

GENDER STEREOTYPES

MODULE TITLE: **Separate Gender**
PROGRAM NAME: **Healthy Relationships For Youth**

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

Recent research indicates that separating students by gender is one of the best ways to engage youth to discuss and think critically about relationships.

Young men and young women have few opportunities for these types of thoughtful discussions about gender roles, gender stereotypes, and gendered pressures. They are also rarely invited to think about or celebrate what they like about being a young man or young woman.

However, some students will challenge the gender separation. Handled properly, these objections can lead to rich discussion about sex and gender. Facilitators can set the proper tone by positioning it as a rare and special experience, for both boys and girls, to sit down with members of their own sex to talk about gender-related issues.

Gender-separate sessions provide a safe space for each group to talk about the stereotypes related to their gender. Over the years, student feedback shows that these discussions are often a highlight of the programs. In one recent study, facilitators reported these types of discussions generated the most conversation amongst youth.

One student facilitator, reflecting on his experiences over a three-year time span, said:

> "By emphasizing gender differences and the pressures of each sex, we can better understand the stereotypes that exist, the meaning behind our actions and the pressures felt by both male and female students."

Students in these groups typically need to talk a lot. Be sure to leave plenty of time in the sessions for discussions. This exploration can be very powerful for the students and shouldn't be shortchanged.

It is important to tell the students that the information generated in the separate gender discussions will be shared with the whole class at the end of the session. A representative from each group will summarize the points discussed. This way, information shared remains anonymous. It is not meant to represent one cohesive voice but a variety of perspectives emerging from the discussion. Besides learning more about gender stereotyping, students also get to practice listening to others and communicating more effectively.

Total Time
- 60 minutes.

Learning Objectives
- This section invites students to reflect on their gender and how is framed in media and society and the pressures this creates. This allows the group to celebrate the aspects they most enjoy about their gender and reflect on the challenges faced by the other sex.

Students will:
- Express the experience of being a male or female with their peers
- Practice listening to each other as they express the results of the stereotyping exercise
- Develop empathy by learning how each gender is affected by stereotyping

Materials
- Flipchart paper and markers

<u>Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators</u>
- This exercise works best when it is peer-led, with adults acting only as supervisors and facilitators in the final analysis. Youth facilitators can lead the separate gender warm-up activities and discussions. They can also present the information back to the mixed group.

<u>Notes:</u>
- This module requires at least 2 facilitators, one female and one male.
- Ideally, there will be 2 female facilitators (adult and youth) and 2 male facilitators (adult and youth).
- The class will separate into two groups, with the female students working with the female facilitator(s) and the male students working with the male facilitator(s).
- Two separate rooms are needed to encourage open dialogue in the separate-gender groups.
- Students should sit in a circle to encourage discussion and promote the notion of equality and inclusion.

ACTIVITY 2.1 INTRODUCTION   (5MIN)
NOTE: The group is together for this activity.

Ask the students to say their name and share their favourite pastime.

Explain that they will be divided into two groups, male and female, where they will have the chance to talk about what it's like to be a boy or a girl.

Explain that afterwards, they will come back together and their responses will be shared with the whole group.

Have the students separate by gender. The simplest and most traditional way is to split the class into boys and girls, which reinforces the social gender binary that most students are accustomed to following. However, although this will increase participation for most students, it excludes the needs of students who may identify as gender queer or transgender.

An option is to split the class into three groups, allowing them to self-select:

1) Students who are most comfortable in an all-girl discussion
2) Students who are most comfortable in an all-boy discussion
3) Students who are comfortable in a mixed gender group. (Each activity includes note on how to adapt the materials for a mixed group.)

Encourage students to choose the gender group they are comfortable with, being sensitive to and supportive of students who may not identify as male or female.

NOTE: The third group is an example of how to adapt a program to provide greater inclusiveness for diversity of gender identity and sexual orientation.

ACTIVITY 2.2 ICE BREAKER – "MOVE YOUR BUTT" PART 1 (5 MIN)

Goal of Activity: To give students the opportunity to express views about their own gender and the opposite gender. They will share their views with each other after discussing in separate gender groups.

Value: This is to open everyone up and to introduce the important subject in a fun way. The structure loosens tension and invites reflection.

NOTE: Students are in separate gender groups for this activity.

Have the students arrange the chairs in a circle. Remove one chair so that one person has to stand

Explain the game: The person standing has to make a statement, then say "Move Your Butt", and the students who relate to that statement must get up and find another place to sit.

For example, the standing person might say:

- "Anyone who has been to the movies, *move your butt*!"
- "Anyone who is wearing blue, *move your butt!*"
- "Anyone who has traveled outside the province, move your butt!"

Anyone who is wearing that, has done that, or has been there, has to get up and find another chair. They are not allowed to sit back in their own seat or move to the chair directly beside them. The speaker also tries to find a seat during this time.

The person left standing starts the process again.

This game is played until most people have had a turn.

ACTIVITY 2.3 ICE BREAKER – "MOVE YOUR BUTT" PART 2 (5 MIN)
NOTE: Students are in separate gender groups for this activity. For mixed-gender groups, skip this activity.

Now the standing person says: "What I like about my gender is…" filling in the blanks with a statement that feels true for them.

Students who feel the same should try to find another chair.

This should be played until most or all students have had a chance to speak.

ACTIVITY 2.4 DISCUSSION (10 MIN)
NOTE: Students are in separate gender groups for this activity. Mixed-gender groups make a different list, as shown below.

In separate-gender groups, ask students the following questions, and write down their answers on a flipchart:

- What I like about being a girl/boy (my gender) is….
- What I like about the opposite gender is…
- Because I'm a girl/boy people expect me to…
- Sometimes it's hard to be a girl/boy because….
- We would like to let the opposite gender know that…

In the mixed-gender group, use these questions.

- What is great about being a girl?
- What is great about being a boy?
- What do people expect from girls?
- What do people expect from boys?
- What is difficult about being a girl?
- What is difficult about being a boy?

Bring the students back together in one room.

ACTIVITY 2.5 - LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER (20 MIN)

Goal: For both groups to listen to what the other had to say in the separate gender discussion.

Value: To avoid further polarization, and to unite understanding of both perspectives, both groups join and discuss with another their new gained perspectives

NOTE: Students are together for this activity.

Ask students to post the flipchart paper at the front of the room.

Ask a representative (or representatives) from each gender to present their results to the larger group.

Once both groups have presented, lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- Do you see any similarities between the two lists?
- What, if anything, is different between the two lists?
- Was there anything that surprised you about the two lists?
- Have you discovered anything about the other gender that you did not know before?

Point out statements that ask the other gender to stop doing a particular behaviour. Note that learning to respect these types of requests is part of creating healthy relationships between the sexes.

ACTIVITY 2.5 - CLOSE   (5 MIN)

Ask students to share one thing they have learned through this discussion that they can use to create better relationships.

If time allows, invite them to explain to the group how this new learning will help them.

