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PAUKTUUTIT  
INUIT WOMEN OF CANADA

# NATIONAL STRATEGY TO PREVENT ABUSE IN INUIT COMMUNITIES

AND

# SHARING KNOWLEDGE, SHARING WISDOM

A GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL STRATEGY



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Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada is the national organization that represents all Canadian Inuit women. Its mandate is to foster a greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, advocate for equity and social improvements, and encourage their participation in the community, regional and national life of Canada.

Pauktuutit has been active in abuse prevention and building capacity to address abuse issues since its inception in 1984. Pauktuutit brought together individuals, agencies and groups who share a common interest in preventing abuse in Inuit communities, to collaborate on the development and implementation of this unique national, community-based strategy.





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*We are told that we follow our generations, our 'family generation-root'. This is what we follow. I'm going to use an example: if there is sexual abuse in the family, if that root is not severed it grows as the roots grow. We have to sever the pain that was inflicted because if it is not dealt with, it will keep on going, from my grandparents to my parents, the root continues to grow.*

Kanayuq Salomonie (Cape Dorset)

## OVERVIEW NATIONAL STRATEGY TO PREVENT ABUSE IN INUIT COMMUNITIES

### **Vision**

Our vision is an Inuit society of healthy individuals who respect the past and embrace the future as Inuit, and who live in supportive families and caring communities. In our vision, violence and abuse are rare occurrences that are dealt with swiftly and justly according to Inuit ways. Abusers are held accountable for their actions, and both victims and abusers are supported in their healing process.

### ***Inuit Principles of Healing and Working Together***

1. **Piliriqatigiinnngniq** – working together for the common good
2. **Avatikmik Kamattiarniq** – environmental wellness
3. **Pijittsirarniq** – service to others and leadership
4. **Pilimmaksarniq** – empowerment
5. **Qanuqtuurunnarniq** – resourcefulness and adaptability
6. **Aajiqatigiinnngniq** – cooperation and consensus

### **Goal**

The goal of the Strategy is the steady reduction in incidents of violence and abuse in Inuit communities, and the eventual predominance of caring and respectful relationships.

### **Objectives**

1. **Develop sustained relationships** among partner organizations that are committed to a steady reduction of violence and abuse in Inuit communities;
2. **Coordinate efforts** so that resources can be used to the best advantage and
3. **Implement effective, culturally appropriate services and programs** to prevent abuse and promote healing.

### **Strategic Priorities**

1. Make abuse in Inuit communities a **priority issue**.
2. Raise awareness and **reduce tolerance of abuse**.
3. Invest in **training and capacity** development.
4. **Sustain front-line workers** and community services.
5. Deliver **services that heal** the Inuit.
6. Expand programs that **build on Inuit strengths** and prevent abuse.



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## Introduction

Violence and abuse are serious problems in Inuit communities. Far too many children, adults and elders are living in violent and abusive situations today. Many others have deep and traumatic memories of abuse. Those who are knowledgeable about the issue say that most Inuit have been victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse or have witnessed a close family member being abused, assaulted or killed. Abusers are often survivors of abuse themselves – abuse that occurred in the community, in the residential schools, or in their own families. Abuse creates a cycle of fear, shame, anger, addictions and violence that passes from one generation to the next, from man to woman and from adult to child.

Inuit cannot be healthy and productive family and community members while they live with so much hurt. Inuit society cannot prosper while violence and abuse continue to be a common occurrence. Inuit society will not survive a continued assault on elders who must be well to pass on their knowledge, on mothers and fathers who must be strong and loving to raise healthy children, and on children who must experience joy and security if they are to fulfill the hope of the future. Inuit health, economic self-sufficiency and political self-determination have been compromised because of the impact of violence and abuse on our communities.

It is the hope and desire of the Nuluq Project and its partners that, by working together as Inuit have done for centuries, abuse can be healed, reduced and eventually prevented. Unfortunately, abuse has come to be hidden in many communities and no action is taken. Out of fear and shame, victims remain silent and abusers are enabled to continue. In some cases, victims themselves are blamed and threatened. Fear and denial have paralyzed us. Leadership is needed to turn the tide.

