

OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROJECT

About the Women's Policy Office

The Women's Policy Office was established in 1985. It is the central agency within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that supports the development of programs and policies to advance the social and economic status of women.

The vision of the Women's Policy Office is social, legal, cultural and economic equality for women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Women's Policy Office:

- Ensures that the impact on women of legislation, policies and programs is brought to the attention of the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and departments;
- Monitors and reviews activities of Provincial Government departments and agencies to ensure they conform to government policy of improving the status of women; and,
- Liaises with Provincial Government departments and agencies, other governments and advisory councils and women's organizations on all issues affecting women.

About the Violence Prevention Initiative

The Women's Policy Office is the lead department for the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI). The VPI reflects the Provincial Government's commitment to address the problem of violence. This Initiative is a six-year, multi-departmental, government-community partnership. It seeks long-term solutions to the problem of violence against our core populations most likely to experience violence.

The vision of the Violence Prevention Initiative is that women, children and youth, Aboriginal women and children, older persons, persons with

disabilities, persons of differing race or ethnicity, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, and persons of differing economic status, will face less violence and live and work in communities where violence is considered unacceptable.

Violence Prevention Initiative Guiding Principles

The Violence Prevention Initiative is guided by the core belief that violence is rooted in *inequality* which promotes inappropriate use of *power and control*.

The *Respect Aging* training project is grounded in the following **Violence Prevention Initiative guiding principles**:

- People have the right to a safe and secure environment;
- Health, well-being and productivity are enhanced in a violence-free environment;
- The social and cultural roots of violence are based on inequality. While all women, children and older persons are more likely to be victims of violence, factors such as ability, sexual orientation, economic status or ethnicity can put them at even higher risk;
- Society reinforces violence through expressions of sexism, ageism, classism, heterosexism and other biased attitudes;
- Violence is a choice and is preventable. There is strong evidence that effective intervention can reduce and prevent violence;
- Prevention of violence is everyone's responsibility;
- The elimination of violence requires a comprehensive response including prevention, public education, services and enforcement of the law; and,
- Criminal and other acts of violence and abuse require effective consequences, including punishment under the law.

About this Project

One of the priorities of the Violence Prevention Initiative is to provide information and resources to recognize, prevent and intervene in violence

against core populations who are most likely to experience violence. The *Respect Aging* education and training project is a multi-year collaborative effort between the Women's Policy Office (as lead agency for the Violence Prevention Initiative) and the Office for Aging and Seniors of the Department of Health and Community Services, one of the Violence Prevention Initiative's key partner departments.

The goal of the project is to provide information, resources and tools to raise awareness and increase understanding about violence against older persons. It challenges people to think about what they can do to make our communities and institutions safer for older persons.

We hope to accomplish this by:

- Providing training materials that reflect **cultural, regional and provincial** issues, stories and demographics;
- Providing opportunities to explore the problem of violence against older persons in the areas of **recognition, prevention and intervention**;
- Providing **information, resources and tools** for helpers and others involved with older persons, and for older persons themselves;
- Emphasizing our **core violence prevention principle** that the social and cultural roots of violence are based on inequality which promotes the inappropriate use of power and control;
- Providing opportunities for participants to reflect on their **perspectives, assumptions and feelings** about violence against older persons; and,
- Providing opportunities for participants to consider the **impact**, on their own lives and work, of interacting with victims of violence.

Training is a process that requires time for effectiveness. *Respect Aging* was designed as a series of training modules to be delivered over time. This allows participants to incorporate what they have learned into their work practices and interactions with older persons.

The success of a training project depends on many factors. Training is not an end in itself; it should connect with and impact both the participants and the host organization. Training needs to be part of a comprehensive

strategy for change. There must be a clear mandate for the training from the leaders of the organization. This mandate should be clearly articulated to all relevant divisions and departments. An effective training strategy also involves the identification, development, communication and implementation of priorities and policies, and results in changes in the ways work is performed.

Target Groups for Training

Respect Aging was designed to address the education and training needs of members of the target groups listed below. The training materials may also be used with other adult groups, organizations, sectors or communities.

