

Ending Violence Against Women in Aboriginal Communities



Workshop Manual





Acknowledgements

Developed by:

Justice Education Society of BC.

Adapted from materials from the We Can End All Violence Against Women BC Campaign.



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**TO: Workshop Facilitators**

Dear Educators:

The British Columbia 'We Can End All Violence against Women' Coalition Team is pleased to provide you with this We Can End All Violence against Women Workshop for Aboriginal Communities. We hope you will find it useful in your efforts to raise awareness about violence against women (VAW).

'We Can' believes that the best way to prevent violence against women from occurring is to challenge the social beliefs, attitudes and practices that support and maintain violence against women. By focusing on attitudinal change and on challenging long standing practices that are harmful to women we can replace them with positive social values that foster individuals' rights and dignity.

A key component of the 'We Can' campaign is educating and mobilizing individuals to take a public stand and public action against violence against women. By delivering this workshop in your school, workplace or community, you are directly participating in an international effort to end violence against women. By encouraging participants to become involved with initiatives to end all gender-based violence and discrimination, you are contributing to a worldwide movement for global social justice.

The following workshop has been designed to be both participatory and interactive while at the same time sensitive to the diverse needs and backgrounds of all participants. It is important to note that this package is not a script for you to follow word-for-word, but rather a guide or kit that can be adapted as you see fit.

Although this handbook has been designed to contain enough detailed information about violence against women and the 'We Can' campaign to enable you to design an interesting, thought-provoking workshop, you may wish to do some outside reading to broaden your own understanding of the issue. Here are a few good places to start:

- The British Columbia 'We Can' Website: www.wecanbc.ca > Resources
- The South Asia 'We Can' Website: www.wecanendvaw.org
- The United Nations 4th World Conference on Women:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm>

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to ending violence against women.

Yours sincerely,

The 'We Can' Coalition of BC



Workshop Objectives

This workshop is designed to:

- Encourage participants to examine issues of women's rights, gender equality and social justice
- Raise awareness about violence against women in Aboriginal communities and why it occurs.
- Introduce participants to the 'We Can End All Violence against Women' campaign
- Demonstrate the importance of **attitudinal change** in ending violence against women
- Encourage participants to become actively involved with initiatives to end violence against women in their communities
- Inspire participants to become Change Makers

Workshop Checklist

Make sure to obtain and print other documents from the various parts of your Facilitator's Guide that you will need for the workshop.

- Backgrounder
- Slides
- Handouts
- Participant Handbook



Organization of the Workshop

Before the Workshop

- Consider inviting a co-facilitator to help you throughout the workshop
- Do background research on the material that you are presenting--read the 'Backgrounder'.
- Take care of all logistical elements (venue, computer, overhead projector and/or TV)
- Advertise the workshop
- Gather and itemize materials that you will bring with you
- Invite the speaker for Activity D: Aboriginal Experience and Intergenerational Violence
- Invite a local victim worker or counselor to the session and let the participants know that they can talk to that professional after the session

What are the Objectives?

- Be Specific – What do you want the participant to gain from the workshop?
- How will you know whether you have achieved these objectives?
- Be Realistic – Consider the time you have available

Who are the Participants?

- How many participants are you expecting?
- Who are the participants?
- Do they know each other?
- Why are they attending this workshop? What are their expectations?

During the Workshop

- Present information visually (charts, overheads, videos or slides)
- Use small group activities where appropriate and possible
- Engage participants with interactive discussions and hands-on activities
- Make sure the objective remains clear throughout the workshop
- Consider the participants' comfort levels
- Adapt to needs as they arise
- Deal with problems and questions as they occur
- Watch the time and know when to move on



Workshop Agenda

A. Introduction	10 minutes
B. Defining VAW and Recognizing the Problem	15 minutes
C. Violence Against Women and the Canadian Law	15 minutes
D. Aboriginal Experience and Intergenerational Violence	75 minutes
E. Personal Reflections	5 minutes
F. Key Issues Relating to Violence Against Women	20 minutes
G. How Can Change Occur?	20 minutes
H. How Can You Get Involved?	10 minutes
I. Question and Answer Period and Wrap-Up	10 minutes

Total Time: 180 minutes



Workshop Outline

Key Ideas

Familiarize yourself with the following ideas:

- Violence against women is institutionalized at all levels of society – individual, family, community and institutional. To foster equal worth and opportunity, it is necessary to address the issue of gender discrimination and violence against women at each level.
- Ending violence against women requires a change in deeply entrenched and pervasive societal attitudes and practices that endorse violence against women.
- Long standing practices that are harmful to women can be replaced with positive social values that foster individual rights and dignity.

