

NCFV E-Bulletin - January 2010

Engaging Men & Boys in Family Violence Prevention

This edition of the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (NCFV) E-bulletin focuses on engaging men and boys in the prevention of family violence. We highlight current efforts in communities across Canada and around the world working to involve men - as fathers, friends, educators, coaches and leaders - to play an active role in addressing gender-based violence and promoting healthy, equal relationships. The NCFV E-bulletin is a bi-monthly newsletter for those interested in family violence prevention. It is produced by PHAC, on behalf of the Family Violence Initiative (FVI) of the Government of Canada. We want to hear from you – please send your comments and feedback to our editor at: ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca.

Fast Facts

Men's Perspectives on Violence Against Women There are encouraging research findings about men's recognition of their role in addressing violence against women and their perspectives on efforts by institutions and groups to address it. For example, a national poll¹ in Canada showed that:

Sixty-six percent of Canadian men feel that men are not doing enough to address the problem of violence against women in Canada.

The vast majority of men support tough enforcement of existing laws; seventy-five percent say rigorously enforcing existing laws should be a high priority.

Sixty-nine percent of men say that programs targeted towards school-aged boys about ending violence toward women and promoting healthy relationships should be a high priority.

A majority of men (62%) say that raising the awareness of men regarding the need to take a stand against violence towards women should be a high priority.

Men also support increasing funding to women's groups and facilities addressing violence against women, with 45% saying it is a high priority and 42% saying it is a medium priority.

Feature Article

There is a growing emphasis in Canada and in other countries on the importance of engaging men and boys in addressing violence against women. To increase awareness and encourage changes in attitudes and behaviours, some governments

and organizations have introduced violence prevention campaigns that focus on the role of men in educating boys about gender equality and healthy relationships.

For example, Newfoundland and Labrador's Violence Prevention Initiative launched a multi-media campaign that encourages men to teach the boys in their lives about showing respect, fairness and equality towards women. The Respect Women campaign consists of posters, print and television ads, as well as a respectwomen.ca website. It positions men as role models who can deliver positive messages to their sons, grandsons, nephews and younger brothers. Key messages include that: men have a responsibility to nurture and shape the beliefs, attitudes and values of boys, and violence against women, in any form, is unacceptable.

Similar messages are promoted through "It Starts With You. It Stays With Him", an online-based, social media campaign developed by the White Ribbon Campaign and Le Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions, a Francophone provincial training and consultation centre. The comprehensive website itstartswithyou.ca provides men - fathers, uncles, grandfathers, teachers, coaches - with tips, stories, links and resources to educate the boys around them about healthy relationships, sexism, homophobia and degrading language. Example messages include that: being a caring father means educating your son about healthy and equal relationships, and educators have a role to play in teaching boys the language of equality and fostering leadership in male students and colleagues.

In Ontario, the Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin ("I Am a Kind Man") community action campaign - designed for men and youth - engages Aboriginal men and boys through culturally informed messages. It is based on the premise that violence has never been an acceptable part of Aboriginal culture and the application of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. The iamakindman.ca website includes information about how to get involved as well as resource lists.

For additional campaigns organized by or aimed at men to prevent violence against women, please see:

Coaching Boys into Men, a media campaign by the Family Violence Prevention Fund that encourages men to teach boys early, and teach them often, that violence never equals strength.

<http://www.endabuse.org/content/campaigns/detail/688>

Man Up, an international campaign that mobilizes young leaders in a movement to stop violence against women and girls.

<http://manupcampaign.org>

Network of Men Leaders, a new initiative of the United Nations campaign, UNiTE to End Violence against Women.

<http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/network.shtml>