*Let's get help. It's hard to ask for help, and to complicate matters, there are very few services in the north to help men who want to deal with issues of violence in their lives.*

Inuk man responding to the Nuluq Project survey

When asked to visualize how he saw Inuit working together to prevent abuse, National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention member Lieutenant George Okpik of the Kativik Regional Police, drew a picture of an animal skin being stretched on a frame.

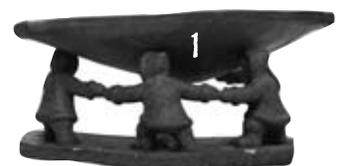
*In order for a family or community to work as a whole, everything and everybody has to do their part for all directions! Like the ropes that are pulling in all directions to make sure that the seal skin is properly tanned and dried. The wooden frame represents the resources we as Inuit have, while the seal skin represents the families and communities we need to support.*

George Okpik, 2005



Because abuse has affected so many Inuit, prevention must begin with healing. So many people have been victims that the cycle of abuse will not be broken until victims and abusers have acknowledged and dealt with their abuse experiences. Treatment services that work for Inuit are needed.

Since its inception in 1984, Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada has spoken out about abuse, yet an appalling lack of resources has caused change to be painfully slow. Those who work in abuse prevention and community services – shelter workers, crisis counsellors, Inuit healers, and police – are also discouraged. As people on the front lines say, “it’s all talk and no action.” A considerable sustained effort, with adequate resources, is urgently required. We need to do more, now.



## ***Violence and Abuse in Inuit Communities***

Violence has consistently been identified at Pauktuutit's annual general meetings as a high priority issue. Inuit communities and Pauktuutit's board members report a need for crisis and long-term counselling, safe shelters and training of Inuit front-line workers.

Current information indicates a very high occurrence of violence in Inuit communities. For example, in 2004, Nunavut's **reported** violent crime rate was eight times that of Canada overall.<sup>i</sup> In the same year, RCMP detachments in Nunavut reported 498 domestic assaults against women and 58 against men, likely a small percentage of those that occurred.<sup>ii</sup> In many communities, violent crime is increasing rather than decreasing, and women and children are most often the victims.

A recent Statistics Canada survey shows use of shelters for abused women and their children has grown dramatically in Nunavut. Between 2001 and 2004, use of the shelters went up by 54 per cent, compared to a 4.6 per cent increase in the rest of the country.<sup>iii</sup>

A 2002 survey of services for Inuit survivors of child sexual abuse revealed that while most Northern counselling services now include some cultural content or Inuit *Qaujimaqatugangit* (Inuit traditional knowledge), only two out of every ten programs had a cultural component to healing and only three out of ten included elders or traditional counsellors. Three out of every ten organizations had unfilled staff positions for work with child sexual abuse survivors, and a third of existing staff had no specialized training related to child sexual abuse.<sup>iv</sup>

Too often, services for crime victims in the North operate in isolation of each other. Lacking a systematic and coordinated approach, efforts to prevent victimization in Inuit communities are hindered by gaps in services; inequitable distribution of resources; burnout and loss of trained staff; an absence of training and support for front-line workers; and incomplete program evaluation.

The need to coordinate and unite efforts to prevent victimization is echoed by recent national and regional consultations including the Aboriginal Women's Justice Consultation, *Qullit* (Nunavut Status of Women Council) and the Baffin Regional Agvvik Society (the governing board of the only Inuit regional transition centre for

abused women). Currently, there is no ongoing system of connecting and supporting community groups or individuals offering counselling, support, healing and abuse prevention in Inuit communities.

Federal, provincial and territorial governments do provide or support many services and programs intended to help. However, we believe that additional efforts are required and available resources could be better allocated in a coordinated approach.

## ***The Nuluq Project on Abuse Prevention***

With primary funding from the National Crime Prevention Strategy, the Nuluq Project is a three-year initiative (2003-06) developed by Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada to improve the coordination of abuse prevention services and resources in Inuit communities. It has a searchable database and network contact list of about 400 services and programs [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca). Information from the database and additional interviews was analysed to prepare two reports: *Inuit Healing in Contemporary Inuit Society and Abuse Prevention Services in Inuit Communities*; and a multi-stakeholder National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention was established, to create this action-oriented Inuit Abuse Prevention Strategy to promote best practices and to support increased collaboration on abuse issues.

