




NWAC Youth Violence Prevention Workshop

Sexual Assault

CREATED BY:
NWAC YOUTH COUNCIL &
NWAC YOUTH DEPARTMENT



OPENING ACTIVITY

BALL OF STRING FLING

Sexual Assault



Acknowledgements

- "Recognizing and Responding to Violence against Women in Aboriginal Communities" created in conjunction with Kenneth McGrath from Mandala Learning Solutions Inc who generously donated his time to work with the YC
- INAC funding to work on the youth violence prevention Toolkit
- The content of this workshop was developed by the NWAC Youth Council members and the NWAC's Youth Department
- A limited survey on violence prevention issues was conducted with Aboriginal youth prior to developing the workshop
- We partnered with Wabano Cyber café youth in order to make a youth video for the workshop

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Workshop Contents

Please use this information at your own discretion

This is the tool for raising awareness and education developed by NWAC's Youth Council in consultations with other youth but we are not professional service providers so please contact relevant agencies and local service providers for any professional advice



Sexual Assault



"I think that violence toward Aboriginal women is perpetuated within society.



It is not only one person making them feel worthless, but instead it is the general accepted stereotype surrounding Aboriginal women."

- Age 19, Ontario

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Why do we need to talk about violence prevention?

1999 Statistics Canada data reports that from 7,400 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women 12.6% of Aboriginal women had been victims of violence by their current partners in the previous five years.

For non-Aboriginal women, they report the figure was just 3.5%.

(Assessing Violence Against Women: A Statistical Profile 1999).

Up to 75% of victims of sex crimes in Aboriginal communities are female under 18 years of age, 50% of those are under 14, and almost 25% of those are younger than 7 years of age.

(McIvor & Nahanso, "Aboriginal Women: Invisible Victims of Violence" 1998 source: Correctional Service of Canada)

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How Violence Affects Aboriginal Girls?

The incidence of child sexual abuse in some Aboriginal communities is as high as 75 to 80% for girls under 8 years old*

The heightened vulnerability to violence is experienced by Aboriginal / Indigenous girls in Canada*

The suicide rate for adolescent Aboriginal girls is 8 times the national average of non-Aboriginal adolescent girls*

*[McEvoy & Daniluk, "Wounds to the Soul: The Experiences of Aboriginal Women Survivors of Sexual Abuse," Canadian Psychology 36, 3 1995]
*(The Girl Child: Having to 'Fit' by Jasmin Jiwani, Ph.D., October 1998)

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What we will address..

- 1) How to recognize specific types of violence?
 - what is considered violence, abuse, harassment?
 - types of violence (descriptions, examples)
- 2) How to recognize early signs of violence?
 - major signs for each of the categories (in a relationship, school, work place, on-line, bars etc)
- 3) How to respond to and prevent violence?
 - scenarios
 - situations
 - obstacles to responding to violence: shame to talk about it, stigmas, lack of confidence, lack of skills to express themselves, poverty, lack of resources, low self-esteem, intergenerational trauma
 - highlighting healthy relationships
- 4) List of Resources and Workshop Sources
 - websites
 - tools

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Ways to Prevent Violence

- Learn about types of violence that might occur
- Start learning about prevention early
- Learn to recognize early/warning signs of violence
- Recognize obstacles to responding to violence
- Build your own-security networks and support systems
- Know resources available to you and places to call in your community/city

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ACTIVITY 1 WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Sexual Assault



What is sexual violence / assault?

Sexual assault can be verbal, visual, or anything that forces a person to join in unwanted sexual contact or attention.

Examples of this are voyeurism (when someone watches private sexual acts), exhibitionism (when someone exposes him/herself in public), incest (sexual contact between family members), and sexual harassment. It can happen in different situations, by a stranger in an isolated place, on a date, or in the home by someone you know.

From, Women's Health, <http://www.4woman.gov/faq/sexualassault.htm>

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What is sexual violence / assault?

Rape is a common form of sexual assault.

It is committed in many situations - on a date, by a friend or an acquaintance, or when you think you are alone. Educate yourself on "date rape" drugs. They can be slipped into a drink when a victim is not looking. *Never* leave your drink unattended — no matter where you are. Try to always be aware of your surroundings. Date rape drugs make a person unable to resist assault and can cause memory loss so the victim doesn't know what happened.

From, Women's Health, <http://www.4woman.gov/faq/sexualassault.htm>

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Sexual violence / assault facts

- in 1999, in Canada, 23,872 sexual assaults (total of all types) were reported to police. (METRAC, Stats Can 2000)
- 80% of Aboriginal girls under the age of 8 in the Northwest Territories have been sexually assaulted (Gurr *et al.* 1999)
- 75% of Aboriginal girls under the age of 18 have been sexually abused. (Jiwani, 1998)
- Only 6% of sexual assaults are reported to the police and only 1% of date rapes are reported to the police (Statistics Canada)
- 63% of sexual assaults reported to the police involve girls and young women under the age of eighteen. (METRAC)

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What is sexual violence / assault?



