

Strengthening Families in Canada

*Immigrant Men's Needs Assessment on Family
Violence Prevention Education*



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Winnipeg, Manitoba

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was established as a primary domestic violence prevention education and research initiative. This project was sponsored by a partnership of 4 community based agencies and consisted of 3 streams of activity: the *Immigrant Women's Action Against Violence* prevention education program, the *Spanish Speaking Youth Action Against Violence* prevention education program and the *Immigrant Men's Research Project* on family violence prevention education.

The goal of the *Immigrant Men's Research Project* component of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was to develop an understanding of how family violence is perceived by immigrant and refugee men in the community and to determine the best way to deliver culturally appropriate community education and public awareness on the issue of family violence for immigrant and refugee men. The needs assessment consisted of two streams of activity:

- A literature and program review
- A series of focus groups with immigrant and refugee men

Literature and Program Review – Key Findings

The literature and program review included a search for articles, reports, program descriptions and program evaluations in the area of primary violence prevention initiatives and consultations with service providers in Winnipeg and other jurisdictions. Key findings of the literature and program review are as follows:

- Domestic violence is a worldwide problem that occurs across all cultures and socio-economic groups.
- There is a lack of conclusive quantitative data on the prevalence of domestic violence in immigrant and refugee communities in Canada.
- The experience of immigrant women in a domestic violence situation is compounded by language barriers, isolation, changes in economic status, tenuous immigration status, distrust of the legal system and misconceptions of the Canadian context.
- Societal responses to domestic violence have focused primarily on support programs for women, legal and judicial interventions and batterer intervention programs.
- There is growing emphasis on the need to invest more resources in domestic violence primary prevention programs.
- The increasingly complex and diverse demographic profile of Canadian society is resulting in a need to provide culturally competent programs that address the needs of immigrant and refugee communities.
- There is an emerging recognition of the need to provide domestic violence education for men and the positive role they can play as allies and advocates.

Immigrant Men's Focus Groups – Key Findings

The level of interest and participation in the focus groups surpassed the expectations of project partners and the members of the research team. Sixty-five immigrant and refugee men from diverse backgrounds participated in focus groups and interviews on domestic violence prevention. The focus groups generated animated discussion and provided useful insights. The main findings from these consultations are as follows:

- A participatory research approach which included the involvement of immigrant men in the research design, participant recruitment and the analysis of results was integral to the success of the research project.
- Intergenerational conflict, the discipline of children, and adaptation to shifting gender roles were strongly recurring themes.
- Participants identified a broad range of actions they would consider to be domestic violence. They provided examples of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
- Participants identified economic stress, cultural adaptation, addictions, miscommunication, the lack of information and expanded rights and freedoms as causes of domestic violence.
- There was general consensus that physical violence between spouses was not acceptable. Participants expressed differing views on the acceptability of physical discipline of children.
- Participants identified both physical and psychological impacts of domestic abuse. Family disintegration was identified as a critical concern.
- There was strong support for providing immigrant and refugee men with more information and education on domestic violence prevention. Dominant themes were issues of cultural adaptation, the need to gain a better understanding of the law and the importance of providing information to newcomers.
- Participants expressed a concern that a program directed at immigrant men alone would stigmatize immigrant men. There was strong support for a joint program that included women and youth.

Key Recommendations

Project partners should work in collaboration with community groups to develop domestic violence prevention programming that addresses the needs of immigrant and refugee men. The following recommendations are based on the program and literature review as well as individual interviews and focus group consultations.

1. Project partners should develop and implement a *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series that provides family violence prevention education for immigrant men. This workshop series should be designed to include immigrant and refugee men, women and youth from a variety of ethno-cultural backgrounds. The workshops should be offered as separate parallel streams for women, youth, and men with joint sessions for all 3 groups at the end of the series.

2. The *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should adopt a holistic approach to family violence prevention. The workshops should include topics that are related to family violence prevention with a strong focus on family issues. In addition to partner violence, the workshops should address the issue of child abuse, the discipline of children and intergenerational conflict.
3. Immigrant and refugee community members (including men) should play an integral role in program development, recruitment and delivery for the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series.
4. Project partners should offer components of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series as stand alone sessions for community groups and agencies.
5. Project partners should develop a *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program. The training should focus on providing immigrants and refugees with enhanced knowledge of the content included in the workshop series as well as training in the areas of program development, workshop design and public speaking/facilitation skills.
6. Project partners should utilize a community development approach which builds on community assets, provides economic opportunities and strengthens capacity within immigrant and refugee communities.
7. Project partners should encourage and support the development of community based violence prevention initiatives led by ethno-cultural community groups.
8. Project partners should continue to support the development of new partnerships and expanded networks in the area of domestic violence prevention.
9. Project partners should advocate for long term core funding to support new and existing primary family violence prevention initiatives.
10. Project partners should take steps to ensure that the dissemination of research findings and the development of new programs do not reinforce negative stereotypes about immigrant and refugee men or ethno-cultural communities.
11. Project partners should ensure that new initiatives include the resources required to rigorously document and evaluate the program offerings.

PROJECT BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project emerged from the *Women's Action Against Violence (WAAV)* training program. WAAV is a partner violence prevention education program for women from a variety of ethno-cultural backgrounds. This joint training program was launched in 1999 by the Immigrant Women's Counselling Services (IWCS) and the Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC) in Winnipeg. The evaluation of the WAAV program demonstrated the success of this approach and identified additional needs (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2004a). A key recommendation put forward by program participants was to develop domestic violence prevention programming for immigrant and refugee men.

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was sponsored by a partnership of community based agencies and funded by the Community Mobilization Program, National Crime Prevention Strategy. These agencies included IWCS/Nor-West Co-op Community Health Centre, Cross Cultural Counselling Program/Mount Carmel Clinic, Teen Talk/Klinik and SERC. The *Immigrant Men's Research Project* on family violence prevention education was one component of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project. In addition to the needs assessment, the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project included two other components: the *Immigrant Women's Action Against Violence* prevention education program and the *Spanish Speaking Youth Action Against Violence* prevention education program. The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was supported by a Project Advisory Group consisting of partner agencies and community members. The research for the needs assessment was guided by a Research Advisory Committee which included representatives from partner agencies and a member of the academic community.

The goal of the *Immigrant Men's Research Project* component was to develop an understanding of how family violence is perceived by immigrant and refugee men in the community and to determine the best way to deliver culturally appropriate community education/public awareness on the issue of family violence for immigrant and refugee men. The needs assessment consisted of two streams of activity:

- A literature and program review
- A series of focus groups with immigrant and refugee men

The literature and program review included a search for articles, reports, program descriptions and program evaluations in the area of primary violence prevention initiatives for men as well as a focus group with service providers in Winnipeg. The research focused on immigrant and refugee communities in Western industrialized countries. Program information was obtained through key informants and the internet. Interviews were conducted with program staff members working on primary prevention programs focusing on immigrants, refugees and men.¹ Program staff members were asked to identify other relevant programs and resources that could be included in the research. Seven interviews were conducted with local service providers and 3 interviews were conducted with external agencies.² Information from local service providers was also obtained through a focus group. Immigrant serving organizations and agencies providing domestic violence related services

¹ See Appendix A for the interview questions

² See Appendix B for a list of organizations interviewed

were invited to participate in the focus group.³ Eleven representatives from 10 local organizations attended the focus group.⁴

The focus groups with immigrant and refugee men were organized and conducted using a participatory research approach. The research was conducted by a mixed-gender research team. The team consisted of 7 Community Based Researchers (CBRs), a Research Co-ordinator and 2 SERC staff members. The SERC staff and the Research Co-ordinators were women and the CBRs were all immigrant men. Nine of the 10 research team members came to Canada as immigrants and one was a second generation Canadian.

The CBRs were identified and selected by consulting with project partners, the Research Advisory Committee, the Project Advisory Group, and immigrant serving agencies. The goal was to select CBRs with knowledge of ethno-cultural communities in Winnipeg and strong networks within these communities. CBRs were responsible for providing input on the focus group format, organizing a focus group, developing an outreach strategy, recruiting participants, documenting focus group proceedings, co-facilitating a focus group and assisting with the analysis of the research results.

In general each focus group was co-facilitated by the Research Co-ordinator and the CBR who organized the focus group. The Research Co-ordinator and the CBR met prior to each focus group to review the format and divide roles and responsibilities. The SERC staff members provided input into the research processes, supported the organization of the focus groups, provided an overview of the research to focus group participants, assisted with note taking and assisted with the analysis of the research results.

The goal was to organize focus groups of 6 to 12 immigrant and refugee men representing a broad range of ethno-cultural communities, and age groups. Attempts were also made to include men who had been in Canada for various lengths of times. Initially focus groups were designed as 2 hour sessions. After the 'test' focus group was conducted, the format was refined to include fewer questions and the length of time was extended to 2 and a ½ hours.⁵ A total of 7 focus groups and 3 sets of interviews were conducted. Participants in the interviews and focus groups were provided with an honorarium of \$25.

Focus group proceedings were documented by the co-facilitators who noted comments on flip chart in point form. There were also two note takers who took more detailed notes and the proceedings were also recorded on audio tape. The informed consent form that participants signed prior to the session provided an overview of the documentation process. The documentation process was also reviewed verbally with focus group participants at the beginning of each session.

All the notes were submitted to the Research Co-ordinator who compiled the results. The members of the research team were invited to participate in a final session to analyze the results and to summarize the key findings from the focus groups. Input from this session formed the basis for the focus group report. Members of the research team and the Research Advisory Committee received a copy of the draft focus group report and were invited to provide further input and feedback before the needs assessment was finalized.

³ See Appendix C for the service provider's focus group format.

⁴ See Appendix D for a list of the agencies represented.

⁵ See Appendix E for the final focus group format.

