

Giving Voice



2013-2016 Final Report
Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW), I am pleased to present the Giving Voice 2013-2016 Final Report.

In Canada today, half of all women are victims of violence but Aboriginal women are three times more likely to be victims, and it is eight times more likely for those violent situations to end in homicide.ⁱ In 2015 the Native Women's Association of Canada suggested that there are more than 4,000ⁱⁱ murdered or missing Aboriginal women and girls across Canada, and in 2010 suggested that one-quarter of all cases to date had occurred in British Columbia.ⁱⁱⁱ It is clear that many

continue to experience the inter-generational impacts of residential schools and colonization.

MACAW strongly believes that Aboriginal communities know how to heal themselves and, in this spirit, launched Giving Voice. These inspiring projects are community-led, community-mobilized and "give voice" to issues of violence within Aboriginal women's lives and communities.

The women of MACAW raise their hands to community champions who led Giving Voice projects, and to leaders who continue to advocate for an end to violence against women. We know that by working together, respectfully and in partnership, we will make a difference for all women.

Chastity Davis
Chair, Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women

ABOUT MACAW

The Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW) was established in 2011. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women in B.C., and it envisions a world where all Aboriginal peoples live free of violence and are healthy, sustainable, and self-determining.

MACAW honours Aboriginal worldviews and works from a holistic perspective of women. When it speaks of women, it is inclusive of children, family, community, nationhood, wellness, justice, land, and water. MACAW draws inspiration from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

MACAW is comprised of up to 10 members, including one position designated for an Elder and another for a youth. The Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation appoints members based on criteria of experience, diversity, and regional representation.

MACAW advocates for the well-being of Aboriginal women by:

- Providing advice and support to government through the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.
- Strategically influencing decision-making that will improve the quality of life for Aboriginal women.
- Fostering dialogue between government and communities.
- Offering guidance and direction that is rooted in Aboriginal worldviews.

MACAW facilitated the development and signing of the *Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Stopping Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls*, which was endorsed by Aboriginal and provincial leadership in 2014. It goes hand-in-hand with the *Declaration on Stopping Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls*, which may be adopted or adapted by all leaders, communities, organizations or individuals who commit to stopping violence against Aboriginal women and girls.



Background



CONTEXT AND GOALS

“To address the issue of violence, one must understand the history and impact of colonization on Aboriginal peoples in Canada. It is the ongoing narration of violence, systemic racism and discrimination, purposeful denial of culture, language and traditions, and legislation designed to destroy identity that has led to the realities facing Aboriginal peoples... Colonization is not simply a strategy of the past, but a reality that reinforces the silence surrounding the violence experienced by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis women today.”

– Native Women’s Association of Canada^{iv}

In 1996, a Canadian government statistic revealed that Aboriginal women between the ages of 25-44 with status under the *Indian Act* were five times more likely than all other women of the same age to die as the result of violence.^v Aboriginal women are also more likely to be killed by a stranger than non-Aboriginal women.^{vi}

In response to these alarming statistics, in 2013 MACAW launched Giving Voice, a multi-year initiative to support community-led projects that created space for healing, and met the needs of communities depending on their readiness to address violence and encourage healing.

The goals of Giving Voice were to:

- 1) Provide Aboriginal women, men, youth and Elders a safe opportunity to “give voice” to issues of violence and abuse within their lives, families and communities.
- 2) Learn successful strategies to address these issues from one other, and learn from stories of resilience and strength.
- 3) Be inspired to create change.

Its underlying approach is that **Aboriginal communities know how to heal themselves.**

“At 10-12 years of age, the girls quickly picked up that girls need – and deserve – a voice. No one should be silenced, especially girls who know exactly what is needed to create change. It gave the older girls hope and was a reminder to be confident in who they are as Indigenous peoples.”

