





## Executive Summary

Youth for Safety is a three-year Youth empowerment project, initiated by the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society (LAWS), designed to foster community safety and justice for young women and girls centered on the town of Watson Lake, Yukon and nearby Kaska First Nations populations in Two Mile area, Upper Liard and Lower Post, BC. This program was developed in collaboration with Watson Lake community organisations committed to improving community safety. The project is intended to increase safety of Youth and community members in Watson Lake by helping male and female Youth learn ways of restoring and preserving dignity of those who experience violence, while also learning new skills to increase safety.

The overall program model will be delivered over 3 years in 4 parts. The overall model is designed to have Youth take on more and more responsibility and ownership of the program as it progresses, ultimately leading to Youth serving as mentors to younger Youth<sup>1</sup>. The evaluation strategy for this project involved both formative (monitoring results as we go) and summative (evaluating at key points in the project) elements. In recognition that not all outcomes and impacts of a project fit neatly into indicators, and that there are many inter-related and complex dynamics at play when examining the topic of community safety, this project also adopted many principles of developmental evaluation.

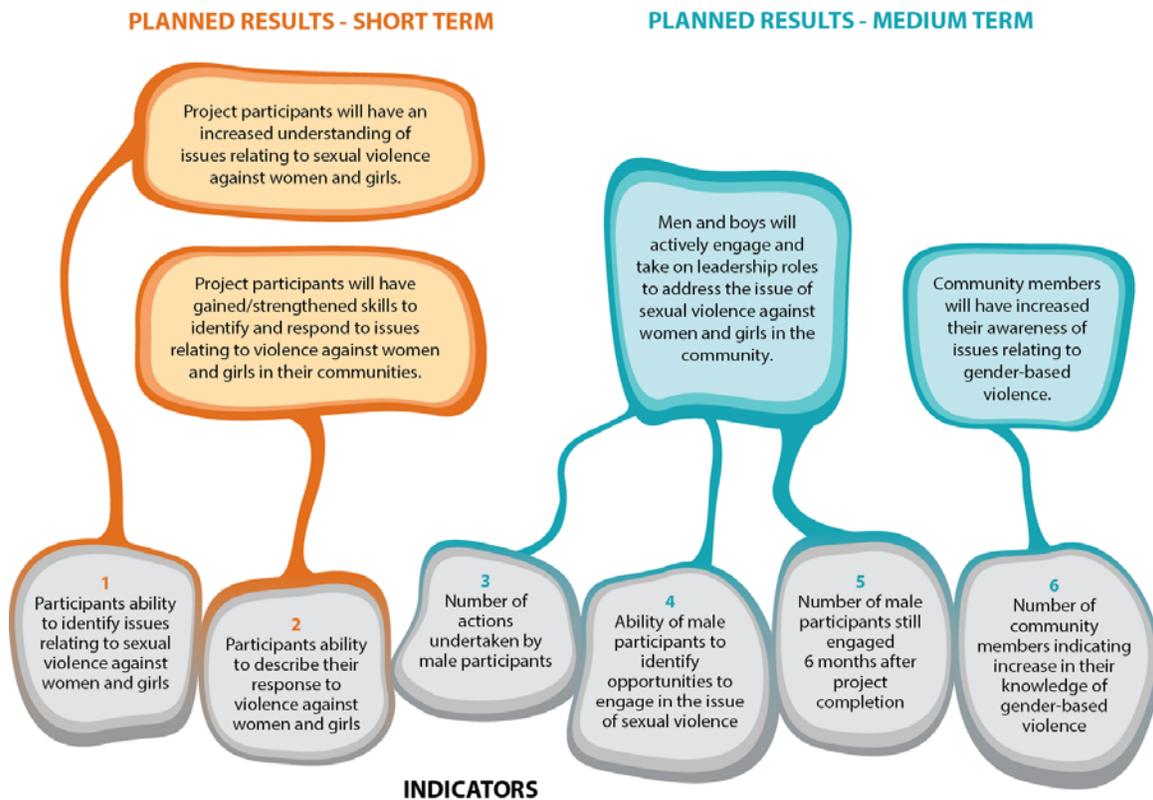


FIGURE 1: PLANNED RESULTS AND INDICATORS

<sup>1</sup> See Program Model report for full description of Program Model and Appendix A for a summary description



A performance measurement plan was crafted as part of the funding application process with Status of Women Canada. The plan described our 4 anticipated results (short-term and medium term) as well as the 6 indicators used to measure progress on each planned result (see Figure 1). For each indicator, we decided on what data sources and data collection methods we would use to collect information. Our data sources included a mix of surveys, discussions, art, quizzes, observations and interviews to paint a qualitative picture of the early results of the program on our planned indicators, as well as on some other, unanticipated results. See Table 1 for the emerging results for each of our indicators, as well as some results that were not captured by our initial indicators.

**TABLE 1: EARLY RESULTS BY INDICATOR**

Indicator	Early Results
1 Participants ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls	Participants demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness of the statistics regarding sexualized assault (they aced the quizzes!)</li> <li>• An ability to acknowledge the extent of the problem in their community</li> <li>• An ability to describe the issues relating to sexualized violence (such as gender, social responses, racism, mental health)</li> <li>• An understanding of the principles of response-based practice (such as dignity, resistance to violence, how language conceals violence, positive social responses)</li> <li>• An ability to identify the interrelated factors that contribute to safety from violence</li> <li>• An increased willingness and comfort talking about sexualized violence</li> </ul>
2 Participants ability to describe their response to violence against women and girls	Participants demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A commitment to working towards stopping sexualized violence, educating community members about sexualized violence and better supporting the recovery of victims of sexualized violence</li> <li>• An understanding of how the Youth for Safety project was one way to respond to violence and identified the role they see Youth playing in the goal of fighting violence in their community</li> <li>• An understanding of positive and dignified responses to violence</li> <li>• An ability to identify concrete actions they can take to respond to violence against women and girls</li> <li>• An increase in concrete skills they can use to get involved in taking action on issues of sexualized violence (such as campaigning, communication, using the media)</li> <li>• An ability to express their responses to violence through art</li> <li>• A recognition of the importance of speaking out and starting a community conversation about sexualized violence, an increase in comfort speaking out</li> <li>• A shift in attitude in dealing with sexualized violence and the ability to intervene and stand up for what they believe in when confronted with issues relating to sexualized violence</li> <li>• An increase in motivation to get directly involved in solutions</li> </ul>
3 Number of actions undertaken by male participants	At this stage, it is too early to report on the number of actions undertaken by male participants. Of the 4 Youth campaigns that resulted from year 1, 3 of them involved male participants. Attendance by gender is being and will continue to be tracked as well as the number of actions being initiated by male participants. The proportion of male participants has remained fairly steady throughout the project. In the introductory sessions 46% of participants were male, in the first project launch meeting in January 32% were male. Of the 11 participants who completed a post-launch survey, 45% (5) of the participants were male.



<p>4 Ability of male participants to identify opportunities to engage in the issue of sexualized violence</p>	<p>To date, half of the core group of participants are male, and many of those have actively taken leadership roles in the project. There is evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased understanding and acknowledgement among male participants of the extent of the problem of sexualized violence against women and girls in their community</li><li>• A sense of responsibility and obligation among male participants to be personally involved in the solution and awareness of the role men play in stopping sexualized violence</li><li>• A sense of pride among male participants that they are actively working towards a solution</li></ul>
<p>5 Number of male participants still engaged 6 months after project completion</p>	<p>Since the project is not yet complete, it is too early to report on the number of male participants still involved after 6 months. As was mentioned for indicator #3, the proportion of male participants has been steady, and we recommend continuing to track attendance by gender</p>
<p>6 Number of community members indicating an increase in their knowledge of gender-based violence</p>	<p>At this stage, the only data collected from the community was through a community survey administered after the Youth's May community presentation. 50 community members completed the survey, and specifically reflected on what they learned. 49/50 respondents were able to identify something that they learned. The most common response was that community members learned how much Youth know about sexualized violence and the power they have to be leaders on the issue (36% of respondents). 21% of respondents reported having learned that Youth do not feel safe and that Youth violence is not taken seriously. 13% of respondents reported learning about the role of community in stopping violence and responding to sexualized violence.</p>
<p>Unexpected results</p>	<p>Additional findings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A change in attitudes towards Youth, and a recognition of the power of Youth leadership in addressing the issue of violence against women</li><li>• Increased sense of connection with other Youth. This connection to a network of Youth they trust to approach with an issue related to sexualized violence has the potential to provide support for Youth victims of sexualized violence</li><li>• Increased confidence and self-efficacy. Being a part of this team gave Youth an opportunity to build their confidence and recognize their ability to play an active role in building a safer community</li><li>• Starting a community conversation about sexualized violence</li><li>• Building a stronger social support network. Youth are more aware of resources, community organizations and a network of people who care about sexualized violence against women and can help. For those participants who have been a victim of sexualized violence, learning about the broader problem helped them see that it is not their fault and contributed to their recovery.</li></ul>



Based on these early findings, recommendations for future evaluation are suggested. We recommend that the YFS team continue to monitor:

- Group's ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence, watching for more depth in understanding
- Participant's ability to respond to violence and take positive action
- Participation rates, including specifically male participation rates and how many participants from the first year returned in the second and third year
- # of actions undertaken by male participants
- Changes in community member's awareness and knowledge of gender-based violence

In addition, based on what we know now, we recommend that the YFS team starts monitoring:

- Future actions by Youth, ability of the group to stay together and maintain project momentum
- Project uptake, how many new Youth join in the second year and stay involved
- Youth activity outside of structure modules
- Testimonials by Youth about the value of this program, getting a better understanding of it and how Youth value the program and the role they see for themselves in it
- Participant's ability and willingness to approach key adults and allies
- Eventually, it may be worthwhile to consider community safety indicators for the school to be able to track instances of violence

Finally, the following successes, challenges and opportunities have been identified.