Workshop Activities

A. Introduction *(10 minutes)*

Welcome

Welcome the participants and introduce yourself, other facilitators and speakers, if applicable.

- Use an ice-breaker for participants' introductions. You can ask the group to break into pairs and ask the following questions:
 - What is your name?
 - What do you do?
 - What do you expect to learn at this workshop?

After a couple of minutes, ask everyone to introduce their partners.

- Tell participants that this workshop has been designed to be interactive and participatory and encourage participants to contribute their comments, ideas and questions throughout the session.
- Tell them that this is a safe space, however, the workshop deals with issues that can evoke strong emotional reactions, so there will be someone that they can talk to after the workshop if needed.

Agenda

Discuss how the workshop will be presented. Copies of the Agenda may be handed out at this time. A copy of the agenda is provided on **Slide #1: 'Agenda'** or use the **Slide PDF** included in the **DVD** to show them on a screen. [See: 'Slides'].



Objectives

Go through workshop objectives with the participants. A copy of the workshop objectives is provided on **Slide #2: 'Objectives'** or use the **Slide PDF** included in the **DVD** to show them on a screen. [See: 'Slides'].

- Tell participants that this workshop will examine issues relating to women's rights, gender equality and global social justice [See: 'Backgrounder']
- Tell participants that this session is intended to raise awareness about violence against women and introduce participants to the 'We Can End All Violence against Women' campaign
- Tell participants that this session is designed to encourage participants to become actively involved with initiatives to end violence against women

B. Defining Violence against Women and Recognizing the Problem **(15 minutes)**

Objective

This activity is intended both to introduce the topic of violence against women and to demonstrate the scope and severity of the issue.

Setup

Use the **Slide #3: 'Defining Violence Against Women'** and **Slide #4: 'True and False Statements'**. [See: 'Slides'].

Instructions

Ask: What is violence against women?

Participants will give their answers out loud and a recorder will write down all of the answers on a board or piece of flipchart paper. Most likely those would be the examples of different forms and types of violence. Compare the answers with the examples below to make sure all the types of violence have been identified.

Types of violence

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Economic
- Spiritual
- Cultural

Some examples of the forms that gender-based violence takes: sexual abuse or rape, including marital rape or sexual slavery; battery; domestic violence; forced prostitution; trafficking in women and girls; burning or acid throwing; female genital mutilation; female feticide and infanticide; violence in armed conflict; systemic rape; forced pregnancy; and forced marriage.



Ask: Which types of violence are not easily recognized in our society? Which ones are not usually acknowledged?

Show the definition of violence against women provided on Slide #3: Defining Violence against Women. Tell participants that this internationally accepted definition that captures various aspects of this complex issue.

Violence against women is a human rights violation. It is defined as any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts and coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether in public or private life.

Ask: Is there anything surprising in this definition?

You may want to bring participants' attention to the following elements of this definition:

- Violence against women is a violation of women's rights as human rights. Every human being has the right to a life free from violence.
- Threats of harmful acts are also considered to be violence, not just the acts themselves.
- Even if harmful acts occur in private life, this is still violence. Violence at home is also a public matter.

Recognizing the Problem

Setup

Use **Slide #4:** 'True and False Statements'.

Ask: Which of the following statements is true?

Have a recorder write down the answers.

1. Globally, one in five women has experienced physical or sexual violence or abuse by a male.¹
2. Among women aged 15-44 years, gender-based violence accounts for more death and disability than the combined effects of cancer, malaria, traffic injuries and war.²
3. Violence against women is usually perpetrated by strangers outside the home.
4. 21% of Aboriginal women reported physical and sexual violence compared to 7% non-Aboriginal women.³
5. The economic costs of violence against women in British Columbia, including health care, policing, incarceration, court proceedings and transition houses, totals approximately one billion dollars per year.⁴

¹ UN Commission on the Status of Women, 2/28/00 - <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

² UNIFEM East and South East Asia Region, <http://unifem-eseasia.org/resources/factsheets/Gendis5.html>

³ Statistics Canada 2006

⁴ Critical Elements of an Effective Response to VAW: Briefing Document, <http://www.bcysth.ca/pdf/resources/criticalelements/BN-INTRO.pdf>



6. 101,019 women and children were admitted to shelters across Canada between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008.⁵
7. Nearly one-quarter of Aboriginal women experienced some form of violence from a spouse within a five year period.⁶
8. In Canada only 30 percent of women who have experienced physical violence and less than 10 percent of women who have experienced sexual violence report these offences to the police.⁷
9. Over a five year period between 1994 and 1999 in Canada half a million children heard or witnessed a parent being assaulted.⁸

Once participants have guessed whether the statements are true or false, go through the correct answers together.