A variety of acts (for example, the use of a weapon, causing bodily harm and making threats) as well as the types of relationships within which sexual contact is or may be a criminal offence (for example, where one person is in a position of authority over the other or where there is a relationship of dependency by one person towards the other).

From Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)

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"I think it makes us feel small,
unworthy, always wondering what
we did wrong..."

- Age 26, Yukon

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What is sexual violence / assault?

- inappropriate touching
- vaginal, anal, or oral penetration
- sexual intercourse that you say no to
- sexual intercourse while you are incapacitated (i.e. not able to make a rational decision - under the influence of drugs or alcohol).
- rape
- attempted rape
- child molestation

(From Women's Health, <http://www.4woman.gov/faq/sexualassault.htm>)

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What do you know about sexual violence / assault?

- neglected issue, taken lightly
- not allowed to talk about
- people taking the side of the offender
- people will say you're lying



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What you know about sexual violence?

- OVERLOOKED AS OFFENCE
- nobody thinks of it as offence
- stays with you for the rest of your life
- personal thing - but affects the society at large
- joking about it is not appropriate



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Sexual violence / assault Warning signs

- unwanted, inappropriate touching
- verbal harassment
- inappropriate jokes, apparently humorous gestures like "slap on the butt", sexual looks and proposals, showing pornography, sexual comments
- someone using his power position over you



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Sexual violence / assault Warning signs



- someone trying to lure you into secluded space
- someone trying to separate you from your friends
- someone encouraging you to drink a lot

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ACTIVITY 2

SCENARIO

DO YOU GET IN THE CAR?

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Scenario

Do you get in the car?

You are with your friend in a bar and you had couple of drinks, but you feel ok. It's time to go home, and as you walk out, your friend wants to take a cab home but at that moment a car pulls over and a guy that you occasionally hanged out with in that bar offers you a lift home. He seems nice enough and you know that you even saw him in your community couple of times. Your friend doesn't want to come and insists on calling a cab.

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Scenario

Do you get in the car?

- ◊ What do you do?
- ◊ Why would you go in a car with him?
- ◊ Why wouldn't you go in a car with him?
- ◊ Would you separate from your friend and go with him?
- ◊ What is the scale of risk here?
- ◊ Do the risks outweigh the benefits here?



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Tips on being safe



- be aware of your surroundings - who's out there and what's going on.
- walk with confidence - the more confident you look, the stronger you appear.
- don't let drugs or alcohol cloud your judgment.
- be assertive - don't let anyone violate your space.
- trust your instincts - if you feel uncomfortable in your surroundings, leave.
- don't prop open self - locking doors.

Source: National Crime Prevention Council

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Tips on being safe

- lock your door and your windows, even if you leave for just a few minutes
- watch your keys. Don't lend them. Don't leave them. Don't lose them. And don't put your name and address on the key ring.
- watch out for unwanted visitors. Know who's on the other side of the door before you open it.
- be wary of isolated spots, like underground garages, offices after business hours, and apartment laundry rooms.

Source: National Crime Prevention Council

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Tips on being safe

- avoid walking or jogging alone, especially at night. Vary your route. Stay in well-traveled, well-lit areas.
- have your key ready to use before you reach the door - home, car, or work.
- park in well-lit areas and lock the car, even if you'll only be gone a few minutes.
- drive on well-traveled streets, with doors and windows locked.
- never hitchhike or pick up a hitchhiker.
- keep your car in good shape with plenty of gas in the tank.

Source: National Crime Prevention Council

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Prevention - practical tips

- carry a whistle
- dress confidently
- learn how to carry a key as a weapon
- avoid the pony tail - men attack women with pony tails as it is easier to grab them
- yell fire if someone attacks you or you see someone's being attacked
- if sitting in your car, undo the seatbelt so you can get away and defend yourself
- if someone attacks you in the car - fasten your seatbelt and crash the car
- learn about numbers to call, options * features on your cell phone



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Prevention



- understand men are physically stronger
- know your strength and weakness
- don't put yourself in vulnerable situations (alone with someone, in closed space, etc)
- follow your intuition: does it feel right, are you uncomfortable
- trust your instincts
- make sure you have control over your environment at all times
- identify who would you turn to if it did happen; who would go to police with you

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Prevention - When you go out

- stick to your plans for the evening out
- take a trusted friend with you
- watch over your friends when you go out
- say no assertively to something you don't agree to or doesn't feel right
- don't leave your friend with someone if it feels wrong
- don't separate from your friends in the bar
- tell someone what you're wearing that night
- plan ahead - what if your friend leaves you, you ran out of gas, money, your cell is out etc
- avoid walking home / to the car alone



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Prevention if you (or your friends) are drinking...