**Successes:**

- Engaging and diverse learning modules that brought in outside resources
- Positive uptake of the program by Youth (90% of Youth reported being satisfied with the program)
- Evidence of transformative learning for Youth participants. They reported feeling like they changed personally and acquired concrete skills (campaigning, communication, media/social media, speaking up)
- Overwhelmingly positive feedback from community members and a clear desire for more! When asked how proud people were of the Youth 95% of respondents ranked their level of pride between 7 and 10 out of 10
- Momentum created by the final presentations and inter-agency excitement and commitment to the project's continuation

**Challenges:**

- Keeping Youth involved from project beginning to end, participation rate declined as year progressed
- Recruiting new Youth while keeping graduated Youth involved and engaged
- Keeping Youth engaged between sessions
- Getting teachers on board



**Opportunities:**

- Strengthening the cultural elements of the program, exploring the Kaska understanding of the concept of dignity: Dene ā' nezen
- More content about self-harm and mental health
- Engaging current participants as mentors to younger participants
- Involving Youth in the monitoring and evaluation of the project, thus increasing their responsibility and leadership of the project
- Further involve members of the interagency group as speakers, resource people and mentors to the Youth
- Hosting more community events, to keep community members informed of the group's work, continue the community conversation and build more awareness





## Acknowledgements

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Help & Hope for Families	Yukon Alcohol and Drug Services
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Social Services	

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## Introduction

Youth for Safety is a three-year Youth empowerment project designed to foster community safety and justice for young women and girls centered on the town of Watson Lake, Yukon and nearby Kaska First Nations populations in Two Mile area, Upper Liard and Lower Post, BC.

This project was initiated by the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS), a non-profit, charitable, community-based, aboriginal organization providing social development services to the Kaska Nation in the Yukon and northern British Columbia. LAWS worked in collaboration with Watson Lake community organisations and external facilitators and an evaluator to deliver Youth for Safety.

The project recognizes the need for active female and male Youth participation in addressing issues of violence against young women and girls, and is designed to provide Youth with the knowledge and skills needed to assume a leadership role in promoting safety and justice for Youth women and girls, Youth to Youth and within the community at large. The focus of the project is providing support to young women and girls (under 18) who are at risk of falling victim to sexual/physical violence through empowerment and advocacy and engaging the community at large. The project is intended to increase safety of Youth and community members in Watson Lake by helping Youth learn ways of restoring and preserving dignity of those who experience violence, while also learning new skills to increase safety.

Evaluation of this project was built into the project's design, and is recognized as an important way to:

- Understand how the project was unfolding
- Inform mid-course corrections
- Document in a user-friendly way this ground-breaking model unique to an isolated Northern Aboriginal community
- Conclude lessons learned and recommendations for future projects

This evaluation report provides an overview of the project, describes our evaluation methodology, shares results of evaluation and makes recommendations for project improvements and for future monitoring and evaluation. See Appendix A for an overview of the Context, Program Model and curriculum.



## Methodology

### Evaluation Approach

The evaluation strategy for this project involved both formative (monitoring results as we go) and summative (evaluating at key points in the project) elements (Figure 2).

Formative or monitoring tools were used throughout the project to help understand what was working, what could improve the project, and what participants were getting out of the project.

Summative tools were used to evaluate the overall progress towards our planned results. These tools were designed to capture information at key points on the project with the goal of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the projects.

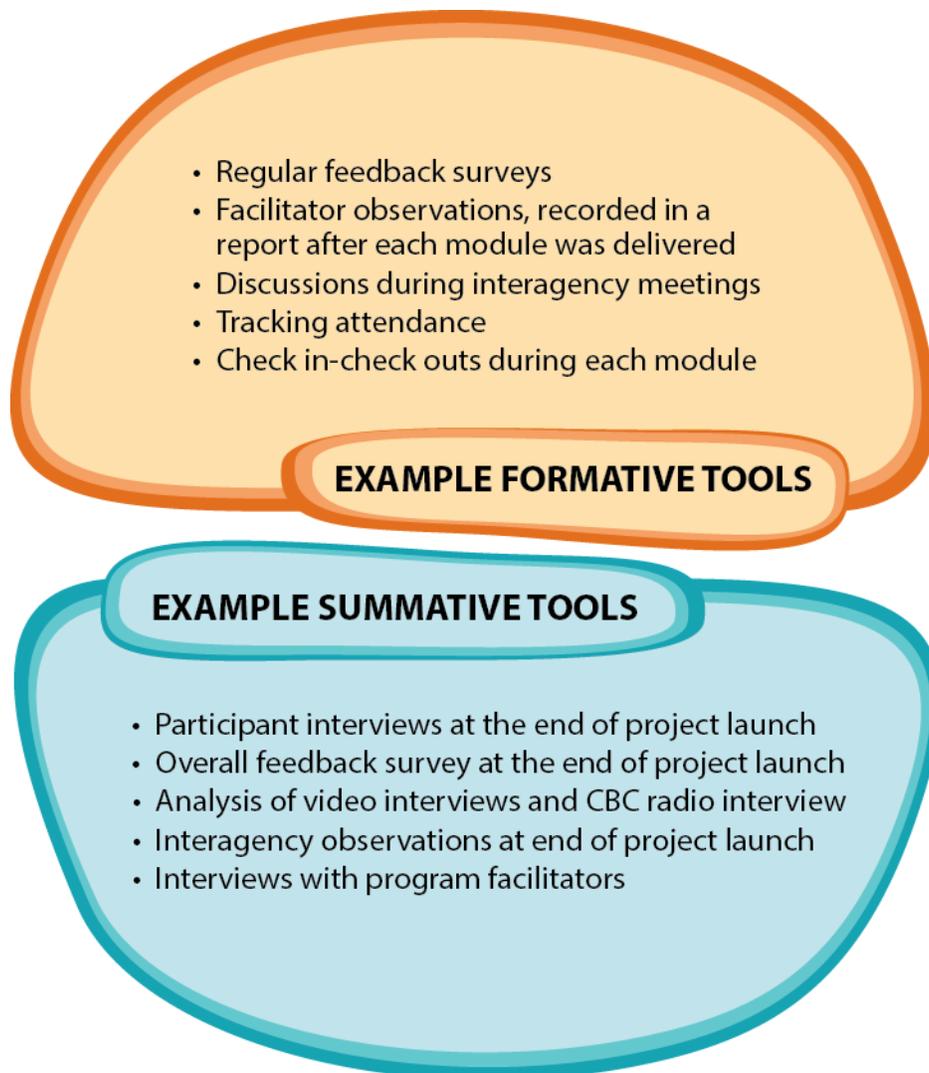


FIGURE 2: EXAMPLE SUMMATIVE AND FORMATIVE TOOLS



In recognition that not all outcomes and impacts of a project fit neatly into indicators, and that there are many inter-related and complex dynamics at play when examining the topic of community safety, this project also adopted many principles of developmental evaluation.