Correct Answers: True: 2,4,5,6, 7, 8 and 9
False: 1 and 3 (see below)

1. False: Globally, one in three women has experienced physical or sexual violence or abuse by a male
3. False: Women are more likely to be victimized by a friend, family member or intimate partner, than by a stranger.

Ask: Were you surprised by these statements? Which ones and why?

Have a discussion on whether the general public knows about this problem and why violence against women is considered by most people to be a private not public matter.

C. Violence against Women and the Canadian Law (15 minutes)

Objective

This activity introduces participants to the fundamentals of the Canadian justice system. It informs the participants about the criminal charges that can apply in violence against women cases. The activity builds on the previously explored types of abuse, and enables participants to make critical connections with legal responses.

Setup

Use **Slide # 5:** 'Criminal Law vs. Civil Law' and **Slide #6:** 'Common Charges in Relationship Abuse Cases' and **Handout #1:** 'Relationship Abuse Case Study'.

Instructions

Introduce participants to the basics of the Canadian legal system [See 'Backgrounder'].

⁵ Residents of Canada's Shelters for Abused Women, 2007/2008 Statistics Canada

⁶ Statistics Canada 2006

⁷ Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006 Statistics Canada

⁸ Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2006 Statistics Canada

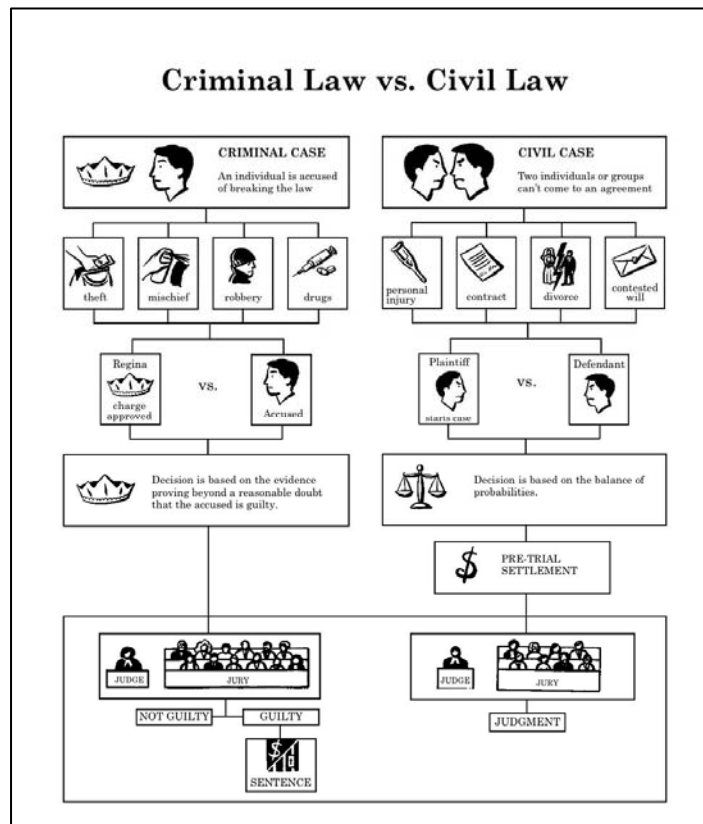


Display 'Criminal Law vs. Civil Law' **Slide #5**, and highlight the key differences.

Ask: What kinds of criminal charges can apply to cases where there is violence against women.

Display 'Common Charges in Relationship Abuse Cases' **Slide #6**. Go over the definitions.

Ask: Are you surprised at any of the definitions? If so, why?



Common Charges in Relationship Abuse Cases

Slide #6

Uttering threats: It is a criminal offence to utter a threat to kill or seriously harm another person, to destroy another person's personal property or to injure or kill an animal or bird belonging to another person.

Assault: When someone touches another person, directly or indirectly, without that person's consent it is an assault. It is also an assault when the person attempts or threatens to touch another person. This is a criminal offence, whether or not the victim has any physical injuries.

Criminal harassment: Making threats against a person, if it causes that other person to be fearful for his/her safety.



Instructions

Buzz groups

Divide the participants in groups of 3-4 people. Distribute the **Handout # 1: 'Relationship Abuse Case Study'** to each group. Have the group read the case study (3-4 min) and discuss the questions on the handout (5 min).