Value: This leaves the lesson in the hands of the individual to reflect on their learning and apply it to their own situation. This reinforces the students as the agents of change.

Sample Module 3

UNDERSTANDING DATING VIOLENCE

MODULE TITLE: **The Ties That Bind**
PROGRAM NAME: **Making Waves**

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

Abusers have many ways to make themselves feel POWERFUL or to CONTROL their partners. Abuse is not just about physical violence – it takes many forms.

- Threats: Abusers say "Do what I say…or you'll be sorry." They may threaten to hurt their partner, other people, pets, or themselves.

- Sexual Abuse: Abusers don't respect boundaries. They may force or pressure their partner to do things that make them uncomfortable or take advantage of them when they've been drinking or doing drugs.

- Isolation: Abuser often want to control who their partner can speak to and what they are allowed to do, leaving them feeling trapped and alone.

- Emotional Abuse: Abusers treat their partners with disrespect, calling them names, swearing at them, or telling them they are worthless. They may embarrass their partner in front of others, not treat them fairly. They often make their partner feel bad by saying things like "You're stupid," or "You're such a loser that no one else would ever go out with you."

- Intimidation: Abusers can make their partners afraid without even touching them, by yelling, breaking things, slamming doors, punching walls, getting too close, or cornering them.

- Blame: Abusers don't accept responsibility for their own actions. If anything goes wrong they typically blame their partner, or may blame alcohol, drugs, stress, etc.

- Physical Abuse: Includes shoving, slapping, choking, punching, pinching, kicking, biting, burning, hair pulling, using a weapon. Many abusers are careful not to leave marks.

Most abuse occurs in a cycle, which makes it more confusing for victims. The tension begins to build as the abuser becomes more stressed, until the next incident. Afterwards, they often apologize – many cry and beg the victim to stay with them. After an abusive incident, abusers can often be very sweet and romantic, and treat their partners very well. Then the cycle is repeated.

Victims often lose their self-esteem, confidence, freedom and sense of safety – and in this state of mind, it can seem almost impossible to leave.

Total Time
- 60 to 90 minutes.

Learning Objectives:
- To illustrate what a healthy relationship "should" look like.
- To ensure warning signs of abuse can be recognized.
- To portray the implications of power and control in a relationship in a way that makes sense to young adults.
- To illustrate the subtleties of emotional abuse.

Materials:
- 2 hula hoops for the icebreaker
- At least 50 feet (or more) of rope or yarn
- Word Signs (To create the Word Signs, write each of the following words on a coloured sheet of 8 ½ X 11 piece of paper: Intimidation, Blame, Isolation, Emotional, Sexual, Threats. Write one word per sheet. Use a different colour for each word. If possible, laminate the sheets.)

- Scenario Cards (To create the Scenario Cards, photocopy the Scenario Card resource pages – they appear after the module description - and cut out the individual boxes. Or, write the scenarios on coloured index cards (or coloured paper) that matches the colour of paper used for the corresponding Word Sign.)
- Friend Cards (To create the Friend Cards, photocopy the Friend Card resource page – it appears after the module description - and cut out the individual boxes.)

<u>Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators:</u>
- This module requires at least two facilitators, one female and one male.
- Students should be sitting in a large circle.
- Additional youth facilitators would be helpful particularly assisting small groups as they prepare skits.

ACTIVITY 3.1 – THE HULA HOOP (15 MIN)

Ask students to form a circle (or two circles, depending on group size), standing and holding hands.

A hula hoop is inserted between two participants, and the group must pass the hula hoop around the circle (each person passes through the hula hoop) without letting go of each other's hands.

You can then try this again with two hula hoops, each traveling in opposite directions around the circle. (At some point, the two hoops will have to pass through/around each other.)

<u>Discussion</u>

Facilitate a discussion based on the following questions:
- How is this activity like a relationship?
- How is it like a difficult relationship?

Record their answers on the flipchart.

Possible responses include:
- Sometimes you get stuck
- Sometimes it's easier to get through with the help of a friend
- Sometimes you can get through on your own
- Sometimes you fall down
- Sometimes people laugh at you
- Sometimes you need to ask for help
- It's easier when people work together

ACTIVITY 3.2 – VIDEO ON POWER AND CONTROL (15 MIN)

Show the following video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmM-n4GhVaE

Invite a brief discussion by asking "So what's going on here?"

Note when students mention the specific types of abuse the boyfriend used (which are shown on the screen).

ACTIVITY 3.3 – DEFINING ABUSE (15 MIN)

Using the Word Signs, go through the forms of abuse in the Power and Control Wheel:

- Intimidation
- Blame
- Isolation
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Threats

Canadian Women's Foundation

As you hold up each Word Sign, invite the students to brainstorm a definition by asking questions such as:

- What is intimidation?
- What does intimidation look like?
- How can intimidation be used to control someone in a relationship?

Ask for specific examples, and discuss them as a group.

ACTIVITY 3.4 THE TIES (10 MIN)
NOTE: Before the session begins, select a student or other volunteer to play the "victim" in this activity. Explain the activity ahead of time, and make sure they will be comfortable playing this role.

Participants sit in a circle, either on chairs or on the floor.

Have the pre-selected volunteer sit on a chair in the middle of the circle, holding the end of the rope.

Pass out the Scenario Cards (each illustrates a different form of abuse).

The facilitator explains that all of these "abuses" are going to happen to the volunteer.

Ask the students to take turns reading their cards, starting with the cards labelled Intimidation. Then continue through the other cards, in the order shown in the list above.

As each person reads their card, the loose end of the rope is passed to them.

As the rope is passed from person to person, allow the volunteer to become tangled in the rope, which represents the web of abuse.

Once the person is all tied up, ask them how they feel.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- What does the rope represent?
- How would you feel if you were the person in the middle?
- What impact does abuse have on a relationship?

Key points to raise:

- Abuse in a relationship tends to build up over time.
- Abuse often starts with relatively small things. If a person punched someone on a first date, the "victim" probably wouldn't stick around.
- Over time, a person loses their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Even if a person is being abused, they may still "love" their partner. They just don't "love" the abuse.

ACTIVITY 3.5 UNTYING THE KNOTS (10 MIN)

The object of this activity is to untie the victim.

Here are two possible options – the students may suggest others.

Option 1:

Distribute the prepared Friend Cards at random. As each student reads their card, they undo part of the web. Eventually the entire web is undone, freeing the victim.

This could then be followed by a brief closing discussion of ideas for helping a friend who is behaving in an abusive manner.

<u>Option 2:</u>

Lead a group discussion on different ways to support friends who are either victims of abuse or are acting in abusive ways.

Whenever a student raises a good point, ask them to undo part of the web.

Continue the discussion until the victim is freed.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards - INTIMIDATION

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Female

My boyfriend has really got a temper. The other day I was late meeting him after school. He got so angry that he punched a big dent in my locker.