Developmental evaluation is an evaluation approach that is well suited for innovative projects in complex environments where results are uncertain<sup>2</sup>. It aims to concurrently conceptualize, design and test new approaches in an ongoing process of continuous implementation, adaption and change

Some of the elements of developmental evaluation adopted in this project include<sup>3</sup>:

- Having the evaluator play a role in the project team, integrated in the process of gathering and interpreting data and developing the evaluation and program model in real-time
- Evaluation that aims to nurture learning by providing rapid, real time feedback and uses a diversity of tools to stay in touch with what is unfolding allowing facilitators to adapt and make changes to program delivery
- Rather than trying to predict the outcomes of the innovative project within a context of uncertainty, developmental evaluation applies an ongoing process of innovation in which the path and the destination are evolving

## KEY DEFINITIONS

**Formative evaluation:** on going evaluation that aims to improve a model, to prepare the model for summative evaluation

**Summative evaluation:** evaluation at key points in the project to render judgement as to whether a program worked or not

**Developmental evaluation:** real-time evaluation where facilitator helps conceptualize, design and test new approaches in an ongoing process of continuous implementation, adaption and change

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<sup>2</sup> Gamble, J. A. A. The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, (2008). A developmental evaluation primer. Retrieved from website: [http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/assets/Media%20Library/Publications/A%](http://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/assets/Media%20Library/Publications/A%20Developmental%20Evaluation%20Primer.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Patton, M. Q. (2009). *Developmental evaluation as alternative to formative assessment*. [Web Video]. Retrieved from [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=Wg3IL-XjmuM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Wg3IL-XjmuM)

Claudia Wong (2015) Developmental evaluation. [Web Video]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oL8Nz83KUZ8>



## Planned Results and Indicators- Performance Measurement Plan

A key element of summative evaluation is to develop a set of objectives and pick indicators to measure progress towards these objectives. For this project four objectives or planned results (short-term and medium-term) were identified at part of the funding application process with Status of Women Canada. These planned results are shown below in Figure 3:

### KEY TERMS

**Objective:** The overall goal or planned result anticipated from the project.

**Indicator:** A measure of something, expressing a value to indicate change.

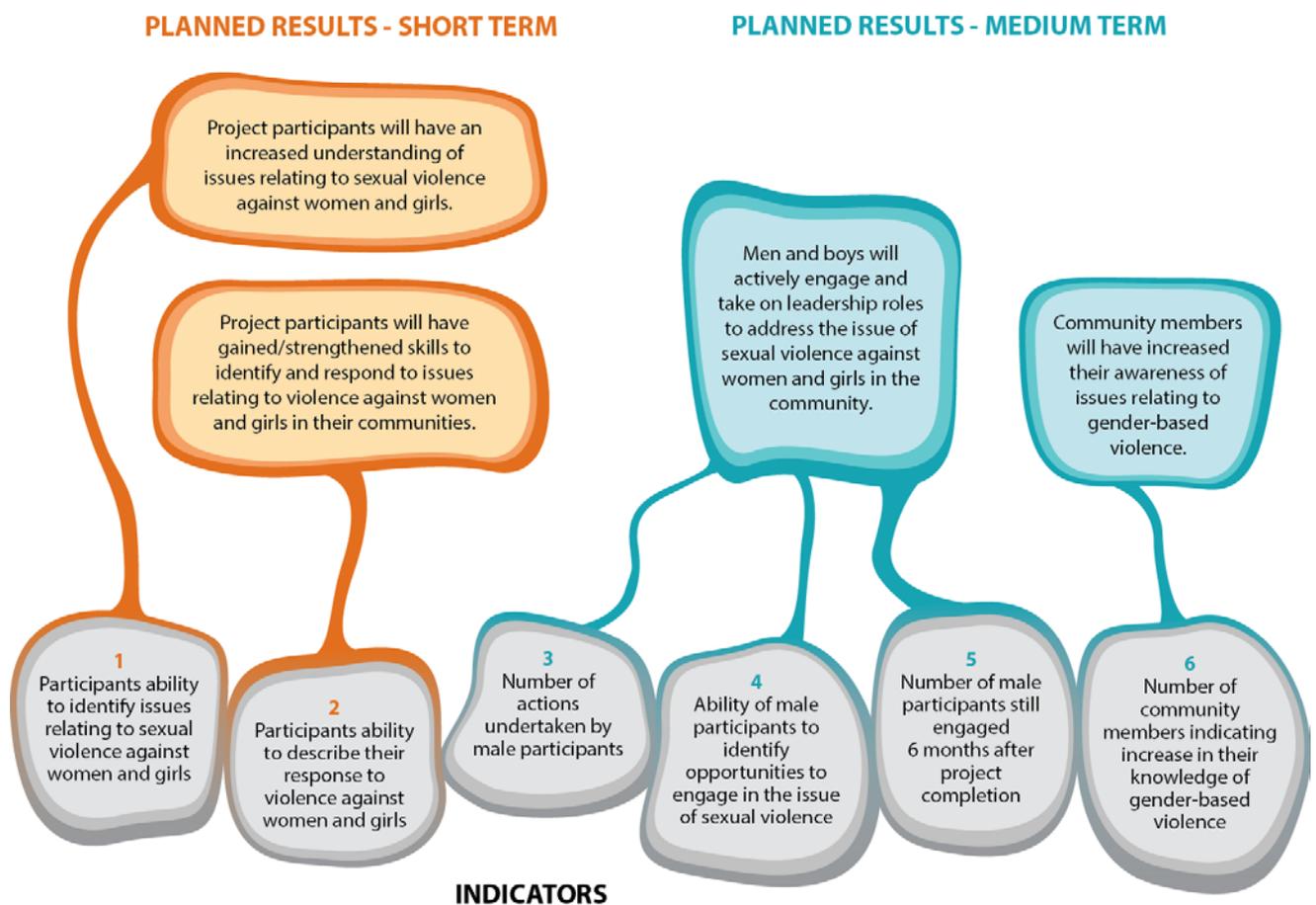


FIGURE 3: INDICATORS BY OBJECTIVE



## Data Sources and Data Collection Methods

This evaluation involved a wide diversity of data sources and data collection methods. Table 2 lists data sources and data collection methods by indicator and describes the purpose of each one.

### SHORT TERM RESULTS

TABLE 2: DATA SOURCES AND COLLECTION METHODS

Indicators	Data Source	Description of Collection Method
1. Participants ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls	Group discussions	Facilitator observations of participant learning during discussions such as: -What does safety look like? -What is dignity?
	Community safety mapping	Opportunity for Youth to demonstrate their understanding of current community safety and factors that influence safety
	Sexualized violence quizzes	Fun quizzes during program delivery to spark discussion and allow participants to show their knowledge on sexualized violence
	Video interviews	Opportunity for participants to articulate their perspectives on the issue of safety from violence and the importance of this project
	CBC radio interview	Opportunity for the facilitator and one participants to describe what they are learning
	Feedback survey	Participants reflect on how the experience changed them and specific skills they took away
	Interagency observations	During interagency meeting, collaborators share their observations on participant learning
	Key informant interviews with Youth	Participants reflect on their experience and demonstrate understanding of complex interrelated factors relating to sexualized violence
	Key informant interviews with facilitators	Facilitators asked to reflect on how participants' thinking about sexualized violence evolved over the course of the project



Indicators	Data Source	Description of Collection Method
2. Participants ability to describe their response to violence against women and girls	Initial feedback survey	By asking “how do you keep safe”, allowing participants to describe their response to violence
	Dignity interview exercise	Facilitator observations of participant responses to the question: -How to help a friend experiencing violence?
	Classifying social responses	Facilitator observations of participant responses to the task of categorizing responses to violence as either positive or negative
	Developing press releases	Participants have opportunity to describe their understanding of the project and the response needed to violence against women
	Art projects	Opportunity for participants to express their response to violence through developing art -Buttons (with campaign messages) -Posters, signs -Stop action video
	Safety campaigns	Opportunity for participants to demonstrate their response to violence through a safety campaign Opportunity to notice evolution in thinking around responses to violence by comparing early campaign ideas with final campaigns
	Youth video	Participants describe their response to violence by: -Sharing what they are most proud of -Sharing observations on the impact of the project
	Interagency observations	Interagency anecdotes describe participant’s responses to violence
	Final feedback survey	Participants reflect on specific skills they took away from the project
	Key informant interviews with facilitators	Facilitators asked to reflect on participants’ reactions to what they have learned



**MEDIUM TERM RESULTS**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Description of Collection Method</b>
3. Number of actions undertaken by male participants	Attendance lists	Tracking attendance by gender
	Description of Youth campaigns	Keeping track of number of Youth initiatives
4. Ability of male participants to identify opportunities to engage in the issue of sexualized violence	Interviews	Male participants describe their understanding of the issue and what they think should be done about it
	Feedback survey	Male participants acknowledge the prevalence of rape and sexualized assault and the need for action
	Video interviews	Male participants describe importance of project and the need to get involved
	CBC radio interview	Facilitator highlights presence of strong male leaders. Male participant comments on his commitment to the project.
	Key informant interviews with facilitators	Facilitators asked to reflect on how male participants thinking about sexualized violence evolved.
5. Number of male participants still engaged 6 months after project completion	Attendance lists	Tracking attendance by gender
	Feedback survey	Male participants express their interest in continuing involvement with the project
6. Number of community members indicating increase in their knowledge of gender-based violence	Community survey	Delivered after Youth presentations to the community, 53 community members reflect on what they learned



## Results

The following section describes the results of our evaluation. We start by reporting on the indicators identified in our performance measurement plan. Results are organized by our 6 indicators. We then explore other relevant findings, not captured in our initial indicators.

