

# TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

## *Bridging the Gap:*

A Cross-Cultural Conversation between  
Aboriginal women, RCMP, Yukon Women's Groups,  
First Nations and front-line service agencies



*Liard Aboriginal Women's Society*

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## *Bridging the Gap:*

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Yukon Women's Groups, First Nations and front-line service agencies

## *Whitehorse and Watson Lake Meeting Reports*

*We would like to acknowledge  
and thank our funders*

Justice Canada

Women's Directorate  
Yukon Government

RCMP  
Family Violence Fund

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) recognizes a critical need to provide more opportunities for Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) members to hear from Kaska women, Help and Hope for Families, Kaushee's Place, other women's groups, government agencies in Watson Lake and Whitehorse, Yukon, community members, and service providers about violence and how it can be addressed. The current climate of fear and distrust of police has been well documented in Yukon. (See for example reports of "What We Heard" and Sharing Common Ground at [www.policereview2010.gov.yk.ca](http://www.policereview2010.gov.yk.ca)). LAWS is motivated by a desire to change that climate of fear and to build safety in community.

With Justice Canada and RCMP funding, LAWS held two workshops in March 2011 to promote a dialogue between women and the RCMP about how we can create safety for women so they can retain their dignity and report violent crimes. LAWS wants to stop the serious abuse of women in Yukon communities, and help develop an effective plan of action to address this abuse with the full participation of RCMP and community members. As activists for social justice together, we need to establish a set of practices that acknowledge harm, honour resistance, and stop violence.

RCMP participation and ongoing communication and cooperation with women's and community groups is key to building trust among all participants, and improving safety for women. The program objective is to create lasting change, through the development of an action plan and orientation documents that could be used by the RCMP to inform and improve policing and social service delivery for women living in Watson Lake and Whitehorse.

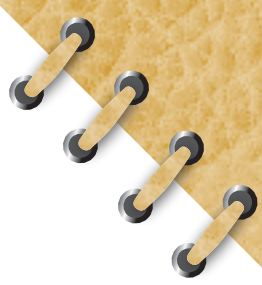
At the initial workshops; "Bridging the Gap: a Cross Cultural Conversation between Kaska women, First Nations, RCMP and community agencies" and "Bridging the Gap: Creating Safety in Community", Allan Wade and Cathy Richardson educated on safety, the importance of accurate language, violence, responsibility, and recovery. The facilitators were tasked with structuring a conversation and activities about current practices, the issues of violence and about shared concerns regarding violence in communities, particularly against indigenous women. At these workshops, participants would periodically exchange relevant information and strategize for areas of improvement. At the end of each workshop, the participants completed evaluations and an agreement was established to maintain ongoing communications throughout the series of future workshops. LAWS has applied for funding for a two-year Together for Justice project to continue this work.

LAWS asked participants at Bridging the Gap sessions to make a collective commitment to move forward in building relationships that will accomplish change. LAWS publishes this report of conversations from the first two Together for Justice workshops in the hope it will inform improved service delivery, policing, and community work to prevent male violence against women and violence in all its forms.

Lois Moorcroft, Liard Aboriginal Women's Society Secretariat  
July 2011



# *Session 1*



# AGENDA

## *Bridging the Gap –*

*A Cross-Cultural Conversation between Aboriginal Women, RCMP,  
First Nations, Women's groups and front-line Service agencies.*

Date & Time: MARCH 3, 2011 & MARCH 4, 2011 • 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Location: NaKwaTaKu Potlatch House

Presenters: Allan Wade, Ph.D., Catherine Richardson, Ph.D.,  
Centre for Response-based practice, Duncan B.C.

### MARCH 3, 2011

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 10:00        | Opening Prayer  |
| 10:15        | Identifying Points of Connection and Common Purpose     |
|              | Purpose and Process of the Gatherings                   |
|              | Building Safety   |
| 11:00        | Social Responses in Cases of Violence                   |
| 12:30 – 1:30 | LUNCH PROVIDED ON-SITE                                  |
| 1:30         | Dignity   |
|              | Understanding Violence in Social and Historical Context |
|              | Family Resemblance in Domination and Resistance         |
| 2:45         | NUTRITION BREAK   |
| 3:00         | Violence is Social                                      |

### MARCH 4, 2011

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 10:00        | Violence is Unilateral                                  |
| 11:00        | Responses and Resistance to Violence                    |
| 12:30 – 1:30 | LUNCH PROVIDED ON-SITE                                  |
| 1:30         | Language and Violence                                   |
| 2:45         | NUTRITION BREAK   |
| 3:00         | Identifying Effective Social Responses Already in Place |
| 3:45         | Evaluation  |
| 4:00         | Forging Commitments for Sustainable Local Action        |
| 4:30         | Closing Comments  |

# PARTICIPANTS

## *Bridging the Gap – Creating Safety in Community*

Date & Time: MARCH 3, 2011 & MARCH 4, 2011 • 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM • 1:30 PM – 4:30 PM  
Location: NakwaTaku Potlatch House

Michelle Beckley	Aboriginal Women's Project Officer - Women's Directorate
Ann Maje Raider	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Mary Maje	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Martina Baker	Teslin Tlingit Council - Peacemaker Diversion Program
Peter Clark	Commanding Officer RCMP
Bob Johnson	RCMP Training Development
Kurt Bringsli	RCMP youth Liaison
Kelly MacQuame	RCMP - Magor Crimes Unit
Janet McDonald	Liard First Nation Member
Liz Porter	Liard First Nation Member
Mary Charlie	Liard First Nation Member
Cindy Chiasson	Elizabeth Fry Society Yukon Outreach Worker
May Brodhagen	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
May Stewart	Liard First Nation Member
Barbara McInerney	Kaushee's Place
Winnie Atlin	CTFN Elders Council
Kitty Grant	CTFN Elders Council
Pearl Keenan	WCC Elders Advisory Council
Agnes Mills	WCC Elders Advisory Council
Paul Thalhofer	RCMP
Dean Hoogland	RCMP
Julie Menard	Women's Directorate
Shauna Curtin	Women's Directorate
Don Rogers	RCMP
Terra Taylor	RCMP
Sharon Keaton	VAU-RCMP
Rick Aird	RCMP
Ketsia Hoode	Les EssentiElles
Charlotte Hrenchuk	Yukon Status of Women Council
Adeline Webber	Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle
Julianna Scramstad	Victoria Faulkner Women's Society Program Coordinator
Fannie Vance	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Lois Moorcroft	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society Secretariat

# *Whitehorse Report*

## *Together for Justice*

**Bridging the Gap: A Cross-Cultural Conversation between Aboriginal women, RCMP,  
Yukon Women's Groups, First Nations, and front-line service agencies  
NaKwaTaKu Potlatch House, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, March 2011**

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## Introduction:

Host agency: Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS)

Mary Maje, President, Ann Maje Raider, Executive Director, Elders, Board members

Presenters: Dr. Allan Wade, Dr. Cathy Richardson, Centre for Response-based Practice, Duncan, BC

Thirty-three participants attended Liard Aboriginal Women's Society's *Together for Justice: On Violence, Language and Responsibility* introductory workshop in Whitehorse.

LAWS representatives, Kaska Elders and LAWS Secretariat, RCMP "M" Division Commanding Officer, and RCMP from First Nations, Youth, Training, Major Crimes, Communications, Whitehorse and Kwanlin Dun detachments, RCMP victim assistance volunteer program; Kaushee's Place, Les EssentiElles, Yukon Status of Women Council, Elizabeth Fry Society Yukon, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre; Yukon Government Women's Directorate, Whitehorse Correctional Centre Elders Advisory Committee, Vuntut Gwitchin, Teslin Tlingit, and Carcross Tagish First Nations' Elders and Liard First Nation citizens joined presenters Dr. Allan Wade and Dr. Catherine Richardson for the gathering. A list of participants is found on page 27 of this report.

The goal of *Together for Justice* is to build on the opportunity for change by bringing together First Nations and community women, RCMP, women's groups representatives and front-line responders to start a conversation, to learn better ways of responding to violent crime against women living in aboriginal and northern communities, and to develop ongoing agreements on how to improve women's safety.

Many women distrust police because of previous negative experiences when they have reported violence. LAWS project is designed to bridge the gap between women and the RCMP, and to educate about the use of language and how to deal with people with dignity, respect, and honour. The initial two workshops, in Whitehorse and in Watson Lake, have been funded by Justice Canada and the RCMP for fiscal year 2010-11.

Evaluations said it was good that we cared enough to get together to change things for ourselves and future generations. Participants appreciated that the RCMP attended. They learned how important words are in the justice system, and that passive and mutual language can undermine the victim and normalize the violence or even blame the victim. Safety is always the underlying foundation for women's actions and we need to honour resistance and put emphasis on it when dealing with women, not blame women or judge them. Education and communication will all parties involved is essential to creating safety in communities. The open dialogue was a good start, more gatherings and conversations are needed to learn more and to develop lasting change through agreements and action plans to create safety.

By collaborative work during the Together for Justice workshops, RCMP members, Aboriginal women, First Nations service providers and women's groups can develop action plans and orientation documents for the RCMP. Participants will learn about safety, the importance of accurate language, violence, responsibility, and recovery. This knowledge, if put into practice, can help to improve investigating and reporting of sexual and spousal assaults. Ongoing communication and cooperation will inform improved service delivery, policing, and community work to prevent male violence against women and violence in all its forms.

## Opening Prayer and Introductions:

Ann Maje Raider welcomed everyone, and Elder Pearl Keenan gave the Opening Prayer. Gunalcheesh.

Cathy Richardson asked the ancestors to join us, gave thanks for the prayers, and acknowledged the traditional territory of Kwanlin Dun First Nation. She spoke of her Metis heritage and her great-grandmother from Old Crow and of her work with Yukon First Nations communities. We're here to help people recover and create safe, just, dignified conditions around them.



Allan Wade introduced himself as someone who has been walking the divide for a long time, growing up in Chilliwack in an orderly, square grid pattern neighbourhood, on the other side of the dyke from the “Squaw River Reserve.” As a child he wondered why the dyke protected the white folks' homes and not the Indian ones. Working as a family therapist, counsellor, and psychologist he addresses problems that are connected to violence. Colonization is hidden under the term “civilization.” Working with aboriginal people he started hearing about the prison camps that we call residential schools which were not a residence nor a school. Their intent was to de-educate not to educate. Allan does critical incident debriefing with firemen and police, and helps communities create more socially just and effectiveness circumstances for people. His research is on the connection between violence and language. As an employee of LAWS he is accountable to the advocates.