– Giving a Voice to Girls

QUICK FACTS

Total number of Giving Voice projects:	50
Total funding allocated:	\$420,000
Total number of participants:	2000+
Timeline:	2013-2016

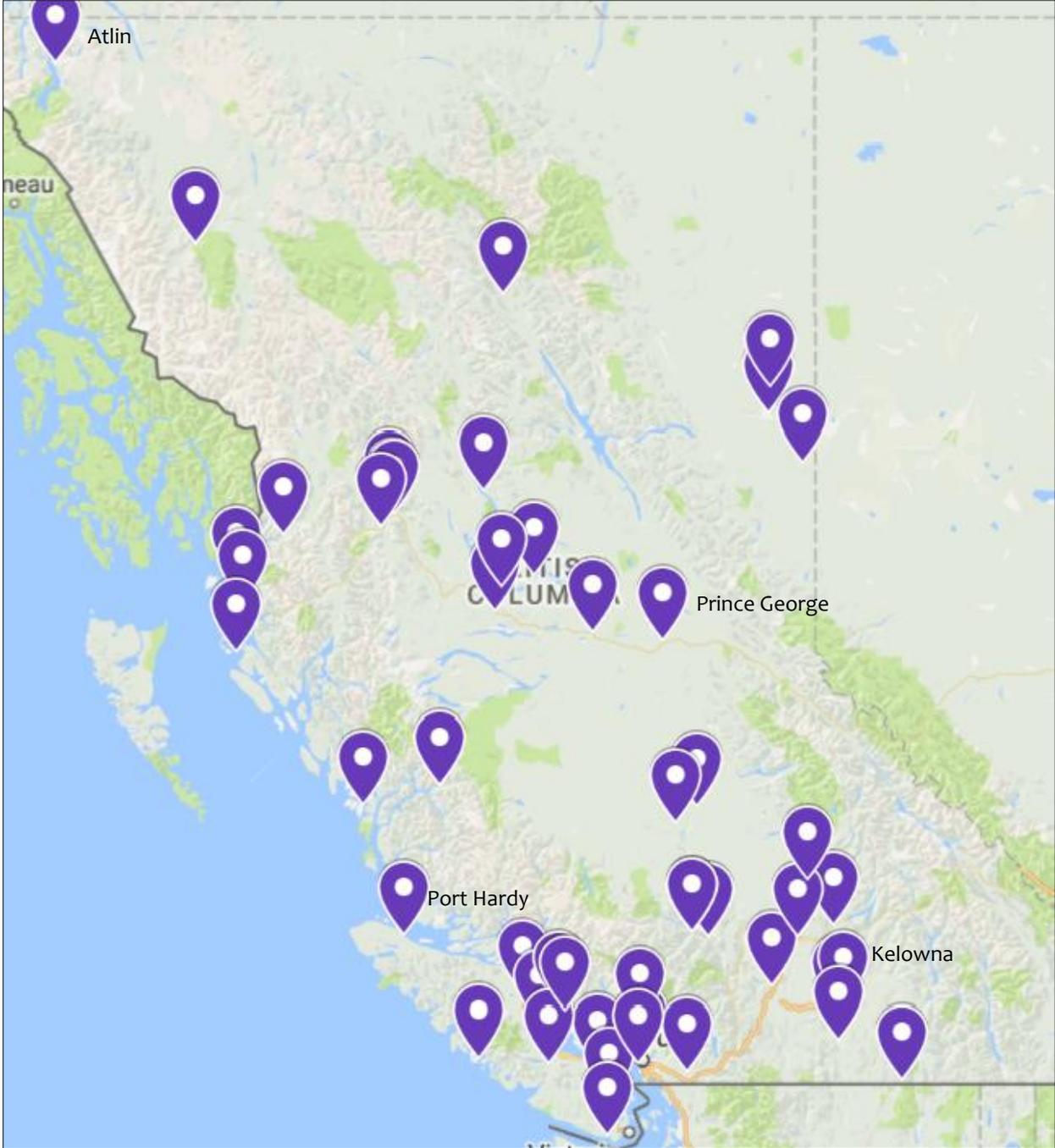
Two phases of projects took place and were led directly by Aboriginal communities or organizations. Phase one took place from 2013-2014, with 13 projects receiving a total of \$70,000. Phase two took place from 2014-2016, with 37 projects receiving a total of \$350,000.

MACAW gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and also thanks Carrier Sekani Family Services for administering the funding.



LOCATIONS

Projects or activities took place in more than 50 locations across British Columbia. Geographic representation was considered when selecting projects to fund.



COMMUNITY THEMES AND APPROACHES

Once their Giving Voice project was completed, Aboriginal communities and organizations provided final reports that outlined community-identified and community-led approaches to ending violence that supported dialogue to foster healing.