- Staff in the Regional Health Authorities
- Aboriginal Communities
- Justice and law enforcement professionals
- Personal care homes
- Other formal caregivers
- Financial institutions
- Community stakeholders
- Caregivers of older persons
- Older adults
- Other adults
- Families of older persons
- Youth

A Note about Language

Focus on “Violence against Older Persons”, Rather than “Elder Abuse”

In this education and training project, the term “violence against older persons” is used, rather than “elder abuse” or “senior abuse”. As a trainer, you should reflect this perspective in the language you use in your training sessions. This is important because:

- Violence against older persons is part of the social problem of violence against *all* age groups. When we refer to “violence against older persons”, we understand that violence can occur at any time in a person’s life. Some people think that violence is only a problem of the young. They think that violence *stops* at a certain age. The truth is that violence - acts of power and control - exists across the lifespan. A woman who has been physically harmed by her spouse throughout her marriage does not suddenly become a victim of “elder abuse” at some arbitrary older age; she is a victim of *violence*;
- Because of ageism, the terms “elder abuse” or “senior abuse” may inaccurately imply less serious violence. The terms “elderly” and “seniors” sometimes evoke negative images of vulnerability, unproductiveness and burden. These prejudices are reflected in society’s attitudes toward older persons. Using the term “older persons” includes them in the lifespan continuum. It does not just relate to a point in time at which the stereotypes of aging suddenly apply; and,
- The term “Elder” is often used in Aboriginal contexts to describe cultural and spiritual guides who have gifts of insight and understanding. Aboriginal Elders transmit the collective wisdom of the generations. This training program is concerned with violence against older persons from *all* backgrounds and cultures. Therefore, the phrase “elder abuse” is not used in this manual.

Project Materials

- Trainer’s Guide (for trainers)
- Participant Manual
- PowerPoint presentation

The **Trainer’s Guide** and **PowerPoint presentation** contains all the materials you will need for facilitating the training sessions:

- Three session outlines covering Modules 1-16 of the Participant Manual. These outlines provide a framework for trainers;
- PowerPoint files, for each session;
- Speaking notes for each PowerPoint presentation;

- Handouts for participants; and,
- Evaluation forms for participants and trainers.

The ***Participant Manual*** provides information, resources and tools in three key areas: Recognition, Prevention and Intervention.

- *Recognition*: Violence against older persons cannot be addressed or reported unless it is recognized and identified as such.
- *Prevention*: Prevention of violence against older persons involves building skills and increasing knowledge and awareness.
- *Intervention*: In this training manual, intervention is based on the principle that older persons have the right to make their own choices about their lives.

The Participant Manual also includes:

- *Stories from the Front Lines*. These are real stories of violence that have happened to older people in this province. Each story was shared by someone who works with older persons. Participants will discuss these stories during the training sessions and respond to questions to help them understand and work through situations of violence;
- *Reflection Questions*: Reflection is integral to learning, because it helps build self-awareness and self-understanding. This can improve a person's effectiveness in taking action on an issue. These questions are at the end of most of the modules in the Manual. They provide opportunities for participants to examine their own attitudes, perspectives and biases with respect to both violence against older persons and violence in their own lives. These questions were developed for participants to use on their own. However, trainers may consider incorporating some of these questions into the session; and,
- *Links/Internet Resources*: This section of the Manual provides Internet resources for further learning. There are links to local, provincial and national resources from government, communities and other sectors that should be of interest to participants from many different backgrounds.

Copies of the whole Participant Manual can be made for participants, or you may decide to give them one module or section at a time. These

materials can also be viewed or downloaded from the *Respect Aging* website at www.respectaging.ca.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an important component of program delivery. There are two important components to our evaluation process.

We first ask that you ensure that the participants complete a Participant Evaluation Form after each session. The feedback obtained can help you to recognize what works well and what could be improved for future training sessions. **Participant Evaluation Form #3** is used at the end of sessions #1 and #2, while **Participant Evaluation Form #4** is used after session #3.¹ Participant Evaluation Form #4 contains a section for feedback on the last session as well as a section for feedback on the whole program.

We then ask that trainers complete a form for the compilation and summary of data. Again, one form is titled **Compilation and Summary of Data Collected with Evaluation Form #1** and the other is titled **Compilation and Summary of Data Collected with Evaluation Form #2**. These forms will allow you to summarize the participants' feedback and to also provide your perspective on what elements of the training program delivery worked well and what elements of the training program delivery might be improved. This will assist the Violence Prevention Initiative's Training Coordinator to support other trainers in the effective use of the *Respect Aging* program. Please return these **Compilation and Summary of Data Forms** to the Training Coordinator for the Violence Prevention Initiative at the address provided in the *Contact Information* section below.

¹ Participant Evaluation Forms #1 and #2 are used only with the Trainer's Guide for 1.5-hour sessions.

Contact Information

For more information or to obtain *Respect Aging* training materials, contact the Violence Prevention Initiative:

Violence Prevention Initiative

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