LITERATURE & PROGRAM REVIEW

Prevalence of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a critical issue that impacts women throughout the world. A report titled *Assessing Violence Against Women* provides an overview of the results of national surveys which included questions on violence against women (Federal/Provincial Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, 2002). In a 1993 survey of 12,300 Canadian women, 25% reported that they had been physically assaulted by a marital or common law partner during their lifetime. This survey also found that 12% of women indicated that they had been assaulted by a domestic partner within the previous five years. A 1999 survey of 14,269 Canadian women found that 8% of women reported having been assaulted by a domestic partner within the previous five years.⁶ The *Assessing Violence Against Women* report concludes that violence against women represents a serious threat to women's health and highlights the detrimental social and economic consequences of violence against women for society (Federal/Provincial Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, 2002). These findings are consistent with a UNICEF report that examined global violence against women (Kapoor, 2000). Statistics compiled from various industrialized countries ranged from 20% to 60% of women surveyed reporting that they had been physically abused by a partner.

Research studies confirm that domestic violence occurs across all cultures and socio-economic groups. Menjívar and Salcido (2002) observe that the links between immigration and domestic violence are beginning to emerge in this relatively new area of research.⁷ They acknowledge that a number of studies reported very high rates of domestic violence in some immigrant communities. However, based on their review of the research, they concluded that the incidence of domestic violence is not higher in immigrant populations when compared to the general population. The 1999 national survey did not find higher rates of domestic violence among immigrant women when compared to the Canadian average. However, the survey was conducted only in English and French. It is recognized that because of language barriers this study lacks sufficient data on the experiences of immigrant and refugee women (Federal/Provincial Territorial Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women, 2002). An analysis of the data from the 1999 national survey by Brownridge and Halli (2002) suggested that immigrant women from developing countries had a higher prevalence of violence when compared with immigrant women from developed countries and Canadian born women. There is general agreement in the literature that the experience of immigrant women in domestic violence situations is compounded by a number of factors that relate to their position as immigrants. These factors include language barriers, isolation from family and community, changes in economic status, tenuous immigration status, distrust of the legal system and misconceptions about the Canadian context (Avilés & Bailey, 2003; Côté, Kérisit & Côté, 2001; Menjívar & Salcido, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Smith, 2004).

⁶ Both surveys were conducted by Statistics Canada. The 1993 survey was a Violence Against Women Survey focusing on single acts of violence against women. The 1999 survey was a General Social Survey focusing on multi-faceted crime victimization. The authors of the *Assessing Violence Against Women* report note that due to methodological differences between the 1993 and 1999 surveys, comparisons between the data produced by the two surveys should be made with caution.

⁷ Because these surveys were only conducted in English and French, the data does not fully reflect the experience of linguistic minorities, recent immigrants or refugees.

Strategies to Address Domestic Violence

The recognition of domestic violence as a serious social issue is a relatively recent phenomenon in North America. During the 1970s the feminist movement was at the forefront of raising public awareness about domestic violence and advocating for responses to address the issue. Myers (1995) identifies the following strategies that have been utilized to address domestic violence:

- Domestic violence support programs for women who have experienced abuse such as the establishment of shelters, transitional housing and resource centres
- Legal and judicial interventions directed at the batterers
- Batterer intervention programs for men to foster non-violent alternative behaviour
- Primary prevention programs that aim to prevent incidents of domestic violence from occurring in the first place.

The following sections provide an overview of these approaches.

Domestic Violence Support Programs for Women

The two women's shelters in Winnipeg, Osborne House and Ikwe-Widdjitiwin, provide emergency accommodation as well as individual counselling and support groups to women who have been affected by domestic violence. The Salvation Army Booth Centre also offers emergency accommodation for women in crisis. Alpha House, Women in Second Stage Housing (W.I.S.H.), the Native Women's Transition Centre and L'Entre-temps des Franco-Manitobaines provide long-term housing services for women leaving abusive relationships. Additional supports available to women in these second-stage housing programs include individual and group counselling as well as parenting support. The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, Pluri-elles Manitoba and the North End Women's Centre provide individual counselling, support groups, educational programs, and community development activities for women affected by domestic violence. Other support programs for women include the Immigrant Women's Counselling Services, the Evolve Program at the Klinik Community Health Centre and the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Family Violence Counselling Program. These programs offer individualized counselling, support groups and public education services. A Woman's Place is a multidisciplinary clinic that provides advocacy, referral and legal services to women leaving abusive relationships.⁸

Legal and Judicial Interventions

Manitoba has joined many other jurisdictions in North America by adopting a zero tolerance or pro-arrest policy towards domestic violence. This policy limits the discretion of the police and the victim by placing an obligation on the police to lay charges in domestic abuse cases if they have evidence to support the charges. The Victim Services Domestic Violence Unit⁹ provides services to women who have experienced domestic violence. The program was established to provide

⁸ NorWest Co-op Community Health Centre, Legal Aid Manitoba, Manitoba Justice and Manitoba Family Services and Housing worked in collaboration to create this service.

⁹ Formerly called the Women's Advocacy Program

information and support to women after charges have been laid against their partners. Early research suggested that arrest was an effective deterrent (Sherman & Berk as cited in Myers, 1995) when compared to mediation or separation for the night. However subsequent studies concluded that arrest was no more effective than a temporary protective order (Berk as cited in Myers 1995). Other provisions available to women experiencing domestic violence include Protection Orders, Prevention Orders, and Peace Bonds which can prohibit an alleged abuser from having direct contact with the victim.

Batterer Intervention Programs

Zero tolerance policies resulted in an increasing numbers of arrests and convictions of batterers during the 1980s (Jackson et al., 2003). Some of the victims objected to the arrests stating that they wanted the violence to stop but did not want their partners to be incarcerated. Batterer intervention programs emerged as a response to these requests and the desire to establish more effective methods to prevent domestic violence. Intervention program for batterers were established to provide treatment to men who had been arrested for domestic violence or men who would be arrested if their behaviour became known to law enforcement authorities. Many of the men who participate in batterer intervention programs are mandated by the courts to enrol in these programs. Some men also participate in these programs voluntarily. Batterer intervention programs include men's groups, individual counselling and couples counselling. There are an estimated 1,500 batterer intervention programs in the United States (Fleck-Henderson & Areán, 2004). A Health Canada (1999) publication lists 205 Canadian treatment programs for men who abuse their partners. There are 5 programs listed for Winnipeg. Three of the programs work with court mandated clients while the other 2 only work with voluntary clients.

Batterer intervention programs are controversial (Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2001). Women's organizations have voiced concerns about the allocation of resources to provide programming for batterers instead of providing urgently needed support for individuals who have been abused. Furthermore, questions have been raised about the preventative value of batterer intervention programs. Evaluations of the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs in reducing the likelihood of further violence have produced inconclusive results (Jackson et al. 2003; Tolman & Edleson, 1995).

Need for Primary Prevention Programs

There is a growing emphasis in the literature and among practitioners on the need to invest resources in primary domestic violence prevention approaches (Graffunder, Noonan, Cox, & Wheaton, 2004; Kapoor, 2000; Kulwicky & Miller, 1999; Myers, 1995; Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2000a; Saunders & Hamil, 2003). This has resulted from the recognition that preventing domestic violence from occurring in the first place would reduce the need for shelters and counselling after the violence has occurred. As previously noted, the effectiveness of batterer intervention programs is debatable. A number of studies suggest that these programs are most effective when they are part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence (Bennett & Williams, 2001; Jackson et al., 2003; Seibold 2003).

A key recommendation that emerged from a review of spousal abuse policies and legislation in Canada was that the government and other stakeholders work to implement a preventative strategy that addresses all stages of the continuum of family violence (Ad Hoc Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group, n.d.). These findings were echoed by the participants at the *Family Harmony Conference* in Winnipeg in 1996 (Multicultural Partners Abuse Prevention Project & Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba, 1996). This conference was hosted by the Multicultural Partners Abuse Prevention Project and the Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba. A key recommendation that resulted from this conference was to develop ongoing primary violence prevention activities using a community directed peer education approach. Participants in the Winnipeg service provider's focus group held in June 2005 strongly supported the idea that there is a need for more domestic violence prevention education in Winnipeg. Participants commented that prevention is chronically under resourced and that their organizations had only been able to secure ongoing funding for intervention and suppression. Even though primary prevention is not directly funded, a number of the service providers described some of the domestic violence prevention activities they had implemented as part of their programming.

There is also a growing recognition in the literature that primary violence prevention programs should reach out to men as potential allies, advocates and role models in violence prevention efforts (Fullwood, 2002; Kapoor 2000; Mitchell-Clark and Autrey 2004; Saunders and Hamil 2003). Members of the Winnipeg service provider's focus group were also supportive of focusing prevention activities on immigrant and refugee men. However, they cautioned that this work could meet with more resistance when compared to working with women. They suggested that any programming should be presented in a way that did not negatively stereotype immigrant and refugee men but that recognized domestic violence as a broad societal problem. Focus group participants also questioned whether there was a need to develop new programs or if it would be preferable to enhance the support being provided to existing agencies so they could broaden their efforts in this area.

The area of primary violence prevention is still a relatively new field. Initial results from violence prevention evaluations are promising. However, evaluation research on violence prevention programs is still in its infancy and caution should be employed in the broad generalization of these initial results (Wolfe & Jaffe, 2003). Seibold (2003) also reiterated the need for further research and the need for comprehensive evaluations of violence prevention efforts. Many women's organizations have recognized the importance of primary violence prevention and have welcomed the emergence of men's groups speaking out against domestic violence. However, support for these initiatives has been accompanied by the caveat that the expansion of programming for men must not be achieved by reducing the limited resources available for programs that support women survivors of domestic violence (Spindel, Levy, & Conner, 2000).

Needs of Immigrant and Refugee Communities

Impact of Immigration

The unprecedented rate of immigration during the 1990s has had a marked impact on the demographic profile of Canadian society (Statistics Canada, 2003). Canada has a high rate of immigration when compared to other Western industrialized countries. Since the late 1980s

immigration to Canada has been proportionally higher than immigration to either the United States or Australia – two major immigrant-receiving countries. Canadians reported belonging to over 200 different ethnic origins in the 2001 census. The primary source countries for Canadian immigration have shifted resulting in emerging ethno-cultural communities originating from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Central and South America. This increasingly complex and diverse profile of Canadian society has important implication for domestic violence prevention efforts.