Common themes and approaches emerged across communities and projects:

- Creating safe environments for participants to gather without judgment.
- Inter-generational bonding and mentorship naturally occurring within groups.
- Individuals recognizing healthy versus unhealthy relationships.
- Supporting individuals to respect themselves and require respect in their relationships.
- Giving parents a safe place to gather, share, and grow without judgment of their parenting techniques.





Project Examples

Aboriginal Dads' Talking Circle and Aboriginal Daddy Day Camp

Location: Westbank and Kelowna

- More than 80 children attended Aboriginal Daddy Day Camp with their fathers over five days.
- Dads and children attended 12 monthly talking circles.
- Explored traditional parenting methods guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings – love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth – and teachings about the role of men and fathers.
- Discussed the experience of trauma as children.
- Recognized values that dads want to pass on to children.
- Identified cultural and recreational activities to do with children.
- Observed other dads' parenting techniques and engagement with their children.

“We saw many dads open up and share intimate experiences and personal history. Many expressed how important this experience was and how grateful they were for peer support.”

– Aboriginal Dads' Talking Circle



Youth Violence Prevention and Awareness

Location: multiple communities

“We must help our youth and community members to build their confidence in our teachings, which gives them roots of responsibility and wings of independence.”

– Canoe Journey - Life Journey

Recognizing the importance of supporting the next generation, multiple communities offered youth violence awareness workshops or culture camps, which explored topics such as:

- Forms of violence and abuse.
- Identifying power and control in relationships.
- Identifying personal strengths and emotions.
- Safety plans for dating.
- How to say ‘no’ to friends.
- Social media violence.
- Sexual consent and healthy sexuality.
- Setting boundaries.
- Bullying awareness.
- What is appropriate behavior?
- Coming-of-age rites and ceremonies.
- Traditional practices associated with the gender with which youth identify.
- Suicide awareness.
- Blanket Exercise.

“Teenage girls became aware of their current relationships and able to identify if they were healthy or unhealthy.”

– Giving Voice Final Report

“There was an understanding between the girls, women and Elders that we are not alone in our struggles.”

– Girl Power Hour



Violence Prevention and Awareness

Location: multiple communities

“I learned what love is, what love isn’t, and how to be safe.”

“I learned how to walk away from abuse.”

- Giving Voice project participants

A number of communities held violence prevention and awareness workshops, most of which were offered to women. Most brought participants together to engage in cultural activities, while learning about violence or discussing the impact of violence on their lives and communities. Participants explored:

- Forms of violence and abuse
- Impacts on adults and children of witnessing abuse.
- Types of intimate partner violence, linking to the medicine wheel: emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual realms.
- Safety planning for crisis situations or intimate partner violence.
- How to leave an abusive relationship.
- Healthy vs. unhealthy relationships.
- Stalking, power and control.
- Identifying community supports and services.
- Empowerment: self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, setting boundaries, healthy social relationships, and finding spiritual supports.
- RCMP role in domestic disputes.
- Navigating the child and family services and justice systems.
- Conflict resolution skills.

“One individual in our group left her abusive partner.”

“Some women realized they were in unhealthy relationships, and took steps to set boundaries and educate their daughters and granddaughters.”

“Women indicated that the information they learned will help them make better choices, feel safer and give them help in their present relationships. Some said they wished they had known this information before they got into relationships.”

- Giving Voice final reports



Cultural Activities

Location: multiple communities

Many communities brought people together to discuss broad topics such as violence, inter-generational trauma and colonization while engaging in cultural activities such as:

- Making potlatch blankets.
- Sewing moose hide purses.
- Weaving baskets.
- Shawl making.
- Picking berries.
- Making moccasins.
- Healthy eating and traditional foods.
- First Nations history.
- Traditional knowledge.
- Self-care.
- Participating in sweat lodges.
- Medicine walks with Elders.

“Prayers helped me walk through what I was going through. This was a real eye-opener.”
– Giving Voice project participant

“Culture saves lives, and it only takes one person to make a difference.”
– Lheghidli: A Streams Approach to Healthy Relationships

“We underestimated the strength of being out on the land; it was the strongest component of the program that provided healing, self-esteem and connectedness to culture and tradition.”
– Giving Voice So People Will Hear: Women and Girls Program



“An Aboriginal woman from the local women’s shelter had the opportunity to connect with traditional ceremony. She was transformed from a very sad and introverted space to a happy, calm and open person. This project made a very positive impact on this woman and several others as we saw their confidence in themselves and their self-assurance build.”

