

Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence against Women and Girls
Chrysalis House / Juniper House Project

Needs Assessment and Assets Map

Executive Summary

Our goal is to develop and pilot an engagement model that would motivate and mobilize men to work to end violence against women and girls in our communities. Our catchment area covers the six counties of West Hants, Kings, Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth and Shelburne. We conducted a two-phase needs assessment and collected a list of resources that could be brought to bear to fill the needs. The first phase of the needs assessment was a round of community consultations to get input re perceived needs and preferred focus. The second phase was to assess the community readiness to implement a project with the chosen focus.

Phase 1 – Initial Consultations

A combination of data-gathering through focus groups, meetings, trainings, questionnaires and interviews brought in perspectives from approximately 250 local stakeholders, including representatives from the following organizations:

Tri-County Women’s Centre, A Woman’s Place, Chrysalis House and Juniper House women’s transition houses, Harbour House, Gather the Men (men’s group), RCMP community policing, town police, The Portal youth centre, Nova Scotia Youth Facility for sentenced and remanded young persons, SchoolsPlus (Acadian and English), school administrators, town recreation departments, Valley Community Learning Association, Survivors of Abuse Recovering, Acadia Student Union, Acadia University, Nova Scotia Community College (Kingstec and Burrigge campuses) – faculty, staff and students, Knights of Columbus, Family Matters Family Resource Centre, Apple Tree Landing Family Resource Centre, Community Services, Mental Health and Addictions, private therapists, Seniors Safety Officer, Orchard Valley United Church, South Range Christian Church, Kings County councilor, CareForce Home Care, volunteers.

Based on the initial round of responses, we identified a strong concern to put resources into developing a sustainable youth mentorship model, where “youth” meant teen to mid-twenties. Three key areas were identified where skills and resources needed to be developed:

1. Youth Engagement
 - a. It was stressed that this needs to involve youth in planning, training and implementation, with adult trainers and mentors providing continuity as students moved though and out of school.
 - b. Inclusive of those not involved in the educational system
2. Training in Gender Based Analysis and Gender Aware Facilitation
 - a. There was sense of unreadiness from many to engage men in issues of violence against women due to a lack of experience or training in such work.
 - b. Need for tools and practice to develop skills and confidence to create environments where men and women can work together to end violence.
3. Communication
 - a. The catchment area for the project covers six counties and there may be dozens of partners working on various aspects of the project. There is need for a communication

mechanism to coordinate the activities, facilitate decision-making, project development and delivery.

- b. A need for a cost-effective way to promote the project through web sites and social media

Phase 2 -Community Readiness Assessment

Having established the need for an engagement model involving youth mentorship, the next step was to assess the readiness of the community to implement it. We used the Tri-Ethnic Center's process that assesses community readiness for change (see Appendix 1) on nine levels over five key dimensions. This assessment enables the development of an intervention appropriate to the community needs at the time, designed to help move it upward to greater readiness to implement change. After questioning several key informants and coding the responses, we determined that the community was at Stage 4: "Pre-planning". At this stage community members acknowledge that this issue is a concern, but have limited awareness of what resources are available or how to address the issue. This indicates a need to inventory and publicize local and other available resources, and to provide training and tools to those who are ready to do the work. The readiness assessment will be ongoing to monitor community development and assess readiness of new partners as they join in the work.

Detailed Description of the Assessment

Phase 1 - Regional Consultations

We conducted regional consultations through focus groups and "piggy-backed" on similar groups being run by Tri-County Women's Centre. This enabled us to get feedback from a broad range of people concerned with violence against women, including those from social service agencies, youth justice system, community policing, youth workers, volunteers, mental health professionals, etc. Groups were held in Shelburne (Yarmouth County, 40 people), two in Digby (Digby County, total of 66 people), and Kentville (Kings County, 17 people). We also met with organizations such as Transition House Association of Nova Scotia (10 people), Canadian Federation of University Women (15 people) and three SchoolsPlus groups, including the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) French-language one that covers Clare, Argyle and Greenwood, one in Annapolis County and one in Digby County. (Total of 30 people in the SchoolsPlus meetings.) "SchoolsPlus is part of Nova Scotia's child and youth strategy, *Our Kids Are Worth It*. ... The vision for SchoolsPlus is that schools become a convenient place for government and other services to be delivered to families." (<https://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca/>)

