

Summary of Roundtable Discussion with Domestic Violence Service Providers Concerning Domestic Violence Prevention Month from November 2016

Twenty-four participants from the following organizations attended the roundtable:

- ▶ Brandon Friendship Centre
- ▶ Bravestone Centre
- ▶ Canadian Red Cross
- ▶ Ending Violence Across Manitoba
- ▶ Family Violence Prevention Program
- ▶ Ikwe Widdjiitiwin
- ▶ Immigrant and Refugee Organization of Manitoba
- ▶ Islamic Social Services Association
- ▶ Klinik Community Health Centre
- ▶ Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre
- ▶ Manitoba Association of Women's Shelters
- ▶ North Point Douglas Women's Centre
- ▶ NorWest Co-op Community Health
- ▶ Nova House
- ▶ Pluri-elles
- ▶ Rainbow Resource Centre
- ▶ Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre
- ▶ Sierra Leone Nationals Association of Manitoba
- ▶ Women's Health Clinic
- ▶ Winnipeg Blue Bombers
(*Be More than a Bystander campaign*)
- ▶ YWCA Thompson

Message from the Minister

November is Domestic Violence Prevention Month in Manitoba.



The Manitoba government is committed to the prevention of domestic violence. During Domestic Violence Prevention Month and throughout the year, we work together with our partners to raise awareness about this serious issue and its impact on children, families and our communities.

This past November (November 24, 2016) I was privileged to host a roundtable discussion with domestic violence service providers. This provided the opportunity to hear directly from community regarding approaches to prevent domestic violence and how to promote healthy relationships.

I gained a great deal of valuable feedback and insight from these experts. I am pleased to release this summary of those discussions, to report back to the community and those in attendance. I will also be sharing this information with my colleagues in government as we work to fulfil our mandate to improve the lives of Manitobans.

Original signed by

Honourable Rochelle Squires,
Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Participants shared their perspectives on three questions.

Some key themes emerged from the discussions, which are summarized below.

QUESTION

THEMES THAT EMERGED

1 To address violence prevention, we often hear it is important to work with youth and focus on creating healthy relationships. Can you share with us the key elements of youth programs that assist them in developing and maintaining healthy relationships?

- It is important to work with schools and across government departments. For example, the Department of Education should be included as part of the conversation. Delivering healthy relationship programming should be tied to physical education or health curriculum. However, health curriculum is not universally mandated.
- Teaching respect and consent as a component of healthy relationships is important and should be taught early.
- It is important when working with youth to talk to them at their level, using media and technology whenever possible, and adapting communication to their needs.
- It can be difficult communicating the extent and reality of the problem to youth; information should be engaging, interactive, safe and at their level. Building some “shock” value into presentations may be helpful.
- Peer support is an important element that should be incorporated into programs for youth. That support must be gender inclusive.
- Successful programs for youth are developed by or in consultation with youth.
- It is important to take a holistic approach to programming that focuses on family and the community.

2 When we work with youth, what is important to know when working with boys, girls and those who identify along the gender spectrum? Do elements of the program or approach need to be different?

- Working with members of the community on program development is essential. This includes the immigrant and Indigenous communities, families and those along the gender spectrum.
- Be aware of a binary approach when discussing gender. Let students self identify, asking them “how do you see yourself?”
- The importance of working with men and boys was stressed. Developing role models that are reflective of different genders is critical and adds value to programming in the community.
- Working with schools is important. Programming of this type should be incorporated earlier into the curriculum and it should be mandatory
- Public education with adults is needed.

3 What do we need to know about family violence in Manitoba? What might be happening in your community regarding family violence that is new? Are there new concerns or emerging issues that you haven't seen before, etc.?

- Resources are lacking across the province.
- Resources are lacking for those seeking access to mental health services – service providers are seeing long wait lists for specialized services, etc.
- Rural and northern communities in the province are particularly affected by lack of resources.
- The importance of working with men and boys was emphasized. Role models are key and add value to programming in the community.
- More work should take place to connect with ethno-cultural communities. There should be specific roundtables for ethno-cultural communities.
- The topics of domestic violence and sexual violence must be dealt with separately. Education and programming that deal with the issues are too often mixed together.
- The community and government departments must not work in silos. There should be clear communication and clarification of roles and responsibilities across departments and with community partners.
- The easy access to pornography should be considered in prevention efforts.
- Consideration should be given to the 70 per cent of Indigenous women who access shelters. Ikwe Widdjiitiwin shared that 98 per cent of the women who access their shelter are Indigenous.
- There is a need to consider a multi-sectoral approach, including children, violence, technology, etc.