Emerging Demographic Characteristics

- *Manitoba received 6,492 immigrants in 2003 – an increase of 40% when compared to the previous year.*
- *Winnipeg has the highest proportion of Filipinos of any major city in Canada. About 10% of Filipinos residing in Canada make their home in Winnipeg.*
- *Refugees accounted for close to 20% of immigration to Manitoba in 2003*
- *A marked increase in the number of refugees originating from Sudan made Sudan one of the top ten source country for immigrants to Manitoba in 2003.*
- *Immigrants account for over 18% of Canada's population and 16.5% of Winnipeg's population*

Source: Statistics Canada (2003) & Manitoba Labour and Immigration (2004)

Accessibility of Mainstream Services

Immigrants, refugees, service providers and researchers have observed that a critical limitation of many mainstream initiatives to address domestic violence is that they are not fully accessible to immigrants and refugees. As previously noted, immigrant and refugee women can encounter unique challenges when dealing with domestic violence. Factors such as language barriers, isolation, misconceptions about Canada, tenuous immigration status and distrust of the legal system serve to limit the accessibility of mainstream services for immigrant women (McDonald, 1999; Merchant, 2000; Miedema & Wachholz, 1998).

In assessing batterer intervention approaches, a number of practitioners have raised concerns that the theoretical approaches which inform these interventions and the mode of delivery may not be appropriate for men from cultural minority groups (Almeida & Dolan-Delvecchio, 1999; Fleck-Henderson & Areán, 2004; Jackson et al., 2003). Practitioners have noted that men from minority cultural groups are less likely to access services. Evaluations of batterer intervention programs in the United States have been hampered by higher drop out rates of African American men (Gondolf & Williams, 2001). This same pattern has been observed by counsellors in the Winnipeg context where counselling programs have reported very low levels of involvement by men from the immigrant and refugee communities in their programs. The recognition that language posed a significant barrier for many immigrant men, resulted in the adaptation of the Partner Abuse Short Term Education Program for immigrant men on probation (Manitoba Justice & Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1994). A review of the violence prevention literature conducted by the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic Violence concluded that violence against women is not explained entirely by the theories presented in Western cultures and that prevention efforts must address the cultural factors that drive violence against women (Seibold, 2003). If immigrant and refugee community member are to fully benefit from domestic violence prevention strategies, then steps should be taken to ensure that existing programs and new initiatives are accessible and culturally appropriate.

Culturally Competent Programs

There is an emerging literature that emphasizes the importance of developing culturally competent or culturally responsive programmatic responses to domestic violence (Gondolf & Williams, 2001; Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2001; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Rianon & Shelton, 2003). Cultural competence requires the acquisition of skills, attitudes and values that will enable individuals and institutions to respond effectively to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language and behaviour of people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2004b). Participants at the *Family Harmony Conference* held in Winnipeg in 1996 identified the importance of encouraging mainstream agencies to hire multicultural workers and the need to develop greater cultural awareness in the delivery of services to immigrant communities as key recommendations (Multicultural Partners Abuse Prevention Project & Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba, 1996). The *Family Violence and Cultural Awareness Program* operated by the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association in Halifax provides workshops for mainstream service providers to raise awareness of newcomer issues and to encourage service providers to make services more culturally responsive to immigrants. Local service providers in Winnipeg identified language barriers as a key issue that limits access to mainstream services and noted that many agencies did not have the funding to provide services and information in multiple languages. Other barriers identified by participants in the service provider's focus group included a Western approach to helping that may not fit with other cultures, a lack of cultural awareness, and the under-representation of staff members from a diversity of cultural backgrounds.

Culturally Focused & Multicultural Programs

Culturally focused programs refer to specialized programs that are developed to address the needs of a homogenous ethno-cultural group. This contrasts with multicultural programs that are developed to address the needs of participants belonging to a number of ethno-cultural groups. Through the efforts of community members and service providers, a number of culturally focused and multicultural programs have been developed to address the needs of Winnipeg's ethno-cultural communities. The Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba and the Immigrant Women's Counselling Services have provided multicultural domestic violence counselling support services for immigrant women in Winnipeg. The *Multicultural Partner Abuse Group Program* is a court mandated batterer intervention program designed specifically for immigrant men. This program grew out of the recognition that, due to linguistic barriers, immigrant men were not able to access the mainstream *Partner Abuse Short Term Group* program offered by Correctional Services. The *Services to Immigrants on Probation Project* which operated from 1992 to 1994 was a precursor to this program. It was a culturally focused program that provided batterer intervention programming in 6 different languages. The *Multicultural Partner Abuse Prevention Project* was a primary violence prevention program which operated in Winnipeg from 1995 to 1996. The goal of this program was to raise awareness about partner abuse and to increase access to family violence prevention information and resources. The *Women's Action Against Violence* project is a multicultural primary violence prevention program which was launched in Winnipeg in 1999. This innovative partner violence prevention training program was designed to meet the needs of women from a variety of ethno-cultural backgrounds.

Primary Prevention Approaches

Overview of Primary Prevention Programs

As previously noted, although the bulk of domestic violence prevention resources have been invested in other approaches, there is growing recognition of the potential benefits of primary violence prevention approaches. This emergent interest in prevention has been accompanied by an expansion of primary violence prevention programs. Primary prevention approaches include school based educational programs, community education programs aimed at adults and general public awareness campaigns.

Primary prevention programs have included initiatives that are reaching out to men as allies in preventing violence against women. The *Violence Against Women Network (VAWNNet)* provides links to a growing array of violence prevention campaigns and campaign materials designed specifically for men. Examples include *Men Make Choices* community awareness and action campaign in Texas, the *Freedom From Fear* media campaign in Australia, and the *White Ribbon Campaign* which encourages personal and collective action among men in Canada and a number of countries to end violence against women (VAWNNet, n.d.).

The development of primary prevention programs designed specifically for immigrants and refugees is still in its infancy. Canada has a few primary prevention programs focused on immigrant communities. These include the *Family Violence and Cultural Awareness Program* operated by the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association in Halifax, the *Religious Community Advocacy Project* operated by the Korean Canadian Women's Association and the *Changing Ways Muslim Family Safety Project* in London Ontario. A number of primary prevention pilot projects have been initiated by ethno-cultural community groups to address the issue of domestic violence. The *South Asian Men Against Violence Project*, for example, was a community led educational and public awareness pilot project that operated in Toronto from 1994 to 1995.

Primary prevention initiatives have also been launched in Winnipeg. The *Manitoba Men's Network* and *Men Against Sexism* were grassroots organizations which operated for a number of years in Winnipeg. These groups sought to work in solidarity with women's organizations to do educational and advocacy work to prevent violence against women. As previously noted, the *Multicultural Partner Abuse Prevention Project* which operated from 1995 to 1996, raised awareness of domestic violence in 10 ethno-cultural communities in Winnipeg and a partnership between the Sexuality Education Resource Centre and the Immigrant Women's Counselling Services resulted in the development of the *Women's Action Against Violence* training program in 1999.

Ethno-cultural communities in Winnipeg have also implemented violence prevention education programs, often working in partnership with established agencies. The Filipino community has established a coalition to raise awareness of issues related to domestic abuse. The coalition has been operating for approximately 10 years. Leaders in the South Asian community have recently launched a planning process to address the issue of violence within their community. This initiative is being supported by Mount Carmel Clinic. The Afghan Association has worked in partnership with the Immigrant Women's Counselling Services to organize workshops on family issues and domestic violence prevention. The Sudanese Association has recently secured funding to launch an initiative to educate community members about domestic violence and youth crime prevention.

Methods of Engagement

Public Awareness Campaigns

Public awareness campaigns that utilize communication tools such as the media, posters and brochures are common primary prevention approaches. Some initiatives have made creative use of promotional items to communicate violence prevention messages. One example is the *Place Mat Project* which was launched by the United Neighbours of Fall River in Massachusetts. This project produced and distributed over 225,000 placemats containing violence prevention messages through local restaurants, community centres and factory lunchrooms (Fullwood, 2002).

School Based Education Programs

Wolfe and Jaffe (2003) identify schools as the ideal place to introduce primary prevention programs to a wide range of children. The Violence Against Women Network provides online links to a variety of violence prevention curricula aimed primarily at boys and young men. The *Taking Action Against Violence* resource guide provides an overview of the current school curricula and programs in Manitoba that relate to domestic violence prevention (Manitoba Justice & Manitoba Women's Directorate, n.d.). These materials include a *Violence Prevention in Daily Life and Relationship* curriculum for Grades 5-8 and a *Violence Against Women: Learning Activities to Prevent Violence Against Women* curriculum for Grades 9 to 12.

Community Education Programs

Community education programs are often delivered through community based agencies. A number of agencies in Canada and the United States reported providing presentations and workshops on domestic violence prevention in response to requests from immigrant community groups. These educational initiatives were largely delivered on an ad-hoc informal basis. There were, however, a number of formal educational initiatives that had been designed to meet the needs of specific groups within immigrant communities. Examples of specific groups include newcomers, parenting classes and faith based community leaders.

The *Family Violence and Cultural Awareness Program* operated by the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association (MISA) in Halifax provides training sessions on family violence as part of its orientation program for newcomers. They also deliver violence prevention training through ESL classes and a parenting group.¹⁰ All of these training sessions are attended by mixed groups of men and women. Settlement counsellors at Welcome Place in Winnipeg include information on domestic violence in the orientation provided to newcomers. Domestic violence prevention is also a component of the ESL classes delivered through the *Entry Program* in Winnipeg. However, the MISA program is much more developed and comprehensive. Co-ordinators at Welcome Place and the *Entry Program* reported that instructors and settlement counsellors devote an estimated 10 to 20 minutes on topics related to domestic violence prevention. The MISA ESL program consists of 6

¹⁰ The participants in Women's Action Against Violence (WAAV) training program recommended that all new immigrants should have access to the knowledge on domestic violence that been provided through the WAAV training sessions. They suggested that ESL courses were the best places to obtain this knowledge (Migliardi, Blum, & Heinonen, 2004). Research indicating that domestic violence has a detrimental impact on children and that abusive men have difficulty with parenting suggests that training parenting skills and domestic violence prevention education should be integrated (Fleck-Henderson & Areán, 2004).

two hour sessions, while their newcomer orientation includes between 3 and 4 hours of training on domestic violence prevention.

