

Ending Violence Against Women in Aboriginal Communities



Workshop Slides





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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Workshop Agenda

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

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**

Defining Violence against Women

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.

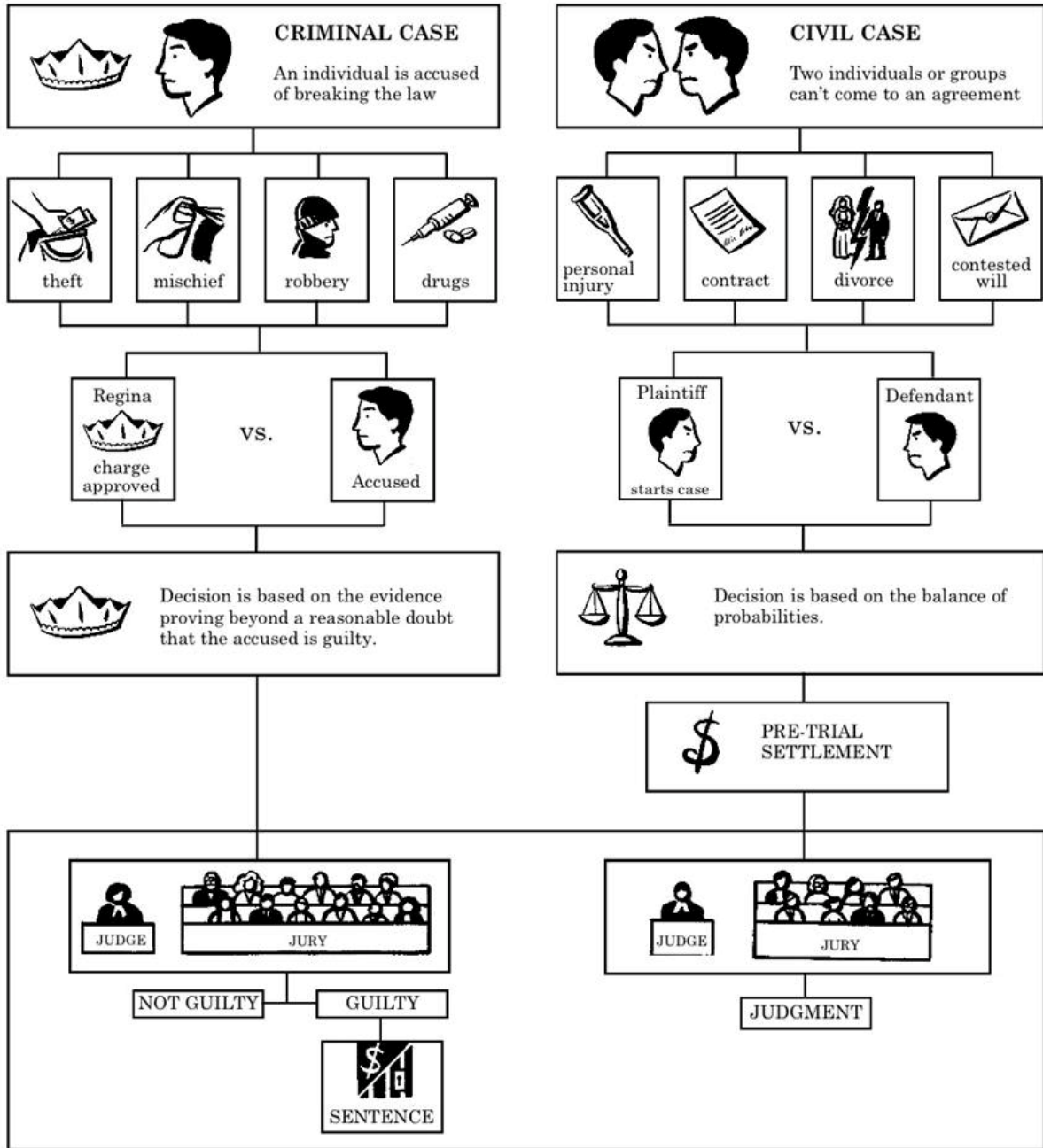
- **Violence against women is a violation of women's rights as human rights. Every human being has the right to a life free from violence.**
- **Threats of harmful acts are also considered to be violence, not just the acts themselves.**
- **Even if harmful acts occur in private life, this is still violence.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

True and False Statements

- 1. Worldwide, it is estimated that one in five women has experienced physical or sexual violence or abuse by a male.**
- 2. Globally, 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.**
- 3. Violence against women is usually perpetrated by strangers outside the home.**
- 4. In Canada, 21% of Aboriginal women reported physical and sexual violence compared to 7% non-Aboriginal women.**
- 5. Across Canada, 101,019 women and children were admitted to shelters between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008.**

- 6. In Canada, nearly one-quarter of Aboriginal women experienced some form of violence from a spouse within a five year period.**
- 7. 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.**
- 8. In Canada, over a five year period between 1994 and 1999 half a million children heard or witnessed a parent being assaulted.**
- 9. In British Columbia, the economic costs of violence against women, including health care, policing, incarceration, court proceedings and transition houses, totals approximately one billion dollars per year.**

Criminal Law vs. Civil Law



Common Charges in Relationship Abuse Cases

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, that causes that other person to be fearful for his/her safety.