### Short Term Results

## 1. Participants ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls

Participants ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls increased significantly during the course of the project launch. Specifically, participants demonstrated:

- Increased awareness of the statistics regarding sexualized assault
- An ability to acknowledge the extent of the problem in their community
- An ability to describe the issues relating to sexualized violence (such as gender, social responses, racism, mental health)
- An understanding of the principles of response-based practice (dignity, positive and negative social responses, how language conceals violence)
- An ability to identify the interrelated factors that contribute to safety from violence
- An increased willingness and comfort talking about sexualized violence

Next, we explore the evidence for these findings by data source.

### Data source: Group discussions

Facilitators noted observations during the group discussion that took place throughout all modules. Throughout the course of the project, participants explored how factors such as privilege, gender and sexuality, addiction and racism relate to sexualized violence. These discussions demonstrate an evolution of understanding of the issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls.

One baseline measure were participant's responses to the question "what does safety look like to you?" during the November and December 2015 introductory sessions.

In the opening session, Youth described a safe community as one without drugs and alcohol or crime and violence, with high levels of community support, respect and kindness. They also touched on themes such as traffic and road safety, opportunities for Youth, good policing, and absence of bullying or racism.

This baseline information provided facilitators with a sense of the general safety concerns that were top of mind among Youth and a sense of their current understanding of safety. This knowledge helped facilitators design future learning modules to match this baseline understanding and incorporate top safety concerns into the learning curriculum.



During the January session, students were asked a series of questions in large and small groups around the topic of dignity. Their responses provided evidence of an understanding of the concept of dignity, which they described as relating to self-respect, honour, pride, self-awareness, culture, tradition and spirituality.



**Data source: Community safety audit**

In small groups participants were asked to draw a rough map of Watson Lake and then asked to mark on their maps with different symbols the places where they felt safe and places they avoided due to safety concerns. They were also asked to write down what made the places safe or unsafe, and the kinds of safety issues they noticed.

When groups reported back, there were similarities between the group's responses: they all seemed to know the places to avoid and had strategies on how to stay safe if they went to those areas (such as travelling in groups or signals to communicate with each other when they wanted to leave). After a male student stated he felt safe everywhere, a female student replied that it was because he is male. The resulting discussion surrounding who felt safe where helped participants express their understanding of some of the factors that contribute to feelings of safety.



### Data source: Quiz results

Participants were quizzed on their sexualized violence knowledge three times during the process. The quizzes were designed to be fun and promote discussion in a safe way, but also served the purpose of quantifiably measuring participant understanding of key concepts of the curriculum.

Participants aced the quizzes including the February True or False and multiple choice quiz, the March multiple choice quiz and the May game of jeopardy. The Youth were astounded by the statistics, and reported being angered by them.

One of the most impactful things I've learned from it is probably all of the statistics about rape and sexual assault and how much it actually happens and how much people don't get justice- Youth participant

### Data source: Video interviews

During the April workshop, participants were interviewed about their experience with the project in order to create a short video about the project.

These video interviews were also an opportunity to evaluate participant's ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls.

Participants interviewed were given an opportunity to describe their understanding of what the Youth for Safety project is and why it is important. The interviews demonstrated an understanding of the issues relating to sexualized violence and the need for positive responses.

The Youth for Safety Program talks about the prevention of rape and how we can help the survivors that have been hurt or mentally scarred by it- Youth participant



### Data source: CBC Radio Interview

In May, one of the participants and one of the facilitators were interviewed on the CBC about the Youth for Safety project. In this interview, the participant was put on the spot and had an opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge of sexualized violence issues by describing the issue of sexualized violence going unreported.

It's all about raising the awareness really, because it's often something that goes unnoticed and unreported- Youth participant

The facilitator also had an opportunity to reflect on the increase in knowledge of the group from the beginning to the end of the project.

It's been really great to see the Youth learning from day one to now, I've been so impressed with their knowledge of sexualized violence- YFS facilitator





### **Data source: End of project launch feedback survey**

The final feedback survey at the end of the project launch gave participants an opportunity to reflect on what they enjoyed, favourite topics, how the experience changed them and what skills they acquired.

Participants were able to identify numerous issues relating to sexualized violence against women and girls when responding to these questions such as dignity, positive and negative social responses, racism, and mental health demonstrating a mature understanding of issues relating to sexualized violence.

It's made me more aware of what goes on in the community and how to help and respect people-  
Youth participant

### **Data source: Interagency observations**

At the end of the project launch, the Youth for Safety Interagency group met at Watson Lake Secondary School to discuss their observations of the project.

Overall, meeting participants were impressed with the Youth learning they witnessed. Specific competencies they highlighted include increased understanding of sexualized violence statistics, knowledge of how to keep themselves and others safe, understanding of response-based principles and the importance of dignity.

Astonished at the knowledge in the room...they are doing things to keep each other safe...grasped ideas of response-based language quickly...understand dignity- they are driving the bus- Interagency meeting participant



### Data source: Key Informant Interviews with Youth

At the end of the project launch, the evaluator had a chance to interview 4 participants to better understand how the project impacted them.

Participants share an awareness of the extent of the issue in their community. Facilitators share their observations that when some of the participants acknowledge instances of rape and sexualized assault in their community, the weight of their comments can be felt, as if the Youth have only recently come to a place where they can talk about these difficult issues.

This means there should be no more rape and sexual assault, because there is lots of it in town  
[Pause, notice a sense of pain, difficulty]- Youth participant

Participants show a mature understanding of the factors and issues that relate to sexualized violence. One participant in her final interview discusses the relationship between residential school, addiction and sexualized assault.

Residential school was a tragedy. It's still an open wound, still the reason for people's drinking. Sometimes, growing up, this stuff rubs off on you. This is where sexualized assault happens. This is why we need to make this community safe- Youth participant

Finally, participants report changes in attitudes towards victims of violence.

Took away a mindset. Feel more respectful and understanding of people's circumstances in certain situations- Youth participant

This change in mindset described by this participant is hard to quantifiably measure, and yet is one of the ultimate goals of the project.



**Data source: Key Informant Interviews with Facilitators**

At the end of the project launch, the evaluator had an opportunity to interview project facilitators. Facilitators observed that at the beginning of the project, participants were reserved in talking about sexualized violence, and some had more traditional beliefs about it. Facilitators describe an increase in willingness and comfort in talking about sexualized violence, in front of their peers and in front of community members. Specifically, an ability to talk about sexualized violence in a dignity preserving way. Facilitators report that more traditional beliefs about sexualized violence among participants were eradicated by the end of the launch. They described the pride the Youth expressed in knowing about the statistics around sexualized violence, and the increased sense of responsibility they Youth felt as a result. Facilitators describe the Youth playing an active role in supporting each other and helping each other out, and the need to move the Youth from a place of compassion, to a place of activism in the second year of the program.





## 2. Project participants will have gained/strengthened skills to identify and respond to issues relating to violence against women and girls in their communities

For this indicator, we were looking for evidence that participants had developed skills to effectively respond to issues of violence. While the first indicators focused solely on participants understanding of issues relating to violence, this indicator looks specifically at how Youth respond to knowledge of sexualized violence and what Youth feel they can do about these issues. Relating to this indicator, participants demonstrated:

- A commitment to working towards stopping sexualized violence, educating community members about sexualized violence and better supporting the recovery of victims of sexualized violence
- An understanding of how the Youth for Safety project was one way to respond to violence and identified the role they see Youth playing in the goal of fighting violence in their community
- An understanding of positive and dignified responses to violence
- An ability to identify concrete actions they can take to respond to violence against women and girls
- An increase in concrete skills they can use to get involved in taking action on issues of sexualized violence (such as campaigning, communications, using the media)
- An ability to express their responses to violence through art
- A recognition of the importance of speaking out and starting a community conversation about sexualized violence, an increase in comfort speaking out
- A shift in attitude in dealing with sexualized violence and the ability to intervene and stand up for what they believe in when confronted with issues relating to sexualized violence
- An increase in motivation to get directly involved in solutions

The following text describes these findings by data source.

### **Data source: Orientation Session**

During the orientation sessions, participants were asked “What would indicate a safe school/street/home to you?” Some of their answers reflected a baseline understanding of appropriate social responses to violence against women such as respect and lack of judgement (14% of responses); and support and people who stand up for one another (12% of responses). The subsequent results described in this section demonstrate how this understanding matured over time.