Another avenue for the delivery of violence prevention awareness is to engage community leaders and influential institutions within the immigrant community. A number of sources have identified religious leaders and faith based institutions as an important avenue for primary prevention initiatives (Ayyub, 2000; Hyman, Guruge, Stewart, & Ahamd, 2000; Kapoor 2000; Mitchell-Clark & Autry 2004). Examples of pilot projects utilizing this approach are the *Religious Community Advocacy Project* operated by the Korean Canadian Women's Association and the *Changing Ways Muslim Family Safety Project* in London Ontario. The *Religious Community Advocacy Project* provides training to religious leaders in the Korean community on domestic violence prevention. This program is delivered in two hour sessions addressing the topics of the reality of domestic violence, the legal system, and their roles and responsibilities as religious leaders. Approximately three quarters of the religious leaders are men. The *Changing Ways Muslim Family Safety Project* is a collaborative project between the Muslim community and local anti-violence agencies. The goal of the project is to develop family violence prevention and intervention models that integrate the Canadian legal and social approaches with Islamic teachings. It is hoped that this collaborative effort will generate the development and implementation of community-based religious and culturally responsive family violence prevention and intervention services.

Winnipeg Service Provider's Suggestions

The Winnipeg service providers' focus group suggested that the following elements be incorporated into primary domestic violence programs for immigrant men.

Positive Messages

Participants suggested that the focus should be on what we are 'for' instead of what we are 'against'. It should be strengths-based instead of shame-based.

Emphasize the Family

All of the ideas for key messages included family oriented themes such as:

- Respect for Family
- Strengthening Families
- Helping the Family in Canada
- Long Term Benefit to Family & Community

Focus on Newcomers

Participants suggested that primary prevention efforts should focus on newcomers and stressed the importance of providing information in their own language.

Suggested Workshop Topics

Participants identified the following topics that could be included in a domestic violence prevention workshop series:

- Types of abuse

- Cycle of abuse
- Family stress caused by cultural adaptation
- Dealing with the legal system
- Unacceptability of domestic violence
- Impact of abuse on children
- Community resources
- Gender equality

Potential Partnerships

Based on existing initiatives and demographic trends, participants suggested the development of community-based primary prevention initiatives in partnership with the following ethno-cultural communities.

- Filipino community
- Emerging African communities (Sudan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone)
- Afghan
- Kurdish
- Latin American (Colombia)

Best Practices

Primary violence prevention is a new and evolving field. As previously noted there are significant gaps in the literature with respect to evaluating the effectiveness of primary prevention approaches. This is particularly true of programs that have been designed specifically to address the needs of immigrants and refugees. The lack of sustained funding for these types of initiatives means that these programs have not been widely tested on a large scale. Emerging themes from the Winnipeg service provider's focus group as well as community consultations and program evaluations on primary prevention in Canada and other Western industrialized countries suggest the following best practices: develop culturally competent services, utilize a community development approach, engage community leaders, build on community values and norms, emphasize positive family relationships, make long term sustained investments and ensure rigorous documentation and evaluation.

Culturally Competent Programs

Domestic violence prevention programs need to be culturally responsive to enhance their effectiveness in reaching diverse ethno-cultural communities (Bent-Goodley 2005; Raj & Silverman, 2002). Mainstream programs should work with ethno-cultural communities to ensure that their programs are culturally appropriate and that the staff members who are responsible for program delivery have the skills to work effectively with immigrants and refugees. Additionally, community based agencies should also work with immigrant and refugee communities to develop and deliver culturally focused programming.

Community Development Approach

The development and delivery of culturally appropriate services requires a community development approach. This means working in partnership with agencies and members of the immigrant community to develop intimate knowledge of various cultural groups (Denetto & Mutta, 1995; Fullwood, 2002; Mitchell-Clark & Autry, 2004; Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2000; Raj &

Silverman, 2002). It is essential to identify the underlying factors that contribute to domestic violence as well as the community assets that can be utilized to address the issue most effectively. Community members must be involved in defining the desired outcomes and strategies so that they take ownership of the programs. Services and programs must remain accountable to community needs. Programs should be designed and delivered with a view to investing resources in the community in a way that builds the skills and capacities of community members to address violence prevention issues in their own communities. These programs provide avenues for creating much needed Canadian employment experience for individuals who may be unemployed or underemployed. Relying primarily on the voluntary effort of community members can result in programs that are unsustainable over the long term. Challenges in their personal lives and competing demands can result in very high volunteer turn over rates making it difficult to maintain momentum and the continuity of community building initiatives.

Engage Community Leaders

To create effective durable change, it is important to develop grassroots networks of community leaders committed to violence prevention efforts (Fullwood, 2002; Health Canada, 2002; Mitchell-Clark & Autry, 2004; Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2000). This leadership should also include men who can play a role in promoting violence prevention programming to other men and boys. Men should be invited to play a positive role in prevention activities rather than indicting all men as potential perpetrators. Engaging religious leaders appears to be a promising avenue for primary prevention efforts.

Build on Community Values and Norms

It is important to identify and build on community values and norms that condemn family violence (Mitchell-Clark & Autry, 2004; Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2000). The *Changing Ways Muslim Family Safety Project* is a good example of this approach. By developing family violence prevention and intervention models that integrate Canadian legal and social approaches with Islamic teachings, the educational efforts are more likely to encounter greater community acceptance.

Emphasize Positive Family Relationships

The research suggests that violence prevention initiatives are more effective in reaching ethno-cultural communities when they emphasize building stronger family relationships (Partnership Against Domestic Violence, 2000). The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project is similar to other programs that place the emphasis on a positive message about improving family relationships as opposed to a more confrontational approach. While a family oriented approach may yield greater community acceptance, care needs to be taken to ensure that this approach is utilized without compromising on core principles which underpin the work (i.e. domestic violence is always unacceptable).

Long Term Sustained Investment

Mitchell-Clark and Autry (2004) emphasize that meaningful community engagement is a long-term process that requires long-term investment. The development of community based programming requires stable long term funding. However, recent years have seen a marked shift away from core funding to project based funding. This has made it difficult to expand primary prevention programming designed for immigrants and refugees. Despite a demonstrated need and positive

program evaluations, most of the primary prevention programs identified in the program review failed to attract the funding required to establish a stable ongoing program. For example, the *South Asian Men Against Violence Project* which operated from November 1994 to July 1995 generated promising results (Denetto and Mutta, 1995). Despite positive results and strong community support the project proponents were unable to secure sustained long-term funding for a continuation of this initiative.

Documentation and Evaluation

As previously noted the field of primary prevention is an emerging area. Although there is a growing body of materials and resources available, it is challenging to obtain information about the processes and procedures used to develop and deliver prevention programs. There are also significant gaps in the literature especially in the area of evaluation (Seibold, 2003; Wolfe & Jaffe, 2003). Graffunder et al. (2004) conclude that the lack of empirically tested violence prevention strategies presents a major challenge for the next decade. These observations underline the need for practitioners to build in rigorous documentation and evaluation processes when designing and implementing new prevention programs.

FOCUS GROUP REPORT

Reflections of the Researchers

As previously noted, the *Immigrant Men's Research Project* was the result of recommendations put forward by immigrant women who had participated in the *Women's Action Against Violence (WAAV)* training program. However, project partners and members of the research team¹¹ were unsure of how this research project would be received by immigrant and refugee men. Would men enrol in the focus groups? Would focus group participants share their views openly? Would they articulate a need for violence prevention education for immigrant men? The staff member who had transformed the idea into a project proposal captured this uncertainty when she described the research project as “*a shot in the dark.*”

The research project has yielded very positive results as the outcome of focus groups exceeded the most optimistic predictions. At the beginning of the research process many of the Community Based Researchers (CBRs) expressed concerns about the number of participants they would be able to recruit.¹² As the recruitment proceeded the CBRs were surprised by the level of interest in the focus groups. All of the CBRs were successful in organizing a focus group with participation ranging from 4 to 13 participants. The focus group with 4 participants was the only group that failed to meet the minimum goal of 6 participants. The main recruitment problem faced by a number of the CBRs was limiting the number of participants to the maximum allowed for their focus group. A number of CBRs were extremely surprised by how openly and enthusiastically the participants engaged in the discussion. Six of the 7 focus groups generated active participation in response to all of the questions.¹³ In their parting comments at the end of the focus group some participants stressed that they would welcome more gatherings of this kind and many participants expressed a strong interest in attending the community celebration which would bring together all 3 streams of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project. At the conclusion of a number of focus groups, participants continued to engage in animated discussions. Some of these participants exchanged business cards and contact information.

What Surprised You the Most about the Focus Groups?

- ✓ *The number of people who wanted to participate*
- ✓ *How actively and openly they discussed such a sensitive topic*
- ✓ *How enthusiastic they were and the level of interest in more gatherings of this kind*
- ✓ *The discussions and networking that happened after the sessions*
- ✓ *The number of participants who could be potential allies in domestic violence prevention initiatives*
- ✓ *Participants actually showed up and they showed up on time!*

Note: These responses are not direct quotes. Comments by the researchers have been summarized.

¹¹ See the *Project Background & Methodology* section for information on the composition of the research team.

¹² The CBRs felt that the honorarium of \$25 would encourage enrollment in the focus groups. However, a number of CBRs were still concerned about recruiting enough participants because the issue of domestic violence was not something that was openly discussed in their respective communities.

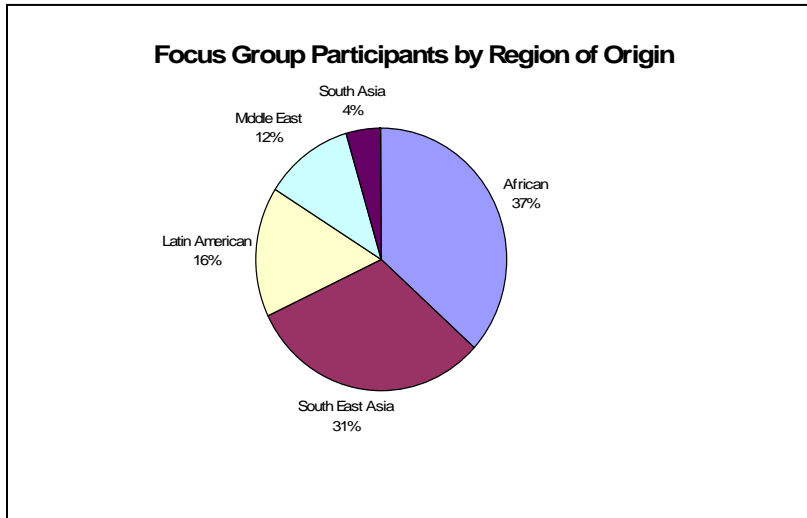
¹³ It is not clear why one of the focus groups failed to generate active participation from group members. Possibilities include language barriers, the sensitivity of the topic, political tensions within the community or failure to effectively communicate the research goals. Individual interviews with participants from the same ethno-cultural community generated more complete responses to the research questions.