Methodology

After giving a brief overview of the project, participants in the consultations broke into small groups to consider these questions:

- *What are the needs from your perspective in your community re ending violence against women and girls?*
- *What resources do you bring or are you aware of that could help coordinate this project?*
- *What is missing that needs to be put in place?*

The groups then reported back and there was general discussion of needs, resources and gaps.

- *From what you have heard or from your own experience, what would you suggest as an effective way of engaging men and boys in ending violence against women and girls?*

Response

There was a clear consensus on the need for work on this issue, in particular to coordinate activities so that the right combination of expertise could be assembled for any given task, and that we do not duplicate efforts unnecessarily. For example, an organization in Digby was delivering a module to the high school on understanding consent. This expertise could be cloned and the programme delivered elsewhere in the region without having to reinvent the wheel.

The need for Internet-based communication and collaboration tools was expressed, given the broad area covering six counties.

The emergence of a consensus to develop a youth mentorship model. While various creative ideas were raised in the different meetings, there was one common theme that emerged consistently, perhaps best expressed by one participant's comment, "If you are not working with youth, you are wasting your time!" As this was discussed further, a strong suggestion was to do this via a sustainable mentorship model that would involve youth in dynamic activities, rather than having them be "talked at".

Challenges with sustainability. The issue was raised that the challenge of doing peer or near-peer mentoring in a school environment is of course that the trained peers graduate and move on very rapidly, so to be sustainable there needs to be buy in from adult leaders who would run the training on an annual basis, replenishing the supply of peers. Although the trained peers would leave the school each year as they got older, this would also be "seeding" the community with youth who have been sensitized to gender violence issues, and would hopefully take that understanding and commitment out into the wider community.

Active engagement and media competence. There was an expressed need to develop activities beyond talking or writing, especially when engaging youth. There was a call for opportunities to address these issues with creative modalities such as video, physical activities, games, the arts, etc. More presence in social media.

In the first four groups, participants filled out the Gender-Equitable Men Scale and a Rape Myth Acceptance Scale to give a baseline of attitudes in the community, and to stimulate discussion. We found this to be too time consuming and so discontinued this for later groups.

Need for Training

We also had group participants respond to the need for gender-aware facilitation training:

- *What experience do you have with all male or mixed gender groups?*
- *What has worked well for you in these groups?*
- *What would be useful to you in a training session for facilitators re gender-aware facilitation of all-male or mixed-gender groups?*

There was a lot of concern expressed about a lack of familiarity in working effectively with groups of men, or working safely and productively with mixed gender groups. We were surprised when over 80% of participants in the focus group expressed a desire to take the training. Discussion also surrounded the need to go beyond gender-aware to gender-transformative training such that the processes used would challenge and change ingrained patterns of behaviour and enable leaders to create environments that encouraged rethinking of conditioned gendered behaviours.

The two trainings that we consequently led (total 48 participants) also provided input into our assessment of needs, particularly from the evaluation of the training. It was clear that this was for some a watershed experience, building confidence to create mixed-gender transformative dialogues in their communities and workplaces, and giving them insight into their own processes. They stated a clear need for further training across a wider geographic area.

Phase 2 - Community Readiness Assessment

Model

Once we were clear that the community was asking us for a youth mentorship model, a second aspect of the needs assessment was to conduct a Community Readiness Assessment (see http://triethniccenter.colostate.edu/docs/CR_Handbook_2014.pdf for detailed information.) to get a sense of how ready the community was to embrace this idea. This model describes nine levels of community readiness for change (see Appendix 1) over five key dimensions:

- Community Knowledge of the Issue
- Community Knowledge of Efforts
- Community Climate
- Leadership
- Resources

Why this works

This accomplishes several goals. Firstly, we get a sense of how prepared the community is to engage youth in these issues, which guides the type of intervention that we choose to implement. Secondly, it identifies key leaders and organizations that are most ready to work with us, and also where we may have our most challenges. Thirdly, it creates a baseline that we can use in our evaluation process to demonstrate the impact of our interventions on community readiness a year from now. And lastly, it creates an opportunity to dialogue with a wide range of community influencers.