– Hear Our Voices

“At the final session, women were dressed in cedar bark hats and traditional shawls. The women were held in a place of reverence, and some of the women were moved to tears. The women danced proudly and were in their element.”

– Kwakiutl Band Health Center

“The men in the community expressed their desire to stand up and take on their traditional role as community protectors.”

– Giving Voice Final Report

“A memorable moment was the radiating pride that Aboriginal teenage girls held for their place in the community during an Honouring Our Young Women ceremony.”

– Snuneymuxw Nation



Listen to our Heartbeat: CD Production

Location: Vancouver

- Warriors Against Violence produced and launched a CD compilation of Aboriginal music that sought to raise awareness about violence against Indigenous women.
- The Georgia Strait newspaper ran an article to promote the CD launch event.
- Vancouver Police showed their support by attending the CD launch and concert.

“One artist donated the proceeds of their single to an anti-violence organization.”

- Listen to our Heartbeat



Next Steps



IMPACT OF GIVING VOICE

Giving Voice has had tremendous impact on Aboriginal women, families and communities across British Columbia, and directly aligns with MACAW's vision of "a world where all Aboriginal peoples live free of violence and are healthy, sustainable, and self-determining."

The impact of Giving Voice has been inspiring, compelling and far-reaching. Stories of teenage girls finding their voices, vulnerable people gaining strength from cultural activities, and of women leaving abusive relationships or setting boundaries with their partners show the value of these community-led projects.

In some instances, these one-time grants have sparked ongoing programs, and transformation has occurred in many individuals and communities with relatively small investment. Giving Voice final reports outlined a wide-range of individual and community benefits that emerged:

Individual Benefits

- Improved sense of cultural identity, community belonging and connection.
- Increased opportunities for vulnerable people to engage in traditional activities.
- Increased awareness about different types of violence.
- Increased awareness of community or provincial resources.
- Enhanced self-esteem.
- Enhanced communication and problem-solving skills.
- Increased sense of personal and family safety.
- Improved understanding of impact or consequences of behavior.
- Increased sense of responsibility to community.

Community Benefits

- Created opportunities for communities to "give voice" to issues of violence and abuse.
- Enhanced capacity to deliver programs and services.
- Enhanced responsiveness to community needs.
- Improved policies to prevent violence.
- Built community partnerships and networks.
- Improved staff training and development.

Giving Voice also:

- Supports a paradigm shift away from government-led to community-led healing.
- Supports a return to traditional ways of healing, as Aboriginal peoples have done for millennia.
- Encourages local decision making by acknowledging that government doesn't need to provide answers because communities already have them.
- Is proactive instead of reactive – as Warriors Against Violence stated, “The best way to end violence is to prevent it.”



STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH THE PROVINCE

Giving Voice strategically aligns with a number of Provincial efforts and agreements, such as:

- Vision for a Violence Free BC^{vii}
- Provincial Domestic Violence Plan^{viii}
- The Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Stopping Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls (2014)^{ix}

Giving Voice also directly aligns with numerous goals, objectives and strategies laid out various ministry mandate letters and service plans. Specifically, it supports the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation's 2017/18 – 2018/19 Service Plan:^x

- The Ministry is committed to... Provincial and ongoing community-based dialogue on the root causes and prevention of violence against Indigenous women and girls (p. 7).
- Engage First Nations and Aboriginal peoples early to ensure they have opportunities to participate in, and in involved with, initiatives that affect their communities (p. 11).
- Work with Aboriginal peoples to enhance and build capacity in Aboriginal communities, government and organizations (p. 11).
- Continue to reconcile with Aboriginal peoples in B.C. (p. 13).
- With the guidance of the Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women, promote culture-based approaches to violence prevention, awareness and enhancement of victim services for Aboriginal families and communities (p. 15).
- Benefit from the cultural and traditional knowledge of Elders by working to highlight the critical roles and contributions of Elders in Aboriginal communities (p. 15).
- Seek out opportunities to create partnerships between First Nations, industry, education providers and government, and to support dialogues that contribute to positive community outcomes and promote reconciliation (p. 15).

NEXT STEPS

MACAW continues to advocate for further funding to allow the Giving Voice initiative to continue. It holds great potential for communities to continue healing, and furthers the Province's reconciliation efforts by addressing the root causes of violence caused by colonization.