### **Data source: Dignity interview activity**

During the January workshop, to apply their knowledge around dignity after watching a video of Dr. Allan Wade explaining dignity, participants were asked to discuss: “If you had a friend who had experienced violence or who was not safe...what would they find helpful? What would they say is helpful about you?”

The Youth described the importance of being someone to talk to, providing a safe and supportive environment, being non-judgemental and easy to trust. Their responses demonstrated participants’ knowledge of positive and dignified social responses, and their ability to identify ways to respond to violence.

### **Data source: Classifying positive and negative social responses**

During the March workshop, participants were given a scenario where a girl is in an abusive relationship and it starts to become apparent to her friends. The Youth were asked to imagine that they are the people in the girlfriend’s life: friends, family, school mates, police etc. They were presented with a number of statements representing either positive or negative social responses. They were then asked to classify the statements as either a positive or negative social response.

This activity really allowed them to showcase their knowledge of how to show someone dignity. They debated over several of the responses and came up with very thoughtful reasons to choose whether it was a positive or negative response for the victim demonstrating a mature understanding of positive responses to violence. An evolution of understanding of positive social responses is evident in comparing participant comments from the January and March workshops.





### **Data source: Developing press releases**

During the March workshop, participants were asked to develop a press release to announce their campaigns. The campaigns that presented back to the group demonstrated an ability to describe the project's goals and methods and the role they see Youth playing in responding to violence against women.

Who- we are Youth advocating for safety in communities like ours

What- talking about it and raising awareness for these issues

When- over the course of the next 3 years, but we will present in May

Why- to raise awareness for domestic abuse and sexualized assault and rape that goes unnoticed and unreported

How- by getting the Youth of the communities involved in taking action against it- sample press release

### **Data source: Safety campaigns**

Asking participants to produce ideas for campaigns to address sexualized violence was one way to measure their response to violence against women and girls. In identifying and refining their campaigns, participants demonstrated their ability to effectively take action and respond to issues of violence against women. In addition, by asking Youth to brainstorm campaign ideas at different times during the project, it allowed evaluators to notice an evolution in thinking around effective responses to sexualized violence.

Youth brainstormed safety campaigns during the introductory workshops, then again during the February workshop after having been exposed to some learning about sexualized violence. The initial safety initiatives proposed focused primarily on cracking down on violence with security measures such as safety cameras, more street lights, more police patrols and locker checks.



The final campaigns, rather than focusing on enforcement, really target some of the systemic issues around social responses to violence. The final campaigns the Youth decided to work on were:

1. A petition to change the wording of the criminal code (122 supporters to date)
2. Stop-motion short video on bystanders and social responses
3. Photography/graffiti/art awareness project
4. Button making

We aim to change the way the Criminal Code of Canada describes sexualized violence of all kinds. The current language does not accurately depict the violence, conceals the violence, and therefore colludes with perpetrators of violence- Youth petition

These projects all target language and general community awareness around sexualized violence. The final campaigns that they chose and developed, compared to the initial ideas presented in the introductory workshops demonstrate an evolution of thinking around the complexities surrounding issues relating to sexualized violence and an ability to effectively respond to issues of violence.





### Data source: Art projects

Throughout the project, Youth had opportunities to use art to express themselves and respond to violence against women. This also provided a source of information about participants' understanding of issues relating to sexualized violence against women.

One of the Youth came up with a button that said "don't get raped" but then crossed out the "get" and the "d" in raped so it read "Don't ~~get~~ raped"

The Youth creating a large sign by spray painting a tarp with the consent message "Anything less than a yes is a no"

They had a safety sign made that said "stop rape" which they put up in the signpost forest<sup>4</sup>.

The art they produced was poignant and effective in starting a community conversation about sexualized violence. One project partner reported that when wearing a "Don't rape" button a teacher asked why you would have to wear such a button.

The impact of the project is rippling out into community- Interagency representative



<sup>4</sup> For those not familiar with Watson Lake, their most famous attraction is the sign post forest comprised of signposts brought from travelers from their hometowns since 1942. <http://www.yukoninfo.com/watson-lake-signpost-forest/>



### **Data source: Video interviews**

During the interviews with participants for the project video, participants demonstrated their understanding of the importance of positive responses to violence against women and girls.

I think it feels pretty bad for the victim, because they are basically being told that it was consensual, you consented to doing it so...I feel like it's pretty crappy for them- Youth participant

They also demonstrate an understanding of the importance of starting a community-wide response to the issue, recognizing the role that silence about the issue plays in concealing acts of sexualized violence.

Hopefully the community will be more open about this thing, be able to talk about it more, be comfortable in those situations so we can finally help put an end to it- Youth participant

### **Data source: Interagency observations**

Interagency representatives made some observations as to how this project impacted participant's ability to respond to views about violence against women and girls incompatible with what they were learning through Youth for Safety. A facilitator shares the story of the group of Youth being told by someone "Stay safe, don't drink, don't go out alone". Some of the Youth were struck by what they were being told and stood up for themselves, pointing out that it is not their fault, that the real problem is those doing the raping.

A teacher shares a story of overhearing some girls standing up for themselves in a conversation with some guys at school talking about sexualized violence. These are both powerful examples of Youth's ability to respond to the messages they are hearing about sexualized violence, and speak up to start a conversation about more positive social responses.

### **Data source: Key informant interviews with facilitators**

Facilitators describe the collective outrage expressed by participants upon learning about sexualized assault statistics. Facilitators feel that this outrage motivated participants to get involved in campaigns and talk about sexualized violence in front of the community.

Facilitators shared stories of how what they were learning was impacting how their campaigns were shaping up. One facilitator shares the story of a participant writing the storyline for a stop motion film



about sexualized violence. Initially, the story involved a bunny who is sexually assaulted by a wolf. A fox is a bystander that does nothing. The bunny commits suicide. Over the course of working on this story, a participant suggests a new storyline in which the fox reacts with a positive social response, leading to a different outcome for the bunny. The process of creating this story, and then imagining a different outcome demonstrates a firm understanding of the power of positive social responses, and an ability to see that a different outcome is possible for victims.

Facilitators describe their response to this knowledge as diverse depending on the participant. They responded with:

1. Conversations with friends
2. Direct action (campaigns)
3. Talking about what they've learned in front of the broader community

Facilitators feel that the core group of participants have had an opportunity to practice and demonstrate their knowledge of what to say in response to sexualized violence. Specifically, participants feel more comfortable in calling out others on racism and violence. With time, facilitators believe that participants' campaign experiences will help build their confidence to speak out publicly. Facilitators also highlight the desire Youth had to expand the program to include Youth outside of the school and to other schools in the Yukon.

**Data source: Final feedback survey**

In the final feedback survey, 11 participants were asked to reflect on the specific skills they took away. They reported a mix of concrete skills to help respond to violence such as campaigning (5 responses), communication (3 responses), using the media (2 responses) and speaking up (1 response).

What skills did you take away? Campaigning and social media for stopping sexual violence- Youth participant

They also reported a change in general attitude and approach to dealing with sexualized violence.

How has this experience change you personally? I've promoted and been more open towards stopping sexual violence- Youth participant





## Medium Term Results

### 3. Number of actions undertaken by male participants

At this stage, it is too early to report on the number of actions undertaken by male participants. Attendance by gender is being and will continue to be tracked as well as the number of actions being initiated by male participants.

The proportion of male participants has remained fairly steady throughout the project. In the introductory sessions 46% of participants were male, in the first project launch meeting in January 32% were male. Of the 11 participants who completed a post-launch survey, 45% (5) of the participants were male.





## 4. Ability of male participants to identify opportunities to engage in the issue of sexualized violence

Male leadership on this issue was isolated as an indicator, in recognition that responsibility for dealing with the issue of sexualized violence is often placed on women. Part of the shift in thinking about sexualized violence promoted by the learning program is that rather than blaming women for violence and looking for what women should be doing to prevent it, focusing on what young men can do to stop it.

To date, half of the core group of participants are male, and many of those have actively taken leadership roles in the project. There is evidence of:

- Increased understanding and acknowledgement among male participants of the extent of the problem of sexualized violence against women and girls in their community
- A sense of responsibility and obligation among male participants to be personally involved in the solution and awareness of the role men play in stopping sexualized violence
- A sense of pride among male participants that they are actively working towards a solution

The following text describes the data relating to this indicator by data source.





### **Data source: Video interviews**

Interviews with male participants during the making of the video about the project reveal an increased ability to identify opportunities to engage in the issue of sexualized violence.

One male participant expresses an awakening to the severity of the problem and the need for action.