Community and Inuit services representatives met in March 2005 to begin to formulate the strategy. Over the following year the Committee was expanded to include representatives of Inuit Land Claims organizations, provincial and territorial governments, police services and other national organizations. A draft Strategy was reviewed widely and finalized in March 2006.

## ***A National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities***

A strategy is simply a plan for what we want to achieve, what we need to do to get there and who needs to work together to reach this common goal.

This Strategy is based on information collected for Pauktuutit's abuse services database, interviews conducted with service providers and Inuit counsellors/healers, a special project to record Inuit cultural approaches to healing, and the knowledge and expertise of Advisory Committee members. The Strategy was created through

consultation and collaboration among those affected by abuse and those whose mandate includes abuse prevention and treatment, safe shelters, justice and corrections.

This National Strategy may be used by:

- \* local committees – to develop plans to reduce violence and abuse in their communities;
- \* agencies and organizations – to develop programs and services that work and meet Inuit needs;
- \* regional, provincial and territorial organizations – to develop activities that support Inuit in reducing violence;
- \* territorial, provincial and federal government departments – to improve services for Inuit and ensure that family violence, sexual abuse and crime prevention efforts are appropriate for Inuit;
- \* national Inuit and Aboriginal organizations – to advocate for Inuit-specific approaches to abuse prevention and to carry out national projects that help; and
- \* International Indigenous organizations – as a model of an Inuit-led plan.

We invite YOU to use the Strategy and its companion guide – Sharing Knowledge, Sharing Wisdom – to increase your own efforts to end abuse and violence in Inuit **communities**.

## ROOT CAUSES OF ABUSE

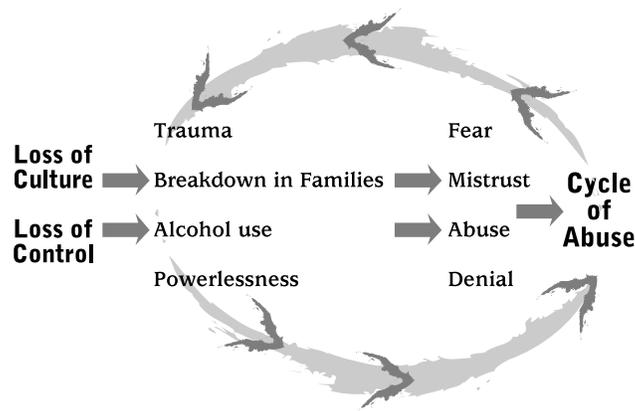
*It is all about your upbringing. If a child was abused at a very early age, sexually or physically, then that's all they know and they will continue to abuse. And it's up to the community to stop that abuse with education and awareness. The root cause comes from shame, guilt and what you've learned from a young age.*

Inuk elder/healer

Why is there so much violence and abuse today? Most Inuit agree that while there always has been some violence and abuse in Inuit society, it now is much more common than in the past. Individuals and communities feel overwhelmed by the extent of the problem and the lack of knowledge and resources to respond. Many victims are afraid to come forward because they aren't sure they will get help, and it seems that many abusers get off lightly. Services for victims and offenders don't

seem to be able to prevent further abuse. Some community leaders believe that violence has become so destructive to women, children, family relationships and community health that it threatens the very future of the Inuit.

The diagram below provides a simplified picture of some of the root causes of abuse in Inuit communities. Of course in reality, the circumstances surrounding abuse are even more complex and affect each person differently.



National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention, 2005

In this model, the current high levels of violence and abuse in the Inuit context can be traced back to two main 'roots'. 1) loss of culture and tradition; and 2) loss of control over individual and collective destiny. This history leads to psychological trauma, the breakdown of families, alcohol and drug addictions and increased feelings of powerlessness. Fear, mistrust, abuse and denial result, creating a cycle of abuse in which individuals can be both victim and abuser – a cycle that repeats itself with each new generation.