“The women were disappointed that this program was ending and asked if there is going to be another. If so, they wish to be contacted to continue their journey.”

– Llum'utul Smuun-eem

Through Giving Voice projects, communities and organizations were able to positively impact over 2,000 participants throughout B.C. It has been inspiring to see what Aboriginal communities have accomplished when given the space and support to heal themselves. The Minister's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women hopes similar projects will take place to support Aboriginal women, peoples and communities to give voice to issues of violence and foster healing.

“Every session gave me strength. Right in the heart.”

– Giving Voice project participant



REFERENCES

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- ^{ix} Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Stopping Violence Against Aboriginal Women and Girls. June, 2014. http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/aboriginal-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/mou_regarding_stopping_violence_signed_june_13_2014.pdf.
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APPENDIX

GIVING VOICE 2013-2016 PROJECTS

2013-2014

Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society

Project name: Aboriginal Women's Spirit

Location: Vancouver

Carrier Sekani Family Services

Project name: Highway of Tears Community Safety Training

Location: Prince George

Kwadacha Nation

Project name: Giving Voice

Location: Prince George

Bella Coola Community Support Society

Project name: All Women's Empowering Potlatch and Feast

Location: Bella Coola

Mission Friendship Centre Society

Project name: Patchwork on our Hearts

Location: Mission

Seton Lake Band

Project name: Our Sacred Dress

Location: Shalalth

Gitsegukla Health Centre

Project name: Kitchen Table Women's Group

Location: Gitsegukla

Ahousaht Nation

Project name: Ahousaht Voices - Digitized

Location: Ahousaht

Nala'atsi School District #71

Project name: Giving Voice Project

Location: Courtenay

Taku River Tlingit First Nations
Project name: Reviving Traditional Ways
Location: Atlin

Tla'Amin Health Community Services Societys
Project name: Women's Wellness
Location: Powell River

Scw'exmx Child and Family Services Society
Project name: Giving VoiceProject
Location: Merritt

Ksi Xy'ans Daycare Head Start
Project name: Nisga'a Women's Footprints to Wellness
Location: Caxgals'ap

Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society
Project name: Standing Up Our Women and Children
Location: Kelowna

2014-2015

WISH Drop in Centre Society
Project name: Aboriginal Health and Safety Project
Location: Vancouver
Description: Provided a continuum of culturally safe services for marginalized Aboriginal women working in the sex trade to connect women to their culture and each other, and increase their capacity to resist violence and exploitation.

Prince Rupert Aboriginal Community Services Society
Project name: Turning Points
Location: Prince Rupert and Lax Kw'alaams
Description: Education-based and group-facilitated sessions allowed women to learn about violence and take concrete steps to end the violence in their lives – whether as victim and perpetrator.

Boundary Métis Community Association
Project name: Hear Our Voices
Location: Grand Forks
Description: Workshops addressed ending violence by bringing women together to learn about cultural teachings and connect with health service providers.

Squamish Nation Education Department

Project name: Bringing Back Tradition (Against Lateral Violence)

Location: Squamish

Description: This project delivered four 4-day family culture camps which welcomed families with sharing circles, education on family violence and abuse, guest speakers, traditional wool shawl/tunic or cedar hat weaving, drumming and singing.

Skin Tyee Nation

Project name: Giving Voice to Our Women

Location: Southbank

Description: Twenty bi-weekly gatherings of women and girls took place with guest speakers, traditional activities, and an “invitation only” support group on social media. This project provided tools and supports to prevent and escape violent situations, and supported recovery processes through social media, safe houses, gatherings, and workshops with the RCMP.

Kwakiutl Band

Project name: Kwakiutl Women, Empowered Women

Location: Port Hardy

Description: Weekly focus groups combined with traditional activities and culminated in a camp. The camp was delivered by Elder women and ‘ninogad’ (wise ones) with support from band staff. Themes included empowerment, traditional cleansing rituals, self-care, co-dependence, co-dependence no more, stress management, and reaction vs. action.

Gitlaxt’aamiks

Project name: Giving Voice Workshop

Location: Gitlaxt’aamiks

Description: This project offered three full-day workshops for women to help raise awareness about violence, and to educate and empower. Topics included risk factors and the arrangement of a local support group within the community.