Cathy said her understanding of our task is to bring individual women and RCMP members together to talk about how we can create safety. We would like to stop violence and build relationships. We will identify what's already safe and what's already working.

Allan said that when you talk about violence you talk about hard things, that's unavoidable, but we'll be very sparing about that. We don't want people to be traumatized or sad. We'll create enough safety to look at these issues in a fairly straightforward way. We're not going to talk about your personal lives. We're not going to engage in the practice of criticism. We're here to build, not tear down. This is a place for direct, honest, informed criticism. Participants should have a willingness to enter into some examination of their practice. I expect that like me you are humbled by the people you work with. Just when you think you know things you learn so much from other people's wisdom and experience.

Ann Maje Raider explained the background for this gathering. Last summer LAWS applied for RCMP family violence program funding. Ann acknowledged the support of Sergeant Paul Thalsofer, and thanked Yukon women's groups for their letters of support. We've applied to Status of Women Canada for longer-term project funding. In Yukon, there is a gap between women and the RCMP, and the idea behind our project is to bridge the gap. We want to educate about the use of language and how to deal with people with dignity, respect, and honour. We want to reach a protocol agreement with the RCMP. When new members come in to work in our communities they will take Kaska cultural training, and have an understanding of the history of violence against Kaska people. The Kaska have a rich history and culture, we are much more than what the RCMP see in arresting our people. We are not that. In our community the RCMP are very transient; we want them to have the wonderful knowledge Allan and Cathy have that will be introduced over the next couple of days. I want to thank the RCMP, Kaushee's Place, and women's groups for their help. We're glad the RCMP are making amends and building relationships.

Mary Maje acknowledged our Elders and our people, saying it's an honour to be here among the Elders and always good to be in a learning environment. I represent Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) and I honour Ann, Lois and Travis for their hard work bringing this about.

May Broadhagen is from Liard First Nation, has been part of LAWS since they started and serves on the RCMP “M” Division Elders Advisory Committee. She's interested in stopping violence against women and improving the relationship with the RCMP. “I like my people to feel safe with them. We have to know they're respectful. So hopefully everything will turn out.”

Each participant then introduced themselves around the circle. Several of the Elders spoke about how abuse of women has to stop, describing their work over many decades in the area of healing and recovery, by empowering our women which empowers the whole family. They talked about residential school and being made to feel ashamed of who they were. Members of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre Elders Advisory Committee work with inmates to help the healing of a lot of men and women who are stuck in the violence and in the justice system. They expressed concern about very young people being drunk and then having to be picked up and taken by RCMP to the hospital. They were really happy to be there to discuss all of this and said it's good to help each other in a circle.

## **SAFETY AND COLLECTIVE ETHICS**

Allan talked about the many layers and different forms of violence that are functionally connected to each other. During invasions there are often high levels of rape, kidnapping of children, ethnocide, high levels of debasement and humiliation. We need to connect these things, to see the links between schoolyard bullying and wife assault. LAWS is looking for participants to commit to three two-day workshops over a period of months to work on breaking down isolation. Virtually all forms of violence involve isolation. In Watson Lake, bingo is about a lot more than playing a game. It's a way to break down isolation.

We need to create a spirit of collective ethics and sustain a relationship over time. It's big fish to fry, not an easy project. This is an historical moment and we hope everyone will rise to it. Talk it over; if you're not willing to participate we don't want anybody to be forced to attend. Coming and going from the session interferes with collective efforts and sustainability. There is no value in just holding a two-day workshop with outsiders from B.C. The group needs to foster something that's going to be sustainable over time. We'll be discussing that more later on.

## **SOCIAL RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE**

Allan and the Centre for Response-Based Practice look at how police, lawyers, doctors, transition house workers and other people respond to victims, children, the accused, offenders. He's been at the work in earnest for about 30 years. A majority of victims receive negative social responses. An example is a parent may say to a battered woman "Honey you made your bed, lie in it," or "Your children need your marriage to stay together." These are well-meaning people.

It's so quick to subtly blame a woman for being raped, to ask, "Why were you in that part of town?" As a parent you might ask that out of real concern. Social responses also include service providers. An assaulted woman phones police, calls a victim assistance worker, the police arrive, a constable begins to interview her. He gets information about the past, in B.C. there's a primary aggressor assessment requirement. He asks the woman "How long have you been having the problems in your marriage." She replies "This isn't a marriage problem, this is a violence problem. It's a criminal assault." The police constable is experienced and competent, but now embarrassed. He finds the accused, arrests him, lays a charge, once convicted the sentence included jail and a no contact order. After the offender is out of jail he came to the woman's house and she phoned the police to say you need to call the arresting officer, he's not supposed to be here and he's accosting me. It goes to the detachment and she is told "I'll make a note on the file." She phoned Allan who advised her to go back down to the detachment and ask them to locate the accused and enforce the no contact order. There is no negative intention at all, but the woman isn't being protected.

A 56-year old woman whose psychological career started when she was 13 had had shock treatments and been diagnosed with anxiety disorder, depression and personality disorder. Support from members of a faith community helped her. When asked why she ran away from home at a young age it was because her brother had been molesting her since she was 8. She told her mom one day when she was giving her a bath. Her mom pushed her head under the bath water and said "Your brother would never do that." Her brother and his friends sexually assaulted her and she ran away when she was a young teen. Victims of violence who have negative social responses are unlikely to tell an authority person. She said how her mother reacted to her made her feel worse than the assaults did.

Aboriginal women who are part of so-called healing processes, reconciliation processes, say it means you get to tell these five lawyers representing the church and the government, these strangers in suits, what the priest did to you. When, where and how he touched you. You might be 75 years old and you're being asked to recall painful abuse from years ago. That's not justice, that's violence. A few years ago at Wye Lake cabin several Edmonton lawyers blew in to town to take statements and get clients, then left. People drink, they get sad, they think about suicide. That's a negative social response to all victims of violence. Then legal counsel sent out a long form in English to the survivors.

Violence is the cause of most "learning disorders." A child who can't sleep, lives in a house of terror where dad is beating mom, and the child lies awake then falls behind at school, feels humiliated, and is diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder. Many of the psychological tests used to diagnose children are unethical and unsupportable, and should not be used. The WISC and other common tests to diagnose learning disabilities, as well as mental health

diagnostic tests such as those used to diagnose ADD/ADHD and depression, are problematic in this respect. The quality of the social response is a better predictor of recovery from violence, when people have good social responses they recover quicker. When a counselor asks you “Why do you pick these men?” it puts the deficit on the woman rather than on the violent man.

Our collective project is to reshape and improve our social responses all across the board. Police are one part of that, social workers and nurses and others need to be involved.

Cathy said women experience negative social responses more often than men, and are more likely to receive a psychological diagnosis. Once you have a permanent mental health record you can never get it cleared off your name. It can be subpoenaed in court; you can be denied life insurance or a mortgage. Many people are not made aware of consent and what the implications of a psychological diagnosis are. I see it as a misdiagnosis of violence, particularly when members of the aboriginal community are labeled as mentally ill. Negative social responses leave more intense and lasting distress.

When we think about how to solve the violence, or ask if women have been victims of violence, we tend to assume they are likely to be violent if they have been victims of violence. Actually that’s not true. It depends on how they were treated when they reported the violence. That’s what makes the difference. If they’re cared for well when they report violence they likely won’t be violent themselves.

Allan spoke about how violence by the offender begins a cascade of violence from many other people. If a woman reports sexual assault by a Chief, her kids are beat up, she’s sworn at at the grocery store. The water truck doesn’t make its delivery. The exercise of power and privilege to suppress the victims is entrenched in power structures, financial, political, gendered power, and male power. We have to find a way to address that, to bring about safer social responses.

An Elder said that in the communities Chief and Council have a lot of power. In her experience sometimes the violence is reported but no action is taken by police. Our people think they’re in partnership with Chief and Council.

Wade: In those cases, people know nothing happens. You tell your friends, they want you to be safe, and ask why you don’t leave. If you leave he’ll get partial custody and the children won’t be safe. It’s a deeply problematic notion that she has to leave. There are many good reasons why women stay. Most women who are murdered by their partners it’s after they leave. In BC psychiatrists are not required to disclose violence. Men who are violent are more successful in Court in getting custody.

Richardson: Under “Failure to protect” policies child welfare intervenes and ask why you didn’t stop the violence and children are removed from the mom and placed with the dad who was beating her. Poverty, class, and race are significant factors. A child protection worker may say “You need to move or we’ll take the children away.” There’s a zero vacancy rate in Whitehorse. Landlords do not want to house a single mom with three kids and a violent man chasing her around.

Elder: We’re looking at keeping people safe in the community, keeping them at home. The reality is often a child services intervention. Both parents may have problems with alcohol and drugs. Go back to the community and give them the capacity to help themselves, use culturally based activities.

AW: There are initiatives in several places for “Safe at home places.”

CR: When those mothers have to leave subsidized housing because their children were taken away from them they go to Edmonton, to Vancouver, to the Downtown East Side, and some are disappeared.

An RCMP asked Allan whether after being involved in this for 20 years, was he making gains?

Wade: What really brings change is culture. I've seen change when people feel a sense of belonging. All their lives they've been rejected. Culture brings them dignity.

A participant said what brings about change is education. Teachers have to be involved. First Nations learners are being disadvantaged because they are exposed to violence. Teachers don't see these children as what they've experienced, don't see them with a sense of hopeful possibility. They see them as learning disabled or damaged.

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS – On a scale of 1 to 10, how just and effective are social responses to Aboriginal women in the Yukon, in cases of violence? Record your number and discuss in small groups why you picked it.**

After the small group discussions, we talked about why most groups had picked low numbers. Women have to answer to so much criticism to get what they need. There's still a lot of ostracizing women who speak up. We react quickly with – what did you do? There's so much blame on the victim and it's all her fault. Women very rarely report. In small communities, girls and women don't report gang rape – these girls get blamed. It's so easy to fall into that trap. There are children being gang-raped and there is no positive response. Absolutely none. And she lives with that. Kids are taught they can't tell. They don't report violence, then later on in life they have troubles.

