



KANAWAYHITOWIN
Honour Life, End Violence

Backgrounder

November 25, 2014

KANAWAYHITOWIN

Kanawayhitowin is a Cree word, which in English translates to 'taking care of each other's spirit'. When we are born our spirits are pure and whole. As we journey through our time on earth, our spirit may encounter abuse and neglect. Everyone has the right to have their spirit protected and the responsibility to take care of the sacredness of life.

Kanawayhitowin is an Aboriginal campaign to raise awareness about the signs of woman abuse in communities, so that people who are close to an at-risk woman or abusive man can provide support. This campaign has been adapted from the *Neighbours, Friends and Family* initiative in the province of Ontario to reflect a traditional and cultural approach to community healing and wellness.

This campaign:

- Focuses on ending the isolation abused women feel.
- Emphasizes the empowerment of Aboriginal men to take responsibility and make change.
- Incorporates a variety of educational and awareness raising activities and materials (brochures, PSA's, training video, CD ROM).
- Includes guidelines on how to implement in your community.
- Provides information about warning signs and safety planning.

Since 2007, and the development of the *Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women in Ontario*, the OFIFC has carried out numerous activities. From 2009 – 2014, the initiative has successfully:

- Provided training on recognizing and responding to the signs of woman abuse to a total of 2,468 people. Of these, 922 were trained as facilitators (front line workers) and 1,536 were community participants. Both men and women were provided the training with men representing approximately 5% of the total number.
- Incorporates a wholistic framework that engages and supports all members of the lifecycle.
- Informs and educates on historical and root causes of violence against Aboriginal women.
- Identifies supportive strategies to address issues of women abuse, family violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking, cyber bullying and impacts on child witnesses of violence.
- Impacts on all socio economic backgrounds.
- Seeks to engage urban rural Aboriginal and First Nation communities.

Goal of the Kanawayhitowin campaign (from the Kanawayhitowin Logic Model)

- To implement an initiative that reflects a traditional Aboriginal and cultural approach to community healing and wellness designed to prevent, reduce and eliminate domestic abuse in Aboriginal communities.

Goal of this Project

- To implement an initiative that reflects a traditional Aboriginal cultural approach to provide education to assist Aboriginal Youth and Adults to establish healthy relationships designed to prevent, reduce and eliminate violence against women and girls in Aboriginal communities.

Key objectives of the Kanawayhitowin campaign (from the Kanawayhitowin Logic Model)

- To raise awareness among Aboriginal leaders, service providers, neighbours, friends and families so that they recognize the warning signs of woman abuse and can make the appropriate referrals for supports and services in their community.
- To support a wholistic framework that includes a traditional and cultural approach to community healing and wellness.
- To support and engage men in a traditional approach to ending woman abuse.
- To recognize that woman abuse in Aboriginal communities may end in serious injury and death and therefore recognition of warning signs and safety planning may be essential.
- To develop and implement a province wide marketing strategy, using Kanawayhitowin informational materials as the foundation.
- To disseminate the information and messages from Kanawayhitowin through a specific communications strategy including: mass mailings, local and regional strategies, dedicated website, and province-wide facilitator training.
- To support trained facilitators to launch community based campaign to inform and educate community leaders, service providers and members.
- To facilitate connections between community members and their local service providers.
- Evaluate the effectiveness—community development and provincial dissemination of messages by collecting data to measure the results of the campaign against outputs and outcomes projected in a Kanawayhitowin logic model.

Kanawayhitowin—Taking Care of Each Other’s Spirit campaign with key activities including:

- Continue to support trained Kanawayhitowin Facilitators in the adult initiative by continuing to provide them with access to updated resources, and by disseminating new campaign materials as they are developed. All enquiries from the adult Kanawayhitowin Facilitators will be addressed as needed.
- Develop and implement a Kanawayhitowin Youth Initiative to work with youth and young adults, to educate young women and men on the warning signs of violence, create

supports, and provide traditional knowledge and strategies to create and maintain healthy relationships.

- Connect with the Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I am a Kind Man) initiative to provide traditional and cultural supports to men to prevent an end violence against Aboriginal women.

Youth

- 50 Aboriginal youth Trained
- 5 Kanawayhitowin Youth Initiative Facilitator Training Sessions delivered
- 1 Training of Trainers for Youth Facilitator Training
- 5 OFIFC Facilitators Trained in the Kanawayhitowin Youth Initiative
- 5 Kanawayhitowin Youth Community Based Sessions will be held
- 2,500 Brochures
- 2,500 Bookmarks
- 200 promotional DVDs
- 2 presentations to Aboriginal Youth conferences delivered by Youth Advisory Committee
- 1 province-wide Youth social media strategy
- website updated to include youth content
- Invitations, meeting and training for Members of the Youth Advisory Group
- Evaluation framework

Adult

- 50 Aboriginal Front Line Workers Trained
- 5 Kanawayhitowin Facilitator Training Sessions delivered
- 1 Training of Trainers for Facilitator Training delivered
- 5 OFIFC Facilitators Trained in the Kanawayhitowin Initiative
- 5 Kanawayhitowin Community Based Sessions will be held
- 2,500 Brochures
- 2,500 Bookmarks
- 200 promotional DVDs
- 2 presentations to conferences delivered by Kanawayhitowin Urban Aboriginal Community Activator
- 1 website
- Evaluation framework
- Strategic Plan developed
- Province-wide media strategy

Public Awareness Campaign - 2014

The following are paid components of the awareness campaign:

222 Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) cards on subways from November 25 to December 31, 2014;

Posters in Toronto Subway Stations;

Billboards in and around Toronto and on Highway 27;

CTV North 30 second public service announcement from November 15 to January 30, 2015:

Regional broadcast area covers northeastern Ontario and northwestern Quebec. This encompasses the cities of Timmins, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury and all the smaller communities in between, including Manitoulin Island and the North Shore of Lake Huron

A new Kanawayhitowin website with a younger demographic focus, www.kanawayhitowin.ca;

Information brochures outlining 9 themes so young people can identify themselves with the content to include recognizing those at risk, cyberbullying, LGBT, Aboriginal culture, Men at Risk, Women at Risk and Safety Planning;

Aboriginal media buy throughout Ontario including Wawatay, Two Row Times, Turtle Island News and support from Nation Talk and Anishinabek News.