Handout # 1

Relationship Abuse Case Study

Together for just under five years, a married couple was going through a rough time. Things were great at first, but over the past year the husband became very controlling and harsh. They began to fight a lot, and when they did he would put her down and humiliate her. He became very cruel, calling her names and even threatening to harm their dog to get back at her.

One evening, she arrived home after an evening out with her friends to find him waiting for her. He was very angry. While he did not physically hit her that night, he was very aggressive and his body language was extremely threatening. His behavior was scaring her more and more, but she didn't feel like she needed to tell anyone because he hadn't actually hit her. She was also ashamed of their fighting and felt uncomfortable telling anybody about it.

A few months after that night, he began to be physically violent with her. Their fights ended with him pushing and hitting her. Afterwards he would apologize with such genuine emotion that she felt she had no choice but to forgive him: he was her husband after all. She was feeling very vulnerable and was even afraid to be in her own home sometimes. She wanted to talk to someone about it but had no idea where to go.

Discussion Questions:

- At what point do you think that this woman's experience with this man would count as abuse?
- At what point do you think a crime has occurred, and she has grounds to take legal action against him?

Debrief on the discussion that took place in groups/pairs. Write down the answers on a flipchart or white board.

**D. Aboriginal Experience and Intergenerational Violence (75 minutes)**

Participants will explore the connection between the Indian Residential School experience and intergenerational violence in aboriginal communities today. There are three parts to this section. Part I: Yesterday covers the history of the Indian Residential School experience, Part II: Today looks at how that experience affects communities today and Part III: Tomorrow discusses ways to break the cycle of intergenerational abuse and violence.

Part I: Yesterday (25 minutes)**Objective**

To increase participants' knowledge about the history of Indian residential schools in Canada.

Options

As a facilitator, you have a few options when doing the activities. It is preferable to have a live speaker for Part I and Part II but if this is not possible you can use the different parts of *Breaking the Cycle*- DVD. If you do not have video equipment you can use the different Handouts to facilitate each part. If you are inviting a speaker there are letters in Appendix A and B you can use or adapt. Also you may want to leave time for a question and answer session with the speaker.

The different options for Part I: Yesterday are below:

Option 1: Bring a live speaker from the community in to give an historical overview of residential schools. The speaker could be a residential school survivor. See Appendix A for a letter you can send to your speaker which includes a list of the topics you wish them to speak about. OR

Option 2: Show Part I: Yesterday of the DVD that is part of this workshop package. It provides historical archival materials about the residential school experience. OR

Option 3: Distribute **Handout #2:** 'Yesterday-A Historical Perspective' for workshop participants to read on their own, or for you to read aloud to them. Help them to fill in the blanks as you read. Use the Facilitator's Key.

Setup

Prepare the live speaker or use the *Breaking the Cycle*-DVD and/or handouts. Use **Slide #7:** 'Which Statements are True?' The answer key is below.

Instructions

Read the true or false statements and ask participants to call out what they think are the correct answers. If you have a speaker they can talk about their experience at residential school. If you do not have a speaker, than show the Part I: Yesterday of the *Breaking the Cycle*-DVD. If you have no audio video equipment you can use **Handout #2:** 'Yesterday-A Historical Perspective' to introduce the ideas in this part. Divide the participants into groups of 4-5 and give each group a copy of **Worksheet #1:** 'Yesterday' and have them answer the questions. Come back together to discuss their ideas.



Which Statements are True?

1. Aboriginal women and girls in Canada are at higher risk of violence than other groups of women. **(TRUE)**
2. Between 1840 and 1983 around 150,000 Aboriginal children went through the Indian residential school system. **(TRUE)**
3. The history of colonialism played a distinct role in contributing to abuse in Aboriginal communities, as well as to many other problems, such as poverty, drug abuse, and suicide. **(TRUE)**
4. Historically, colonialism has left Aboriginal communities shattered spiritually, culturally, socially and economically. **(TRUE)**
5. The residential school system and colonialism are two completely separate phenomena that have nothing to do with each other. **(FALSE)**
6. What we learn and experience as children has no impact on our adult behavior. **(FALSE)**
7. Abused children are often unable to express their feelings about the abuse because of their anger, fear, grief, and guilt. **(TRUE)**
8. Residential schools survivors were denied the opportunity of connecting to their cultural and spiritual roots, as this is what the school system was designed to erase in the first place. **(TRUE)**

Part 2: Today (25 minutes)

Objective

To learn about the impact that Indian residential schools have had on individuals and communities over many generations and the ways to move forward.