### **Fear, Mistrust, Anger and Denial**

Counsellors tell us that abuse is often most directly tied to fear, mistrust, anger and denial of feelings. Abusers may feel anger and grief at changing roles in the family, losing loved ones to others (jealousy is a major factor in abuse, leading to attempts to dominate and control others) or fears about their ability to love and be loved. Other fears come from the harsh realities of the Arctic: loss of traditional sources of income; poor housing; poverty and hunger; and not being able to provide for one's children.



As fear grows, so does mistrust. Mistrust can spread through families and whole communities and also prevent community members from working together to address abuse issues. Anger is a pervasive response to fear, pain and loss. Anger can erupt in fierce bouts of rage or long-standing verbal, physical or sexual abuse designed to hurt and control others. Inuit healers and counsellors talk of high levels of denial about abuse: abusers refuse to acknowledge their own destructive behaviours or the pain and trauma they have experienced; family problems are discounted and ignored; and whole communities feel overwhelmed by social and economic problems.

### ***Past Abuse and Mental Trauma***

How did fear, mistrust, anger and denial become so widespread? In research for the Nuluaq Project, Inuit front-line workers identified a lack of healing of unresolved mental trauma as a major cause of these feelings. Individuals need to understand and deal with past pain, including that caused by abuse against them, in order to stop the ongoing cycle.

The negative impact of the residential school system continues to affect individuals, families and whole communities. These experiences have had deep effects on self-esteem, emotional resilience and coping abilities. Other trauma that has affected the Inuit includes enforced relocations; uncontrolled outbreaks of disease and famine; unilateral imposition of modern laws and customs; and external governance.

### ***The Loss of Culture and Continuity***

Are there even deeper 'roots' to violence and abuse in Inuit communities? Inuit leaders and cultural experts think so. For the Inuit, high levels of abuse and violence also have roots in a loss of culture and social continuity, as well as, for many, feelings of a loss of control over the present and hopelessness about the future.

Rapid social and economic change combined with culturally insensitive approaches to the North has eroded Inuit values, customs and ways of living together.

*The fact that some Inuit are struggling with their identity, who they are and where they come from, is a major problem. Difference in lifestyle between the adults and the youth, experiencing major changes in life or sudden changes are*

*other factors. The older generation used to live one way and today's younger generation is living a different lifestyle. That sudden change in lifestyle has had a tremendously negative impact. The older generation and the younger generation do not understand each other; the connection between them has been severed.*

Inuk counsellor/healer

### ***Loss of Control over the Present***

Within a generation, as a result of rapid changes in lifestyle and the economic base in communities, as well as imposition of non-Inuit structures and values, Inuit have lost control of their destiny. Thus, high rates of change, harsh assimilation policies and the introduction of residential schools contributed to loss of culture and tradition.

The cycle of violence and abuse continues when individuals believe they have no power over their lives, and try to regain a feeling of control by dominating others.

*I think the intergenerational impact is the main one. When the [new] system of government came, changes were made [in how Inuit live and govern themselves]. A lot of our people are still living in that place where they had to obey; they had to listen to what was being brought to them.*

Inuk counsellor/healer

### ***Hope for the Future***

*Inuit are helping their children and grandchildren to regain their culture and their traditional values. Inuit dialects are being taught to children and youth are being encouraged to feel pride in their identity as Inuit.*

National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention member

While the root causes of abuse may seem insurmountable, they are not. As understanding of the cycle of abuse grows, so does the commitment to change.

By addressing more than symptoms of imbalance and ill health, Inuit communities are getting at the root causes of abuse. Several communities now have healing circles and residential school survivors programs. Inuit are slowly regaining control over their lands and over the social and economic policies that affect their lives. There is a renewed sense of cultural pride and respect for Inuit ways.

We hope that this Strategy will help everyone who is concerned about abuse in Inuit communities to work effectively together to address abuse and its root causes so that Inuit may regain their pride, dignity and independence.