Kwadacha Nation

Project name: Kwadacha Healthy Families Project

Location: Prince George

Description: This project worked with existing men’s, women’s, Elders’ and youth groups to offer workshops on ending violence, communication skills and relationship problem-solving techniques. There was also a focus on restorative justice and healing camps.

Pauquachin Nation**Project name: Opening the Door: “Thu she’l’ yu’h’wet a’l’et thu s’l’en sleni”**

Location: Victoria

Description: This four-month program offered integrated, women-centered support circles for up to 15 women, and included Elder involvement. It laid a foundation for understanding women’s experiences with abuse, supporting women to understand their partner’s responsibility for abuse, and rebuilding and finding hope.

Dease River First Nation**Project name: Giving Voice**

Location: Good Hope Lake

Description: This project brought together women in a safe environment to sew a traditional “Healing Blanket” while listening to workshops on violence against women and youth workshops. Women participated in the workshops on a need-to basis. The blanket will be displayed in the community band office as a reminder of healing.

Cariboo Chilcotin Métis Association**Project name: Make Your Voice Heard for Women**

Location: Williams Lake

Project details: This project offered workshops for 10-12 women and youth, and welcomed guest speakers to discuss: violence and abuse issues in their community, families/personal relationships, violence prevention, signs of abuse, gender roles in society, culture, sexual harassment, getting out of abusive relationships, and learning safer and healthier sexual interaction.

Nee Tahi Buhn Indian Band**Project name: Giving Voice**

Location: Burns Lake

Description: These holistic workshops/gatherings were open to all on/off reserve community members. Guest speakers – including RCMP, Victim Services, Elders, and Traditional Healers – addressed violence, safety plans, spiritual healing, personal well being and self-care.

Laichwiltach Family Life Society**Project name: Rekindle the Spirit of Our Women and Girls**

Location: Campbell River

Description: This weekly group for women and children allowed them to share and learn traditional and cultural activities, as well as new skills for dealing with family violence and creating safety plans. A weekly group for girls brought them together to share and learn traditional crafts and cultural teachings about family and dating violence.

Aboriginal CATCH - Community Action Towards Children's Health

Project name: Aboriginal Fathers Engagement Program – Giving Voice to End Violence against Women and Girls

Location: Kelowna

Description: Talking circles were open to participants in the Aboriginal Fathers Engagement Program (which provides support for Aboriginal fathers, father figures, uncles and grandfathers) to learn about traditional parenting skills, respectful relationships, meaningful interaction with children, and building a stronger cultural identity.

Mount Currie Band (Lil'wat Nation)

Project name: Safer Families, Safer Children

Locations: Mount Currie and Lower Mainland

Description: This program included: an introduction to family violence, antecedents, and patterns in First Nations communities; violence in society (focused on history of First Nations); counseling interventions; inter-disciplinary responses/obligations; family/criminal legal system; and safety planning.

Nawican Friendship Centre

Project name: Giving Voice – Speaking Out Against Violence Towards Aboriginal Women and Girls

Location: Dawson Creek

Description: Women of the community came together to break the silence about violence against women, and to achieve community awareness, action, and inspiration. It included lunch, short presentations, guest speakers, discussion on how this is a community/cultural issue, ways men can take a stand, available support services, debriefing with a counselor, and a film screening of "Finding Dawn."

Nusdeh Yoh Aboriginal Choice School

Project name: Sharing Our Voice, Stopping Violence

Location: Prince George

Description: In partnership with Prince George Secondary School, this project conducted art-focused sharing circles in a safe and culturally sensitive environment for a group of girls, youth and women. It built awareness about the effects of violence. The groups planned an art show to build community awareness of how violence affects Aboriginal girls and youth.

Penticton Indian Band

Project name: Giving Voice so that People Hear Me

Location: Penticton

Description: This provided a safe forum for Aboriginal women and girls to share their stories in 16 weekly closed-group sessions. The sessions began in June when the birch and cedar roots are ready to make birch bark baskets from start to

finish. Participants planned to invite Chief/Council, Elders and men of the community for a traditional feast and to communicate what women in the community expect from men (e.g. protection, respect, and sacrifice) in the interest of creating a safe and healthy community.