In the past our community would sit down and talk about it. This conversation is going to help turn things around, if we as a community raise the children together.

**POSITIVE EXAMPLES OF CREATING STRUCTURES OF SAFETY**

Cathy described a safe baby program, where family members can visit their children. The model of a kibbutz, living in a collective way, allows change and recovery.

Allan talked about the February 2011 outcry of positive social responses for the victim when Manitoba Justice Dewar gave a 2-year conditional sentence to a man convicted of sexual assault, calling him a "clumsy Don Juan," and said in the judgment that "Sex was in the air". The provincial government filed a complaint to the Judicial Council, and the Crown has appealed the sentence.

LAWS asked about developing a protocol. How do we incorporate this knowledge into protocols? How do we keep the language and the process going when we're alone? Who's going to implement it? Some of the ideas discussed were that once trust is broken it's gone, and to foster safety in communities we need to develop personal and institutional trust through improved relationships. Some of the suggestions related to trust and protocols:

1. Ensure RCMP continue to learn to develop clear descriptions of violence and resistance, using accurate language. For example, sexualized assault is a crime of violence, not a crime of wrongful sex. Wife-assault is about violence by a man against a woman, not about a "domestic dispute" or "conflict" or "abusive relationship". As well, any complete description of violence should include a description of how the victim responded and resisted. This reveals the ways in which the perpetrator tried to suppress that resistance, and reveals the full extent and deliberate nature of the crimes. Accurate descriptions, especially those that are developed when there has been a sincere effort to identify the primary aggressor, provide a more complete fact pattern and challenge the ways in which victims are blamed. (See handouts, page 26)
2. Kaska history/ Tlingit history/ the history of the First Nation whose traditional territory RCMP are placed in is learned by RCMP new to the community. It's a time saver for them – efficiency and economy for police.
3. Holding a circle discussion with women who are allowed to bring a supporter.
4. Commit to regular meetings.

**NEGATIVE SOCIAL RESPONSES – turning them into positive social responses**

We have huge room for creativity in solving these problems. Women who receive negative social responses from members of the community every time they report an assault need to have support if they are going to come forward



and report. She could identify two or three friends to sit in a circle with a police officer in the circle, to make it possible for her to report her account of violence in an environment she feels safe and that she won't be judged.

Another example of negative social response was recently reported at a Downtown Eastside Shelter – a Minister at a church shelter where a number of women reported rape said “Those women should watch how they dress, and how they walk around.” Marginalized, oppressed people are much more likely to receive negative social responses.

Victims who receive negative social responses experience more intense, lasting distress, are less likely to disclose violence, and are less likely to cooperate with authorities.

Victims who receive positive social responses tend to recover more quickly and to cooperate more with authorities. When children are provided with safe care they recover very quickly.

## THE COLONIAL CODE OF RELATIONSHIP

Cathy spoke about the Nanaimo Indian Hospital in the 1960s, where a child she knew was chained to the bed and the toddler's parents were not allowed to see him on a regular basis. Because her dad was white she went to the other hospital. Her family came from Fort Chipewyan, and when her grandmother lived in Uranium City she lined her garden with uranium rocks. They weren't told the rocks were dangerous, and all of her hair fell out when she was still young. Her mom went to Anglican day school, and later taught her daughter to make birchbark baskets and traditional crafts.

Déline is known as “the Village of Widows.” Everybody in charge knew that the uranium was dangerous. All the men who carried 25 kg sacks of uranium on their shoulders died. The Dené had a prophecy, “I saw people going into a big hole in the ground – strange people, not Dené. Their skin was white. They were going into a hole with all kinds of metal tools and machines and making a lot of noise, so I followed them. They were going back and forth into that hole. They were digging a great tunnel.” The Elders said those rocks were dangerous and should stay in the ground. (<http://web.uvic.ca/~mharbell/final/prophecy.html>) The uranium they mined was used in the Manhattan project and in the Little Boy atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

People are still dying from this. Then it was uranium and radiation poisoning. Now it's oil. Animals are being born with more than one head. First Nations communities are dealing with all the pollution. Communities have lots of transient labour, boom and bust economic cycles, men come into the city and young women aren't safe. We want safety for every human being born on the planet.

In Canada we still have racialized legislation, the Indian Act that governs aboriginal peoples. In 1951 changes were made to the Indian Act so provinces could take over child welfare. First Nations families experienced the 60s scoop, the millennium scoop. Social workers would go into communities with empty buses and take all of the children off the reserve. This is destabilizing communities, and part of the colonial project of “Move over, we want your land”, which First Nations were expected to believe was for their own good.

People want proof of these things. They think aboriginal people are complaining. In 2008, on Squamish Nation Territory near Vancouver, The Friends and Relatives of the Disappeared released a list of twenty-eight mass graves across Canada holding the remains of untold numbers of aboriginal children who died in Indian Residential Schools.

There are many sources for this colonial history, Bourgeois, Harris and Tough document land theft research. *Merchant Princes* (O'Keefe and Macdonald, 2001), tells the history of the Saskatchewan Valley Land Co., which amassed 5 million acres in 1899 at \$1.00 per acre, resold \$20.00 per acre. The land was described as sparsely or unpopulated with no mention of its original inhabitants. Millside Logging and Comox Logging & Railway controlled 70,000 acres of timber between Courtenay and Campbell River. The majority of Canadian Western Lumber Co. board members were in the Canadian parliament. Leaders profited from the wealth of stolen indigenous land.



An Elder talked about Dena Au-Nazen, the highest law of our Kaska people, which is to honour the land and to have respect for everybody. It's the self-control and the social order of our people. People were taught for generations how to treat people, the animals, and the land.

Allan described how European culture gave us genocide against indigenous peoples. European imperialism gave us psychiatry and psychology. What's known as the talking cure – if you talk about something enough you'll get better. There's a way of thinking imbedded in colonialism and the helping professions that is part of a colonial code of relationship. And it's how the land, the children, and the social order were taken from aboriginal people. What the institutions of health, education and child welfare have in common when applied to indigenous people is land, or "Move over, we want what you're standing on." We need to move away from the colonial code of relationship.

#### Colonial Code of Relationship

1. You are deficient and heathen,
2. I am proficient – knowledgeable, white, wealthy,
3. I have the right to perform certain operations on you – controlling, policing, diagnosing, apprehending, .... for your own good.

Cathy told the history of scrip paper which was issued by government agents to Metis and aboriginal people in exchange for their land. Speculators followed the government agents and bought the scrips for 50 cents or for a beer. After Louis Riel was hanged it wasn't safe for Metis to live there, many moved to Saskatchewan or BC or the Island. If we can't keep people safe in their own communities they become isolated and vulnerable, or susceptible to poverty, violence and homelessness because they lost their homes and were spread out without their families.

The government deliberately killed off all the buffalo, and gave Indians the most primitive farming implements. Imposing the colonial order leads to high levels of alcohol abuse and high levels of violence in the communities.

Allan talked about the connections between logging interests, mining, and violence against women. The Endridge Northern Gateway pipeline project has been approved by government. BC Chiefs were unanimously opposed to it. What's going to happen? Men working away from home in resource extraction industries often use drugs and alcohol, become abusive. Young women are not safe from assault. Who's asking for anything to be done about it? There's a role for the RCMP in that. How will they consult aboriginal women and be involved in keeping women and community members safe?

#### **VIOLENCE IS DELIBERATE**

Cathy presented information about Dr. Peter Bryce, the Chief Medical Officer for the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1905 he reported that Indian children were deliberately being exposed to tuberculosis. He was fired from his job and expelled from the medical society. In 2008, Dr. John O'Connor exposed unusual and high cancer rates harming aboriginal people in Fort Chipewyan, and asked for more study into the effects of high levels of arsenic dumped into water supplies by the tar sands industry. He had to appear before the College of Physicians for a disciplinary hearing after he was accused by Health Canada of causing undue alarm.

Allan discussed his experience as a special education teacher in Prince Rupert, where parents didn't come to meet the teacher night. Five generations of their children had been kidnapped and taken away. When he began to work in counselling, he started hearing about residential schools and thought he must be stupid not knowing about it. That was the intended effect of a colonial education – how did the truth get hidden? He started to identify the ways bleached history had been produced. He saw parallels in the way grammar and language was used in colonial language and in describing sexualized assault.

Bleached history – Example 1 – Desmond Morton. 1988. *Towards tomorrow*.

“Since the beginning of European settlement, Canada’s original citizens had little place in the mainstream of Canadian life. Even during this century, Native people did not share in Canada’s growing prosperity. Most continued to live in rural areas; over 60% were employed in such occupations as trapping, fishing, logging, and unskilled labour, which traditionally were seasonal and paid lower wages than the urban jobs held by most Canadians. Native people also had limited access to education to improve their chances of getting better-paying jobs. When formal education was available, it often seemed of little use to people coming from a tradition where learning through participation and from oral teaching was highly valued. Worst of all, those who ran the schools frequently used education to undermine Native traditions. The superiority of every aspect of “white” society was emphasized. For example, Native children were forbidden to speak their own language among themselves at school, and, if caught, were punished for doing so. Native groups saw education as being imposed from outside; they felt they had little control over the curriculum or teaching methods. As a result, few of the children who did attend school went past the elementary level.” (p. 206-207)

This kind of language is found all the time in legal judgments and psychological reports.

Bleached history – Example 2. CBC radio interview of Bishop Weisner – “Can you address for a moment the legacy of residential schools? And the concerns of native people leaving the church?”

Bishop Weisner: “No, I can’t. I don’t really know that much about the history of the residential schools up here.... Ummm... or what the situation of the native people. The ummm... like a general comment I would make on the residential schools is... I think it’s one of those things where... where we’re dealing with some positives and some negatives. I... I wouldn’t want to deny that... that in some ways language and culture of native peoples and maybe some other aspects of their lives have somehow been stifled or hurt by the residential schools. At the same time I really believe that the people who were involved in the residential schools at the time were really committed people, really dedicated people. And in the circumstances that they seriously discerned that to be about the best way they could serve the needs of these people. And I know a lot of people who gave their lives in the residential schools and gave their lives literally, like they really served. And... and so like I say, I think there is both positive and negative with respect to the schools.”