Options

The different options for Part II: Today are below:

Option 1: Bring a live speaker to talk about the various impacts that residential schools have had on different levels, across communities and society. See Appendix B for a list of the possible questions that your speaker could cover during his/her talk. OR

Option 2: Play Part II: Today of the DVD. OR

Option 3: Distribute **Handout #3:** 'Today in Our Community' to workshop participants and ask them to read it themselves or read it aloud to them. Help them to fill in the blanks as you read. Use the Facilitator's Key.

Setup

Prepare the live speaker or use *Breaking the Cycle*: DVD and/or handouts. Have copies of **Worksheet # 2a:** 'Today-Our Community' and **Worksheet #2b:** 'Today-Our Society' ready to handout to participants. You will need a flipchart or a white board to record the ideas.

**Instructions**

Break participants into groups, distributing one worksheet per group and asking them to delegate a scribe to record the group's answers. Each group will brainstorm the impact of residential schools on a specific level (either community or society). Then each group will read their ideas to the larger group, where you (or a participant volunteer) will record the answers on a white board or flipchart. Discuss their ideas.

Part 3: Tomorrow (25 minutes)**Objective**

To identify changes that can be made in order to break the cycle and to encourage participants to reflect on how to take action in their own personal lives.

Options

The different options for Part III: Tomorrow are below:

Option 1: Show Part III: Tomorrow of the *Breaking the Cycle* DVD. Discuss the answers to the questions on the back of **Handout #4:** 'Breaking the Cycle'.

Option 2: If you do not have video equipment you can distribute the written scenario **Handout #4:** 'Breaking the Cycle' either to be read aloud by the facilitator, aloud within the group, or quietly individually.

Setup

Use *Breaking the Cycle*: DVD and/or the handouts. Make a copy of **Handout #4:** 'Breaking the Cycle' for the discussion questions after you watch the video.

Instructions

Watch the video or read the handout. Discuss the answers to the questions about the scenario on second page of **Handout #4:** 'Breaking the Cycle' if you have watched the DVD. After you have finished answering the questions about the scenario move to the next activity on Personal Reflections.

**E. Personal Reflections****(5 minutes)****Objective**

This activity allows participants to think about violence against women in the context of their own lives. This activity will enable participants to think about some of the challenges to ending violence against women and will prepare them for focusing on change.

Setup

A list of activity questions is provided below.

Instructions

Tell participants that this activity is meant to provide them with an opportunity to reflect on the issues that have been discussed so far, as well as enable them to think about violence against women in the context of their own lives.

Tell participants that in a moment you will ask them to close their eyes and listen to a series of statements. Ask participants to clap when they agree with/or have had experiences similar to those described in a particular statement. Tell participants that should they choose not to participate in clapping exercise, they can use this time to quietly reflect on the statements that are being recited. Facilitators should pause after reading each statement to allow participants time to reflect.

Ask participants to close their eyes. Facilitator's should choose a few of the following statements to read out loud.

Personal Statements:

- a. I have heard the word 'rape' used as a joke.
- b. I have felt angry towards the portrayal of violence against women in the media.
- c. I have felt complacent towards the portrayal of violence against women in the media.
- d. I have heard my friends use negative comments towards women. I have let these comments slide.
- e. I have been uncomfortable walking home alone at night OR
I have felt uncomfortable with a female friend walking home alone at night.
- f. When I am out at night, I keep an eye on my drink.
- g. I have treated women differently based on the way they were dressed.
- h. I know of someone who has been involved with violence against women but did not know how to approach him/her.

F. Key Issues Relating to Violence against Women**(20 minutes)****Objective**

This activity allows participants to work through some of the key issues relating to violence against women. Through this activity participants will be able to isolate the different variables acting to support violence against women. Furthermore, participants will be able to visually identify what violence against women entails and some of the more common ways it is shown.



Setup

Before the workshop write the following three categories onto a piece of flipchart paper: Behaviours, Practices/Customs, Beliefs/Attitudes.

Instructions

Tell participants that this activity will involve a series of partner and group brainstorms.

Buzz Groups

Ask participants to turn to the person next to them and discuss the following question.

Ask: What are the behaviours that support and maintain violence against women?

Give participants two minutes to brainstorm their answers and then call everyone back into a big group. Ask people to call out some of their answers. Record these answers on the chart.

Buzz Groups

Ask participants to break up into pairs again (participants should find a new partner) and discuss the following question.

Ask: What are the practices/customs that support and maintain violence against women?

Give participants two minutes to brainstorm their answers and then call everyone back into a big group. Ask people to call out some of their answers. Record these answers on the chart.