Warriors Against Violence

Project name: Listen to our Heartbeat

Location: Vancouver

Description: Produced and distributed an electronic CD by various Aboriginal artists to raise awareness about stopping violence against Aboriginal women, It included a CD launch party to coincide close to National Aboriginal Day.

Tl'esqox (Toosey) Band - Health Department

Project name: Giving Voice Conference

Location: Riske Lake

Description: This conference for Elders, women, men and non-school aged children began with a half-day event at Tsilhqot'in heritage site "Woman Who Turned to Stone." Elders shared the significance of the site and the teachings inherent in the legend that includes a deep respect for young women, the roles of young women/men, and girls coming of age. The second day focused on family violence, young moms and healing from violence.

Lalum'utul' Smun'eem Child & Family Services

Project name: Si'a'lum' stuhw thu slhunlheni' tst (Giving Strength to our Ladies)

Location: Duncan

Description: This program for women and young girls addressed intimate partner violence and other forms of violence. Based on three topics - education, prioritizing safety, and social/emotional spiritual supports - the program was offered as a series once per week for 24 weeks with a maximum of 12 participants. Cowichan Elders provided cultural support and guidance throughout the series.

Lake Babine Nation

Project name: Girl Power Hour

Location: Burns Lake

Description: Weekly Monday gatherings were open to all Lake Babine Nation women/children to engage in various crafts, storytelling and healing circles. It included information sessions on the history and impacts of colonization, trauma on self/family/nation, community willingness to end silence, shame and guilt, breaking the silence, types of violence, the right to be safe, and protecting children. It kicked-off and concluded with an interactive ladies' luncheon.

Yekooche First Nation

Project name: Yekooche Women's Group

Location: Prince George

Description: The existing Yekooche Women's Group of 25 women held 25 bi-monthly meetings to raise awareness/empower each other and the community to address violence and bullying. It included craft making, an International Women's Day event March 6th, dinner and slide show at school gymnasium, and a program graduation on Nov. 30, 2015.

Butterflies in Spirit Society

Project name: Butterflies in Spirit

Description: Vancouver

Project details: Butterflies in Spirit created new dance performances to commemorate and raise awareness about the female victims of violence in Vancouver and across Canada. The dances were showcased at the National Day of Action of Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women on Oct. 4, 2015.

Snuneymuxw First Nation

Project name: Wise Women

Description: The project was constructed by a focus group of 24 Snuneymuxw women, including five Elders. It involved women telling stories of resilience and strength in overcoming violence. These stories were recorded during a three-day weekend retreat. Participants directed how to give creative and meaningful voice to their findings through stories (e.g. music, dialogue, dance, art). A public event was planned to "give voice" to strength and resiliency, including a cultural longhouse ceremony honouring young women (a cultural practice that has all but disappeared since European contact) to bring back respect for women and their unique role of creator.

2014-2016

Tahltan Band Council

Project name: Giving Voices Youth Summer Camp

Location: Glenora Fish Camp

Description: Tahltan, Kaska and Tlingit youth participated in:

- Suicide prevention
- Residential school presentation
- Blanket Exercise
- Sweat lodge
- Processing salmon
- Healthy relationships workshop
- Tahltan language
- Puberty rites teachings
- Drumming and singing
- Tahltan film presentations

Scia'new First Nation

Project name: Canoe Journey – Life Journey

Location: Sooke

Description: “Canoe Journey – Life Journey” is a metaphor for exploring and nurturing intergenerational knowledge on respectful relationships and giving voice to the youth, which will be heard throughout the community. Drawing on traditional teachings and ways-of-knowing, the youth reclaimed their sense of identity and self-respect that is the foundation of healthy relationships.

Carrier Sekani Family Services

Project name: Youth Culture Camp

Location: Donald's Landing (Lake Babine territory)

Description: The youth culture camp taught youth the traditional practices of Carrier Sekani territory. Youth learn the traditional practices associated with the gender they identify with. Youth and their chaperones are taught to process fish, hunt, and gather berries and traditional medicine plants. Carrier Sekani Family Services reaches out to Elders and knowledge holders from the communities to support in the delivery of the camps and cultural teachings.

Kamloops Sexual Assault Counseling Centre

Project name: Indigenous Community Safety Project

Locations: Kamloops, Simpcw First Nation, Lillooet First Nation, Little Shuswap First Nation

Description: This project provided information to Indigenous leadership in First Nations and urban Indigenous communities about criminal justice, family justice, child abuse and neglect, and child protection laws, policies and practices. It also provided for victim-centered safety planning, and information about violence and human trafficking.