WADE The stated policy of the government of Canada was to eliminate Indian people. We’re raising our kids on bleached history. This is flat out racism. We have to speak the truth and talk plainly about what’s going on. Stephen Harper gave a non-apology apology, which is a common silencing strategy. It implies, “Now get over it.” Listening to Harper’s non-apology in a BC friendship centre, the energy went way down until Beverly Jacobs from the Native Women’s Association of Canada said “We never let you do that to us.”

This colonial history on an interpersonal community level constitutes a deep humiliation across time on a daily basis. There is a deep need for respecting the dignity of people. RCMP must build on a foundation of dignity to repair some of the harm that has been done. A positive and effective and socially just response is for police to get out of uniform and have tea with an Elder. As RCMP you will perpetuate the problem if you don’t do that.

## **DIGNITY**

Dignity is respect from other people and from you towards others, and for yourself. Dignity is to be accepted for who you are. It’s the opposite of humiliation.

Dignity is about autonomy, freedom, physical and psychological integrity, safety and security, being treated with honour, self-worth, self-sovereignty, concern for others, and much more. Dignity is something we all have. It’s part of the human condition and the human spirit. It’s part of daily life. It’s something we all know a great deal about.

Dignity comes from self-confidence, from culture, from being treated with dignity by others. Dignity is recognizing competency – your ability to act in the world. You can do something and affect how things turn out. Dignity is having

your human rights respected, freedom from violence. It is creating conditions of dignity, integrity, wholeness, you have control over your own body.

We conceal our commands as requests out of respect for other's dignity, we'll say pass the salt please. We laugh at people's bad jokes. In polite company we all work together to protect the dignity of others. We attend to the dignity of others all the time.

Your ability to care effectively for others is essential to dignity. If your kids don't have a proper lunch, or the same lunch, or can't take part in sports, or if your parents can't afford medicine or are dying in squalor, you are robbed of dignity.

Have you ever had somebody tell you how you feel? Representatives of the state engage in surveillance, for example a public health nurse visiting a new mom. It's not an invited service. If you have a baby expert on the front doorstep, you can't tell them to go away. They offer advice, one part is the advice. Another part is the unspoken notion that I am here to give this advice because you don't know it on your own. There's a cold unspoken accusation that you don't know how to take care of your child. Young moms will always say "Thank you," and then "That's what my mom said," or "I tried it and it didn't work," or "Thanks, I saw it on Oprah." These are ways to assert their competency as a matter of dignity, when they're saying in some way "I already knew about that." Your first job then is to ask, to find out what they think, feel, say, or do.

We have an understanding the Elders role is to teach things and our job is to learn.

An Elder said it was important to think of the little people. Slow down and pay attention to their needs. Are you training her to run a marathon? It's a big responsibility to raise a child. She shared a story about raising children.

The Elder went on to say the police have to be kind to people. There's a young man in our community, the police were beating him up and he finally moved away because he couldn't take it anymore. I was at depot for a visit one time and I saw the instructor yelling at the recruits, treating them like they weren't even people. Is that how to teach people? Of course you're going to come out of there mean if that's how they treat you. Then they don't act the way we want them to when they come into our communities.

Allan said that whenever there's a violation of dignity people respond in some way. In cases of violence dignity is always at stake. If a man denies raping a woman, women report humiliation is the deepest and most lasting injury. Recovery from violence is a struggle for dignity. To support dignity means creating autonomy, giving a choice, trying to learn how that victim tried to protect herself. We need to understand that the nature of that resistance is important in our practice, to structure all of our services to restore dignity. Pay attention to non-verbal and body messages. Back up and ask people to tell you if we're doing something wrong. Recognize how women cling to dignity. He used examples from his practice and said he doesn't ever use sarcasm or irony as humour because they don't have enough safety.

## **HOW DO YOU PAY ATTENTION TO PEOPLE'S DIGNITY?**

Members of the group shared ways they pay attention to people's dignity, and problems of losing dignity.

*Acknowledge everybody.*

*Show respect before I start talking.*

*Need safety in the community – I went to residential school so it's hard for me to trust. To be safe I think about how to avoid situations – stay away from older boys and the men. Create safety where you have a buddy system with a friend. It's a very closed community and it takes years to build trust and you don't talk.*

*Silent code. We don't talk about the violence in the open because it brings shame to the family and to yourself. It's embarrassing and hard to talk about. It's not easy to talk about.*

*We don't talk about safety enough? Why? Because the violence is rampant in our communities. Who do you*

*trust to talk about it? We don't talk to RCMP or authority figures because we were abused by them. It's hard to talk to an authority because they've done this violence to us too.*

*To create safety is another matter. When you begin to involve Elders in culture and teaching, and teaching about safety networks, and getting involved with victims, and start to hold them up rather than their being ashamed, you can build more safety.*

*Get the men to begin to be responsible for the men's actions.*

*Try and teach the younger ones in the school.*

*The word victim is not really a good word for me because it puts you down, being victimized kind of puts you down all your life. It makes people think you're weak.*

*In our society they hold up the offender more because it's about power and control. There's kind of a vacuum for the survivor.*

*I worry about my grandkids, we need more safety in school. The older boys were bothering my granddaughter. My daughter is talking to the school and bringing it up at the school council.*

*I didn't have anybody to talk to and was scared because I had nobody to talk to, having lived through sexual abuse at residential school and at home. Give her a hug and say I love you. I don't want them to go through what I went through. Tears is the best medicine of healing. My mom said "Don't be mean. Let it go. Let things go." I think to myself – I let it go. That was the law – we respect everybody. Everything was stripped from us. Having children and have to learn how to raise them – I try to remember my mom's teaching.*

*I learned not to judge anybody because they each have their own story.*

*Listen and restore their dignity. Respect them and not judge. You know you've done that when you release them from custody and they say thank you. Treat them the way you would like to be treated in the same situation.*

Cathy displayed the Medicine Wheel of Response: How did you respond – what did you do?

Everyone has different needs across different ages and in different settings. What are the physical responses?

What are the emotional responses? What are our emotions telling us? Sadness tells us we refuse to participate.

Emotions can be a form of protest.

What are the spiritual responses? People pray, or get together, or have ceremonies, or think about how we keep our spirit alive.

What are the intellectual responses – what were you thinking in your mind? What are people already thinking and knowing?

## **SOCIAL RESPONSES TO VICTIMS**

Yesterday we talked about social responses to victims a little. We just touched on one of a number of topics that are part of that, social responses to children and youth. We also look at mothers' and children's responses to violence.

We want to always acknowledge and remember the people who have been harmed by violence. We will look at the culture of resistance to violence and why resistance is often overlooked in court documents and interviews. We will consider steps we want to take to create more safety for victims.

There are always acts of resistance and they may not stop the violence, but they help to preserve dignity and the human spirit. Allan shared Fran Christie's story of residential school in Port Alberni. Healthy food was contraband at these prison camps. Some girls had gathered apples fallen from a tree hanging over the fence. The apples were confiscated. The nun lined up the girls in the order of their height and went to get a switch. Fran turned to the other girls and said "don't cry". Fran refused to cry, she refused to give them her tears. Many years later she told 120 university Education students that story and reclaimed her right to cry, which she hadn't done in the intervening years. These small acts of living don't stop violence, but they show other people the history and what happened.

We don't want to focus on trauma. In fact the pain and suffering is resistance. What people despair of is what they hope for. In many cases open physical struggle is the least common form of resistance because it's simply too difficult. When you undergo an experience without calling out in pain, because you may be killed or under torture,

you will do things like play mathematical games in your head. In moments of extreme adversity people find ways to resist.

People will say “I went to court and that’s why none of my family will talk to me anymore.” That’s not an uncommon experience, people will talk about you behind the scenes, we call that “lateral violence.”

It’s not uncommon for a victim support group to never discuss how they had resisted. But the children would practice turn-taking, for the beatings, or the sexual assaults. Children would take turns sleeping on the outside to protect siblings from rape. Resistance is ever present.

How do you learn these subtle ways of resistance? We talk about the way a survivor responded to the violence. Parents would drink and pass out and men/predators would come to the house and rape the kids. We asked her “What did you do?” not “What effects did this have on you?” and she said how she would respond. Children will pull a dresser in front of the door.

People will protect the ones they love. Allan told the story of an older sister at the prison camp they called residential school who would crawl under the beds, through the dorms, to lay beside her younger sister and stroke her hair and sing quietly to her in their language. Being asked to remember what she did to protect her sister told her a lot about how good of a mother she would be. It helped her to heal, to recognize her own resistance and strength.

Youth who have survived extreme violence will adopt a fuck you attitude, that means “I will always continue to go forward.”

An Elder said that since the Aboriginal Healing Foundation closed its doors people have stopped talking about the prison camps. Since then there’s been a lot of chaos among our people. There’s a lot of vandalism and assaults because people are venting. What steps can be taken to relieve the chaos? I know there’s counselling available but a lot of people are still stuck in one place. Survivors need to take up the cause in some place where they can continue to talk about their resistance.

Cathy said we need to put safety containers in place for people.

Allan said that people will talk about difficult and graphic experiences. How much safety are they going back to? Will they be safe to walk along the lake? We need to create safe environments for people in communities and move from counselling to community development work.

Cathy talked about another example of creating safety. In Iceland there was a movement to stop the violence at a popular rock festival, to make sure there were no date rape drugs. From initial planning to the festival people were completely committed to making sure there was no violence against women – they built it in as part of the title and the advertising for the event.

## **CONCEALING THE VIOLENCE: CONTRASTING ACCOUNTS OF MALE TO FEMALE VIOLENCE** (See page 26)

Allan: I’m going to try to persuade you that if you don’t get a clear picture of how the victim resisted you are concealing the violence. Accounts 1 and 2 of male to female violence appear on page 19. From the description in Account 1 you could assume that Sue was passive. Account 2 inserted Sue’s responses. It switches from an “argument” to an assault. Which of these two descriptions is most likely to go to court?

RCMP asked whether Allan was talking about police or Crown reports to Court. Allan asked what information would come out in the police interview? RCMP said you might not get the victim’s cooperation.