Female

My boyfriend is so cute...and he has such gorgeous eyes! I was thrilled when he asked me out. The other day, though, he said he had seen me talking to another guy. He backed me into a corner, and kind of stood over me while he was telling me how disappointed he was. He never touched me, but I was really scared.

Female

My boyfriend and I were walking around the mall when we ran into a friend of mine. This friend, who happens to be a guy, asked me whether I could meet with him later, to help him figure out a math assignment. My boyfriend grabbed my hand and held it really hard. He didn't say anything, but I knew what he was thinking.

Male

My girlfriend and I have been together for a couple of months. The other day, when I was hanging out with a bunch of friends in the cafeteria, she walked by and gave me "the look". I didn't know what I had done wrong, but I knew I had to apologize.........and fast!

Male

My girlfriend just found out that my ex is in my math class. She came up to me in the hallway and kind of blocked my path. She said "YOU WILL drop that math class". And I did.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards - BLAME

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Male

If I was late getting home after practice, she'd accuse me of having sex with someone else. She never trusted me. I was always trying to prove myself to her, to prove that I loved her enough.

Male

My girlfriend failed this major test. She said it was my fault...........that if I hadn't taken her to the movie the night before, she would have had enough time to study.

Male

My girlfriend wrecked her parent's car. She told them that it was my fault, and that I'd been driving. I wasn't even in the car!! The police were here to see my parents. She told me that if her parents found out she'd been driving, she'd be grounded for a month.

Female

I saw him making out with another girl at the party. He said that if he couldn't get any action from me, he would have to get it elsewhere. He said I should understand his "male needs".

Female

My boyfriend hit me, so I told him I was leaving the relationship. Then he explained why he had hit me, and made me realize that it was really my fault. I shouldn't have made him so angry.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards - ISOLATION

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Female

I love him so much. He convinced me to take the same classes as him, so that we could be together all day. He applied to work at Dairy Queen when I started work there, and now he makes sure that we always have the same shifts. He calls me every night, to make sure that I am home. He said he worries about me when he doesn't know where I am.

Female

Last weekend there was this huge family reunion.........My partner guilted me into not going. He says he should be more important to me than a bunch of cousins and great-uncles that I've never even met.

Male

My girlfriend wants me to spend all my time with her. She doesn't even want me to hang out with the guys. She cried the other night, when I told her my friends from the hockey team were planning a guys-only camping trip.

Male

My girlfriend told me my best friend was talking about me behind my back. I never thought he was that kind of guy. She's probably right, though. I guess I know who my real friends are.

Male

My best friend told me that, in my relationship, I'm just like a little puppet on a string. He says that I never have any time for him, and that he doesn't know what's wrong with me. I guess he just doesn't understand what a serious relationship is all about.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards – EMOTIONAL ABUSE

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Male

I wasn't doing that great in school. She was getting such good marks…………..top of the class. She read out our grades in the cafeteria, in front of everyone. She made me feel like an idiot.

Male

I got the lead role in the school play. I was really excited…………….until I told my girlfriend. She said only fags would want a role in a musical.

Male

My girlfriend and I were at a pizza place with a bunch of friends. As I reached for a second slice, she said: "I don't think you really need that" and made these weird pig noises. I guess maybe I do need to lose a little weight…

Female

I got a new outfit on the weekend, and wore it to school on Monday. When my partner saw me, he told me I looked like a slut. He told me that I was just trying to get attention, and that he was embarrassed to be dating me.

Female

My boyfriend is always telling me how lucky I am that he's going out with me. He said that no one else would have the patience to put up with me, and that no one else could ever really understand me.

Female

When I got the highest mark in the class on my math test, my partner told me to stop acting like such a geek. He told me I was making everyone else look bad, and that I shouldn't be such a show-off. I hadn't even told anybody else about my grade.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards – SEXUAL ABUSE

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Female

Every time he looked at me, I felt like he was undressing me. He was always making comments about my body, and telling me that he couldn't control himself around me. At first, I thought it was because he really liked me. Now, it's starting to scare me.

Female

I didn't sleep with him………..but I guess the truth doesn't matter. He's already told everyone that I did.

Female

I really fell for it. My boyfriend and I were really close. He said "you will, if you really love me like I love you." We had sex, and the very next day I overhead him laughing with his friend about how he had "scored."

Male

My girlfriend and I have sex, but only on her terms. She decides when, where, and for how long. Sometimes, I don't even feel like I'm in the mood. Other times, she cuts me off for weeks at a time. She uses intimacy as a weapon against me, and it doesn't feel special anymore.

Male

I was dating this really great girl but I just didn't have "those feelings" for her. I confided in her, that I was questioning my sexuality. The next day "fag" was written on my locker. A guy blocked my way to the locker room, and said he didn't want a fruit in there, checking him out. Later, another guy shoved me to the ground and said that he'd beat me up if he wasn't so scared of AIDS.

RESOURCE: Scenario Cards – THREATS

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

Female

My boyfriend and I were really not getting along. I knew the relationship wasn't good for me or for him. I started talking about seeing other people. He said if I broke up with him, he'd make sure no one else would ever go out with me.

Female

I just found out I'm pregnant. I'm scared and I'm not ready to have a baby. I'm still in high school. My boyfriend says that if I don't go through with this pregnancy, he'll leave me.

Female

My boyfriend is a really great guy, but sometimes he scares me. He has a gun and one day he was out in his backyard, shooting at this target on a fence. He said he has a really good shot………that it would be a really stupid thing for me to screw around on him. I would never do that. What was he talking about?

Male

We dated for a year, and I felt that we had started growing apart. I wanted to start seeing other people. She said that she loved me, and that she couldn't live without me. Then she said she'd kill herself if I ever left her.

Male

My partner told me that I had to pick between her and the hockey team. She said that if I didn't quit the team, it was over between us. I've been on the team for three years….I love hockey, and all of my best friends are on the team.

Male

My girlfriend and I had a kid together. We're really not getting along well at all, but when I tried to talk to her about our relationship, she said that if I break up with her, I'll never see my son again.

RESOURCE*:* Friend Cards

NOTE: Photocopy this page and cut out the individual boxes

RESPECT their privacy. Don't Gossip or spread rumours about the information they share with you	SUPPORT them. Find out what they want to do. They may ask you to go with them to talk to a parent or guidance counsellor.
TELL THEM they don't deserve to be hurt. They may feel like the violence was somehow their fault. Nobody deserves to be abused.	DON'T try to deal with the abuser yourself. If they are violent, it could be dangerous for you and make things worse for your friend.
Remember, they may be ashamed or feel guilty. They may be embarrassed to talk about their problems. They may feel like they are hurting their partner by talking about the abuse. They may have kept the abuse a secret for a very long time.	BELIEVE them. If someone tells you they are being abused or mistreated, they are probably telling the truth. They may be saying that another friend or someone you know has abused them. Remember that even "nice" people can be abusive.
Watch your body language and facial expressions. If it looks like you don't believe them, are bored or in a hurry, they may not be comfortable talking to you. Respect their personal space. Even giving them a hug or putting your hand on their shoulder might make them feel uncomfortable.	TALK to them. Really listen to what they have to say. Don't interrupt. Let them talk.
DON'T CRITICIZE. Don't be an abuser yourself by telling them they are stupid for being in the relationship.	DON'T JUDGE them. They are doing their best. The abuse is NOT THEIR FAULT.
Don't insult the abuser. Your friend may still love their partner. They may not talk to you if they think you are against their partner.	BE HONEST. If you feel unable to help them, tell them you need to talk to someone else like a parent, a teacher or guidance counselor.