Storytellers' Foundation

Project name: K'yuuksw – Waking up to Change

Locations: Hazelton, Gitanmaax, Kispiox, Hagwilget, Gitwangak, New Hazelton

Description: This project held monthly inter-agency meetings and events to address issues of violence and work together to build safe communities. It supported a men's campaign to end violence, and advised a holistic program that supported youth and their families recovering from violence and trauma.

Doig River First Nation

Project name: Doig River Women's Circle

Location: Rose Prairie

Description: This project established a safe place for approximately 40 women and girls, one evening per month for 9-10 months of the year for a total of 18 events over 2 years. It included shared meals, fun activities, healthy lifestyles/self-

care, cultural skills, traditional story-telling, inter-generational transfer of cultural values and local and inter-agency guest speakers, culminating in the development of a community anti-violence action plan with the assistance of regional agencies.

Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

Project name: Creating Healthy Relationships

Location: Port Alberni

Description: In year one, this project held family violence workshops (e.g. girls/youth discussions; parenting; anger management); focus group sessions to obtain community input; and ended with a forum bringing 14 communities together for workshops/guest presenters/panel discussions based on the identified in focus groups. In year 2, this project identified available services and built support system to address needs identified in year one's focus groups and forum.

Musqueam Nation

Project name: Mobilizing a Musqueam Critical Incident Response Team

Location: Vancouver

Description: This project the first stage of address violence: Crisis Response (the other two being Aftercare and Prevention) through community-based mobilization of a Critical Incident Response (CIR) Team. It supported parents/extended families in dealing with issues of violence; enhanced confidence/trust in response teams; and built capacity of community-based staff/social support workers.

Takla Lake First Nation

Project name: Takla Lake Women's Group

Location: Takla Landing

Description: Elders mentored workshops (crafts/traditional teachings) about matrilineal role in Takla society. Various presentations were given, including by the Adah Dene Healing Society, Power Talk Workshop (10 sessions), RCMP, Takla Nursing Staff, and a criminologist. The group also planned to participate with the Takla Men's Group to develop a video presentation for the end of the school year.

Saik'uz First Nation

Project name: Lheghidli: A Streams Approach to Healthy Relationships

Location: Vanderhoof

Description: This project created a theatre group for Aboriginal women and girls that created safety to explore violent experiences, built healthy relationships between women in the group, created stories around violent experiences, created healing through sharing stories and applying intervention in theatre forums. Year one held numerous theatre workshop sessions. Year two held

rehearsals and public performances. There was an expressed community need and creation of a mentorship program connecting Elders with men of all ages to create a space in which men feel safe to confront some of the key issues of disempowerment that might fuel abusive behaviour. Year one focused on traditional and contemporary activities (hunting, trapping, fishing, sports; singing/dancing/ drum-making). Year two built on this with participants acting as mentors, facilitated by a two-day workshop. It included celebratory feasts to honour men's journeys, build relationships, and share skills learned.

Gitxaala Nation

Project name: Naga Amhaw Hana'nax Gitxaata

Location: Kitkatla

Description: This two year project commenced with a Community Forum to identify local concerns/strategies. A team of 8-10 trained volunteers were recruited to: build relationship with Gitxaala women and families through a series of workshops, celebrations, meals and camping; identify additional partnerships; invite, teach and support families served to become part of the response/ prevention team; track #/severity of incidents during project duration; and identify future projects, such as a local safe house. Workshops were based on community input in collaboration with youth centre, family skills, First Responder and mental health programs. It planned to develop four Gitxaala-designed multi-media workshops, entitled "strategies for prevention" and "strategies for intervention", for members/other visiting professionals/communities.

Heiltsuk Tribal Council

Project name: Heiltsuk Giving Voice Project

Location: Bella Bella

Description: Community members/partners/professionals were engaged to create a Heiltsuk Nation Declaration on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls and, subsequently, community policy and protocols. An awareness campaign was conducted through social media updates, lunch and learn programs, community brochures/signage, two marches against violence, and a logo contest. The final phase was a community-wide feast (June 2016) to honour young women in the community and unveil the new Declaration and Protocols. Six other partners each contributed \$5,000 to this project.



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on Aboriginal Women**

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