Allan: The more you ask about the victim’s resistance, the more cooperation you get.

We see that the Crown will make the case for the defence in the Courts in the way they use language.

We have a very particular form of social contempt in North America for people we perceive to be passive victims.

“Victim” used as an assaultive, situated action term is not about your identity. This is a profound distortion – “passive



victims” is a stereotypical notion.

In Account 2 Sue defended herself, she has dignity, she fought back. So you could say “You did everything you could in this situation, didn’t you.” More subtly and more powerfully, the 2<sup>nd</sup> account gives you a greater sense of the full extent of the violence. In the 1<sup>st</sup> account you could maybe think he just had an misunderstanding.

A wife assault or a sexualized assault is not a single act – it’s a series of acts. He anticipates she will resist, she resists, he works to overcome her resistance. There’s unequivocal evidence that violence is deliberate and intentional and that he anticipated her resistance and suppressed it – not that “he lost it” as is commonly said.

Prime Minister Harper in the “apology” referred to “our historical relationship problem.” Not to genocide. At no point did he talk about the history of aboriginal resistance. The use of the term “residential schools” is an integral part of suppressing resistance. It was a military endeavor enacted through the church and the government. Nurses, police, counsellors, mental health workers, kitchen table friends can all get this history of resistance. From our point of view that’s not optional – we have to do that.

When you’re working with abused women, don’t ask “how can you let that happen?” or “why didn’t you leave him?” We’ve been working in women’s minds to change the behaviour of men. That’s not how you’re going to change men’s behaviour. There’s nothing wrong with women’s minds. Ask instead: What is he doing to try to prevent you from leaving? When you attempt to assert your boundaries what does he do to prevent you? Ask yourself, how do we feed the negative perception of victim?

A participant asked why do women stay with abusive men?

Allan: There are many reasons. The violence gets worse when a woman leaves. There’s more abuse of the kids. He’s got weapons. If I’m not with him all of his brothers will hit on me. At least I’ve got a moose in the freezer.

Cathy: If I stay with him I’m more likely to know what state of mind he’s in, assess things related to safety. If I don’t know where he is I have less safety.

Allan: He’s going to win custody, he can afford a barracuda lawyer. What are the circumstances that make it difficult for her to leave? Focus on the context, not on women’s minds.

Cathy: Women will say, he was actually kind in the beginning. I didn’t fall in love with the violent one. He knows how to be kind, how to communicate. He doesn’t need to go to communication classes.

## **VIOLENCE IS UNILATERAL**

Language can be used to: (a) conceal or reveal violence, (b) obscure or clarify offender responsibility, (c) conceal or elucidate victim responses/resistance, and (d) blame and pathologize or contest the blaming and pathologizing of victims. There are no neutral accounts: all accounts involve a process of “fitting words to deeds.”

Look at the distinction between unilateral and mutual acts, and at descriptions in media, courts, psychology textbooks, sports. One action done against the will of another, what one person does to another is a unilateral act. “Violence ain’t sex. If you hit someone over the head with a frying pan it’s not cooking.”

In a good clear description of a physical act “forced” conveys coercion and the use of power. We did research looking at 63 cases before BC and Yukon Courts and found a lot of mutual language in Court descriptions of violence. This is a violation of the spirit and the letter of the law.

Sexual assaults are inherently violent. Don’t let the term “abusive relationship” go by. “Who’s being abusive?” “My husband.” Then say instead, “You’ve been in a relationship with a man who’s abusive to you.”

Reference to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples film, *No turning back*.

Colonial discourse and wife assault fit together hand and glove. It's flat-out woman blaming and it's epidemic in our culture. Tapping in to the stereotypes we've been discussing, an Appeal Court judgment referred to strangling as something that "arose spontaneously during the course of an argument."

**Anger is not a cause of violence, it's part of the weaponry.** Violence is not a marriage problem, it's a violence problem. It's not "difficulties in the marriage." What we've been doing in the court system is profoundly distorting the problem of violence. We're not even getting the clear facts before the courts.

## MUTUALIZING INTERVENTIONS

Accounts that omit victims' responses and resistance:

- Portray victims as passive (imply consent),
- Reinforce negative stereotypes of victims,
- Conceal how perpetrators suppress victim resistance, and
- Conceal the full extent and deliberate nature of violence.

To conceal resistance is to conceal violence.

An Elder asked how do we tell our stories in a way that doesn't victimize us again?

Allan said that what Elders have said is that "you need to hear our stories of resistance." Reparation, restoration and justice is much more than resilience. We didn't take a licking and keep on ticking. A victim's history is the history of resistance. Truth and Reconciliation Commission tried to pay attention to strengths. "Reconciliation" still fails to challenge the big problem – the stereotypical notion that victims are passive.

## THESE TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS DON'T RECOGNIZE VIOLENCE & RESISTANCE

- Workplace abuse – conflict resolution
- Child/spouse abuse – mediation
- Bullying – non-violent communication
- Genocide – reconciliation

Ann said that to hear about the horrors makes a lot of counsellors twitch. It so rips people apart. They don't hear about the resistance, how we took a piece of home with us to those prison camps. We make people feel stronger when we talk about that resistance. That's what we'll do in Watson Lake.

Allan presented a description of a sexualized assault of a minor from a Judge's remarks made in 2004.

Children have the right to have the crimes against them represented accurately. This decision reads like a trashy romance novel. "Peri-pubescent" implies almost ripe. We frequently find some completely unnecessary reference to the victim that's unrelated to the case. It is legally, developmentally, and morally impossible for an adult to have sex with a child. He can't "have sexual intercourse with her," that language completely reverses reality. You wouldn't say "have rape with her." If we use sexualized language we make the crime disappear. Judges violate the fundamental human rights of the child to equal protection under the law when they use this language.

In this account, he "purchased sex from a 3-5 year old girl." Purchase is a mutualizing verb, it presumes there is a buyer and a seller. "Believing he was going to meet a young girl for sex." What he was doing was abducting, confining, overpowering, forcing his body parts on a young child. "Meet" is a mutual term. When he threatens, coerces, stifles the screams of the child that's not sex, that's violence. He wanted to dominate, violate, and dehumanize the child. Why do we accept the notion that pedophilia, the problematic term "child-lover" is about sex?

We ought to treat these kinds of representations as crimes. This is occurring on an epidemic scale in our country and we're the group of people that can address that.

Allan distributed excerpts of articles, judgments, and newspapers accounts, and asked people to break into small groups to discuss them. When reading an account of a crime ask: How did it work to 1. Conceal violence, 2. Obscure the responsibility of the offender, 3. Conceal resistance of the victim, 4. Blame or pathologize the victim?

The inherent messages are that you're all part of the violence, the citations reveal prevailing social norms that violence is mutual and that victims are at fault. These messages pass by our eyes as psychological wisdom.

Discussing the groups' analysis of these articles, we noted that socially, violence is considered ok in the "privacy of your own home." Women don't report because there's some element of blame and shaming, people ask her why were you there? Or interviewers may not have talked about her resisting as she might be dual charged, so keep that under wraps.

## **CLOSING:**

How do we move forward from here? How are you planning to respond to what you're learning? What are you going to do to sustain our collective efforts? We have to have a plan for that or it will drop off the table – as it often does when you talk about violence. How will you sustain conversations about safety?

## **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION.**

Peter Clark RCMP Commanding Officer, Adeline Webber, Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Council

Adeline I'm currently the President of Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle and a volunteer in the community. This is very informative, I've learned a lot. We don't want to leave here and just go away and not talk about it anymore. This session is to ask, How can we work together and help people in our community?

Peter That's kind of what I got out of it too. I've been very privileged to travel around the communities and meet most of you. I arrived in Yukon about a year ago, and became Commanding Officer of the RCMP in July 2010. I was co-chair and co-author of *Sharing Common Ground*. It's a very forward looking document, about the relationships RCMP must have and improve on with aboriginal peoples. There's a good cross section of RCMP here.  
There are a lot of courses our members take on sexual assault investigations. We don't have many courses we take with groups like this. To interact with the people you're interacting with is a beneficial process. We'd like to hear your questions or observations. Where do we go from here?

Question Will you invite Allan Wade to present this to all RCMP?

Peter We're a 24/7 service and are unable to bring 30 members at a time. We will bring more people to Allan Wade in groups like this, but no, we're not going to bring Allan Wade to talk to RCMP alone.

Ann There's a lot of very resourceful people in the group. We want to look at immediate issues and at long-term relationships. How can we use this training and weave it into a protocol relationship with the RCMP?

Peter I don't think we need to wait. Seize the momentum. What does an opportunity look like? RCMP will work on annual performance plans to be developed with communities at the detachment level.

Question How is RCMP approaching community members to engage them in this?

- LAWS Community involvement should be broadened to include women's organizations. Our priorities may be different from the First Nation. Liard First Nation may not have time to meet with you. Does RCMP see the community as being the First Nations' government?
- Peter We see the need to look at new ways of getting community involvement. The first part of implementing *Sharing Common Ground* is developing a plan with First Nations. The second part includes women's groups – there will be a working group to focus on this type of issue and develop a long-term plan. I said we're getting ahead of ourselves with *Bridging the Gap*, and *Together for Justice* – I don't have the budget and human capacity to do it. Without having the foundation we risk failure. RCMP show up for these 2 days in Whitehorse as a gesture to show we're not bureaucratic. That may also be a way to build a sustainable process. RCMP are 50%, the other 50% is yourselves and others who may not be here. How do we do this in a way that sustains itself? The RCMP have a process of developing Annual Performance Plans, and the RCMP are "voluntold", those opportunities are there within our existing situation.
- YSWC I'm hoping this new ease of relationship will facilitate representation of women's groups on the Police Council and that RCMP will walk with us in trying to achieve that.
- Peter I signed the *Sharing Common Ground* report believing it to be true and achievable. The decision on who ends up on the Council is not mine, it's done through Yukon Government appointment process. That doesn't mean you can't use your influence to have women appointed.
- Lois Many women are too afraid of the RCMP to call them when they are being abused. I heard that from women in Whitehorse and around the Yukon during the Review of Yukon's Police Force. Women have told me they are telling each other "Don't call the police if he's beating you." If women don't trust the RCMP and won't call them when they are raped, or beat up by their partners, it can put their life at risk. This is not a small problem, it's a very real problem. Violence against women is far too prevalent in Yukon communities, it's accepted, and men think they can get away with it. I want all women to be safe and for the RCMP to make the changes they need to, to improve police service so that women can trust them. This work is so important.
- Elder AM What we need is to move ahead. I firmly believe when we have working groups they have to have some people who represent everyone in the Yukon. Often what's not spoken about is violence among our people – aboriginal women and their children and men of course. What I perceive is that people are reluctant to talk about it. Let's have some concrete steps to take. It's really hard to sit here for 40 years and talk about the same things. It's not just a relationship with the RCMP but a relationship with Justice and all of the agencies sitting around the room. *Any good because we're all here together and speaking together needs the Elders participating in the working groups.* We need to continue with the children and seven generations down and our voices aren't really in there now. Some of it is harsh stuff and they don't want to hear about it. I'm tired of being patient. I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings but I do want to be in there. On the Whitehorse Correctional Centre Elders Advisory Committee we work in isolation, we can't even throw the ball at your group to help us because there's no capacity and we have no jurisdiction and don't get asked to participate in decision-making. They're living, and don't know why they were always in care, as children in group homes and adults at WCC, and now their children are in care. As Elders we have no clout. At WCC we are told we have no budget.