Sample Module 4

UNDERSTANDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MODULE TITLE: Challenges in Healthy Relationships
PROGRAM NAME: Respectful Relationships

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

Studies suggest that most adults who enter counselling for relationship issues (not related to abuse or substance dependency), generally need help in the following areas:

1. Communication
2. Unmet expectations
3. Division of household responsibilities and finances

Unmet expectations often relate to gender role expectations as well as differences between partners in what they expect from an intimate relationship.

All three problem areas need to be addressed through open, assertive communication, and problem-solving.

NOTE: This approach is not recommended in a seriously abusive or violent relationship.

Many teens, when asked to define a "healthy relationship", listed the characteristics they would like in the other person: e.g., "has a good sense of humour, can be trusted, listens to me," etc.

There is nothing wrong with wanting these things in a partner, but a healthy and respectful relationship is a two-way street. However, both partners must have worthy characteristics, i.e., each must have a sense of humour, be trustworthy, and listen well. Facilitators may need to remind students about the ongoing need for <u>mutuality</u> and <u>equality</u> in relationships.

Ending a relationship is generally painful, whether you are the one leaving or the one who has been left. No matter who initiates a breakup, both partners feel a loss, especially if the relationship was intense or of long duration. People need time to grieve. Students need to know it is normal to experience a variety of feelings, including denial, anger, guilt, increased stress, fear of being unloved or alone, and sadness. They also need to learn that the end of a relationship is NOT an indication of personal failure.

Students should be encouraged to explore different ways to handle their feelings and find closure when a relationship ends, such as talking to the person (if it feels safe), writing about their experience, talking to friends, or seeing a counsellor.

<u>Total Time</u>
- 60 minutes

<u>Learning Objectives</u>
- To define the characteristics of a healthy, intimate relationship
- To explore some of the major challenges in healthy, intimate relationships
- To learn the steps for making difficult decisions in our relationships
- To practice healthy and respectful ways of ending a close relationship

<u>Materials</u>
- Flipchart paper and markers or Blackboard
- Handout – Healthy Relationships Wheel (appears after the module description)
- Handout – Steps to Problem-Solving (appears after the module description)

<u>Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators</u>
- Activity 4.1: If they are comfortable, Youth Facilitators share a personal story about a major challenge in one of their relationships.
- Activity 4.3: Youth Facilitators ask questions 5 and 7 in the discussion.

ACTIVITY 4.1 - EXPLORING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS   (15 MIN)
Goals - Check In and explore and identify the characteristics of a healthy, intimate relationship

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Ask the students to check-in by:

- Describing how they are feeling in one word

and

- Naming one characteristic they think is important to a healthy dating relationship

Write students' ideas on the board as they say them.

Possible answers include:

- Self-awareness
- Realistic expectations
- Communicating needs and expectations in the beginning of the relationship
- Open communication
- Assertive communication skills
- Honesty
- Mutual trust
- Having clear boundaries
- Having a strong friendship
- Conflict resolution skills
- Mutual respect
- Good listening ability
- Mutual empathy
- Mutual attraction
- Shared interests
- Agreement on core values
- Ability to laugh together
- Sharing of thoughts and feelings
- Sharing power and decision-making

Hand out the Healthy Relationships Wheel (appears after the module description).

Ask:
- Is there anything you see on the Wheel you would like to add to our list?
- Is there anything missing from both lists that you would like to add?

Suggest to students they can use the Wheel to think about their own relationships. (This should be done privately, not in class.)

ACTIVITY 4.2 - COPING WITH CHALLENGES IN RELATIONSHIPS   (15 MIN)
Goal - To identify challenges and coping strategies

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- What are the major challenges they have experienced in their closest relationships?

Possible responses include: commitment issues, drifting apart, fear of /lack of intimacy, unresolved conflicts, jealousy, power & control issues

- What are the issues that lead to heartache, heartbreak and sometimes to break up?

Possible responses include: denial, resistance, anger, acting out, running away, acceptance, learning from it.

- What are some of the different ways we typically respond to major challenges in close relationships?

Possible responses include: talking it through, active/reflective listening, communicating assertively, getting help from a counsellor, talking to a friend, or self-care.

- What are some creative and healthy ways to respond to those major challenges?

ACTIVITY 4.3 - SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO NOW   (25 MIN)
Goals
To explore the steps in problem-solving and decision-making in close relationships.
To increase students' confidence in making difficult decisions about their relationships.
To explore the skills needed for healthy breakups, including respectful communication with one's partner and self-care.

The following role-play shows someone trying to decide whether to break up with their partner. It provides an example for the students to explore problem-solving and decision-making steps.

Role-play:

Julie is out with her boyfriend Chris. She says she has something she really needs to talk about.

Julie: "I think you're really nice and a loving person. Most of the time I feel great when we're together but…."

Chris is surprised and interrupts her, saying: "Where is this going?"

Julie: "I think my feelings have been changing for awhile. I'm not sure I want to stay together."

Chris: "Have I done something wrong?"

Julie: "It's not any one thing. It's a lot of little things. It's hard to put into words."

Chris is upset. He thinks everything has been going great. Sure there's been some stress about his going away next year but he thought they would deal with it 'later.'

Chris: "This is a total shock to me, you haven't said anything. Is it about me going traveling next year?"

Julie: "That might be it. I do feel really sad and also kind of mad when I think about you being away having fun without me."

Chris: "Well you know I'm going. Why not enjoy the time we've got? What else can we do?"

Julie: "I don't know exactly what to do, but it's a big relief that we're finally talking about it."

(Note: In the discussion that follows the role play, use inclusive language, i.e. 'partner' instead of 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend.')

At the end of the role-play, hand out the Problem Solving handout.

Lead the students through a discussion of each step, starting with Step 1: Defining the Problem, using the characters of Julie and Chris as an example.

Write students' ideas on the board as you work through the activity.

Do the same for each of the other steps.

If time permits, ask students to vote for one of the options they think would be best for each of the characters.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

1. What feelings might tell us that we need to make a major change in a relationship?

2. What is scary about making a major change in a relationship?

3. What role do assertiveness and empathy play in ending relationships?

4. Does someone always have to be right and someone wrong in a break-up?

5. How can we break up and still be considerate and sensitive to the other person?

6. What are some ways we can take care of ourselves when a relationship ends?

7. Do girls and guys handle break-ups differently? How? (Consider both how each gender handles it when they are the ones leaving and when they are being left.)