Demographic Profile of Participants

A total of 7 focus groups were held. Most of the Community Based Researchers (CBRs) were responsible for organizing focus groups composed of men from their ethno-cultural communities. However, there were 2 mixed focus groups that included men from multiple ethno-cultural communities. As detailed in the accompanying table, participation in the focus groups ranged from 4 to 13 participants.

Sixty-five men participated in the focus groups and 4 individuals participated in interviews.¹⁴ The CBRs were successful in their efforts to include participants from diverse backgrounds in the focus groups. Participants originated from 22 different countries. The accompanying graph provides an overview of participants according to geographic area.¹⁵ Over one third of the participants were of African origin while 31% were of South East Asian origin.

<i>Focus Group</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
<i>Mixed Group #1</i>	13
<i>Mixed Group #2</i>	9
<i>Spanish Speaking</i>	10
<i>Afghan</i>	4
<i>Sudanese</i>	10
<i>Vietnamese</i>	8
<i>Filipino</i>	11



Participants ranged in age from 17 to 79 years of old. The average age was 38. Almost one third of the participants (23 men) were newcomers who had been in Canada for less than 18 months and an almost equivalent number (22 men) had been in Canada for over 10

years.

The project included a high proportion of individuals who identified as refugees. Close to 60% of research participants (41 men) indicated that they had come to Canada as refugees, 21 indicated that they did not immigrate as refugees and 2 participants were Canadian born second generation immigrants.

¹⁴ One individual attended 2 focus groups. Two men were interviewed on an individual basis and 2 other men participated in a joint interview.

¹⁵ Two research participants were Canadian born second generation immigrants. They were both of South East Asian descent. Their data has been included in the demographic information presented.

Understanding Domestic Violence

A key goal of the *Immigrant Men's Research Project* was to gain insights into how immigrant men perceive domestic violence. Focus group participants were asked to reflect on the situation in their respective ethno-cultural communities and to respond to a series of questions which asked them to:

- Identify actions that would be considered domestic violence
- Identify causes of domestic violence
- Comment on the acceptability of domestic violence
- Identify the most serious impacts of domestic violence

Defining Domestic Violence

“Any actions can be considered domestic violence if they are intended to hurt or harm the other person. Even a threat can be considered as domestic violence.”

“Physical abuse of men or women, most for women and vice versa sometimes... kicking, pushing, punching.”

“If I misappropriate the economy of the family, the woman can suffer economically from that.”

Research participants identified a broad range of actions they would consider to be domestic violence. All 6 focus groups that responded to this question identified both physical and psychological abuse as forms of domestic violence. Examples of physical abuse included punching, hitting, shaking, kicking, spanking and physically overpowering another family member.

Examples of actions you would consider to be domestic violence

- ✓ *Physical abuse such as hitting, punching and kicking*
- ✓ *Psychological abuse such as yelling, threats, and neglect*
- ✓ *Economic abuse like gambling or misusing family finances*
- ✓ *Punishing children through emotional or physical abuse*

Note: These responses are not direct quotes. Participants' comments have been summarized.

Participants provided various examples of psychological abuse. These included actions such as verbal abuse, yelling, withdrawing affection, silence, threats, neglect, lack of respect, and false accusations. Three groups discussed economic abuse such as the misuse of family finances or gambling as a form of abuse. Members of 2 groups identified sexual assault as a form of domestic violence.¹⁶ Four of the groups introduced the issue of intergenerational conflict and the discipline of children. Intergenerational tension and conflict emerged as an important theme as the participants responded to subsequent focus group questions. A number of participants also discussed controlling behaviour such as imposing rigid rules on family members or isolating the other person as a form abuse. For the most part, the actions were discussed in general terms as conflict between spouses or family members without identifying the gender of the perpetrators or the victims.

¹⁶ One of the CBRs expressed surprise that participants identified sexual abuse as a form of domestic violence because the open discussion of sexual issues is considered a taboo in his ethno-cultural community

Causes of Domestic Violence

“Frustration. I am not confident because I don’t get a job; economic frustration affects the emotional order.”

“Men have privileges. In African countries men tend to dominate. Here women find a better status... that can create problems.”

“Culture shock... the way we grow up back home is 100% different... The way we raise our kids... the way we deal with each other. We always try to bring up our previous background... apply to our living here and that is something that puts you into conflict with the culture, the values, the societal issues here in Canada... People sometimes they just try to jump. They come from something that is way behind to something that is way advanced. There is a long distance. You have to walk slowly. If you try to jump, you are going to break your neck.”

Economic or financial stressors were the dominant theme in response to the question about the causes of domestic violence. This issue was identified by 6 of the 7 groups. It was often the first issue identified by participants and tended to generate strong support from other focus group members. One participant responded that the most important causes of domestic violence were financial. Issues discussed included the stress of shifting power dynamics as women and children displaced the father as the primary breadwinner and the loss of status resulting from unemployment despite professional and educational qualifications.

What Causes Domestic Violence?

- ✓ *Economic stress, unemployment, loss of status*
- ✓ *Adapting to cultural differences and loss of power in child rearing and gender relations*
- ✓ *Addictions to alcohol, drugs and gambling*
- ✓ *Miscommunication between spouses*
- ✓ *Ignorance, illiteracy and the lack of information*
- ✓ *Expanded rights, resources and freedom for women*

Note: These responses are not direct quotes. Participants’ comments have been summarized.

Issues of cultural adaptation were identified by all of the focus groups. Cross cutting themes included intergenerational conflict and shifting power dynamics between men and women. A number of participants discussed the tension caused by cultural differences in what is considered acceptable with respect to raising and disciplining children. A number of participants suggested that the law and the way in which it is applied encourage domestic violence by giving women too much power. They argued that because of zero tolerance women can manipulate the system to gain the upper hand.¹⁷ Along a similar vein expanded freedom and access to economic resources for women were identified as causes of family tension which could lead to domestic violence. Addictions were also identified by a number of participants as contributing to family violence. Examples of addictions included alcohol abuse, drug abuse and gambling. Lack of information and education as well as a lack of effective communication were also identified as issues by the majority of groups.

¹⁷ See section on *Perspectives on Power* for a discussion on power and shifting gender roles.

Acceptability of Domestic Violence

“I am offended by the question, in any country of the world domestic violence is not allowed”.

“There are different ways of talking to children and to control the anger. You can explain to a child, you can reason with the child, have a healthy argument with him... Depends of how much time you spend with your child... Psychologists use the term bonding.”

“Violence is not acceptable in all circumstances and we should stop comparing...looking to the situation back home. Here it is different.”

“The freedom claimed in Canada is not free, you pay [for] it highly.”

“For instance there is not enough income. You have to work hard, come back from work tired and the woman doesn’t consider that you are coming from work and expects you to take care of the children. Everything blows.”

“Looking at our cultural background... training our children. For the Western world this is domestic violence. For us it is discipline. Children are phoning 911 on their parents because of what is expected here.”

Responses to the issue of the acceptability of domestic violence were highly contingent on how participants defined domestic violence. There was a general agreement across all groups that physical violence between spouses was not acceptable. Discipline of children featured prominently in the discussions of all 6 groups that responded to this question. This issue generated a great deal of debate between group members. Many participants argued that some forms of discipline such as spanking children were acceptable. Others objected strenuously indicating that there were other methods that could be employed to raise children effectively.

Is domestic violence acceptable in some circumstances?

- ✓ *The answer to this question depends on how domestic violence is defined*
- ✓ *Physical violence between spouses is not acceptable*
- ✓ *Discipline of children such as spanking is acceptable.*
- ✓ *Physical discipline of children is not acceptable. There are other ways to raise our children.*

Note: These responses are not direct quotes. Participants’ comments have been summarized.

The emotional arena was seen by some as an ambiguous area. One participant suggested that actions such as yelling or swearing should not be considered domestic violence as these are natural human responses. Two participants indicated that domestic violence was acceptable if a person was defending themselves. One of these participants provided the example of physically restraining someone from going out to gamble as a form of self-defence.

It should be noted that members of the research team believed that some of the participants may not have been completely open about their views because of the sensitivity of this topic and concerns about how their responses would reflect on their community. Participants in one group voiced their concerns about how their responses would be interpreted. A group member sought to clarify comments made by other participants about disciplining children by saying, *“For you guys who are collecting this research, it should be very clear that we are not recommending family violence... we are talking about disciplining.”*

Impact of Domestic Violence

“Physical scars, bodily harm, even death.”

“One of the dangers is the stuff you can’t see. A lot of this happens in the household... verbal abuse and the constant emotional scars. ... These are serious... It can carry on to another generation.”

“The most serious outcome of domestic violence is that it would lead to a broken family.”

Participants identified both physical and psychological impacts of abuse. Examples of physical impacts included disability, physical disfigurement, and death (including suicide). Participants named the following psychological impacts: depression, fear, mental disability, loss of identity, insecurity, grief, self-blame and low self-esteem. A number of participants also discussed adverse emotional impacts on children. They identified intergenerational impacts such as mental disability, joining gangs, acting out aggression at school, poor academic performance and dropping out of school. A dominant theme was the issue of family unity. All 6 groups who responded to this question emphasized the adverse impact of domestic violence on family unity. Issues discussed included disharmony in the family, marital instability, divorce and children being put in care.

What are some of the most serious effects of domestic violence?