## WHAT IS NEEDED

Inuit service providers who were interviewed during the research phase of the Nuluq Project made these recommendations to better address abuse in Inuit communities:

- \* Develop more Inuit healing resources and training;
- \* Recruit and train Inuit front-line workers in all areas of abuse prevention;
- \* Recognize Inuit healing as a legitimate practice;
- \* Establish multi-purpose healing facilities in communities for all ages and needs;
- \* Increase intervention programs for children and families;
- \* Design public awareness campaigns specific to Inuit communities;
- \* Develop aftercare and long-term emotional support for victims of abuse as well as offenders;
- \* Create alternatives to corrections and increase community-based justice initiatives and
- \* Integrate Inuit language and culture and the use of elders and Inuit values in service delivery.

There are many inequities in services for abusers and victims, and in support for service providers, between regions in the North and between southern and northern Canada. For example, there are very few treatment centres for survivors of abuse in the North and often there are no follow-up services for offenders or participants in addictions programs once they have returned to the community.

Lack of training and skill development opportunities for shelter staff and counsellors are significant problems that contribute to staff burnout. It is often difficult for community organizations to keep staff because they leave for less stressful and better paying jobs with governments and the oil and gas companies.

Another key issue is a lack of supervision and support for front-line workers. Disparities exist between community and government staff in accreditation, access to employee benefits, assistance services and training.

There are very few services for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse. Most children remain untreated, or have to leave their communities for help.

Some of the barriers to action to effectively reduce violence and abuse identified by the Nuluq Project and reflected in the Strategy include:

- \* loss of respect for adults and elders among children and youth;
- \* lack of trust among service organizations and competition for scarce dollars;
- \* cross-cultural barriers between Inuit and non-Inuit, and Inuit who have been separated from their culture; and
- \* inadequate capacity in community organizations.

## INUIT PRINCIPLES OF HEALING AND WORKING TOGETHER

*Right now, our lives are unpredictable. Our lives were different in the past. Now people are forgetting who they are, that is the reason why it is important to know Inuit traditions. People have to really look at themselves, who they are and find themselves again. It is not hard to find our selves again. Our identity evolves or grows or consists of what we know, what we see and what we hear. If we follow our traditional knowledge we have a better chance of standing tall and having a better life. We can recapture the knowledge we once had.*

Inuk elder

Six guiding principles of Inuit Qaujimajangit (Inuit knowledge) have evolved through time and form the basis for Inuit counselling practices. The principles also can guide us in effective joint actions to prevent abuse and promote healing.

### 1. Piliriqatigiinnngniq – working together for the common good

This principle implies knowing one's role within a family, community or organization and making judgements and decisions that benefit everyone rather than a few.



## 2. Avatikmik Kamattiarniq – environmental wellness

This principle can be interpreted as a balanced and healthy interconnectedness of the mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions of the individual, the family, and the community.

## 3. Pijittsirarniq – service to others and leadership

These concepts together contribute to the common good and are not mutually exclusive, but inherently part of the same ideal of wisdom in Inuit culture.

## 4. Pilimmaksarniq – empowerment

Inuit can and should use all sources of appropriate information, gathering it and using it to right social and spiritual wrongs, and to work toward a balanced and strong Inuit society.

## 5. Qanuqtuurunnarniq – resourcefulness and adaptability

Inuit have great capacity to be creative, flexible, and solution oriented.

## 6. Aajiqatigiinnngniq – cooperation and consensus

The Inuit healing process is successful only to the extent that it is reciprocal, based throughout on the opinions and contributions of client and counsellor, leaders and community members, each recognizing the value of the other's perspective. Thus, solutions are reached by consensus and therefore are sound.

## VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

### *Strategic Vision*

Our vision is an Inuit society of healthy individuals who respect the past and embrace the future as Inuit, and who live in supportive families and caring communities. In our vision, violence and abuse are rare occurrences that are dealt with swiftly and justly according to Inuit ways. Abusers are held accountable for their actions, and both victims and abusers are supported in their healing process.

### *Goal*

The goal of the Strategy is a steady reduction in incidents of violence and abuse in Inuit communities, and the eventual predominance of caring and respectful **relationships**.