Our people have been crying out, saying train us in our communities. Train us to help ourselves - that's what our people have been asking for, for something that's going to be active.

I have a hard time with the political arena, not just federal and territorial governments but with our own First Nations governments. We need to rectify that somehow – we want to see 14 Yukon First Nations working together. Vuntut Gwichin doesn't belong to Council of Yukon First Nations and doesn't have a voice there. We have to take all of these things into consideration.

Question I'd like to ask whether RCMP would offer language-based training like this at depot. Whether it's Allan or others. RCMP need to start with training members there in the use of language to bring women's voices and women's true experiences into the evidence and documents.

Peter I'm glad you brought that up. The Police Council and training plans, our report says let's go to Depot and show in a comprehensive way what we do. I have to disagree when Elder Pear Keenan talked about depot and people being mean and members being hostile, and talked about values of the RCMP. Yes people still get shouted at at depot. It helps build discipline and character in our members – prepare them for what they'll face when they get out. They have to learn to listen to people. Is there room for curriculum to be improved at depot – Yes. I'm willing to hear about those improvements and build them into depot training. To ask what did you feel, how did you think. RCMP want to show and help people become more aware of what happens at depot.

Adeline Over the last couple of days I made sure I was in groups with different RCMP members.

RCMP There's lots of room for improvement. There were some things I don't agree with for setting the platform for down the road. Ann and I talk at length, I work with LAWS, we have our own issues in Watson Lake.

Comment It's good to find out everybody's background. We need to have that understanding. Knowledge is power. We need to not forget who we are and where we come from.

RCMP For me, meeting such a fabulous group of ladies in the community and knowing there is such strength in the communities is great. We will figure out how to use the strength of people in this room to improve things in the communities.

YWTHS Thank you LAWS for opening up this opportunity and the complete participation of women's groups, police and others. We need to build based on common ground. I'm getting old and cynical and impatient with fighting violence against women for this many years. There needs to be political will to address violence against women or it undermines our ability to work with people. We're often forced to act by terms of reference and as part of a group where our beliefs, passions and strengths will be muzzled. I want more of this open conversation and learning.

Elder PK The last day and a half has been really good and I really appreciate the progress. I really truly think we should train our own people. Our own police will respond to our own people faster than they do to anyone else.

Being on the WCC Elders Advisory Committee, I see the core right where women are hurting.

It's so easy to respond with love in our heart and understanding and not condemning. They've already been condemned. So we see a different response from them when we treat them with respect. Every week when we go in there they open up, when we first go in they're closed. After 3 hours they open it. We need more teachers up there at WCC.

From three years old being molested, there should be a law changed. Just think of that little three year old for the rest of her life. I'm 90 and to think of having to live with that for your entire life is hard. It would stop if you changed the law.



- VAV I've volunteered with RCMP for four years, there's a long process of training. We do callouts at the request of the RCMP. In a month we do a one-week shift and have 8 people on call. I enjoyed being at the meeting and meeting everyone and thank the Elders for what they've shared with us.
- Ann I would like the judiciary to be here – could we get them to the table someday? I echo what Barb is saying about having equal numbers of women on the Police Council. At the political level appointments are made and it's not people who work with victims and advocate for justice.
- Elder MB Thanks Allan and Cathy. You've done a lot for aboriginal women. You will learn a lot from this workshop if you just sit down and listen about how important words are in Court. I really enjoyed it but it's just a start.  
Teach the RCMP about our culture. I often wonder do you have problems with people from other cultures, Japanese, Chinese, blacks, or is it just because there's a lot of native people around here? I know as an Elder whenever we see a policeman we used to run away. We have rights to stand up for ourselves. How would you like it if you have children and if I go in there and grab them away?  
Thanks Ann, she's always there for us in Watson Lake, she's one of our strong Kaska women.
- Elder AM There needs to be at least a couple of Elders on these working groups.
- Peter We shouldn't legislate or mandate for people to come together. Each and every one of us can contribute. Even if these councils are established by government, it doesn't mean people of like minds shouldn't get together. The police and the community will continue to collaborate.
- Allan Linda MacDonald at Liard First Nation first invited me and Robin Routledge to Watson Lake to teach and when the funding disappeared we were hired to teach camp cooking. We got started and one of the participants described running away from Lower Post Residential School at 8 years old. She was in her pyjamas and when the army trucks went by on the road searching for her she was making snow angels in the snowbank. This was heartbreaking and inspiring at the same time. A large Kaska man, who's now part of bringing drumming back, finally put up his hand and asked "What the heck does this have to do with camp cooking."  
Cathy and I are privileged to be working with the Kaska and with all of you and thank you.

Participants were asked to please fill out evaluations and return them.

### Handouts from workshop:

Contrasting Accounts of Male to Female Violence, Accounts 1 and 2  
First and second accounts of sexualized assault  
Wife-assault, Sexualized Assault: Judge's Remarks

#### Account 1: Contrasting Accounts of Male to Female Violence

Sue and Tom had been dating for five weeks. One night they had an argument on the way home from the pub. Tom complained that Sue was cold and not interested in sex. Tom stopped to urinate in the bushes and asked Sue to stop and wait. He caught up to Sue at Sue's apartment. Tom wanted to come in. He pushed the door open and forced his way in. Tom pushed Sue hard against the wall, called her a nasty name, and punched a hole in the wall inches from her face. Tom grabbed Sue and punched her in the ribs, twice. Tom kicked her in the ribs, then left the apartment.

#### Account 2: Contrasting Accounts of Male to Female Violence

Sue and Tom had been dating for five weeks. One night they had an argument on the way home from the pub. Sue complained that Tom was rude and drank too much. Tom complained that Sue was cold and not interested in sex. When Tom stopped to urinate in the bushes, Sue kept walking. Tom asked Sue to stop and wait, but she refused. By the time Tom caught up to Sue, they were at Sue's apartment. Sue told Tom he could go to his own place, but Tom wanted to come in. Sue insisted that he go to his own place. He pushed the door open and forced his way in. Sue told him to get out. Tom pushed Sue hard against the wall, called her a nasty name, and punched the wall inches from her face. Sue ducked underneath his arm and ran for the phone in the living room. Tom grabbed Sue and punched her in the ribs, twice. Sue rolled onto her side, gasping for breath. Tom kicked her in the ribs, then left the apartment. Sue found the phone and called her best friend.

First account of sexualized assault:

He followed her down the sidewalk. He sped up to catch her. He grabbed her by the shoulders and threw her to the ground. He dragged her toward the bushes. He overpowered her and dragged her into the bushes. He held a rock over her head and threatened to kill her if she screamed. He called her degrading names. He forced his mouth onto her face. He tried to undo her belt. He grabbed at her pant legs to pull them off. He overpowered her and vaginally raped her.

Second account of sexualized assault:

He followed her down the sidewalk. She sped up. He sped up to catch her. She moved to the side. He grabbed her by the shoulders and threw her to the ground. She rolled on the ground to get away. He dragged her toward the bushes. She grabbed the roots of a tree so he couldn't drag her into the bushes. He overpowered her and dragged her into the bushes. She started to scream. He held a rock over her head and threatened to kill her if she screamed. She stopped screaming. He called her degrading names. She said, "You don't want to do this. You don't want to hurt me." He forced his mouth onto her face. She averted her face. He tried to undo her belt. She stuck out her stomach so that he could not undo her belt. He grabbed at her pant legs to pull them off. She crossed her ankles so that he could not pull off her pants. He overpowered her and vaginally raped her. She went limp to avoid injury and went elsewhere in her mind.

#### Wife-assault, Sexualized Assault: Judge's Remarks

"The appellant & his wife engaged in an argument . . . . Mr. X became upset over something said during this argument. He thereupon grabbed his wife's neck, squeezing it until she nearly lost consciousness. He then let go. This brought the argument to an end. That the earlier of the two assaults arose spontaneously in the course of an argument is not in dispute. To that extent it can be said to have been unpremeditated. He was willing to take counselling in reference to his anger and his marital problems. He expressed his deep remorse for what had happened and his desire to improve the marriage. They went to bed and he said, 'Jane, I'll have to screw you one more time', and he had intercourse with her. . . . It is obvious difficulties were present in the marriage."