Methodology

We identified key informants in the community, including a student, youth worker, transition house workers, school administrators and social worker and assessed the responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix 2 for our revised questionnaire.) We will continue to receive responses to the questionnaire as we add partners and will continue to monitor the level of readiness as the project unfolds. Two people rated the responses according the Tri-Ethnic Center guidelines and results from both were consistent.

Results:

The community was rated at a Level 4 readiness:

Stage 4: Preplanning: "This is important. What can we do?" (Tri-Ethnic Center, 2014)

- **Some** community members have at least heard about local efforts, but **know little about them**.
- Leadership and community members **acknowledge that this issue is a concern** in the community and that something has to be done to address it.
- Community members have **limited knowledge** about the issue.
- There are **limited resources** that could be used for further efforts to address the issue.

While this was an average score it is of interest to look at some of the divergent responses. Those who were engaged in frontline work in these issues (for example transition house workers), or who were studying the issues (for example a community college student studying human resources), had a higher rating for the resources that may be available and the readiness of leaders to take action than did those working in the school system. This gap indicates a clear need to provide a database of available resources that schools and other organizations can draw on.

Implications

Overall, the readiness assessment indicates a willingness on the part of the community to move forward on the issue, but a great need for leadership, resources and training from those with expertise and experience in the area. As this is coupled with an expressed readiness (approaching Stage 5) on the part of those with the resources, this is a good match of needs and assets. The SchoolsPlus format will provide an ideal conduit for this work as it combines the resource providers in each region with the staff and administration of the schools.

Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence against Women and Girls

Local Assets Map



Community Assets

As we consulted with the community we also compiled an overview of assets that could be brought to bear to implement the project. This is especially salient as the needs assessment indicated a lack of awareness of sufficient resource.

The map on the previous page illustrates the main resource elements that we can draw on over the next year as we roll out the engagement model. The main categories are described below.

Women's Organizations

A Woman's Place, Tri-County Women's Centre, Be the Peace, Women's Institute of Nova Scotia, Juniper House, Chrysalis House

There are very specific local resources on addressing violence and engaging youth developed by the Tri-County Women's Resource Centre:

- Collaborative Model of Practice to Respond to Sexual Violence & Bullying in the Tri Counties
<http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/sexual-assault-awareness.html>
- Youth Truth Matters (YTM) Project
<http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/youth-truth-matters.html>
- Addressing Sexual Violence Prevention through Civic Engagement and Resource Development
<http://www.tricountywomenscentre.org/sexual-violence-project.html> (English et français)

Youth Engagement

There are school-based, community-based and church-based youth groups as well as organizations that serve youth at risk such as The Portal, Split Rock, the Red Door, etc.

Justice

RCMP Community Policing officers who deliver programme in the schools (e.g. DARE, etc.) have expressed willingness to deliver gender-based anti-violence programming in collaboration with us. They also bring expertise in addressing domestic and family violence issues.

Youth workers from the Nova Scotia Youth Facility are interested in working with us to develop program to deliver to sentenced and remanded young persons.

Education

The SchoolsPlus model of service delivery to youth at the school site has created a powerful coalescing of organizations that serve youth and a mechanism to gain access to the school environment. Three SchoolsPlus organizations (Digby, Annapolis and Clare-Argyle-Greenwood CSAP) have expressed a desire to partner with us to deliver gender-based anti-violence programming into the schools.

The Acadia University Equity Officer and the Acadia Student Union Equity Officer and President have expressed interest in participating in a mentorship program. The School of Recreation

Management and Kinesiology may be able to provide input into training coaches and other sports leaders to work with their teams on gender violence issues.