- be aware of effects of drugs or alcohol on you - drink water after some point - make sure how much you can take
- know that if your friend was drinking or doing drugs - she is not in a state to give consent
- beware of rape date drugs
- have a plan - what would you do if you suspect you've been drugged



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Prevention - mental

- learn about safety tips
- learn about body language
- realize your own worth
- think about why do you sometimes do things to get approval of others
- know that it's ok to talk about the pain you're trying to cover with drugs or alcohol
- what kind of void you are trying to fill with drugs and alcohol or excessive partying



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ACTIVITY 3 M&M RECALL TWIST!

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Traditional approach to prevention

- you can get strength from your culture
- identify Elders and persons of trust in your communities - who could you talk to
- talk to your Elder
- identify other Elders you know if you are not comfortable with anyone in your community
- turning to Elders, teachings can be a tool
- learn about Elder's role



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Traditional approach, Elder's advice

- know your area - where your Elders are, cultural centers, and healing places
- look into community resources that offer traditional approach
- if there are no such resources, do something about it, ask why are they are not there, get them started
- seek culturally appropriate approach
- Elders - to talk about respect to youth
- healing circle - grow strength from that



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What youth & communities can do...

- form Aboriginal women support groups
- inform yourself of your legal rights
- make youth aware they have cultural support
- if there are not enough supports in your community - try doing something about it
- educate youth on body language and safe tips
- learn what are the physical barriers to respond to an assault*
- talk about what healthy sexy is
- talk HONESTLY about these issues with girls
- make the society at large realize how big of an issue it is



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What if it happens to me?

- If you're injured, go straight to the emergency room - most medical centers and hospital emergency departments have doctors and counselors who have been trained to take care of someone who has been raped.
- Call or find a friend, family member, or someone you feel safe with and tell them what happened.
- If you want to report the rape, call the police right away. Preserve all the physical evidence. Don't change clothes or wash.
- Write down as much as you can remember about the event.
- If you aren't sure what to do, call a rape crisis center. If you don't know the number, your local phone book will have hotline numbers.

(From TeensHealth, http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/date_rape.html)

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What if it happens to me?

- decide if you want to (can) go to the police
- identify someone for support/identify someone to go with you to the police
- be aware that rape kits are aggressive
- familiarize yourself with the procedure
- ask to know your legal rights
- call help line
- turn to a trusted friend for help
- look into traditional ways of healing
- find healthy ways to let go of your anger



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How to recognize if your friend was a victim of a sexual violence

- physical: bruises, swelling, etc.
- emotional: seclusion, being quiet
- not participating in school activities
- not being him/herself
- sudden change in behavior
- quiet low key behavior
- behavior that shows a "cry for attention"
- person not being comfortable around people of opposite sex
- fear, unhappiness



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How can I help someone who has been sexually assaulted?

You can help someone who is abused or who has been assaulted by listening and offering comfort. Go with her or him to the police, the hospital, or to counseling. Reinforce the message that she or he is not at fault and that it is natural to feel angry and ashamed.



(From, Women's Health, <http://www.4woman.gov/faq/sexualassault.htm>)

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ACTIVITY 4 THE LIST OF 3

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Physical obstacles to responding to sexual assault

- having no place to go
- lack of police station or a hospital in your area
- lack of resources to get to another destination
- lack of transportation to a nearest hospital or police station
- inability to follow advice or suggested steps when you are in a remote community



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Obstacles to responding to these types of violence and telling someone

- family and friends putting you down
- shame
- wanting to keep your privacy
- fear of continued and increased violence
- breaking the ice, initial conversation
- fear of not having support
- unfair justice system for victims
- fear of racial discrimination, stereotyping



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Obstacles to responding to these types of violence and telling someone

- no support in the community
- fear of being judged
- thinking it's your fault and you somehow deserved it
- feeling vulnerable, that you may become a target
- fear that it will affect the way people act around you
- fear that you won't be taken seriously
- feeling stupid for needing and using the resource available



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Obstacles to responding to these types of violence and telling someone



"Because I would feel dumb"
- Age 23, Nova Scotia

"I am only comfortable with people who don't judge only listen"
- Age 15, Nova Scotia

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What to do if you find yourself in any type of violent situation?

- walk away
 - seek help of someone you trust
 - go to elders, adult you can trust
 - call for help, run far away as fast you can to a safe place
 - call your family, friends
 - call or go to police
- “grab friend and fight back and run to the nearest police detachment”
– Age 15, Nova Scotia

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You should know....

- it is not your fault
- you do not deserve it
- there are people out there that can help you out
- it is not normal nor acceptable
- it is not stupid or dumb to seek help and use available resources
- sexual violence can happen anytime
- sexual violence can happen anywhere
- sexual violence can happen to anyone

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CLOSING COMMENTS

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QUESTIONS
&
ANSWERS SESSION

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