**List of Whitehorse participants:**

<b>Bridging the Gap: March 2011, NaKwaTaKu Potlatch House</b>	
<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
Ann Maje Raider	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Mary Maje	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
May Brodhagen	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, RCMP Elders Advisory Committee member
Adeline Webber	Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle
May Stewart	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Fannie Vance	Liard Aboriginal Women's Society
Janet McDonald	Liard First Nation Member
Liz Porter	Liard First Nation Member
Mary Charlie	Liard First Nation Elder
Lois Moorcroft	LAWS Secretariat
Peter Clark	Commanding Officer RCMP
Bob Johnson	RCMP Training Development
Kurt Bringsli	RCMP Youth Liaison
Kelly MacQuame	RCMP - Major Crimes Unit
Paul Thalhofer	RCMP – Watson Lake Detachment
Dean Hoogland	RCMP – Kwanlin Dun Detachment
Don Rogers	RCMP – Communications officer
Terra Taylor	RCMP
Rick Aird	RCMP – First Nations and Youth policing
Sharon Keaton	RCMP Victims Assistance Unit Volunteer
Pearl Keenan	Whitehorse Correctional Centre Elders Advisory Council
Agnes Mills	WCC Elders Advisory Council
Barb McNerney	Kaushees Place, Executive Director
Ketsia Houde	Les EssentiElles, Executive Director
Charlotte Hrenchuk	Yukon Status of Women Council
Cindy Chaisson	Elizabeth Fry Society Yukon Outreach Worker
Winnie Atlin	Carcross Tagish First Nation Elders Council
Kitty Grant	Carcross Tagish First Nation Elders Council
Martina Baker	Teslin Tlingit Council - Peacemaker Diversion Program
Julianna Scramstad	Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre Program Coordinator
Shauna Curtin	Yukon Government Women's Directorate, Director
Julie Menard	Women's Directorate
Michelle Beckley	Aboriginal Women's Project Officer - Women's Directorate, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council
Dr. Cathy Richardson	Presenter
Dr. Allan Wade	Presenter

# EVALUATION TEMPLATE

## *Bridging the Gap –*

### *A Cross-Cultural Conversation between Aboriginal Women, RCMP, First Nations, Women's groups and front-line Service agencies*

1. Can you think of a way to improve cooperation and strengthen trust between community members and the RCMP?  
How could that happen?

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2. What can you do to make women feel safe in your community?

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3. What will RCMP members notice in your community when they have provided you with more of a sense of safety or trust? What will be different?

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4. If your grandchildren were here today, what would they like about what took place in this workshop?

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5. What aboriginal cultural teaching have you learned today that will help you in your daily work?

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6. If all of the people who were taken away to residential school could witness this conversation today, what would they like to see take place?

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7. What do people in your agency need to know that would contribute to improving services for women victims of violence? What have you learned that could improve services for women?

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8. What changes would you like to see in your community 10 years from now? What would your ancestors hope for you to achieve?

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9. How could the workshop be improved?

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# EVALUATION RESULTS

## *Bridging the Gap –*

### *A Cross-Cultural Conversation between Aboriginal Women, RCMP, First Nations, Women's groups and front-line Service agencies.*

#### EVALUATIONS

*(Received from 19 of 31 participants)*

Date: MARCH 2011

Location: NaKwaTaKu Potlatch House – Whitehorse

#### *1. Can you think of a way to improve cooperation and strengthen trust between community members and the RCMP? How could that happen?*

More sessions like this; build on this one.

Continued communication, community events involvement.

I'm not sure how to go further than nice polite talk that doesn't go far. Training together with community and RCMP I hope is a start to change one person at a time but it's so slow!

RCMP have to get out there and get involved in the community; to listen to the people, you have to have knowledge to understand. RCMP should know what role they played in residential school – e.g. process used to recruit. Teach history and relationships during residential school time.

I think that RCMP in the communities need to make more efforts to be a part of that community, not just enforce the laws in it. They need to be involved in community activities; the community needs to know who they are as a person in order to have a positive relationship or form any trust.

I found what Peter Clark said in conclusion quite discouraging. I would like to see a real, genuine openness in the Commanding Officer that was demonstrated by many of the RCMP officers here.

Continue talking and learning together. Meet regularly. Cultural education/prison camp awareness.

Changing the language – this needs improvement in RCMP.

More meetings that bring people together to talk about their differences.

By having an even broader conversation and training with people from Justice – Crown Prosecutors AND Judges, to learn about language and its power. I think processes need to work for people to trust them and use them.

Take workshops together. Take opportunities like the rape kits coming out to train multi-sectorally and identify roles and gaps in service.

Monthly / quarterly meetings with women's groups to work on issues within the communities.

Strengthening trust in the entire system will strengthen trust with each of the component parts/agencies of the system. Isolating a single organization in evaluation is not healthy.

Less focus on past issues and history and more focus on future plans to make positive change. History is important but at some point we need to move forward.

One way: Invite RCMP members and their families to all community events so they 'become' a member of your community. It is through these relationships that we build trust and open communication.

Establish personal relationships rather than institutional – speak the same language about trust and respect.

More gatherings like this where RCMP can get to know aboriginal women and women's advocates and identify common goals.

Have new members to a community be mentored with a First Nations family. Have a First Nations dreamed, led, facilitated orientation to the First Nation – perhaps an overnight campout with RCMP. Have RCMP members attend the First Nations training and First Nations attend the RCMP local training. Have members learn some local First Nations supporting language.

## *2. What can you do to make women feel safe in your community?*

Believe them, honour resistance and history. Treat women with respect. Safe, affordable housing. Continue with this educational process for those in positions of power – child welfare, the justice system, Yukon Housing, etc.

Educate women on their rights, educate them on help and hope.

Making them know that there are places where they can ask for help and where they will be respected and that their resistance will be duly honoured.

Be sure to have a safety plan for young women in the community. Talk to RCMP to help.

Women need to trust and feel safe, leaders of the community have to help develop respect.

Honestly I don't know! I think it starts with mutual respect between community and RCMP. I also think that it has to involve youth.

Not labeling or judging them! Correct people who wrongfully judge victims. Use the language of resistance.

Buddy system.

Stand up and be heard.

Honour our resistance. Continue to (more collaboratively) plan prevention and awareness campaigns.

Educating on assaults/music festivals to make safety a part of organizing them. Yukon wide crisis line. Create circles of support that are defined by the women.

Encourage and walk beside women when they need to deal with RCMP/address judgment calls (if applicable) at the time they happen.

Demonstrating myself as a healthy role model for my wife and daughters.

Work closely with local women's groups to improve trust and work to improve issues.

We together become the strength for women/children by providing unified support and care. Education is key.

Work toward use of language in law. Speak with all service providers.

This is something I would like to have better answers for. To trust and respect and honour women is one way. Great need to improve RCMP responses to violence against women so that women trust them, because when women don't trust police they aren't safe.

Have Elders and women determine what they need to be safe as well as feel safe.

### *3. What will RCMP members notice in your community when they have provided you with more of a sense of safety or trust? What will be different?*

More willingness to work cooperatively.

People will disclose more crime and impunity can stop so violence can stop being normalized.

Less crime, more communication, help and assistance in solving crime.

They would most likely....

People will approach them. Children raped will report to them. Women will report violence.

Needs improvement.

More people will complain to police when they are victimized. More crimes reported.

More people reporting, more people looking them in the eye, more of a sense of collaboration than avoidance and distrust...

Warmth, feeling of being part of the community.

It will provide a sense of trust and respect. Women will not hesitate to call RCMP when needed.

More cooperation from all citizens to deter violence against women.

More cooperation.

Trust speaks for itself. It is a foundation of safe communities. Overall community support will naturally grow.

Higher reporting of violence. Better safety planning. Proactive planning. Better communication.

Less crime and more people willing to report crime.

An Elder will know them and greet them. They will get invited to local events. They will feel they belong and can get advice from local people.

### *4. If your grandchildren were here today, what would they like about what took place in this workshop?*

The change of the discussion from victim blaming and undermining toward the acknowledgement of their resistance to change their situation. Positive social response, what a radical notion.

Have a workshop for young people to have a better understanding. I talk to my family about what we talked about. So it would be helpful for them to understand.

In my opinion, they would learn that language is very important.

I think they would see the collaboration and connections made were a step forward. They would see how so many different stakeholders have a vested interest in creating change.

They would feel safe in the world.

Changes in resistance to violence and how to resist violence and only use good language.

Good food. Laughter. Smiles.

That we cared enough to get together to change things for them.

Adults working together for a common good.

The interaction between RCMP and women's groups without hostility and defenses.

I hope for the future – comfort in action by leaders, parents, elders.

Elders provided the very important advice that culture is needed if we really truly want to help our communities become healthier.

History. Evolution. Education. Dialogue.

That RCMP were willing to listen to women.

That we looked at the importance of language used to frame violence.

## *5. What aboriginal cultural teaching have you learned today that will help you in your daily work?*

Importance of including elders.

The great strength of women elders standing up for their people, even at 80+ years old. The respect for them was lost in the non-native culture.

Strength and resistance in times of adversity.

Dena Au'Nes'sen (Kaska supreme law)

Pass the cultural teaching onto the younger people.

Importance of listening to wisdom of elders.

I feel like this form is an aboriginal cultural teaching! I like it.

I enjoy hearing from the elders. Some of the crap we have and still do teach about First Nations culture.

Referrals to elders for guidance and direction. That culture is important in the north.

Understanding is powerful. Cultural and historical teachings are invaluable.

It was an important refresher of things learned previously and things not learned before.

Elders need to be heard and their advice taken.

Involve elders – eat together – share thoughts.

The elders' knowledge and willingness to share it is inspiring. We need to invite them, respect their wisdom, and learn from their teachings.

The importance of Elders to be present in working groups. They bring the cultural teachings and have years of experience.

*6. If all of the people who were taken away to residential school could witness this conversation today, what would they like to see take place?*

A real plan for action to prevent anything like that ever happening again. A real apology, public honouring of their resistance and dignity.

Recognition that they fought back, that the word prison camp was used and that acknowledge the de-education that was and still is being done.

Have a voice, a small positive step has been taken.

They would see how they resisted and be able to see themselves as not only survivors but also strong and proud. They would see themselves with dignity and strength not as “victims.”

Service providers not judging them. Compassionate workers.

The real truth on the children’s resistance to violence.

Still talking about it. Needs action.

Maybe to see processes that really respect and honour basic human dignity?

Peace / community / unity / dignity.

Some would still be angry for what took place, others would say it is a long time in coming and that we still have a very long way to go.

Not to dwell but understand and move forward to ensure it doesn’t happen again. That their suffering can somehow lead to change that is positive for the future.

Respect being built between all people in this group. We learn from the past and move forward with a plan that is culturally inclusive.