It has really opened my eyes to what happens, because I had an idea of what does happen because I've seen quite a bit of it, but really learning about it, and the statistics, it's scary you know, to think that, if I had a sister, that could have happened to her- Male Youth participant

Male participants express a sense of obligation to get involved, and a pride in playing a role in making the community safer.

Most proud of being able to be a part of this workshop and helping the community become a safer place- Male Youth participant

### **Data source: CBC radio interview**

During the CBC radio interview, a YFS facilitator took an opportunity to acknowledge the strength of the male leaders in the group and acknowledge their sincerity in wanting to work towards making things better for women and girls.

So fantastic to have some strong young males in the group who are willing to take on some projects. Some feedback we've had from the males in the group are statements like "I want to learn how to be a better man" - YFS facilitator



The male participant interviewed is able to describe the response needed to sexualized violence and expresses his pride in being a part of the solution.

It's a very nice feeling, when everybody gets together and really puts their head down, it's pretty cool to see some of the work that can be done- Male Youth participant



**Data source: Final feedback survey**

When asked to reflect on how the experience change them and what skills they learned, male participants demonstrated pride in the opportunity to engage with the issue of sexualized violence.

What did you enjoy most about the YFS program?  
The opportunity to do some good  
Helping to stop rape- Male Youth participants

Male participants acknowledged the prevalence of rape and sexualized assault in their community and the need for them to get personally involved.



### Data source: Key informant interviews

Two male participants were interviewed at the end of the project launch and made comments relating to their ability to identify opportunities to engage with the issues of sexualized violence. They express a recognition of their personal role in helping stop future sexualized assaults.

Hope to prevent a future sexual assault

Getting to stop all sexualized assault in the Yukon, that's what I'm most excited about

I'm more aware of stuff going on. Being more

active about it, doing projects- Male Youth participants





## 5. Number of male participants still engaged 6 months after project completion

Since the project is not yet complete, it is too early to report on this indicator. As was mentioned for indicator #3, attendance of male participants has been steady, and we recommend continuing to track attendance by gender.

### **Data source: Final feedback survey**

What we can report at this stage, is evidence of a desire for male participants to remain involved with the initiative. In response to the final feedback survey, all male respondents (6) expressed interest in remaining involved in the project.





## 6. Number of community members indicating increase in their knowledge of gender-based violence

This indicator will need continued data gathering to be able to report on. At this stage, the only data collected from the community was through a community survey administered after the Youth's May community presentation. 53 community members completed the survey, and specifically reflected on what they learned.

Interestingly, the most common response to that question was not learning about sexualized violence, but learning about how much Youth know about sexualized violence and the power they have to be leaders on the issue (36% of respondents).

I learned how the Youth are working on safety in our community. Good to see.  
Our Youth are powerful leaders.  
How gifted the students were in facing fear and doing their part. I'm impressed - Community members

This finding is discussed further in the following section on additional findings.

21% of respondents reported having learned that Youth do not feel safe and that Youth violence is not taken seriously, thus increasing their knowledge of the issue in the community.

Our Youth do not feel safe in our town.  
That Youth violence really isn't taken that seriously  
The gap between the reality of sexualized violence and the parental perception of it needs to be reduced- Community members



13% of respondents reported learning about the role of community in stopping violence and responding to sexualized violence, some pulling from response-based practice ideas.

It takes a community to stop violence  
How important our response is to someone who  
has experienced sexualized violence  
Response-based practice is about dignity-  
Community member

8% of respondents said they learned that sexualized violence was a hidden issue in their community.

I learned that violence is a hidden issue in Watson  
Lake and it is hard to talk about  
Awareness that violence can be even more  
harmful silent than loud- Community members

Other responses included learning about the wording in the criminal code and learning that there is hope.

These early results give us only a taste of the impact on community members in terms of their knowledge of gender-based violence. This indicator will need to be further monitored in future stages of the project.





## Additional Findings

In the spirit of developmental evaluation, it is also important to take stock of all of the other things that the data tells us, that we did not necessarily anticipate when designing our performance measurement plan and indicators, but are emerging as potential impacts of the project. The additional findings described in the next section include:

- Greater community awareness of the power of Youth leadership
- Increased sense of connection with other Youth
- Increased confidence and efficacy
- Starting a community conversation about sexualized violence
- Stronger social support network, especially for those who have been a victim of sexualized violence





## Awareness of the Power of Youth Leadership

To date, one of the impacts of this project is a change in attitude by adults towards Youth, and a recognition of the power of Youth leadership. This change in perception towards Youth is significant, because in communities with safety concerns, Youth can often be seen as nothing more than the victims of violence or even the perpetrators of violence. We are seeing evidence among those who participated of a shift in thinking about Youth as victims or trouble makers to seeing Youth as active participants, in fact leaders, in making the community a safer place. This shift can help fuel more collaboration with Youth, more positive engagement of Youth and ultimately a safer community. In witnessing Youth leadership on this topic, it has inspired people to pay attention to and acknowledge the sensitive issue of sexualized violence. Seeing Youth take action on these issues has inspired hope in the possibility for change.

As mentioned in the previous section about community members learning, many community members who attended the May Youth presentations were surprised and inspired to see Youth taking leadership roles on this issue. They were impressed by how much the Youth knew about the issue and their maturity in dealing with the subject matter.

Youth know more than they share and are very intelligent in ways we barely recognize

The courage and initiative that the Youth presenters showed in their willingness to speak out and take action

Listen to the Youth, they are more informed than the adults- Community members



During the May interagency meetings, committee members shared observations on the power of Youth leadership and the importance of having the Youth voice as part of the conversation about community safety.

So nice to see kids engaged, involved, taking initiative and doing something for the community

This has given Youth a voice, Youth are letting us know what they need

Youth can lead the way

They taught us a lot of things. Believe in healing, look forward- Interagency representative

In the video interviews, community members commented on how impressed they were by how much the Youth knew and how they have responded to what they are learning

I've been impressed by how aware they are, and how much they know, and also how they have responded to what we've been teaching them

I think that they will be the ambassadors or teachers for the rest of the community, to let them know what it is, and they will influence their circle of friends and family

Sometimes the children can lead the adults-  
Community members

As highlighted by one key informant, the result of this realisation is that the community stands behind the Youth in their courageous leadership in addressing violence. The project has the unique feature of being led by Youth, which keeps the project from being political.



## Increased Sense of Connection with Other Youth

Interagency members share observations of the Youth helping each other, working together, respecting each other and working as a team. They also mentioned how this project managed to build cross cultural relationships and bridge the non-native/native divide.

Youth report enjoying working with kids of all ages, getting to know other Youth better and feeling a part of a team. This peer-to-peer connection is significant because it is a protective factor against the long-term psychological effects of violence<sup>5</sup>. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identify strong relationships with those at school, membership in peer groups that do not condone antisocial behavior, and involvement in prosocial activities as key protective factors for the perpetration of violence<sup>6</sup>.

Participants of this group have potential to access a network of Youth they trust to approach with an issue related to sexualized violence now or in the future. This potential for a positive peer response to violence will serve to better support Youth victims of sexualized violence, thus highlighting the need for this network to grow.



<sup>5</sup> Greenfield, E and Marks, N (2010) Sense of Community as a Protective Factor against Long-Term Psychological Effects of Childhood Violence. *Soc Serv Rev.* 2010 March 1: 84 (1): 129-147

<sup>6</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) Youth Violence: Risk and Protective Factors. Retrieved at: <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/Youthviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>



## Increased Confidence and Efficacy

For the participants of the project, being a part of a team that accomplished their goal was an opportunity to build their confidence and recognise their ability to play a role in building a safer community. One Youth describes well the transition from not wanting to be involved, to accessing a side of him that wanted to get involved and make a difference.

At first I was introverted, but they drew on a side of me that wanted to get involved and wanted to make a difference- Youth participant

During the final key informant interviews, Youth express pride in their accomplishments and a sense of responsibility and ability to actively work towards making the community safer.

Change has to start with our young people. Being part of the change makes me happy. I'm really proud to be able to change our community and make it safe for our community- Youth participant





## Starting a Community Conversation about Sexualized Violence

There is evidence of progress towards the goal of getting the broader community involved in the discussion about sexualized violence.

During the interagency meeting, committee members shared stories of both positive and negative reactions from community members to the campaign.

The buttons the Youth created were in high demand, and proved to be a powerful tool to start a conversation. One teacher reported that while wearing his button, he spoke to around 50 people in the community about the subject of sexualized violence and rape.

The momentum created by the existing Youth group has inspired other Youth to want to get involved.

Seeing a lot of students who were not involved wanting to sign up/sign on- Interagency representative





## Stronger Social Support Network

Another result of this project launch is the beginnings of an increased awareness of the social support network victims of sexualized violence can have access to.