Group Brainstorm

Tell participants this last brainstorm will be a group brainstorm.

Ask: What are the attitudes/beliefs that support and maintain violence against women?

Record these answers on the chart.

Once a chart has been created go over the following questions. [Refer to the 'Backgrounder' for examples of answers you might expect from the participants.]

Ask: What are the effects of violence against women? [Make reference to societal impacts of violence against women].

Ask: Who does violence against women affect?

Ask: Where does violence against women happen?

Ask: Why does violence against women occur? [Make reference to the connection between violence against women and issues of gender equality].



G. How Can Change Occur? (20 minutes)

Objective

This activity challenges participants to think critically and apply analytical tools to develop strategies to end violence against women.

Setup

Use Worksheet #3: 'How Can Change Occur?' and **Worksheet #4:** 'Challenges to Change' which have been provided.

Instructions

Divide participants into groups of five or six. Provide each group with a pen and a copy of **Worksheet #3:** 'How Can Change Occur?' and **Worksheet #4:** 'Challenges to Change'. Tell participants that violence against women is institutionalized at every level of society (individual, family, community and society).

Ask: Is change necessary?

Ask: Is change possible?

Ask: How can change be achieved?

Ask participants to brainstorm different ways that change can be achieved at different levels of society and record their thoughts on **Worksheet #3**. Then work on **Worksheet #4** as to what some of the challenges will be when trying to implement those changes.

Once groups have finished, ask each group to share their findings. If possible, have each individual group present a different section of the two worksheets. If the first group discusses Change at the Individual Level, the second group can discuss Obstacles/Challenges to Change at the Individual Level.

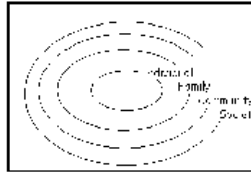


Worksheet #3

HOW CAN CHANGE OCCUR?

Instructions:
Use the space provided to brainstorm different ways CHANGE can occur at each level of society.

For Example: Change can occur through increased classroom education. This statement would probably fit best under institutional change.



INDIVIDUAL

FAMILY

COMMUNITY

INSTITUTIONAL

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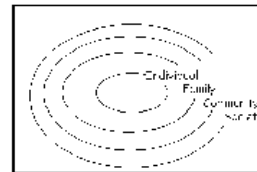
Worksheet #4

CHALLENGES TO CHANGE

Instructions:
Use the space provided to brainstorm the potential obstacles to change that can occur at each level of society.

For Example: Communities should run public workshops about violence against women.

People might not be interested in attending these workshops.



INDIVIDUAL

FAMILY

COMMUNITY

INSTITUTIONAL

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H. How can you get involved? (10 minutes)

Objective

To introduce the 'We Can' Campaign and outline the different ways that participants can become involved in the 'We Can' campaign.

Set Up

Use **Slide #8:** 'What Can You Do?' and **Slide #9:** 'Change Maker' to talk about the 'We Can' campaign. These are also in the Participant Handbook.

Instructions

Refer to the Participant Handbook sections on the Campaign. Provide a brief background to the 'We Can' campaign and its origins and then focus on British Columbia's 'We Can' initiative. Review the following sections in the 'Backgrounder':

- What is We Can?
- What are We Can's objectives?
- What is We Can's campaign strategy?
- Who is a Change Maker?
- Who can become a Change Maker?

Take Action

Involve participants in discussing and analyzing strategies for ending violence against women suggested by 'We Can'.

Ask: Why does 'We Can' focus on attitudinal change?

Ask: If attitudes change, what would happen to behaviours and practices?

Discuss the behaviour and practice changes that might accompany attitudinal change.

Refer participants to additional resources available using **Slide #10:** 'Resources'.

Optional**Say Something. Men Talking to Men: Handout #5**

If you are talking to a group with several young men this would be a good activity to do. Read out the scenarios and discuss how men could speak to men on these issues. 'Say Something. Men Talking to Men' is included in the participant handbook.



I. Question and Answer Period and Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

This is an opportunity for participants to ask questions, make comments or suggestions or share ideas.

Thank participants for sharing their thoughts and ideas and encourage them think about the effects of violence against women and how they can become involved in efforts to end violence.

Ask participants to fill out a brief evaluation using **Handout #6: Tell Us What You Think**.

Total Time: 180 minutes



Appendix A: Letter to Residential School Survivor Speaker

Here is a sample of a letter you may want to send to the speaker once you have made the initial contact. Of course, you will know best how to adapt it.