Facts on Violence Against Aboriginal Women

Over the past decade, recognition has increased that abuse and violence against Aboriginal women and girls is widespread. In 2005, the United Nations Human Rights Committee expressed its concern that 'Aboriginal women are far more likely to experience a violent death than other non-aboriginal women.'

Since then, much has been done to develop responses and services to address the issue of violence and abuse against Aboriginal women and girls. However, despite this marked progress, there is still a need to continue education and outreach about how to recognize the signs of violence, provide assistance or intervention, and break the cycle of abuse. While reliable, evidence-based, recent data on violence against Aboriginal women in Ontario is somewhat lacking, the statistics that do exist point to significantly high rates of violence experienced by Aboriginal women, compared to non-aboriginal counterparts.

According to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by Statistics Canada, Aboriginal women experience spousal violence from either a current or previous marital or common-law partner at a rate that is three times higher than that for non-aboriginal women nationally. In some northern Aboriginal communities in Ontario, it is believed that between 75 and 90 percent of Aboriginal women are battered. *Breaking Free*, a study conducted by the Ontario Native Women's Association in 1989, found that eight out of 10 Aboriginal women in Ontario had personally experienced family violence. Aboriginal women are eight times more likely to suffer abuse than non-Aboriginal women, and of those women, 87 percent had been physically injured and 57 percent had been sexually abused (Health Canada, 1997). Further, crime victimization studies indicate that adolescents and young adult Aboriginal women experience the highest degree of violence of any age group. Young people are significantly affected by violence against Aboriginal women and girls—as victims, perpetrators, or witnesses to violence within households, romantic relationships and friendships.

While written over ten years ago, David A. Wolfe's study, *Emerging Strategies in the Prevention of Domestic Violence* (1999), suggests children witness more than half of the violence that occurs between adults in the home. The study also found the highest incidence of violence against aboriginal women is between the age of 16 and 24 years, with women in the early stage of relationships or those who are young mothers. In research conducted for OFIFC in 2010, 83 percent of respondents to an online survey had witnessed violence against a woman, while in an OFIFC focus group research with incarcerated youth, 100 percent of participants had witnessed violence and knew at least one person who had been abused. All of these experiences with violence and abuse, directly or indirectly, can seriously impair social relationships, learning and opportunities for healthy and safe development into adulthood. Among Aboriginal youth, some are more vulnerable than others to involvement with violence and are more appropriate for targeting an education and outreach campaign through the media, social networks, and more traditional advertising.

Issues related to Violence Against Aboriginal Women

- Aboriginal children experience a higher rate of institutional involvement with Children's Aid Societies and historically, residential schools.
- Understanding violence against Aboriginal women and girls within this historical context also means understanding the intersections that put people at higher risk of being victims and becoming perpetrators.
- Intersecting factors affecting the adult Aboriginal population in Canada include: economic hardship, mental illness, substance abuse and unstable housing.
- With the current national and global economic slowdowns, there will be an expected increase in all contributing factors of domestic violence and therefore, an increased need for public

education and support of communities already facing poverty, high unemployment and no or low education.

- Domestic violence and abuse is transmitted from one generation to the next.
- Aboriginal families experience higher rates of domestic violence, alcoholism and substance abuse, suicides, and sexual, physical and emotional abuses.
- Many Aboriginal people who perpetrate violence were themselves first victims or witnesses of violence.
- The rates of Aboriginal women who report being victimized or will become a victim in the future are continuing to escalate.
- Aboriginal women remain the most vulnerable group, in Canada, to be victims of all forms of violence.
- According to *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile* are “significantly more likely to experience serious forms of violence including being; beaten, choked, sexually assaulted or threatened with or had a gun or knife used on them as compared to non-Aboriginal female victims (54 per cent Aboriginal versus 37 per cent non-Aboriginal)”.¹
- *Aboriginal Domestic Violence in Canada*, found that, mainstream and culture resources within the community may be limited and that the abuser could be an important member of the community and this creates barriers for the victims.
- Historical experiences with mainstream government agencies and services, remote and rural living and the acceptance and normalization of violence against Aboriginal women in communities contributes to a low level of victim reported instances of violence and abuse.²
- According to Statistics Canada’s 2006 study: *Statistics Canada, Measuring Violence Against Women, Statistical Trends* “victimization surveys have found that women are more likely to disclose spousal violence and sexual assault to informal supports such as family and friends, than to police or other social service agencies”.³
- As a result, barriers faced by Aboriginal peoples must be addressed and education and outreach is needed within and outside of the Aboriginal community.

¹ Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile* (Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 2005), 39. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2010000-eng.pdf>

² Aboriginal Healing Foundation. *Aboriginal Domestic Violence in Canada* (Ottawa, ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2003).

³ Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. *Statistics Canada, Measuring Violence Against Women, Statistical Trends* (Ottawa: ON, Statistics Canada, 2006), 55. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2013001/article/11766-eng.pdf>