Youth seem more aware of online resources, the organizations in their community and their roles, and just generally exposed to a network of people who care about this issue and can help. One interagency member describes how Youth from the program now say hello to her when she meets them in the community. A facilitator notes that some teachers got involved in helping the Youth out with their campaigns.

I know now that there are always people to help-  
Youth participant

This awareness may increase participant's ability to deal with the trauma of sexualized assault, whether against them or someone they know. Facilitators noted that for the women participants who had experienced sexualized violence, this project served as a powerful positive social response for those women which has the potential to have significant positive effects on their long-term recovery. For victims, their participation helped them see how violence against women is a broader problem, that it is not their fault, and this realization plays a role in their individual recovery.





## Recommendations for Future Monitoring and Evaluation

The end of the project launch phase of our project has been a natural time for us to take stock of our progress to date. However, this evaluation report does not represent the end of our monitoring and evaluation efforts. As the project continues, we have an opportunity to build on the knowledge harvested with this report, and reconsider what we want to monitor for our next round of evaluation.

At this stage, we recommend that the YFS team **continues to monitor:**

- Group's ability to identify issues relating to sexualized violence, watching for more depth in understanding
- Participant's ability to respond to violence and take positive action
- Participation rates, including specifically male participation rate and number of Youth from first year who return for a second year
- # of actions undertaken by male participants
- Changes in community member's awareness and knowledge of gender-based violence

In addition, based on what we know now, we recommend that the YFS team **starts monitoring:**

- Future actions by Youth, ability of the group to stay together and maintain project momentum
- Project uptake, how many new Youth join in the second year and stay involved
- Youth activity outside of structure modules
- Testimonials by Youth about the value of this program, getting a better understanding of if and how Youth value the program and the role they see for themselves in it
- Participant's ability and willingness to approach key adults and allies
- Eventually, it may be worthwhile to consider community safety indicators for the school to be able to track instances of violence

As identified in the overall program model, the hope is that in future stages of the project Youth will play a role in monitoring and evaluation. There is a powerful opportunity for Youth to play a role in identifying indicators (deciding what is most important to measure), collecting data and communicating results. This will give Youth a further sense of ownership of the project and an opportunity to learn and apply some important monitoring and evaluation skills.



## Lessons Learned and Recommendations:

At this stage in the process, the following successes, challenges and opportunities have been assembled based on the results of this initial evaluation. Specific recommendations are identified for facilitators and for LAWS.

### For Facilitators:

#### Successes:

- Positive uptake of the program by Youth (90% of Youth reported being satisfied with the program)
- Evidence of transformative learning for Youth participants. They reported feeling like they changed personally and acquired concrete skills (campaigning, communication, media/social media, speaking up)
- The success in designing engaging learning modules to include a mix of large and small group discussions, games and teambuilding exercises, and providing food to help keep the Youth motivated throughout the day. Overall Youth reported really enjoying the fun, games, art, food and teamwork.
- The success is bringing in outside resources such as online campaigns and YouTube videos to communicate issues. Youth and the community really enjoyed hearing field stories and experiences from Alan Wade.

#### Challenges:

- The challenge of maintaining participation rate. As the table below demonstrates, participation rates have declined steadily throughout the project. Participants report having many competing priorities (school work, travel, other extra curricula activities) and not all participants have the full support for their families.

	<b>Nov and Dec 2015 Information Sessions</b>	<b>Launch #1 Jan 2016</b>	<b>Launch #2 Feb 2016</b>	<b>Launch #3 March 2016</b>	<b>Launch #4 April 2016</b>	<b>Launch #5 May 2016</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	64	22	19	17	14	10

- The challenge of recruiting new Youth while keeping graduated Youth involved and engaged. There will be a need to revisit previously covered material to assure a basic level of literacy on response based practice from all participants. It will be necessary to find a way to do this without boring participants who have already been through the material.
- The challenge of keeping Youth engaged between sessions. Youth express a desire to keep things going but acknowledge the difficulty of doing so.
- The challenge of getting teachers on board. Facilitators were surprised by teachers' initial resistance to the project.





### Opportunities:

- The opportunity to further involve Elders, cultural activities and teaching and to acknowledge the impact of residential school/colonialism on sexualized violence against Indigenous women. This opportunity was identified by participants through their final feedback surveys and interviews. In addition, research has show that lack of connection to culture has been identified as a clear risk factor in respect to violence<sup>7</sup>.

Specific opportunities to consider include:

- Having Elders share stories, legends and teach skills
- Inviting guest speaker to discuss traditional Kaska gender roles, traditional Kaska teachings around dignity: Dene ā' nezen
- Acknowledging the historical role of Indigenous women in resistance to residential school, racist policies<sup>8</sup>
- Talking about the role of residential school in destabilizing Indigenous people and changing perceptions and attitudes towards women<sup>9</sup>
- The opportunity to include more content about self-harm and mental health in future workshops. This was identified by participants in the final feedback survey as something they wanted to learn more about.
- Participants really appreciated the incorporation of video and art in the workshops, and see an opportunity to incorporate music in the future.
- There is an opportunity to engage current participants as mentors to younger participants, giving them an opportunity to apply group management and process skills for creating safety in small groups, and building Youth ownership, a key ingredient to sustaining the project long term. Having current participants play roles in facilitating future sessions that revisit material already covered will keep the sessions interesting and relevant for them.
- The opportunity to involve Youth in the monitoring and evaluation of the project, discussing what does a successful project look like, picking indicators and collecting information, thus increasing their responsibility and leadership of the project.
- The opportunity to run the project from October to March as not to compete with exams at year end

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<sup>7</sup> Crooks, C. Chiodo, D. Thomas, D (2009) Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A toolkit for service providers.

<sup>8</sup> See examples in Carriere, Jeannine and Richardson, Cathy (2013) Relationship is Everything: Holistic Approaches to Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health. First Peoples Child and Family Review. Volume 7, Number 2, 2013. Pp 8-26

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*



## For LAWS:

### **Successes:**

- Overwhelmingly positive feedback from community members and a clear desire for more! When asked how proud people were of the Youth 95% of respondents ranked their level of pride between 7 and 10 out of 10
- Momentum created by the final presentations and inter-agency excitement and commitment to the project's continuation.

### **Challenges:**

- The challenge of keeping staff/teachers informed and involved. It appears that some teachers were not supportive of the project and the time it took away from class time.
- The challenge of maintaining community involvement and enthusiasm for the project. Community members were inspired after the final presentations. How to harness that momentum and find more opportunities for community involvement?

### **Opportunities:**

- The opportunity to further involve members of the interagency group as speakers, resource people and mentors to the Youth. This will help Youth become more familiar with the network of people who can support them and the services that all of their organizations provide. Specifically, the need to expose the Youth to mental health services was highlighted by facilitators.
- Hosting more community events, to keep community members informed of the group's work, continue the community conversation and build more awareness.
- Communicating a summary of the results of this evaluation with the broader community to help keep them involved and up to date on the project.
- The opportunity to work with educators to incorporate YFS modules in school curriculum, or offer course credit for work relating to this project. Partnering with educators has the added benefit of increased awareness of response-based principles among the teachers who work with Youth everyday. There is an opportunity to either build a deeper connection with the school, or distance the project from the school completely as to not be reliant on teacher support.



## APPENDIX A: Context, Program Model and Curriculum

### Context

Violence against Aboriginal women and girls has been repeatedly identified as a National crisis in Canada. Consistent pressure from Aboriginal and Women advocates have led to the recent launch of a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The National statistics are grim. Aboriginal women and girls are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to report having been a victim of violent crime<sup>10</sup>. Not only do Indigenous women face more frequent incidence of violence, the violence is also much more severe. Most cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women (55%) involve women and girls under the age of 31, with 17% of these being 18 years of age and younger<sup>11</sup>.

A 2011 Statistics Canada report suggests that the national homicide rate for Indigenous women is at least seven times higher than for non-Indigenous women. The Native Women's Association of Canada estimates that roughly 600 Indigenous women and girls in Canada have gone missing or have been murdered over the last two decades. The majority of these cases remain unsolved<sup>12</sup>. The representation of Aboriginal women in the prison system has increased by nearly 90% over the last 10 years, making them the fastest-growing offender group<sup>13</sup>.

Rates of violence against women are particularly high in the Yukon. Compared to the provinces, rates of sexualized offences against women are 2-3 times higher in the Yukon than in the provinces<sup>14</sup>. Indigenous women experience spousal assault at rates more than three times higher than for non-Aboriginal women or for men<sup>15</sup>. The number of Indigenous women who accessed shelters to escape violence in Canada was 21 per 100,000 in 2008. In the Yukon, the rate was 234 per 100,000<sup>16</sup>.