- ✓ *Physical disability, disfigurement, death and suicide*
- ✓ *Psychological impacts such as depression, fear, insecurity, and low self-esteem.*
- ✓ *Children act out what they see at home. They join gangs and drop out of school.*
- ✓ *Destroys family unity through separation, divorce, and loss of children*

Note: These responses are not direct quotes. Participants’ comments have been summarized.

Other impacts identified by participants included economic impacts, consequences for perpetrators and the cyclical nature of violence. Three groups suggested that domestic violence could have adverse economic impacts on the family. Four groups identified loss of reputation and incarceration for the perpetrator. Most of the groups discussed how violence could lead to more violence. They emphasized intergenerational impacts and how some of the effects of domestic violence such as substance abuse could become causes of further violence.

Perspectives on Power

“The traditional macho - Latin macho - he is the one who is in charge for everything, the economy [of the home], solving problems. Here in Canada women are not just staying at home so this causes too much tension.”

“Canada is one of the first countries to give women rights. Women have taken it by the horns and have gotten too powerful.”

“Family law itself... encourages family violence by the way it gives the female more power. I know it is zero tolerance... the way it is designed; it gives the female [more power]. She can manipulate, say and do lots of things”.

“We need to give women rights. Strengthening women’s position would be better for the community. In the past there was more tolerance for men. That is why we need to have more laws to protect women.”

“Men are always so hard headed. They don’t want to change... I 100% disagree with that... I believe in equal rights.”

“Men appreciate democracy and freedom [in Canada]. They appreciate for themselves but don’t want to apply to their members of their family... She is not free to speak. She is not free to work... Men [should] apply what we appreciate to other members.”

Focus group participants were not asked explicitly about their perception of the power dynamics in the household. However, a number of questions generated a discussion of cultural adaptation and shifting power dynamics. Virtually all of the focus groups had extended and animated discussions on this topic. The dominant view was that women in Canadian society were more powerful than men. One participant stated that the statistics show that 80% of women dominate men because they are supported by many laws. He indicated that while he agreed with the rights that women had, he also felt that there was a need to also evaluate the duties and obligations that came with these rights.

Members of the Spanish speaking group discussed challenges to definitions of masculinity arguing that men try to bring *machos* from Latin America to Canada but find that this approach does not fit here. One participant used humour to illustrate this point. He stated that in Canada they are no longer *machos* (boss men who have the power). They now have new roles and that #1 are the women, #2 are the dogs, #3 are the cats and #4 are the men. Discussions about a reversal of power were echoed in other groups. Examples of the way in which women were dominant focused primarily on greater access to support service, enhanced economic opportunities in the job market and a legal system that favours women. Some participants suggested that a bias in support services and the legal system contributed to domestic violence by disrupting traditional roles and family unity.

Statements about women being dominant in Canadian society and abusing the system seemed to resonate strongly with many other group members. This topic, more than any other, appeared to generate a heightened emotional response among participants. There were, however, dissenting voices that challenged the prevailing view in most of the focus groups. A number of men argued that expanded rights for women provided protection and equality for women. One participant suggested that some immigrant men were resistant to extending the rights that they enjoyed to

women and children. A number of participants stressed that men needed to be open to changing so that true equality could be achieved.

Need for Primary Prevention Programs

“Now we live in the Western world... We have to respect the country we are living in – know the law in equal rights. It is very important for men to learn a new way of living.”

“Now we have more information regarding the law. Some people don’t know. That’s why they get into trouble. Need more information about domestic violence.”

“There is an Immigrant Women’s Counselling Service – why not an Immigrant Men’s Counselling Service?”

“Why just men? It is a family problem. [It] can be handled internally instead of listening to the government. We have systems to resolve problems back home.”

Many participants had a strong reaction to the question about whether immigrant men needed more information and education about domestic violence prevention. In virtually every group participants asked why the question was only about immigrant men. They wondered why the research was focusing on immigrants in particular and why women were not being included. Some stated that women were part of the problem and could also be perpetrators of domestic violence. It was this question that generated much of the emotionally charged discussion about shifting power dynamics (see previous section). Despite the controversy about the focus of the question, there was strong support for the idea that immigrant men needed access to more information and education about domestic violence prevention. Dominant themes were issues of cultural adaptation, the need to gain a better understanding of the law, and the importance of providing information to newcomers as part of their orientation to Canada (either before or just after they arrive). Participants emphasized the importance of providing information and education in different languages so that the resources could be accessed by newcomers. In addition to linguistic accessibility, a number of participants stressed the importance of providing culturally appropriate services. Some participants were critical of existing service providers. One participant stated that there was a need for more cultural sensitivity as he did not feel that his cultural background was discussed in a respectful manner by a service provider.

There were dissenting voices who disagreed that more information was needed. Some participants who were opposed to the provision of information indicated that the problems should be solved internally within the community instead of bringing in outsiders. Others argued that it was each person’s responsibility to solve their own problems and to access the information that was already available. One participant felt that the critical issue was not the provision of information or education. He stated that there was need for stable permanent services for immigrant men instead of a piecemeal approach.

Suggested Primary Prevention Approaches

Suggested Strategies

When asked to identify the best methods for primary domestic violence prevention, participants identified public awareness campaigns, community based approaches, school based programs, and orientation for newcomers.

Public Awareness

Participants emphasized the importance of utilizing the media. Suggestions included radio, television and newspapers. They also recommended using ethno-cultural media outlets. One participant used the analogy of smoking cessation education stating that there was a need to invest the necessary resources to effectively communicate the main messages of the campaign. He stressed the need to repeat messages multiple times over a long period of time. Other suggestions included distributing brochures and educational material in high traffic locations such as video stores and restaurants as well as utilizing creative popular education techniques to raise public awareness.

Community Based Approaches

Two groups emphasized the importance of community involvement. Suggestions included recruiting community members to assist with disseminating information, holding community based workshops and consulting with community members before anything is done. When asked to identify community leaders who could play a role in domestic violence prevention, all of the groups that responded to this question suggested religious leaders. Other common suggestions included the leaders of ethno-cultural associations, elders and professionals. A number of groups suggested providing training to community members so that alternative community based conflict resolution mechanisms could be developed. These participants felt that it was preferable to create mechanisms that would allow the community to address domestic violence internally instead of turning to outsiders.

School Based Programs

Three groups recommended reaching children and youth through the school system. They suggested integrating violence prevention education into the curriculum and distributing educational materials such as brochures in schools.

Orientation for Newcomers

The need to place an emphasis on reaching newcomers was emphasized at many points in the various focus groups. Participants suggested that comprehensive information on domestic violence prevention could be provided as part of the orientation for newcomers. Some suggested that this information could be provided in the immigrant's home country prior to their arrival in Canada. Other suggestions included integrating educational information in ESL programs.

Community Workshops

Participants were informed of the possibility of designing community workshops on domestic violence prevention and were asked to identify the topics that should be included. In general,

participants favoured an approach that emphasized positive values as well as the acquisition of skills and information that would promote family harmony. They felt that the name of the program should reflect this approach. The majority of participants suggested a holistic approach that included a broad range of related issues as opposed to a concentrated focus on domestic violence. Most of the suggestions emphasised the inclusion of family issues such as family planning, parenting skills, intergenerational conflict, the discipline of children and anger management. Participants also suggested including issues of cultural adaptation, legal issues, addictions, women's rights/empowerment, children's rights, and civic involvement.

Participants were also asked whether community workshops should be held as mixed gender groups or if workshops for men and women should be held separately.¹⁸ In general participants tended to favour groups that included women and men. The comments below provide a flavour of some of the main arguments put forward to support this position.

"There are lots of program for women... Women change attitudes and [make] changes at home... Men and women need to be involved."

"Not good idea to have focus just on men. Women sometimes are the problem."

"Should be both. If only one knows the information, [they] can't do it alone."

However it should be noted that opinions on this issue tended to be fluid. As some group members identified drawbacks of having mixed gender groups, other program participants often shifted their position. Some of the comments that prompted participants to rethink their initial position were as follows:

"This is my first time here. The only thing that I know is that now that there are strictly men here, it is working out good... and if there was opposite sex here, I don't think I would be that open."

"Women sometimes don't feel free to express themselves [in a mixed group]."

"If put men and women together, women may not say anything and men may not say some things, so they are not perceived as weak".

Some groups discussed the possibility of having mixed workshops that also included youth so that intergenerational issues could be addressed. After discussing the issue, a number of groups tended to favour a model of holding parallel workshops on a separate basis with the different groups (men, women, youth) and then bringing all of the groups together at the end for some joint sessions.

Key Messages

Participants were asked to identify the main messages they would include on a poster about domestic violence prevention. A number of participants emphasized the importance of focusing on positive values as opposed to more confrontational approaches. Key themes included the message

¹⁸ This question was not part of the original focus group format. However, participants in the initial focus groups raised this issue consistently so it was added to the list of focus group questions.

that violence is not acceptable, the importance of family harmony and the impact of violence on children. A number of groups suggested messages with very specific cultural references. The following provides a sample of some of the ideas put forward by the groups.

RESPECT

Family first before action

If you are involved in domestic violence, you can lose your family

We can stop it!

Love surpasses everything

Violence affects us all

Children learn violence from parents

Magbigayan tayo (Let's share)

Your children reflect yourself

Healthy family, healthy community

“Tu hijo va a ser el reflejo de lo que le enseñas” (your children will be the reflection of what you teach them)

RECOMMENDATIONS - BREAKING THE CIRCLE

“In the Buddhist tradition, there is karma. Things get repeated. There is a point in the circle where you can break it. Be aware of the whole process and find that way of breaking the circle.”

This insightful observation was made by a participant in an immigrant men’s focus group. He made the comment in response to a discussion of the cyclical links between the causes of domestic violence, the impacts of domestic violence and the intergenerational transmission of violent behaviour. The information gathered in this needs assessment is part of the process of building an understanding of the issues and identifying the most promising avenues for breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

Findings from the literature review, the investigation of local and international programs, the Winnipeg service providers’ focus group and the immigrant men’s focus groups provide strong support for the development of culturally appropriate domestic violence prevention programming that addresses the needs of immigrant men. The recommendations articulated by the immigrant men’s focus groups combined with the high level of interest and engagement in these sessions are powerful indications that education and information on domestic violence prevention is needed and would be welcomed by many immigrant and refugee men.¹⁹

Project partners should work in collaboration with community groups to develop domestic violence prevention programming that addresses the needs of immigrant and refugee men. Based on the research, the following approaches provide the most promising avenues for domestic violence prevention education for immigrant and refugee men in the Winnipeg.