The Nova Scotia Community College (Kingstec and Burrige campuses) have expressed interest in involvement in workshops on addressing gender-based violence. The Human Resources programs have the capacity to provide interns to work with us.

Religious Institutions

We have had expression of interest from two churches who would like to partner with us to create programme for church youth groups and church summer camps. The availability of newly appointed youth ministers to collaborate with us is a great asset. In addition, the Wolfville Area Interchurch Council is in the process of setting up a standing Youth Project committee that will enable coordination of programme across several religious organizations.

Health

We have partnerships with Annapolis Valley Health (AVH) – Mental Health and Addiction Services and with the Red Door youth clinic. AVH has offered expertise for GBA training and experience working with youth. The Red Door has a pulse on youth issues in Kings County.

Recreation

There are a number of school sports and summer sports programs that give an entry point to work with youth through their coaches. Town recreation staff are also already working with schools through SchoolsPlus.

Community Organizations and Not-for-Profits

There is a wide range of volunteer and professionally staffed organizations in the region that have expertise and experience. Valley Community Learning Association has offered to assist us with creating documents and PR at an appropriate literacy level. Survivors of Abuse Recovering has 20 years of experience in the community supporting abuse survivors. PeopleWorx can offer training and interns. Local service clubs such as Knights of Columbus have been active in speaking out and educating the community about gender-based violence issues. Local men's groups are willing to work with us.

Creative Media and the Arts

There is a wealth of creative expertise in the region. Of particular interest are a graphic artist, Mark Oakley who creates graphic novels and is very popular with teens, and videographer Kimberly Smith who creates community video in collaboration with local residents and has experience working with youth.

Appendix 1 - Stages of Community Readiness (Tri-Ethnic Center, 2014)

Stage 1: No Awareness

- Community has **no knowledge** about local efforts addressing the issue.
- Leadership believes that the issue **is not really much of** a concern.
- The community believes that the **issue is not a concern**.
- Community members have **no knowledge** about the issue.
- There are **no resources** available for dealing with the issue.

“Kids drink and get drunk.”

Stage 2: Denial/Resistance

- Leadership and community members believe that this issue **is not** a concern in their community or they think it **can’t or shouldn’t be addressed**.
- Community members have misconceptions or **incorrect knowledge** about current efforts.
- **Only a few** community members have **knowledge** about the issue, and there may be many misconceptions among community members about the issue.
- Community members and/or leaders **do not support using available resources** to address this issue.

“We can’t (or shouldn’t) do anything about it!”

Stage 3: Vague Awareness

- **A few** community members have at least heard about local efforts, but **know little about them**.
- Leadership and community members **believe that this issue may be a concern in the community**. They show no immediate motivation to act.
- Community members have only **vague knowledge** about the issue (e.g. they have some awareness that the issue can be problem and why it may occur).
- There are **limited resources** (such as a community room) identified that could be used for further efforts to address the issue.

“Something should probably be done, but what? Maybe someone else will work on this.”

Stage 4: Preplanning

- **Some** community members have at least heard about local efforts, but **know little about them**.
- Leadership and community members **acknowledge that this issue is a concern** in the community and that something has to be done to address it.
- Community members have **limited knowledge** about the issue.
- There are **limited resources** that could be used for further efforts to address the issue.

“This is important. What can we do?”

Stage 5: Preparation

- **Most** community members have at least heard about local efforts.
- Leadership is **actively supportive of continuing or improving current efforts** or in developing new efforts
- The attitude in the community is —**We are concerned** about this and **we want to do** something about it||.
- Community members have **basic knowledge** about causes, consequences, signs and symptoms.

- There are **some resources** identified that could be used for further efforts to address the issue; community members or leaders are actively working to secure these resources.

“I will meet with our funder tomorrow.”