8. What are some of the feelings that might come up after a break-up?

9. Is being "in a relationship" something that youth feel pressured about?

10. How do we view people who are not in relationships – i.e., those who choose to be alone, or haven't met anyone who is right for them, or just aren't ready?
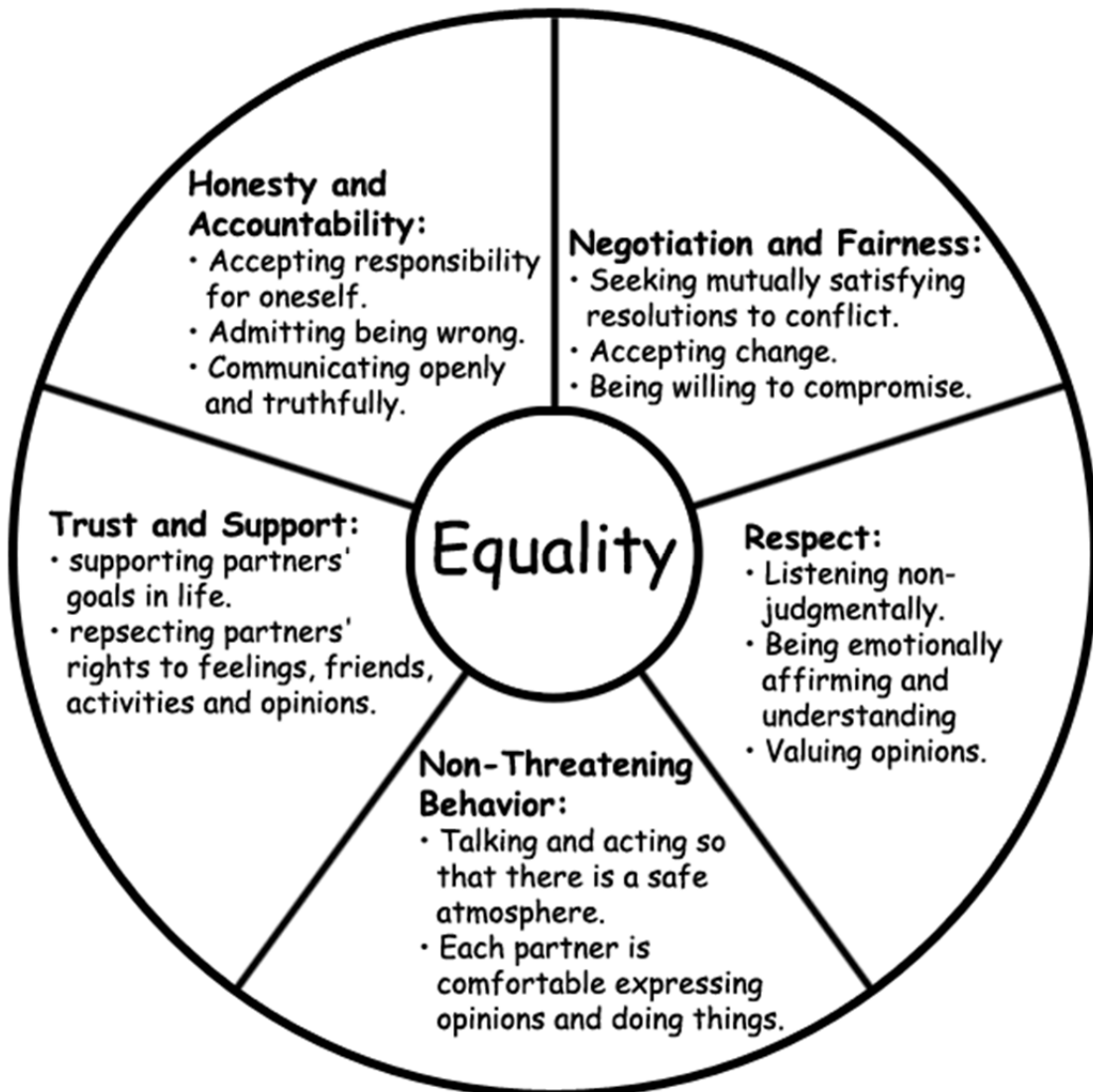

ACTIVITY 4.3 – CLOSE (5 MIN)

Ask each student to share one great thing about being in a relationship, and one great thing about not being in a relationship.

HANDOUT:

Healthy Relationships Wheel

A healthy relationship should be centred around equality,
and should demonstrate a positive balance of mutual respect, trust,
support, fairness, honesty, and consistent behaviour that encourages
safe participation from both partners.

Honesty and Accountability:
- Accepting responsibility for oneself.
- Admitting being wrong.
- Communicating openly and truthfully.

Negotiation and Fairness:
- Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict.
- Accepting change.
- Being willing to compromise.

Trust and Support:
- supporting partners' goals in life.
- repsecting partners' rights to feelings, friends, activities and opinions.

Equality

Respect:
- Listening non-judgmentally.
- Being emotionally affirming and understanding
- Valuing opinions.

Non-Threatening Behavior:
- Talking and acting so that there is a safe atmosphere.
- Each partner is comfortable expressing opinions and doing things.

Adapted from Susquehanna Valley Women in Transition

HANDOUT*:*

Steps to Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

Step 1
Define the problem, including the history and people involved

Step 2
List the potential options for solving the problem

Step 3
Evaluate the options – the 'pros and cons' for each one

Step 4
Choose one option

Step 5
Make a decision and act on it

Step 6
Evaluate how the situation came about, how it was handled, and how we can better respond in the future.

Sample Module 5

SKILLS BUILDING

MODULE TITLE: **Boundaries**
PROGRAM NAME: **Healthy Relationships for Youth**

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

Personal boundaries are an important mechanism of self-definition and self-protection. A failure to set clear, strong boundaries may eventually lead to abuse in friendships and intimate relationships.

Each of us has different boundaries based on our up-bringing, religion, culture, etc. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' boundaries – they simply are what they are. This module offers a way for students to discover their own.

The goal is for students to develop their 'boundary-setting skills' so they can recognize when their boundaries are about to be breached BEFORE that actually happens, so they have time to say NO and prevent the breach. In this way, they won't find themselves thinking (after the fact): "I wish I had spoken up." Or: "I wish I hadn't let that happen."

Facilitators should explain that sometimes it can be especially hard to set boundaries, such as in relationships where they have less power.

Sometimes, people who have been abused as a child often have difficulty setting boundaries. However, this is not true for everyone - some survivors of abuse have developed very strong personal boundaries. However, others may develop protective emotional 'walls' and find it hard to let others get close, for fear of having their boundaries violated again.

In this module, students take turns acting as boundary 'Invaders' and 'Defenders.'

Facilitators must stress that when acting in the role of Invader, they must stop IMMEDIATELY when asked to do so. Defenders should be praised when they show strong, clear boundaries.

During the activities, facilitators should frequently remind ALL students they should refuse to do anything that makes them uncomfortable. The goal of the activity is NOT to stretch one's boundaries but to discover and learn to speak up and be clear about them to others.