They would like to see RCMP have accurate training on the true history of aboriginal peoples in Canada, and a deeper understanding of the role of the police in their colonization. They would want that our society understands the state and industry intent to steal the land and resources from indigenous peoples and destroy their culture, which hasn’t changed much. And see an acknowledgement of First Nations’ governments and leaders’ formal resistance to these practices, as well as the personal acts of resistance of young children, adults, and family members.

They would like to see us making change in the language we use – example, it was a prison camp – we need to honour all the resistance that First Nations have demonstrated and will continue to do. They would like to see First Nations being trained to help ourselves.

*7. What do people in your agency need to know that would contribute to improving services for women victims of violence? What have you learned that could improve services for women?*

Education/communication with all parties involved.

Need to honour resistance and put emphasis on it when dealing with women. I learned how words are important in the justice system.

Language – I really never realized how detrimental passive and mutual language can undermine the victim and normalize the violence or even blame the victim.



Not to blame women or judge them. Recognize that safety is always the underlying foundation for their actions.

That RCMP, Justice and First Nations take resistance to violence and the language change regarding women living in violence.

We need lawyers, judges and social workers here too.

Honouring resistance, ensuring appropriate social responses, ensuring that there is room for maintenance of human dignity.

That RCMP are at the table and will make change.

To look at the resistance rather than the “bad” things women do when dealing with violence.

That the community has an understanding of the challenges that all agencies face and not focus blame. This will give agencies the confidence and strength to accept their shortcomings and then strive to make positive change for all.

To not assume, not judge and not become disillusioned with repetitive clients.

Stop stereotypes. Again respond to the person in each case (the victim).

How to frame issues – what language to use.

Teach people how to use accurate language to convey the true nature and meaning of criminal actions / violence against women.

How to interview women and children in a supporting way and the importance of the words used to describe violence. To honour and recognize the resistance of women.

### *8. What changes would you like to see in your community 10 years from now? What would your ancestors hope for you to achieve?*

Less violence, poverty, homelessness. A concrete action plan for each that is in place and followed, changing with time. This would have to be truly collaborative.

That all see women's worth, women obtain respect and safety.

Understanding and respect. Be proud of the strength shown by all residential school survivors.

Violence against women eliminated. Courts use the language of resistance.

That survivors regain dignity, a violence-free environment.

People involve elders. People work with the RCMP.

Real peace and justice.

More safety, accountability of offenders. Violence against women not accepted.

That women and the RCMP have a better relationship and that women are 100% comfortable in calling when they have issues and need help.

A community where you have a lot of laughter consistently amongst all cultures and demographics.

Reduce the harm to all members of the community both First Nations and non-First Nations.

More elder/community circles.

Less violence, healthy people, less addiction.

Peaceful, compassionate, healthy communities where all people are treated with dignity and have their basic needs met - for food, shelter, safety, a healthy environment.

First Nations and RCMP sharing training. RCMP staying longer in a community. First Nations healing ceremonies. Develop locally based just plans/actions. Have the “truth” be taught in school about the First Nations resistance, history and prison schools.

### *9. How could the workshop be improved?*

This is a great start.

Justice needs to be here. Language issues discussed here need to be incorporated into all lawyers and judges training!

That the RCMP take “the prison camp” teachings from the survivors that lived through it.

Bring Crown Prosecutors and judges and government services folks in on the conversation! Family and Children’s Services too. Hospital workers.

Was great. Committed group.

Possibly include a youth women’s representative.

Louder speakers! Chairs very uncomfortable. Glad to see so many RCMP here and engaged in dialogue!!

More agencies need to be on board. Be honest on what can really be accomplished – reasonable goals.

Less inflammatory introduction as it creates conflict.

Suggest a cultural opening such as drummers/dancers – this brings dignity to all First Nations and participants.

Good workshop – informative.

Longer time. More scenarios. Divide groups up so First Nations / women and RCMP will be mixed.

## *Session 2*



# AGENDA

## *Bridging the Gap – Creating Safety in Community*

Date & Time: MARCH 21, 2011 & MARCH 22, 2011  
Location: Two Mile Hall  
Presenters: Allan Wade, Ph.D., Catherine Richardson, Ph.D.,  
Centre for Response-based practice, Duncan B.C.

### MARCH 21, 2011

10:00 Opening Prayer, Introductions  
10:15 Identifying Points of Connection and Common Purpose  
Safety and Collective Ethics  
11:00 Social Responses in Cases of Violence  
  
12:30 – 1:30 LUNCH PROVIDED ON-SITE  
  
1:30 Dignity  
Understanding Violence in Social and Historical Context  
Family Resemblance in Domination and Resistance  
2:45 NUTRITION BREAK  
3:00 Violence is Social  
4:00 Forging Commitments for Sustainable Local Action

### MARCH 22, 2011

10:00 Violence is Unilateral  
11:00 Responses and Resistance to Violence  
  
12:30 – 1:30 LUNCH PROVIDED ON-SITE  
  
1:30 Language and Violence  
2:30 Identifying Effective Social Responses Already in Place  
3:00 Evaluation  
3:15 Closing Comments

# PARTICIPANTS

## *Bridging the Gap – Creating Safety in Community*

Date & Time: MARCH 21, 2011 & MARCH 22, 2011 • 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Location: Two Mile Hall

Caron Statham  
Susan Whalen  
Alice Broadhagen  
Grace Grady Tom  
Julia Allen  
May Brodhagen  
Julia Fox  
Susan Derksen  
Cecile Cheezo  
Nicki Bowes  
Shannon Miller  
Monica McMillian  
Maggie Dick  
Ruby Johnny  
Michelle Beckley  
Dixon Lutz  
Duane Esler

Frankie D. Magun  
Maria Wolftail  
D. Lynn Leith  
R Dwayne Latham  
Colleen Dennis  
Cst. Colin Kerry  
Cst. Lynden Morrison  
Teena Bazylnski  
Peter Clark  
Ann Maje Raider  
Cynthia Olie

Rick Aird  
Mary Maje  
Rose Peter  
Mary Charlie  
Tootsie Charlie  
Leda Jules  
Daniel Dick  
Lois Moorcroft

Help & Hope Shelter - Executive Director  
Help & hope Shelter  
Elder  
Elder  
Elder  
Liard Aboriginal Women's society  
RCMP  
Nawidiga Pathway Second Stage  
Help & Hope  
Victim Services  
  
DDC Justice Worker  
Elder  
Justice - Acting Director  
Women's Directorate YAWS Implementation Officer  
Liard First Nation Councilor  
"Offender Supervision & Services. Previously -  
Adult Probation"  
Liard First Nation Councilor  
Liard First Nation  
Watson Lake Heath Centre  
RCMP - Operations and Community Support Services  
  
RCMP  
RCMP  
RCMP Training Unit "M" Division  
Commanding Officer RCMP "M" Division  
LAWS ED  
Liard Basin Task Force, Assistant Support worker,  
Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies  
RCMP - FN & Youth Policing "M" Division  
Liard Aboriginal Women's society  
Community Wellness Worker, RRDC  
LAWS Board Member  
Elder  
Liard First Nations Kaska Language  
Liard First Nations Kaska Language  
Liard Aboriginal Women's Society Secretariat



# *Watson Lake Report*

## *Together for Justice*

### **Bridging the Gap: Creating Safety in Community**

**Two Mile Hall, Liard First Nation, Watson Lake, March 2011**

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LAWS: *Bridging the Gap: Creating Safety in Community. March 2011.*  
Meeting notes prepared by Lois Moorcroft

## Introduction:

Thirty-four participants attended Liard Aboriginal Women's Society's (LAWS) first Watson Lake workshop of *Together for Justice: On Violence, Language and Responsibility*.

LAWS Board members, Executive Director, and members, Kaska Elders, RCMP Commanding Officer, Help and Hope for Families Shelter, Nawidiga Pathway Second Stage Housing, Yukon Government (YG) Offender Supervision and Services and Victims Services, Liard First Nation Council, Ross River Dena Council Community Wellness, Watson Lake Health Centre, RCMP representatives from First Nations and Youth policing, Training Division, Operations and Community Support, and Watson Lake detachment, Lower Post First Nation and Liard First Nation Justice workers, LAWS Secretariat, and YG Women's Directorate joined presenters Dr. Allan Wade and Dr. Catherine Richardson for the gathering.

In order to provide effective police service in the Watson Lake area, RCMP require knowledge of the communities they serve and the public's expectations, of Kaska values, beliefs and culture, and of the colonial code of relationships historically and to the present day. The goal of *Bridging the Gap: Creating Safety in Community*, funded by Justice Canada and the RCMP, was to build on the opportunity for change by bringing together First Nations and community women, RCMP, and front-line responders to start a conversation, to learn better ways of responding to violent crime against women living in aboriginal and northern communities, and to develop ongoing agreements on how to improve women's safety. The evaluations showed that the open dialogue that occurred between women and police during the workshop was a good start, although participants agreed more gatherings and conversations are needed to learn more and to develop lasting change through agreements and action plans to create safety.

Many women distrust police because of previous negative experiences when they have reported violence. *Together For Justice* came about because LAWS recognizes the critical need to provide more opportunities for RCMP members to hear from women in the communities about violence, how it can be addressed, and to provide an environment where trust can be established. The March 8, 2009 events that resulted in criminal charges against two RCMP constables who were later acquitted of sexual assault, the statements made at public meetings held in Watson Lake during the *Review of Yukon's Police Force 2010*, and the conversations held at the Whitehorse *Bridging the Gap* session in early March and at the Watson Lake workshop all highlight the current climate of fear and distrust of police. Participants are motivated by a desire to change that climate of fear. This requires active listening, reflection, participation in difficult conversations, and a willingness to learn about and to engage in new practices that respect women, acknowledge women's resistance, and serve and protect women's safety.

By collaborating in the workshops on *Together for Justice*, RCMP members, Aboriginal women, First Nations service providers and women's groups can develop action plans and orientation documents for the RCMP. Participants will learn about safety, the importance of accurate language, violence, responsibility, and recovery. This knowledge, if put into practice, can help to improve investigating and reporting of sexual and spousal assaults. Ongoing communication and cooperation will inform improved service delivery, policing, and community work to prevent male violence against women, and violence in all its forms.

## Opening Prayer

Elder Clara Donnelly gave the Opening Prayer in Kaska for *Bridging the Gap: Creating safety in community*. Each day began with an opening prayer.