A 2013 Human Rights Watch report explores the relationship between the RCMP and Indigenous women and girls in northern BC, and uncovered allegations of sexualized assault by police officers and a widely perceived failure of the police to protect women and girls from violence<sup>17</sup>. The report highlighted how fear of retaliation from police runs high in the north. "Those Who Take Us Away" the title of the Human Rights Watch report is a literal translation of the word for police in Carrier.

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<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada. (2011). Violent victimization of Aboriginal women in the Canadian provinces, 2009. Ottawa: Minister of Industry

<sup>11</sup> Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) (2010) Fact Sheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls. Retrieved from: [https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Missing\\_and\\_Murdered\\_Aboriginal\\_Women\\_and\\_Girls](https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls)

<sup>12</sup> Assembly of First Nations (2013) A National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> Richardson, Cathy (2013) Indigenous Women, RCMP and Service Providers Work Together for Justice: A Response-based Safety Collaboration in the Yukon. Research to Practice Network

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Human Rights Watch (2013) Those Who Take Us Away



Watson Lake has a population of about 800 people, approximately half self-identify as Aboriginal<sup>18</sup>. Reported crime rates historically have been significantly higher in Watson Lake than in other Yukon communities. Reported crime rates per 1000 residents were about 4x times higher in Watson Lake than in Whitehorse between 2003-2008<sup>19</sup>. As a small, remote community, Watson Lake has under-resourced and oversubscribed social development services. In addition, these social development services are generally geared toward providing services within an adult context.

In the Yukon, a series of incidents involving violence against First Nations by the police led to a Police Review which identified systemic issues that compromise the safety of First Nations women and girls. In concert with the RCMP, women's organizations and Kaska women, LAWS spearheaded a community-based collaborative movement, Together for Justice, to restore the dignity of women who have been abused. In particular, to understand how language is used to conceal violence and to understand the impact of negative and positive social response on individuals who have been subjected to violence. This process led to the signing of a Safety Protocol Agreement between LAWS and the Watson Lake RCMP.

The Youth for Safety Project evolved as one element of the Together for Justice Project and aims to focus specifically on empowering Youth to be active participants in building safety and justice for women and girls in their community.



<sup>18</sup> Yukon Community Profiles (2013) Watson Lake. <http://www.yukoncommunities.yk.ca/watson-lake/watson-lake-population-labour-force>

<sup>19</sup> Liard First Nation (2010) Liard First Nation Community Profile. [http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/pdf/FN\\_Com\\_Profile\\_LFN\\_LH\\_Ed.pdf](http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/pdf/FN_Com_Profile_LFN_LH_Ed.pdf)



## Learning Objectives and Outcomes

### Learning Objectives

Participating Youth will learn:

- group management and process skills to create safety in small groups;
- the dynamics of violence and resistance from sexualized violence to structural violence (e.g., the connection between sexualized assault, racism, poverty, gender, sexuality, geography);
- how to raise the subject of sexualized violence with peers of different ages;
- how to approach key adults to engage as “consultants” and allies;
- how to develop original materials as part of individual and collective initiatives to promote safety and justice in the school and community;

### Learning Outcomes

The curriculum was designed with the following outcomes in mind:

- As the program progresses, Youth will experience themselves as knowledgeable and capable of working together to develop an informed and well-planned initiative in the community.
- Because the program will include accessing key adults, Youth will become familiar with the operation of organizations such as Town Council, Watson Lake Secondary School council, Chamber of Commerce, Department of Justice (Territorial and Federal), R.C.M.P. and Victim Services, Crown Counsel, Women’s Directorate, and other services and organizations.
- The group facilitation style will reflect the intended learning outcomes. Rather than a top-down expert-to-novice approach, the facilitators will build safety and confidence by identifying already existing skills and awareness, creating enough safety to allow open discussion, and developing a consistent focus on safety and justice and related materials. Program facilitators will be well trained in democratic and safe leadership group facilitation skills and well versed in projects to promote safety and justice, generally, and freedom from violence, in particular.
- The Youth will find the program interesting, unique, engaging, challenging, supportive, responsive, and educational. Every effort will be made to acknowledge not only the Youth involved but those who support their involvement, from family members to friends and teachers.



## Curriculum

The overall program model will be delivered over 3 years in 4 parts. The overall model is designed to have Youth take on more and more responsibility and ownership of the program as the program progresses, ultimately leading to Youth graduating out of the program serving as mentors to younger Youth.

Figure 4 provides an overview of the goals of each part of the overall program.



FIGURE 4: 4 PART CURRICULUM



## Project Launch Modules

Part 1, the project launch was delivered in 5 2-day modules between January-May 2016. There were also 2 introductory sessions held in November and December 2015. Figure 5 summarizes the content of each module.

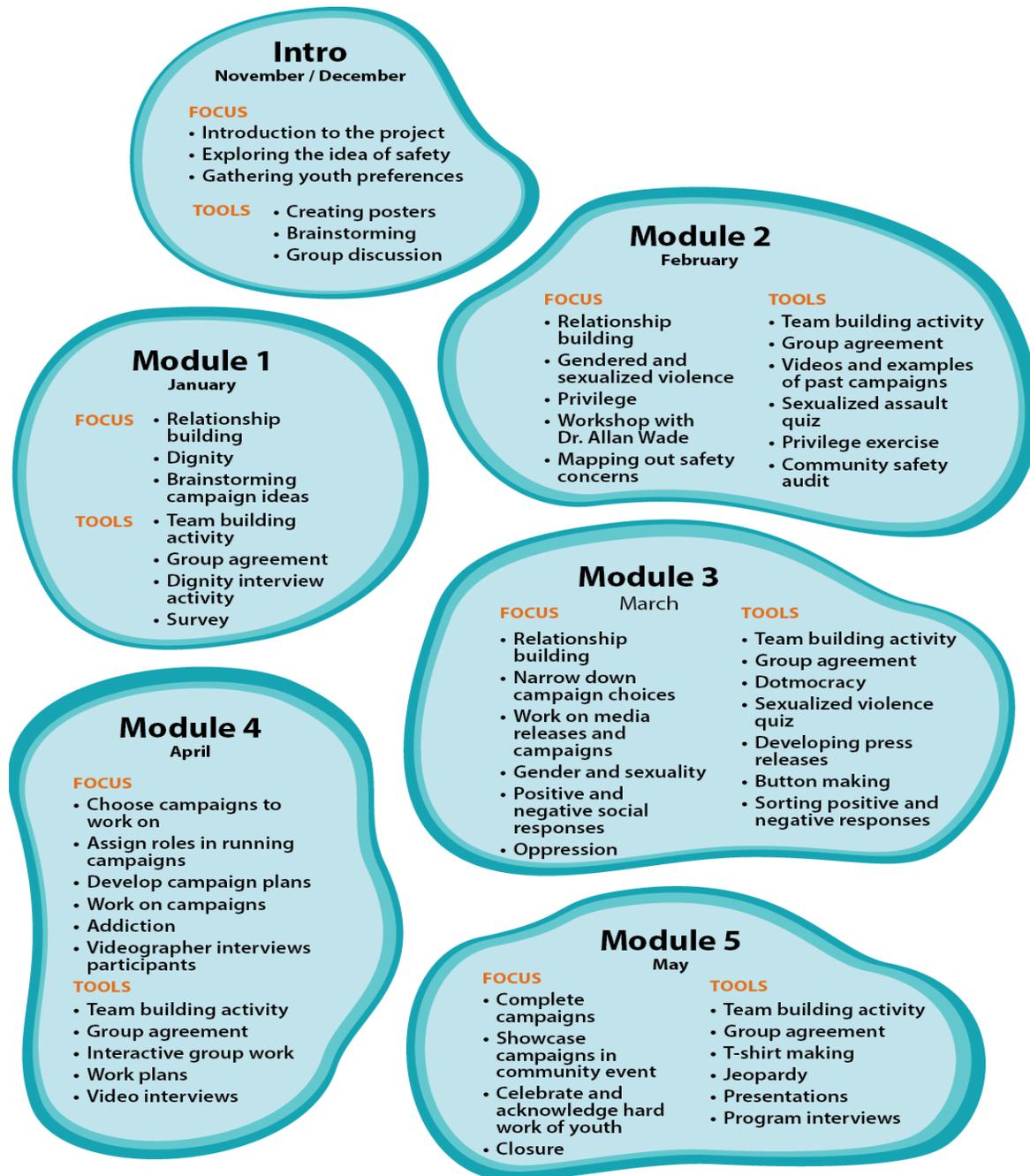


FIGURE 5: OVERVIEW OF PROJECT LAUNCH MODULES