Total Time:
- 60 minutes

Learning Objectives:
- This section invites students to reflect on their own boundaries in relationships and to better understand how to communicate and uphold these limits in different social scenarios.
- Students also learn that each person has different boundaries and limits, and only they can decide what they are.

Students will:
- Explore why healthy boundaries are necessary for healthy relationships
- Define their own boundaries
- Practice anticipating boundary "invasions"
- Learn to defend their boundaries in an assertive way

Materials
- Handout – Space/Touch/Talk Boundaries (appears after the module description)

Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators
- Take turns explaining the activities.
- Provide support for students during the activities, by making sure Invaders stop as soon as the Defenders ask them to, and that Defenders are praised when they use assertive communication.

ACTIVITY 5.1 - INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Today we are discussing boundaries. Learning to identify, construct and defend boundaries is an important step in learning to be assertive. Assertiveness is necessary for healthy relationships. Recognizing your boundaries and asserting your boundaries is the first step to assertive communication.

What are boundaries?

We know our boundaries when we are very clear about: "Where I end and others begin."

Write the following quotes on the board and read to the class:

- Good fences make good neighbours. (Irish folklore)
- Blessed are those who can please themselves. (South African Zulu tradition)

Lead a brief discussion based on the following questions:

1. What do these sayings tell us about boundaries?
2. Why do we need boundaries?

ACTIVITY 5.2 - TOUCH, TALK, AND SPACE BOUNDARIES (10 MIN)
Goal: To introduce the different kinds of boundaries: Space / Talk / Touch
Adapted from Anita Roberts, *Safe Teen: Powerful Alternatives to Violence*, 2001. Pg.276-277

Distribute the Boundaries handout, and ask them to read it.

Ask them to give some examples of space, talk and touch boundaries, and some examples of how they can assertively express their boundaries.

Explain that in the next activity, they will practice defining and assertively communicating their own boundaries.

ACTIVITY 5.3 - SPACE INVADERS / SPACE DEFENDERS (10 MIN)
Goal of Activity: To allow students to physically experience and assert their Space boundary.
Adapted from Anita Roberts, *Safe Teen: Powerful Alternatives to Violence*, 2001. Pg.276-277

NOTE: The facilitators should explain the activity, then demonstrate it first.

Ask the students to move their desks to the walls of the classroom.

Ask students to line up on either sides of the room, facing a partner across the room.

Tell one side they are the Space Invaders; on the other are the Space Defenders.

Have the Space Invaders walk slowly towards their partners while making eye contact.

The Space Defenders must put up their hand and say "stop" when they feel their space boundary has been violated (when they feel their partner is too close for comfort).
Switch roles so all students have the chance to assert their boundary.

Ask the Invaders to step back a few centimetres to see if that improves the comfort level of the Defenders. If so, the Defender probably said "Stop" just a little too late.

Explain that when we first learn about boundaries, our tendency is usually to speak up too late, only after our boundary has already been invaded. This is because the "No" feeling is easier to notice AFTER our boundary has been crossed.

Encourage the students to anticipate the boundary by paying closer attention to how they feel, and to say "Stop" just <u>before</u> their boundary has been crossed.
Ask the group to try it again, to practice anticipating boundaries.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- Was it easy or hard to assert your Space boundary?
- Did this exercise help you to realize WHERE your Space boundary is?
- Do you think your Space boundary is the same in every situation? If not, what changes it?

ACTIVITY 5.4 - WORD INVADERS/WORD DEFENDERS (10 MIN)
Goal: To allow students to define and express talk boundaries.
Adapted from Anita Roberts, *Safe Teen: Powerful Alternatives to Violence*, 2001. Pg.276-277

NOTE: The facilitators should explain the activity, then demonstrate it first.

Ask students to pair up. One of them will be the Word Invader, the other will be the Word Defender.

The Word Invader will ask the Word Defender four questions, each increasingly more personal.

The questions can relate to school, family, money, body image, sex, or other topics. The students can come up with their own questions, or brainstorm together as a group to come up with a list to write on the flipchart.

Each question should begin with the phrase: "Would you tell me…"

For example:
- Would you tell me…if you ever failed a test?
- Would you tell me…who is your favourite family member?
- Would you tell me…how much money your parents earn?
- Would you tell me…what you like best about your own body?
- Would you tell me…what kind of sexual experiences you've had?

Explain that the Word Defenders are NOT to answer the questions, simply to respond YES or NO to each question, "Would you tell me?"

The Word Invaders should keep asking questions (each more personal) until the Word Defender says NO (either verbally or non-verbally).

This is their Talk boundary.

Once their boundary has been reached, the students switch roles.

NOTE: Remind the students that normally it's not okay to ask such personal questions – this is just for the purposes of learning boundaries.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- How did you know when you had reached your Talk boundary? What were you feeling?
- When playing the role of Talk Invader, did you cross any of your own personal boundaries in order to ask the questions?
- In the past, have you ever shared personal information too freely? Do you think it will now be easier to know and defend your Talk boundaries in the future?

ACTIVITY 5.5 - TOUCH INVADERS/TOUCH DEFENDERS (10 MIN)
Goal: To allow students to define and express touch boundaries.
Adapted from Anita Roberts, *Safe Teen: Powerful Alternatives to Violence*, 2001. Pg.276-277

NOTE: The facilitators should explain the activity, then demonstrate it first.
Ask students to pair up. One of them will be the Touch Invader, the other will be the Touch Defender (then they will switch roles).

The Touch Invader will slowly attempt to touch the Touch Defender in non-sexual ways. For example, they can place one finger on the back of their hand, pretend to examine their jewellery, hair or clothing, etc.

As soon as the Touch Defender feels their Space boundary is being invaded, they should say "Stop", raise their hand, and make eye contact.

Once their boundary has been reached, the students switch roles.

Explain that everyone has different Touch boundaries – there are no "right" or "wrong" responses to this exercise. Our boundaries are what they are.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

- How did you know when you had reached your Touch boundary? What were you feeling?
- When playing the role of Touch Invader, did you cross any of your own personal boundaries in order to do the touching?
- What can we do if someone doesn't respect our Touch boundary after we ask them to stop?

Explain that if someone is making them uncomfortable and does not stop when asked to – or if they are too afraid to ask them to stop – they should always tell a trusted adult what's going on.

ACTIVITY 5.6 - BOUNDARIES ROLE PLAY (10 MIN)
Goal: To give students the chance to witness the use of assertive communication in defending boundaries.

Develop a role play based on a common situation involving a boundary violation that students are likely to experience at their school.

If youth facilitators are present, they can demonstrate the role play. If not, arrange beforehand for two students to conduct the role play.

The role play is done twice.

The first time, one of the two participants responds passively (i.e. does not clearly express their boundaries), while the other participant responds aggressively (i.e., violates the boundaries of the other person)

The second time, the passive participant uses assertive communication (i.e., maintains their boundaries).