Dear _____,

We are planning to hold a workshop which addresses the issue of violence against women. A portion of the workshop will discuss intergenerational abuse in Aboriginal communities. The workshop has been developed in conjunction with the We Can End All Violence Against Women BC Coalition.

This workshop would be strengthened enormously if you would consider adding your valuable contribution by being a speaker during the session of the workshop that acknowledges the History of Residential Schools. We would welcome any contribution you could make to this broad area.

Some of the potential topics you could cover in your presentation would include:

- Your experience of residential school, the first day, everyday life within the school, some of your experiences at school and what your life was like before you attended school.
- Any historical descriptions you can offer of residential schools in your community.
- Any other way you can think of to help educate participants about the residential school experience from your perspective including personal or community impact.

Thank you very much for your interest in participating in this very important work and we look forward to working with you in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Appendix B: Letter to Community Speaker

Here is a sample of a letter you may want to send to the speaker once you have made the initial contact. Of course, you will know best how to adapt it.

Dear _____,

We are planning to hold a workshop which addresses the issue of violence against women. A portion of the workshop will discuss intergenerational abuse in Aboriginal communities. The workshop has been developed in conjunction with the We Can End All Violence Against Women BC Coalition.

This workshop would be strengthened enormously if you would consider adding your valuable contribution by being a speaker during the session of the workshop that acknowledges the impacts that residential schools had on the individual, community and society overall. We would welcome any contribution you could make to this broad area.

Some of the potential topics you could cover in your presentation would include:

- How violence has affected your community specifically.
- If any of this violence could be tied to the residential school experience, and if so how.
- The impacts that residential schools have had on your community's experience of violence and anything your community might be doing to address this issue.
- Who you think is most affected by any violence that may have resulted from the residential school experience.
- Any other information or experiences that you might have that speak to the impact of residential schools on communities today.

Thank you very much for your interest in participating in this very important work and we look forward to working with you in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Appendix C: About Circle Talks

A strong cultural value of many Aboriginal peoples is to respect what others have to say, even if you disagree with their viewpoint. In most/all Aboriginal cultures it is considered extremely impolite not to listen, to interrupt or to argue when someone else is speaking. It is believed that everyone's views are valuable. Circle talks are a direct reflection of the cultural value of maintaining harmony within the group. Circle talks also allow people to speak emotionally, "from the heart."

Many Aboriginal peoples, when they have something important to discuss, use Circle Talks. The people gather around in a circle and an object, often called a talking stick, is passed around in a clockwise direction. Only the person who is holding the talking stick is allowed to speak. Everyone else is required to listen. When the person speaking is finished he/she passed it along to the person seated on his or her left.

The talking circle allows everyone to express his or her views without interruption. It is a way of preventing people from butting in before someone else finishes. Everyone knows when their turn is coming so they can focus on what the speaker is saying. Circle talks can be very effective in thoroughly covering a topic and getting at what is important to the participants.

The term "Talking Stick" refers to the item that is passed around the Talking Circle. It can be a stick, a rock, feather, or any other object. The person holding the item has the floor to talk. The chart below compares the two styles of discussing a topic.

Dialogue	Circle Talks
More head, less heart.	More heart, less head.
People can "jump" into the conversation when there is a short pause, meaning the speaker can be stopped by someone else in the group. "Jumping" in is culturally acceptable.	Only the person holding the talking stick speaks, everyone else remains silent until the talking stick is passed, signaling who will be the next speaker. "Jumping in" when there is a short pause is not culturally acceptable.
Many ideas are quickly generated.	Ideas are slowly developed because the speaker has time to elaborate his/her point of view.
People who want to voice their opinion are the ones who are usually more talkative.	People who are quiet get their turn to speak.
The group can reach a consensus.	The group can reach a consensus.
If not controlled, group harmony can be easily diverted or damaged.	Harder to break group harmony.
Much, not all, of dialogue comes from "head knowledge" which is more logical. Logical component usually larger than the emotional content.	The discussion comes from "heart knowledge" which is more emotional. Emotional component usually much larger than the logical component.

Conducting a Circle Talk

Here are some general guidelines however there are different ways of conducting circle talks so please look into how they are done in your local area.