Project partners should develop and implement a *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series that provides family violence prevention education for immigrant men.

Project partners should build on their area of expertise and the success of the *Immigrant Women’s Action Against Violence* and the *Spanish Speaking Youth Against Violence* prevention education programs to develop a workshop series that also includes immigrant men. This *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should be designed to include immigrant and refugee men, women and youth from a variety of ethno-cultural backgrounds.

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should be offered as separate parallel streams for women, youth, and men with joint sessions at the end of the series.

Recruitment efforts should focus on encouraging family members from the same household to enrol as participants. The men’s, women’s and youth groups would operate separately and run concurrently. The same topics areas would be addressed by each group. However, the topics may

¹⁹ A clear demonstration of the level of interest in receiving information about domestic violence came from a focus group that was primarily composed of recent arrivals to Canada. Participants expressed disappointment that they had not been provided with more information about domestic violence prevention in Canada during the focus group. Participants stated they had signed up for the focus group with the expectation that the session would provide them with information about family violence.

be customized to address the issues and concerns of each separate group. At the end of the workshop series, all three streams would come together for a joint session to share their insights and learnings.

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should adopt a holistic approach to family violence prevention. The workshop series should include topics that are related to family violence prevention with a strong focus on family issues. The discipline of children and intergenerational conflict were strongly emphasized in the focus groups. Therefore, the workshop series should address the issue of child abuse and discipline as well as partner violence. Possible topic areas identified by focus group participants include: domestic violence and the law, intergenerational conflict, parenting skills, adapting to shifting roles and responsibilities, communication skills, the cycle of violence, conflict resolution, cultural adaptation, economic development, the impact of domestic violence on children, addictions, civic engagement and anger management.

Promotional materials for the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should emphasize a positive message about preserving family harmony. Focus group participants identified family disintegration as one of the most serious impacts of domestic violence. In addition to making explicit reference to the issue of family violence, promotional materials should emphasize the positive message that the workshops will provide participants with information and tools to help build family harmony.

Components of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should be offered as stand alone sessions for community groups and agencies. The individual workshops within the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series should be designed so that they can also be offered as stand alone workshops for ethno-cultural community groups and community agencies. Priority topics for stand alone workshop offerings include domestic violence and the law, intergenerational conflict, parenting skills, cultural adaptation, and the cycle of violence. These workshops can be integrated into existing programming such as newcomer orientations and ESL classes. Every effort should be made to secure the resources that would allow for the translation of the materials into other languages for ethno-culturally focused program offerings.

Immigrant and refugee men should play an integral role in program development, recruitment and delivery for the *Strengthening Families in Canada* workshop series. The focus group discussions and the success of the Community Based Researcher (CBR) model in conducting this needs assessment demonstrated the importance of involving men as advocates and allies in domestic violence prevention efforts. Immigrant and refugee men should be involved in program design and recruitment.²⁰ The men's workshops should be co-facilitated by a male and female team to model an equal collaborative partnership between men and women.²¹ The discussions in the focus groups revealed that there was confusion and a lack of understanding about many aspects of family violence. The most challenging area relates to concepts of masculinity and adaptation to shifting power dynamics in the Canadian context. Immigrant and refugee men are

²⁰ It is assumed that immigrant and refugee women and youth will also be involved in the development, promotion and delivery of the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project.

²¹ See recommendation on developing a *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program.

well positioned to engage with other men in the process of changing their understanding of community values and norms. The workshops will need to be designed so that myths and misconceptions about family violence can be explicitly addressed in an environment that allows men to honestly express their feelings and to critically examine their beliefs.

Project partners should develop a *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention*

Education program. Project partners should build on the CBR model to introduce a training program for immigrant and refugee community members (including men) in the area of domestic violence prevention education. A number of the CBRs and focus group participants could make excellent candidates for this type of training. The training should focus on providing participants with enhanced knowledge of the content included in the workshop series as well as training in the areas of program development, workshop design and public speaking/facilitation skills.

Project partners should investigate the potential of involving religious leaders as part of the *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program.

One specialized stream for the *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program that should be investigated would be to design a program specifically for religious leaders in ethno-cultural communities. Religious leaders were identified as key potential allies in the review of the literature, the Winnipeg service provider's focus group and the immigrant men's focus groups. Furthermore, the program review identified two initiatives in Canada that could provide project partners with evaluative information and access to resources that would assist with designing such a program for the Winnipeg context. The Mennonite Central Committee in Winnipeg may also be able to provide some guidance in developing such a program. This agency has launched the *Voices for Non-Violence* project which provides resources, training and education to faith communities in Manitoba regarding family violence and faith related issues.

Project partners should utilize a community development approach which provides economic opportunities and builds capacity within immigrant and refugee communities. It is important to invest resources in the community in a manner that recognizes community assets, and strengthens the capacity of immigrants and refugees to address violence prevention issues in their own communities. The *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program should be an avenue for gaining paid employment in designing and delivering the educational initiatives described in the previous section. This is consistent with a community development approach that recognizes the importance of providing community members with a central role in program delivery, transferable skills and tangible economic opportunities.

Project partners should encourage and support the development of community based violence prevention initiatives by ethno-cultural community groups.

The initiatives that are already under way in a number of ethno-cultural communities in Winnipeg provide project partners with the opportunity to support the development of ethno-culturally focussed violence prevention strategies. These groups include the Afghan Association, the Filipino coalition addressing family violence, the Sudanese Association and the Indo-Canadian group that is currently working with Mount Carmel Clinic. Sharing the findings of this needs assessment and the results from the other streams of activity is one avenue for raising awareness and interest in this area of work with other ethno-cultural communities such as the Latin American community, the Kurdish community and emerging African communities (Sierra Leone, the Congo and Rwanda). In supporting the

development of community led ethno-culturally specific violence prevention strategies, it is critical that project partners make every effort to ensure that women and youth are also included in the process.

Project partners should work with ethno-cultural groups to adapt the *Strengthening Families in Canada* program offerings for specific ethno-cultural communities and to develop other primary prevention activities.

The entire workshop series or individual workshops could become part of an ethno-culturally focussed strategy developed in conjunction with a specific community group. The program offerings described above could be adapted to address the needs of specific ethno-cultural communities. For example, one of the focus groups identified gambling a critical issue for their ethno-cultural community and emphasized that domestic violence prevention programming would need to address gambling as a related issue. The ethno-culturally focussed workshops should be led by individuals who have an intimate knowledge of the culture and language of the group as well as comprehensive training in the area of domestic violence prevention.²² Community members may also choose to employ other primary prevention strategies such as public awareness activities as part of their domestic violence prevention strategy.²³ The focus groups revealed the potential of developing key messages that resonate with community norms and values when developing ethno-culturally focussed materials. This underlines the importance of developing multiple avenues for consulting with and receiving feedback from community members. To ensure accessibility for newcomers, the educational materials and program offerings would need to be provided in their mother tongue.

An emphasis on family unity should not compromise core principles of domestic violence prevention.

An emphasis on preserving family harmony provides an important entry point and a non-threatening way to introduce the issue of family violence because it dovetails with community values and is a critical area of concern shared by many members of immigrant and refugee communities. However, collaborative work with ethno-cultural community members including community leaders (i.e. religious leaders, professionals and elders) must be carried out in a way that does not undermine the rights of individuals who have been abused or compromise the key message that domestic violence is not acceptable.

Project partners should explore the possibility of working with immigrant and refugee youth to evaluate the accessibility of existing school based programming.

Project partners should explore the implementation of a project to assess the domestic violence prevention materials that have been developed for inclusion in the school curriculum. These materials should be evaluated to determine if they are accessible and culturally appropriate for immigrant and refugee youth. Immigrant and refugee youth should be included as part of the evaluation team. The results and recommendations of this assessment should be communicated to the relevant government departments.

Project partners should continue to support the development of new partnerships and expanded networks in the area of domestic violence prevention.

²² See recommendation on developing a *Train the Trainer Domestic Violence Prevention Education* program.

²³ A highly successful method used by one of the CBRs to recruit participants for his focus group provides an indication of creative avenues for raising public awareness in specific ethno-cultural communities. The CBR left promotional materials at a local barber shop and asked the barber to talk to his clients about the focus group. This approach generated a surprising number of participants for the focus group.

community-based agencies provided a good foundation for the successful implementation of the 3 streams of activity in the *Strengthening Families in Canada* project. Keen community interest in the results of this needs assessment and active participation in the Winnipeg service providers' focus group suggest that there is potential for widening the network of organizations and individuals working on this issue. The community celebration and other opportunities for disseminating the project findings can provide avenues for developing new partnerships. A structured process and ongoing communication strategy will need to be developed to build new partnerships and to maintain active networks with a focus on primary domestic violence prevention for immigrant men.

Project partners should advocate for long term core funding to support primary family violence prevention initiatives. Successful pilot projects in the area of primary prevention have failed to attract long term sustained funding and primary prevention work currently being done by local service providers is under resourced. Project partners should work to develop a strategy for attracting long term core funding for existing initiatives and new program offerings. This funding should not be secured at the expense of existing domestic violence initiatives. The need to advocate for an expansion of resources allocated to addressing domestic violence and securing a stable funding base underlines the importance of building strong networks and partnerships.

The dissemination of research findings and the development of new programs should not reinforce negative stereotypes about immigrant men and ethno-cultural communities. Care should be taken to ensure that dissemination of the research results and the implementation of domestic violence prevention initiatives for immigrant men are presented in a manner that does not reinforce negative stereotypes of immigrant men or ethno-cultural communities. It is important to effectively communicate the message that domestic violence is a serious problem across all cultures and socio-economic groups. The need to develop or adapt domestic violence prevention programs for immigrant and refugee men should be presented as addressing the need for information and resources that are accessible to ethno-cultural communities. Instead of singling out immigrant and refugee men, these initiatives should be promoted in a manner that emphasizes support for families as well as the positive role that immigrant and refugee men can play in preventing domestic violence.