When the second role play is over, lead a discussion based on the following questions:

1. Were any boundaries violated? (Space, Touch, Talk?)
2. Were any boundaries defended? (Space, Touch, Talk?)
3. How was assertive communication used in this role play?
4. Did it help to use assertive communication?
5. How many of our daily conflicts involve an issue with boundaries?

ACTIVITY 5.7 - CLOSE (5 MIN)

Ask the students to name one thing they learned today about their own boundaries (either Space, Touch, or Talk).

HANDOUT:

Space, Touch, and Talk Boundaries

Boundaries are limits on behaviour and communication that help us feel comfortable. We need to express our own boundaries and respect others' boundaries in order to have healthy relationships. The main forms of boundaries are *space*, *talk* and *touch.*

1. **Space boundaries** express our comfort limits with sharing our space. Examples of actions that violate space boundaries are**:**
   - Going through someone's purse or backpack without their permission
   - Ignoring someone's discomfort with an activity or behaviour
   - Breaking or taking someone's belongings
   - Standing too close to someone

2. **Talk boundaries** express our comfort limits with talking about certain things or ways of talking. Examples of actions that violate talk boundaries are**:**
   - Name-calling and insults
   - Telling offensive jokes
   - Spreading rumors, gossiping
   - Interrupting

3. **Touch boundaries** express our comfort limits with touching and physical intimacy. Examples of actions that violate touch boundaries are:
   - Continuing to horse around or wrestle after being asked by the other person to stop
   - ***Any* unwanted physical contact**

Boundaries are knowing where I end and others begin.

Some ways we can express our **boundaries** assertively:
- Maintain direct eye contact and use facial expressions and gestures which emphasize your words
- Speak in a calm but firm tone of voice
- Use "I" statements, ie. "I don't want to…"
- Move away to create a more comfortable distance from another person

Some ways which **boundaries** can be weakened or ignored:
- Not expressing your thoughts and feelings clearly
- Laughing at jokes you don't find funny
- Answering personal questions that make you feel uncomfortable
- Pretending to agree when you don't
- Going along with an activity you don't want to do

Sample Module 6

ANTI-OPPRESSION

MODULE TITLE: **Heteronormativity and Homophobia**
PROGRAM NAME: **Respectful Relationships**

BEFORE YOU START – WHAT FACILITATORS NEED TO KNOW

This module attempts to create a safe space for students to talk about homophobia. This topic may be uncomfortable and unfamiliar to some of them. Facilitators should assume some students will be openly homophobic. In fact, this issue may challenge facilitators as well as students. In order to avoid judgment and hostility, do not try to change anyone's beliefs. Instead, work to create a space where all students feel free to explore and question their own opinions and beliefs.

Here are some key points to raise when dealing with resistance about homophobia:

1. Homophobia limits all of us:
    *   Homophobia reduces our freedom because it tries to control our behaviour, dictate how we should dress, how we should behave, who our friends should be, and more.
    *   It reinforces conformity, and the idea that being different is not okay.
    *   Calling people names or bullying them are ways of socially shunning people who are seen to be 'stepping out of line' with narrow definitions of how we should behave.
    *   Boys who express their feelings or show emotional vulnerability risk being labeled as 'gay.' In response, they learn to remain emotionally distant, and cannot admit having deep feelings for their male friends – even if they are nonsexual feelings.
    *   Girls who speak up against gender oppression, reject the attentions of a boy, or hang around their female friends "too much" risk being called a 'dyke.' This is meant to shut them up and put them back in their place.

2. Homophobia is destructive and dangerous:
    *   According to Mental Health America, the average LGBT teen hears anti-gay slurs 26 times a day.
    *   It depends on context, tone, and intent, but most of the time, words like queer, fag, dyke, and lesbo are used as weapons and are intended as negative. Even when groups choose to 'reclaim' a term that has a negative history, its use by others is still generally seen as negative.
    *   EGALE Canada's 2008 survey showed 67 per cent of LGBT teens felt unsafe at school and only half felt accepted.
    *   Forty percent of LGBT youth report having had suicidal thoughts and they are 3.4 times more at risk for attempting suicide.(http://www.metronews.ca/toronto/comment/article/248263--much-work-remains-for-lgbt-rights). Rejection, or the fear of rejection, often fuels desperation.

Talking about homophobia in the classroom may be emotional for some students, especially those who are LGBTQ. If there is a gay/ straight alliance in your school, suggest it as a resource for interested students. Provide them with other local resources, such as community agencies, where they can go for more information.

Although these statistics are grim, it's also very important to stress that many LGBTQ youth are very happy with their orientation – avoid giving the impression that all LGBTQ youth are troubled and unhappy.

3. Homophobia is linked to other forms of oppression:
    *   Homophobia reinforces sexism by presenting 'female' ways of being as inferior to 'male' ways of being.
    *   History showed that, at one time or another, similar repressive tactics have been used against every kind of minority group: people of colour, Aboriginal peoples, poor people, Jews, Muslims, etc. Research a few examples that will resonate with this student population, and use them as a means to discuss issues of power and control.

Total Time

- 60 minutes

Learning Objectives
- To understand homophobia and heteronormativity
- To explore student perceptions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ)

Materials
- Poster or overhead of words
- Photocopies of Handouts 1 to 3 (appears after module description)
- Video clip from the National Film Board documentary "In Other Words." (This is the Program Coordinator's responsibility. You may find other sources for video clips on homophobia, such as YouTube)
- VCR or DVD player and Monitor

Potential Roles for Youth Facilitators:
- Activity 6.1 - Work with the small groups, supporting them in figuring out the definitions. Ask question 5 during the discussion.
- Activity 6.2 - Ask questions 4 to 9 during the discussion.

ACTIVITY 6.1 - DEFINITIONS

Goal: To provide students with a vocabulary of words and definitions that enables them to discuss gender stereotypes, sexism, homophobia, and heteronormativity.

Divide the class into four groups.

Distribute Handouts 6.1 and 6.2, and ask them to discuss each word and match it with the correct definition. Allow about ten minutes for this activity.

Distribute Handout 6.3 with the correct definitions. Allow the groups to check their answers, then bring everyone together again.

Lead a discussion based on the following questions:

1. Were any of the definitions new to you? Can you think of any other related words that were not included?
2. Do you think there is homophobia in your school or community?
3. In your school, are the words gay, fag, lesbo, or dyke used as an insult?
4. Who does homophobia affect? Just people who identify as LGBTQ? Or others too? Who? In what ways?
5. Is homophobia related to gender roles?
6. Can homophobia affect how men behave? (e.g., keep them from expressing their feelings)
7. Can homophobia affect how women behave? (e.g., keep them from showing their strengths)
8. Do you think homophobia is okay, or should it be challenged?

ACTIVITY 6.2 - VIDEO CLIP - "IN OTHER WORDS"

Goal: To have an open discussion on the subject of homophobia and heteronormativity and how it affects relationships.