Stage 6: Initiation

- **Most** community members have at least **basic** knowledge of local efforts.
- Leadership **plays a key role** in planning, developing and/or implementing new, modified, or increased efforts.
- The attitude in the community is —**This is our responsibility**||, and some community members are involved in addressing the issue.
- Community members have **basic knowledge** about the issue and are **aware that the issue occurs locally**.
- **Resources have been obtained** and/or allocated to support further efforts to address this issue.

“This is our responsibility; we are now beginning to do something to address this issue.”

Stage 7: Stabilization

- **Most** community members have **more than basic knowledge** of local efforts, including names and purposes of specific efforts, target audiences, and other specific information.
- Leadership is **actively involved in ensuring or improving the long-term viability** of the efforts to address this issue.
- The attitude in the community is —**We have taken** responsibility||. There is **ongoing** community involvement in addressing the issue.
- Community members have **more than basic knowledge** about the issue.
- A considerable part of allocated resources for efforts are from sources that are expected to provide **continuous support**.

“We have taken responsibility”

Stage 8: Confirmation/Expansion

- **Most** community members have **considerable** knowledge of local efforts, including the level of program effectiveness.
- Leadership **plays a key role in expanding and improving efforts**.
- The majority of the community **strongly** supports efforts or the need for efforts. Participation level is high.
- Community members have **more than basic** knowledge about the issue and have **significant** knowledge about **local prevalence** and local consequences.
- A considerable part of allocated resources are expected to provide **continuous support**. Community members are looking into **additional** support to implement new efforts.

“How well are our current programs working and how can we make them better?”

Stage 9: High Level of Community Ownership

- **Most** community members have **considerable and detailed** knowledge of local efforts,
- Leadership is **continually reviewing evaluation** results of the efforts and is modifying financial support accordingly.
- **Most** major segments of the community are highly supportive and actively involved.
- Community members have **detailed** knowledge about the issue and have **significant** knowledge about **local prevalence** and local consequences.
- Diversified resources and funds are secured, and efforts are expected to be ongoing.

“These efforts are an important part of the fabric of our community.”

Appendix 2 – Community Readiness Questionnaire

Engaging Men & Boys: Community Readiness Assessment Introductory Notes for Key Informant Interview Questionnaires

Juniper House and Chrysalis House have received funding from Status of Women Canada to pilot a model of engaging men and boys in ending violence against women and girls. Using information gleaned from focus groups, individual and community feedback and review of existing literature, we have narrowed our focus to a youth mentorship model that involves those from junior high to age 25.

We have identified you as one of the leaders and experts in working with youth, with youth mentorship or with engaging men in anti-violence work. We ask your help in completing our next step.

We need to assess the level of readiness of the community to engage men and boys in ending violence against women and girls. We have chosen the empirically tested Community Readiness Model developed by the Tri-Ethnic Centre at the University of Colorado.

Would you be willing to complete a key informant interview questionnaire as part of this process? This will take approximately one hour of your time. This is a crucial part of our process – we will use this information to assess the appropriate type of mentorship intervention needed for your community. We will contact you after we have evaluated the responses to all the interview questionnaires to discuss next steps for the project. We are hopeful that you will continue to work with us to develop and implement an innovative youth mentorship model that will see increased engagement of men and boys in ending violence against women and girls.

[Where questions refer to “community” we are looking at the organization you are involved with and the youth that they serve. We are looking for your perspective based on your role and experience in this community.]

It is important to note that this is not an anonymous or confidential survey. The questions are not about you as an individual but about your community, and the system or organization in which you work.

It at all possible, we would like your response within a week. The interview questionnaire is appended, and below you can find contact information for steering committee members who would be available to answer questions you may have about the interview questionnaire.

Bruce Dienes

Project Coordinator

Engaging Men and Boys in Ending Violence against Women and Girls

bruce.dienes@engagingmenandboys.ca

Community Readiness Assessment Interview Questions

Mentoring Young Men and Boys to End Violence against Women and Girls.

Please fill this out in Word, then save the document and email it when finished to bruce.dienes@engagingmenandboys.ca

In the questionnaire below, you can add more lines for answers as needed.

Note: This is not an anonymous or confidential survey. The questions are not about you as an individual but about your community, and the system or organization in which you work.