Project partners should ensure that new initiatives include the resources required to rigorously document and evaluate the program offering. Primary prevention is a relatively new field that is under resourced. Initiatives in this area tend to be ad hoc activities, with minimal documentation and evaluation. In proposing pilot projects and other initiatives in this area, project partners should seek to secure sufficient funding to enable rigorous documentation and evaluation of primary prevention projects. This will facilitate sharing of resources and program results with other organizations and community groups in Winnipeg and elsewhere. Comprehensive evaluations are essential to assessing the effectiveness of primary prevention strategies and to building a case for long term core funding of primary prevention.

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APPENDICES

A. SERVICE PROVIDER – INTERVIEW FORMAT

1. What are your domestic violence prevention programs for men? (*or refer to list of programs to verify that information on chart is correct*)
2. How were these programs established?
3. Do you serve clients from an immigrant/refugee background? (If “no”, skip to ____)
If yes → Could you estimate the percentage of your clients who come from an immigrant/refugee background?
4. What countries are they primarily from?
5. Have you made any adjustments to your programming to better meet the needs of your immigrant/refugee clients? (If “no”, skip to ____)
If yes → Could you describe these adjustments?
6. Are you aware of any domestic violence prevention programs in Canada, the States or other parts of the world that have been designed specifically for immigrant and refugee men?
If yes → Could you provide us with more information about these programs (prompt for contact information)
7. Does your organization have any relevant resources or literature that you would be willing to share with us?
If yes → Please describe these materials (prompt to see if available online, cost of materials, etc.)
8. Are you aware of any other relevant resources or literature that would be of assistance?
If yes → How would we access these resources (prompt for contact information, websites, etc.)
9. Do you have any advice for us on how we should proceed with establishing domestic violence prevention programs for immigrant/refugee men?

B. SERVICE PROVIDER – INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

Program / Organization	Project Location
Immigration and Settlement – Manitoba Labour and Immigration	Winnipeg
Punjab Foundation of Manitoba	Winnipeg
Newcomer Orientation Welcome Place	Winnipeg
Men’s Resource Centre Elizabeth Hill Counselling Centre	Winnipeg
Partner Abuse Short Term Group Community & Youth Corrections – Probation	Winnipeg
Evolve / KLINIC	Winnipeg
Entry Program	Winnipeg
Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association The Family Violence and Cultural Awareness Program	Halifax
The South Asian Men Against Violence Project	Toronto
Religious Community Accountability Project Korean Canadian Women's Association	Toronto

C. SERVICE PROVIDER – FOCUS GROUP FORMAT

Strengthening Families in Canada

Service Providers Consultation Agenda

1:00 – 1:10 Introductions

1:10 – 1:20 Project Overview & Research Methodology

1:20 – 1:25 Review Responses to Domestic Violence

1:25 – 2:25 Consultation Questions

2:25 – 2:30 Closing Remarks

Overview of Project

How did this project start?

- The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was the result of a joint training program between the Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC) and Immigrant Women's Counselling Services (IWCS) in Winnipeg.
- The Women's Action Against Violence (WAAV) training program was a program for immigrant and refugee women on the issue of domestic violence.
- The program participants suggested that there was a need for violence prevention education programs for immigrant and refugee men.

Who is behind this project?

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project is sponsored the following agencies:

- Immigrant Women Counselling Services
- Mount Carmel Clinic
- Teen Talk/Klinik
- Sexuality Education Resource Centre.

What is the Strengthening Families in Canada Project?

- The *Immigrant Women's Action Against Violence Prevention Education* - provides partner violence prevention education for women from a variety of ethno cultural backgrounds
- *Spanish Speaking Youth Action Against Violence Prevention Education* - provides violence prevention education to Spanish speaking youth.
- The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project includes an *Immigrant Men's Needs Assessment on Family Violence Prevention Education*.

What are the goals of the Immigrant's Men's Needs Assessment?

- To better understand how family violence is understood by immigrant/refugee men in the community
- To determine the best way to deliver culturally appropriate community education/public awareness on the issue of family violence for immigrant and refugee men.

How is the Men's Needs Assessment Being Done?

- Program & Literature Review
- Seven Focus Groups and interviews with Immigrant Men from various Ethno-Cultural Communities
- Consultation session and interviews with service providers

Responses to Domestic Violence

- Domestic violence support programs for women who have experiences abuse such as the establishment of shelters, transitional housing and resource centres
- Legal and judicial interventions directed at the batterers
- Batterer intervention programs for men to foster non-violent alternative behaviour
- Primary prevention programs that aim to prevent incidents of domestic violence from occurring in the first place by changing societal norms, values and behaviours.

Primary Prevention Approaches

- General public awareness campaigns
- School based educational programs
- Community education programs

Consultation Questions

1. What types of domestic violence prevention programming is done by your agency or other groups/organizations in the city?
2. Are these initiatives accessible to immigrants and refugees? If 'yes' what makes them accessible? If 'no' what are the barriers?
3. Is there a need for more domestic violence prevention/education in Winnipeg? Why/Why Not?
4. Is there a need for domestic violence prevention/education that has been designed specifically for immigrant and refugee men? Why would this be beneficial? What are some concerns?

Assuming that project partners decide to introduce domestic prevention/education program for immigrant men...

5. What are the best educational methods for preventing domestic violence?
6. What are the key messages that should be included in public awareness materials (i.e. posters, brochure, public service announcements)? Would it be better to refer directly to 'domestic violence' in the name of the program or would it better to use a less direct approach? i.e. 'Strengthening Families in Canada'

Assuming that project partners decide to introduce a workshop series on domestic violence prevention...

7. Should the workshops be delivered to both men and women as a mixed group or should the workshops be delivered separately to men and women?
8. In designing a holistic domestic violence prevention program, what other issues should be included in the program? Are there other programs that could be linked to or delivered in conjunction with a domestic violence prevention program? Do you see a role for your organization?
9. Are there particular ethno-cultural groups that project partners should be trying to build partnerships with?

D. SERVICE PROVIDER – FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Organization	Participants
Mount Carmel Clinic	1
Women in Second Stage Housing (W.I.S.H.)	1
Evolve / Klinik	1
Victims Services Domestic Violence Unit	1
Manitoba Immigration and Multiculturalism	1
Pluri-elles	2
Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba	1
Immigrant Women's Counselling Service	1
Success Skills Centre	1
Sexuality Education Resource Centre	1

E. IMMIGRANT MEN – FOCUS GROUP FORMAT

Strengthening Families in Canada Focus Group for Men's Project

AGENDA

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 15 min | Welcome & Informed Consent |
| 15 min | Introductions |
| 5 min | Overview of Project |
| 45 min | Questions on Domestic Violence |
| 10 min | Break |
| 50 min | Questions on Prevention Methods |
| 10 min | Concluding Remarks & Distribution of Honorarium |

Welcome & Consent Form

Welcome participants

Discuss provision of honorariums

Review consent form

- The form is to make sure you understand this research project and agree to participate
- This research project is sponsored by a number of community agencies
- The focus group/discussion will take approximately 2 hours
- Information will be tape recorded and notes will also be taken
- The information will be combined and kept confidential
- The final report will be available to you
- Referral to counsellor can be provided
- If cases of abuse are discussed, we will need to inform the authorities
- Even after you sign the form you can choose to leave the focus group at anytime
- Please indicate if you are available for follow-up interviews
- Please ask any questions

Option of providing written comments

Group Guidelines

- Respect
- Participation
- Allow others to speak
- Confidentiality
- Ask questions

Introductions

Name

How long have you been in Canada?

What are some of the community activities that you have participated in?

Overview of Project

How did this project start?

- The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project was the result of a joint training program between the Sexuality Education Resource Centre (SERC) and Immigrant Women's Counselling Services (IWCS) in Winnipeg.
- The Women's Action Against Violence (WAAV) training program was a program for immigrant and refugee women on the issue of domestic violence.
- The program participants suggested that there was a need for violence prevention education programs for immigrant and refugee men.

Who is behind this project?

The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project is sponsored the following agencies:

- Immigrant Women Counselling Services
- Mount Carmel Clinic
- Teen Talk/Klinik
- Sexuality Education Resource Centre.

What is the Strengthening Families in Canada Project?

- The *Immigrant Women's Action Against Violence Prevention Education* - provides partner violence prevention education for women from a variety of ethno cultural backgrounds
- *Spanish Speaking Youth Action Against Violence Prevention Education* - provides violence prevention education to Spanish speaking youth.
- The *Strengthening Families in Canada* project includes an *Immigrant Men's Needs Assessment on Family Violence Prevention Education*.

What are the goals of the Immigrant's Men's Needs Assessment?

- To better understand how family violence is understood by immigrant/refugee men in the community
- To determine the best way to deliver culturally appropriate community education/public awareness on the issue of family violence for immigrant and refugee men.

Questions on Domestic Violence

BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE

In answering these questions, think about what is happening in your cultural community

1. What are some examples of actions which you would consider to be domestic violence?

2. What causes domestic violence?

3. Is domestic violence acceptable in some circumstances? If “Yes” - What are the circumstances? If “No” - Why not?

4. What are some of the most serious effects of domestic violence?

5. Do immigrant men need more information and education about domestic violence prevention? If “yes” – Why? If “No” – Why not?

Questions on Prevention Methods

SMALL GROUP WORK EXERCISE

Divide into groups of 3 or 4 people to discuss these questions. You will need to select someone to take notes and present your recommendations to the rest of the group.

1. What are the best educational methods for preventing domestic violence?

2. Who are the people in your community who have the most influence on reducing domestic violence? What are the best methods for involving these people in reducing domestic violence?

3. If you were making a poster about preventing domestic violence what are some main messages you would use?

Questions on Prevention Methods

(con't)

ROUNDS EXERCISE

Would it be better to have an educational program that is only about domestic violence or would it better to make this part of another program?

If your answer is “only domestic violence”

What are some of the main topics that should be covered?

If your answer is “part of another program”

What are some examples of programs that could include a section on preventing domestic violence?

Concluding Comments

Thank you

Discuss sharing research results

Honorarium