Guidelines

- Must be a complete circle, not a semi-circle.
- People should not be left out of the circle.
- Only the person holding the talking stick speaks, everyone else listens.
- The talking stick is passed in a clockwise direction.
- A person talks until he/she is finished, then he/she passes the talking stick.
- Be respectful of the amount of time available.
- A person may pass the talking stick without speaking.
- The Circle Talk is complete only when everyone has had an opportunity to speak.
- If desired, the talking stick may be passed around a second time.
- A circle talk is used to discuss issues of importance.
- A circle talk is extremely respectful of each person and what he/she has to say.
- If the speaker has a question or needs clarification, he/she can put the talking stick down in order to “move the conversation out of the circle.” Once the question is answered or the clarification is complete, the speaker can pick up the talking stick and continue.
- What is said in the circle stays in the circle, unless an agreement has been made that it does not.

Additional Issues to Consider

- Before a Circle Talk is conducted it is a good idea to review the protocol for the circle, especially if it is the first time a group is gathering for a Circle Talk.
- It's wise to be trained by someone who is comfortable doing circle talks.
- People should not be left out of the circle. Anyone is welcome to pass the talking stick without speaking.
- The “talking stick” can be any object of significance. First Nations people use a feather, rock, or other object that has significance to them. If no significant object is available, a common practice is to have someone in the group donate something of importance to them, such as a bracelet or a ring. This then becomes the “talking stick.” Sometimes people who do circle talks want to use an item, such as a feather or another object that has been blessed. This is because circle talks are often considered sacred. We're all giving our best to help, or solve problems.
- Only the person holding the object is allowed to speak. If a person is talking and is in pain, body language is used to send a supporting message. The people beside the person may want to touch the hurting person's arm. In some circles, there may be a pause while a friend hugs the person. If someone is going to hug someone else in the circle, walk around the outside of the circle. How circles operate around helping with pain do vary, but all do so in a respectful manner.
- Some circles have a person who is “Keeper of the Circle” and is responsible for conducting the circle. This person may (or may not) smudge, pray or do other ceremonial activities.
- Circle talks are powerful because they often focus on emotional issues and so the messages come directly from the heart.
- The underlying concept is to be respectful. Circle talks are conducted in different ways but the “simplest form of a circle talk” outlined on the previous page, is a good starting point. Don't let uncertainty, fear or being afraid to offend prevent you from participating in this form of communication.
- Remember, it's a good idea to learn to do circle talks from someone who is experienced, as there are several variations.



Combining Dialogue and Circle Talks

Conceptualization

Use the example of kayaking down a river when comparing how mainstream society and some Aboriginal people conduct dialogue. Mainstream dialogue is like traveling the rapids of a river. Many ideas are quickly generated. The speaker pauses in an eddy and someone else quickly takes off into the rapids. The person pulling out of the eddy hooks into what the previous speaker was talking about. Dialogue is fast, with people who want to talk waiting for the speaker to pause in an eddy so they can take their turn at speaking. Much of the conversation focuses on what a person thinks about the subject.

In an Aboriginal circle talk, a talking stick is passed around and only the person holding the talking stick can speak. This causes the pace to slow down because everyone knows who the next speaker will be. This creates a different atmosphere in the conversation with everyone having time to think of what they are going to say. They can also focus more on what the speaker is talking about. The person who receives the talking stick does not have to 'hook' into what the previous speaker was talking about. He/she can begin wherever he/she wants. Much of the conversation focuses on how the speaker feels about the subject.

When the conversation style switches from dialogue to circle talks, an important shift occurs. Mainstream dialogue has a heavy focus in the head (logical), whereas circle talks have a heavy focus in the heart (emotional). Both conversation styles have their strengths and weaknesses. By combining these two methods of conversation, an atmosphere is created where logic and emotion both play an important role. This typically results in a strong tendency to 'refocus the discussion as to what is really important. By combining the two worldviews, a conversation style that is stronger than either one is created.

How to combine Dialogue and Circle Talks

- The topic for discussion is put on the table and everyone starts talking about it in 'regular dialogue' format. Ideas are generated and when the chair feels enough time has passed, or most/all of the ideas have been discussed, he/she summarizes what has been said.
- It is usually better to move directly into a circle talk, while all ideas are fresh. But if a considerable time has already been taken up, it might be time for a break. Usually a circle talk doesn't take a break unless the circle is very large, or the topic very difficult.
- Follow the protocol for Circle Talks until everyone has had the opportunity to speak.
- The chair summarizes and asks for any additional input, as per chair's usual responsibilities.
- It may be necessary to repeat the process more than once.
- Using this approach, there is a strong tendency for the solution to be reached by consensus instead of by democratic vote.
- Everyone discusses how it went, what worked, what didn't and what to change for next time.

NOTE: Often, when using this particular method of communication, there are many wet eyes because people are unable to express exactly how they feel about a particular topic, something that is difficult in dialogue talking alone.



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