If for some reason you do not have time to complete the entire questionnaire, please be sure to at least complete all the **bolded questions**, or we will not be able to score it. Thanks!

Your Name: _____

Best way to contact you: _____

Your Geographic Community (town): _____

Your Organization: _____
(e.g. school, government service, not-for-profit organization, business, etc.)

Your role in the Organization: _____
(e.g. teacher, administrator, student, parent, front-line worker, health care professional, counsellor, recreation leader, social worker, psychologist, coach, police officer, youth worker, volunteer, etc.)

Optional: Age: _____ Gender: _____

Note: Where questions refer to “community” we are looking at the Schools Plus community of organizations and the schools they serve. We are looking for your perspective based on your role and experience in this community.

We do not need lengthy responses – brief comments are fine.

If you have questions about this questionnaire, feel free to contact:
Bruce Dienes bruce.dienes@engagingmenandboys.ca (902) 678-6390
Rhonda Fraser chrysalis@ns.sympatico.ca (902) 679-6544

**Section 1: COMMUNITY EFFORTS (programs, activities, policies, etc.)
and COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE OF THESE EFFORTS.**

1. How much of a concern is mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls in your community?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 a very great concern

Please explain.

2. Please describe any efforts that are currently available in your community that could be drawn upon to address mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls. (e.g. other anti-violence programs, other mentoring programs with a different focus, etc.)

3. What does the community know about these efforts or activities?

4. What are the strengths of these efforts?

5. What are the weaknesses of these efforts?

6. Who do these programs serve? (For example, individuals of a certain age group, ethnicity, etc.)

7. Is there currently any planning to implement services in your community to support mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls? If yes, please explain.

Section 2. LEADERSHIP

8. Who are the "leaders" (shakers and movers, either formal or informal) specific to mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls in your community? Indicate whether they are currently doing this work, or that you think they would be excellent in recruiting to do this work. (Please give contact info if possible.)

9. How much of a concern is mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work to the leadership in your community?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 a very great concern

Please explain.

10. How are these leaders involved in efforts regarding this issue? Please explain. (For example: Are they involved in a committee, task force, etc.? Are they delivering programmes? How often do they meet?)

11. Would the leadership support additional efforts to create new programs and services that support a mentoring model? Please explain.

Section 3. COMMUNITY CLIMATE

12. Briefly describe your geographic community and your organization.

13. Are there any circumstances in which members of your community might think that mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls would not be appropriate? Please explain.

14. How does the community support the efforts to address mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls?

15. What are, or would be, the primary obstacles to efforts addressing mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls in your community?

16. Based on the answers that you have provided so far, what do you think is the overall feeling among community members regarding mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work?

Section 4. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ISSUE

17. How knowledgeable are community members about mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls? Please explain.

18. What type of information is available in your community regarding mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls?

19. What local data (records, documentation, reports, etc.) are available on mentoring young men and boys in ending violence against women and girls in your community?

20. How do people obtain this information in your community?

Section 5. RESOURCES FOR PREVENTION EFFORTS (time, money, people, space, etc.)

21. To whom would a young male who wanted to work to end violence against women and girls turn to first for help getting involved in your community? Why?

22. What expertise and training is there among those working on mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work? very low 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 very high

Please explain.

23. What is the community's and/or local business' attitude about supporting efforts to enable mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work? (e.g. people volunteering time, making financial donations, and/or providing space, etc.)

24. Are you aware of any other proposals or action plans that have been submitted for funding that address mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work in your community? If yes, please explain.

25. Do you know if there is any formal evaluation process of efforts that are in place to address this issue? If yes, how sophisticated is the evaluation effort?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 very sophisticated

26. If there has been formal evaluation, how are the evaluation results being used? (e.g. To start new programs, activities or policies? To make changes in existing ones?)

27. To whom else should we be asking these questions in order to get a more complete sense of community readiness for mentoring young men and boys in anti-violence work? (Please give names and contact info.)