

TOOL**HOW TO ORGANIZE A YOUTH WALK
FOR RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT VIOLENCE ISSUES**

*Sample Guide Walk For Violence Against Women in the N.W.T.
Community “Lending Us Your Legs Walk” by Kiera Kolson*

The Beginning

It all began when I walked with Marie-Speakman, the Native Women’s Association of the N.W.T Victim Services Coordinator and field worker. She organized a walk to and from Rae-Edzo a small northern community sixty miles or so from Yellowknife to raise awareness for community violence. The walk was a success. After completing the walk and when we got back to Yellowknife we talked about how we needed awareness for our youth and the struggles that they go through and are going through in their lives.

The Middle

We planned the walk for the end of the month of July 2006, but decided to fast-track it to Aboriginal Day for June 21, 2006. We sat down to write a short Action Plan that included the following:

- Choose a place to walk to-from from point A-point B;
- Select a date (we chose Aboriginal Day);
- Arrange drivers, snacks, water, and sponsors;
- Write a simple letter stating the 5-w’s (who, what, where, when and why) most organizations are happy or willing to assist in any way;
- Contact the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for safe escort on the Highway(s);
- Contact media outlets in community/city and allied agencies;



- Put posters up in the public and hand out material regarding the Walk;
- Follow through and watch the people assist in any way that they can and watch how beautiful it is to see the community come together;
- Discuss afterwards the successes and improvements for a future Walk.

After our general Action Plan which can be rearranged to suit the location, we contacted the local media outlets and immediately gained support for our Walk. I did interviews on the radio and with the newspaper and went walking around the City of Yellowknife handing our flyers to people providing information and letting people know how they could “Lend Us Their Legs” for a good cause.

We also contacted the RCMP to have an escort for safety purposes while walking on the highway.

We began the walk at a designated location on June 20, 2006 and walked half-way to the Yellowknife River on the fifteen mile walk to and from Dettah, a small Aboriginal community on the out-skirts of the City of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. We continued the walk on June 21, 2006 to Dettah, NT - on Aboriginal Day - and on the way back to the main festivities site at Sombe’ke Park in Yellowknife upon completion of the walk.

The End

It was truly amazing when we arrived at the Aboriginal Day festivities, to know that we did complete the walk but more importantly that we raised awareness for such a worthy cause.

The above are the simple steps we took to arranged the Walk, but depending on how other groups or organizations would like to put a Walk together, will depend on how much more work will go into the planning. For our small community it worked for us and we were able to complete what we started out to do.

*Kiera-Dawn Kolson NWAC North Youth Director
Native Women’s Association of the N.W.T. Youth Representative
Yellowknife, NT*