Which Statements are True?

- 1. Aboriginal women and girls in Canada are at higher risk of violence than other groups of women.**
- 2. Between 1840 and 1983 around 150,000 Aboriginal children went through the Indian residential school system.**
- 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, substance abuse, and suicide.**
- 4. Historically, colonialism has left Aboriginal communities shattered spiritually, culturally, socially and economically.**
- 5. The residential school system and colonialism are two completely separate phenomena that have nothing to do with each other.**

- 6. What we learn and experience as children has no impact on our adult behavior.**
- 7. Abused children are often unable to express their feelings about the abuse because they may internalize their anger, fear, grief, and guilt.**
- 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.**

What Can YOU Do?

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN & BECOME A CHANGE MAKER!

Help us to change the ATTITUDES, BELIEFS and PRACTICES that support violence against women.

Change Makers pledge to:

- Reflect on my own attitudes and behaviors, so as to support gender equality and non-violence
- Speak out against violence against women and promote actions to end it
- Encourage five others to join the We Can campaign
- Commit myself to support the We Can campaign so that it becomes a broad social movement
- Communicate back to We Can about the ways I am an active Change Maker in my life



BECOME a FACILITATOR

Facilitate workshops to raise awareness about violence against women in your school, place of work and community!

VOLUNTEER

Volunteer with your local 'We Can' partner and participate in campaign events!

LEARN MORE

Visit our website to learn more about violence against women and the 'We Can' campaign!

START a CHANGE MAKERS CLUB at YOUR SCHOOL

For more information and to register as a Change Maker visit

<http://www.wecanbc.ca>

Change Makers

Change Makers Believe:

- **Violence against women is never acceptable**
- **Change in current gender perceptions and attitudes is essential and possible**
- **Violence against women is a public issue, not a private matter**
- **Each individual has the potential to change her or his own life**
- **Change must begin now**

What Do Change Makers Do?

- **Initiate and encourage discussion about gender inequality and violence against women**
- **Act as role models of alternative behaviours**
- **Encourage others to recognize the various forms of gender violence and discrimination**
- **Enlist the help of influential community members to create a positive environment and to reduce risks for women**

How Can They Do This?

- **Talk to friends, neighbours and colleagues to raise awareness about violence against women and encourage them to re-examine their own attitudes and practices**
- **Increase their own awareness about violence against women**
- **Disseminate campaign information**
- **Challenge existing gender biased attitudes, stereotypes and practices**
- **Take a public stand against violence against women**
- **Support women who are experiencing violence**

Resources

Learn More

- The British Columbia 'We Can' Website:
<http://www.WeCanBC.ca>
- Native Women's Association of Canada:
<http://www.nwac.ca>
- Status of Women Canada: <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca>
- Women's Organizations in British Columbia:
<http://www.distel.ca/womlist/countries/canada/britishcolumbia.html>
- Where Are the Children? Interactive website about residential school experience and its impact:
<http://www.WhereAreTheChildren.ca>
- Surviving the Past: Options for dealing with residential school abuse
<http://www.SurvivingThePast.ca>
- The Healing Journey:
<http://www.TheHealingJourney.ca>
- Aboriginal Parenting After Separation:
<http://apasbc.ca>

Where to Get Help

- VictimLINK: 1 800-563-0808 (Toll free 24/7 helpline for victims of family and sexual violence)
- Youth Against Violence Line: 1 800 680-4264 (Toll free 24/7 helpline for youth)
- <http://www.domesticviolencebc.ca>
- List of BC Transition Houses:
http://www.bchousing.org/programs/transition_housing/Contacts
- *Indian Residential School Survivors Society*: Toll-free phone: 1 800 721-0066 or 24 hour National Survivors Support Line: 1 866 925-4419
<http://www.irsss.ca>
- *Warriors Against Violence Society*: Phone: (604) 255-3240 <http://wavbc.com>
- *BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres*: Phone: (250) 388-5522 <http://www.bcaafc.com>
- Legal Resources Database:
<http://www.clicklaw.bc.ca>
- Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC: Toll-free phone: 1 877 811-1190
<http://www.nccabc.ca>