Play selected clips from the National Film Board video: "In Other Words."
Suggested clips: From 0:00 to 2:00; 2:50 to 4:45; 6:44 to 8:21, and 10:02 to 10:14.

Canadian Women's Foundation

After watching the clips, lead a discussion based on the following questions:

1. What were some of the feelings you were having while watching the video?
2. Can you relate to any of the people in the video? How?
3. Why do you think youth who are LGBTQ remain in the closet?
4. If you had a friend who was LGBTQ, would you recommend that they keep quiet about it?
5. How safe is it for a person to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender at this school?
6. Some schools have gay/straight alliance groups. How would that group be viewed at your school or in your community?
7. How are people who are LGBTQ portrayed in the media?
8. How do the media impact our perception of people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ)?
9. Do you think listening to people with painful personal stories to tell can shift homophobia?
10. What connection is there between homophobia, sexism, and racism?

Ask the students to think about this question (they should not respond now).

- If your best friend told you that they were gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning, would that change your relationship with them?
- If so, how?

ACTIVITY 6.3 – CLOSE (5 MINUTES)

Ask each student to share one new piece of information they learned today.

HANDOUT 6.1:

Words to be Defined

Heterosexual

Homosexual

Homophobia

Heteronormativity

Asexual

Gay

Lesbian

Bisexual

Transgendered

Two-Spirit

LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning)

Queer

Questioning

Crossdresser

HANDOUT 6.2

INSTRUCTIONS: Match these phrases with the definitions on Handout 1.

_____ Any person, male or female, who's sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the other sex.

_____ The belief that heterosexual relationships and people are the ideal and that they are better or more normal than same sex relationships and people.

_____ The fear and hatred of LGBTQ people; the systemic oppression of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered people, or those who are questioning their sexual orientation, because of their sexuality.

_____ An umbrella word for people who are exploring gender identity by breaking away from one or more of society's expectations around sex and gender.

_____ Usually refers to men who are homosexual, but also is used as the community, which may include lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning persons. (LGBTQ).

_____ This term sometimes refers to Aboriginal/ First Nations people who are LGBTQ.

_____ An inclusive term that refers collectively to lesbians, gay men, bisexual, and transgender (trans) people, and those who are questioning.

_____ Any person, male or female, who's sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex.

_____ Those who aren't interested in or have no desire for sexual activities.

_____ A term that historically has been used in a negative way to describe LGBTQ people. It currently has been reclaimed and many LGBTQ people use it to describe themselves believing that by using it in a positive sense, they take away its power to hurt people.

_____ Exploring your sexual orientation/ gender identity.

_____ Refers to people who wear clothing traditionally associated with the opposite gender.

_____ A person whose sexual and romantic feelings may be for people of either sex.

_____ A woman or girl whose primary sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex.

HANDOUT 6.3

DEFINITIONS

Heterosexual - Any person, male or female, whose sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the other sex.

Homosexual - Any person, male or female, whose sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex. (This term is not widely used today, in part because it was once inaccurately used to define a mental illness. The medical and psychiatric professions have now determined that it is not an illness. The term LGBTQ is now more commonly used.)

Homophobia - The fear and hatred of LGBTQ people; the systemic oppression of gay men, lesbians and bisexual people because of their sexual orientation.

Heteronormativity - The belief that heterosexual relationships and people are the ideal, and that they are better or more normal than same-sex relationships and people.

Gay - Usually refers to men who are homosexual, but also is used to refer to the community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer people (LGBTQ).

Lesbian - A woman or girl whose primary sexual and romantic feelings are for people of the same sex.

Bisexual - A person whose sexual and romantic feelings may be for people of either sex.

Transgendered - An umbrella term for people who are exploring gender identity by breaking away from one or more of society's expectations around sex and gender.
(These expectations include that everyone is either a man or a woman, that one's gender is fixed, that gender identity is limited by their physiological sexual characteristics, and that our gender identity is determined by our socially assigned gender. For example, a person who was assigned the role of 'boy' at birth may experience herself as a woman.)

Two-Spirited - This term sometimes refers to Aboriginal/ First Nations people who are LGBTQ. (The terms gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered are European in origin, therefore this term may be preferred by Aboriginal people. Before colonization, many Aboriginal cultures honoured the people among them who contain both male and female strengths and characteristics, using the positive term "two-spirited" to describe them. They were respected and seen to have special gifts. Not all First Nations have this tradition.)

LGBTQ - An inclusive term that refers collectively to lesbians, gay men, bisexual, transgendered (trans) and queer people, and those who are questioning their sexuality.

Crossdresser - Refers to people who wear clothing traditionally associated with the opposite gender. Has replaced the term transvestite, which is typically used in a derogatory manner.

Queer - A term that historically has been used in a negative way to describe LGBTQ people. However, it is being reclaimed: many LGBTQ people now use it to describe themselves believing that by using it in a positive sense, they take away its power to hurt people.

Questioning – People who are exploring their sexual orientation/gender identity.

Asexual – People who lack a desire or interest in sexual activities, and/or do not experience sexual attraction.

STUDENT SAFETY AND MANAGING DISCLOSURES

Not surprisingly, talking about issues such as dating violence, gender roles and sexism, racism, and homophobia can provoke strong emotional responses in some students. These responses generally fall into two categories: 1) disrespectful behaviour, and 2) disclosures of personal experiences with violence, either as a victim and/or as a perpetrator.

While safety is a group effort, facilitators are responsible to ensure that students understand their role in creating a safe environment. If students do not feel safe, they will not freely share their ideas, thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Managing Disrespectful Behaviour

Facilitators should develop clear ground rules, in partnership with the students, at the beginning of the program.

These guidelines should define respectful behaviour and the consequences for disrespectful behaviour (based on the normal school procedures). Facilitators should include a statement on the need to maintain confidentiality.

At the beginning of each workshop, students should be reminded about the ground rules.

Students who violate the ground rules or otherwise act disrespectfully should be asked to leave the room and face the normal consequences.

Managing Student Disclosures

Students should not be encouraged to share personal traumatic experiences during workshops. Still, student disclosures are not unusual.

Disclosures should be handled on a case-by-case basis. For example, a quiet shared comment can be followed up immediately after class.

However, a strong emotional reaction should be dealt with immediately by taking the student somewhere private. They should be encouraged to seek the support of a trusted adult (parent, teacher or guidance counselor) in a more private setting.

They should also be provided with information on where to get help in the community. The need for outside referrals should be anticipated, and arranged ahead of time through the school counselor and/or principal, as per school district protocols.

Sample Facilitator Strategies

When two facilitators are present, they can strategize on how to handle behavioural issues and disclosures ahead of time.

For example, one facilitator may deliver the majority of the content, while the assistant facilitator monitors student responses, watching for moments when a negative verbal, physical or emotional response is triggered.

If that happens, the assistant facilitator may choose to take a student out of the room to a safe place to talk about their triggered response. Once the student is stabilized, they may return to the classroom or be accompanied to the school office or guidance counselor's office; the school will assume responsibility for the student.

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