## **Objectives**

The objectives of the Strategy are to:

1. **Develop sustained relationships** among partner organizations that are committed to a steady reduction of violence and abuse in Inuit communities;
2. **Coordinate efforts** so that resources can be leveraged to best advantage; and
3. **Implement practical, effective, culturally appropriate services and programs** to prevent and stop abuse and to promote healing.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention has agreed on the following six priorities in the prevention of abuse in Inuit communities. We believe that Inuit communities, regional and national Inuit groups; federal, provincial and territorial government departments; and other organizations can use this Strategy to develop more effective, culturally-appropriate and coordinated responses to violence and abuse.

### **1. Make abuse in Inuit communities a priority issue**

In order for change to happen, leaders at the community, regional, provincial, territorial and national levels must be committed to reducing violence and abuse.

- \* A useful starting point for federal, provincial and territorial governments, regional Inuit land claims organizations, National Inuit associations and others, is to **ENDORSE THIS STRATEGY** and become partners in its implementation.
- \* Hamlet Councils can show their support by passing 'zero tolerance toward abuse' resolutions, forming abuse prevention action committees and sponsoring prevention programs.
- \* Land claims organizations can name abuse as a top priority social and economic issue.
- \* Governments can work with Inuit in setting abuse prevention and spending priorities.

## **2. Raise awareness and reduce tolerance for abuse**

While abuse prevention efforts are quite advanced in some communities and regions, others are just beginning to be actively involved. In too many communities, denial and fear prevents individuals from reporting abuse, and sentences for abusers can be seen as ineffective.

An annual national Inuit abuse prevention campaign, carried out at all levels and involving media, governments and communities would help to raise awareness and change attitudes toward abuse. Regional organizations can take every opportunity to dispel myths about abuse and encourage reporting. Schools and youth groups can promote healthy relationships and non-violent conflict resolution. And all of us can say “NO!” to abuse in our families, workplaces and community organizations.

## **3. Invest in training and capacity development**

Inuit counsellors/healers and non-Inuit counsellors and mental health professionals need additional training in abuse issues, culturally-competent care and Inuit healing methods. Training and quality supervision needs to be ongoing to address the high turnover rate in staff positions. Culturally-appropriate training modules, tele-education seminars, face-to-face conferences and meetings, and mobile healing teams are some means of increasing training and capacity development.

National organizations can assist by producing tools and resources that draw on the best Inuit healing practices and non-Inuit approaches that can be adapted to Inuit needs. Governments can assess specific training needs and work with colleges and agencies to provide high-quality training, on-the-job supervision and on-going education for front-line workers. Community committees and agencies can build in time for training and skill development even when work loads are high (they always will be high!).

## **4. Sustain front-line workers and community services**

Front-line workers are experiencing burn-out and often do not feel supported by their organizations and communities. Actions such as the development of a Northern shelter association and Inuit counsellors/healers network, establishment of regional or community coordinating committees and better services and benefits for front-line staff would be beneficial. Community organizations can share resources and provide peer support to each other; larger organizations can share training resources with smaller

ones; regional organizations can provide support for counsellors and traditional healers to meet with each other; and provincial and territorial governments can address barriers to retaining staff.

## **5. Deliver services that heal the Inuit**

To be effective, prevention and treatment services must be culturally competent, include Inuit healing practices and Inuit healers, and whenever possible, be delivered by Inuit. Actions could include the expansion of land-based healing programs, family-based healing centres and mobile healing teams that can develop local capacities. Funding priority should be given to culturally competent programs, and programs that include a knowledge-sharing function.

Client confidentiality and client and counsellor safety is a significant issue in many communities, and policies and procedures need to be developed that protect victims of violence, and those who help them, when they come forward. Communities can develop coordinating committees to better plan for services, to share information and to work together to help clients; regional, territorial, provincial and national organizations can work with communities to test particular models and approaches; and funding bodies can ensure that resources go to Inuit-directed programs and services.

## **6. Expand programs that build on Inuit strengths and prevent abuse**

Programs and services that strengthen individuals, families and communities are essential to a long-term strategy to prevent abuse. Efforts to nurture cultural pride, build self-esteem and teach new skills to children and youth, as well community-wide efforts to celebrate Inuit strengths will build resilient individuals and families. Preschool programs, public and high schools can teach about non-violence and healthy relationships, and develop and enforce codes of conduct that emphasize respect and prohibit violence. Community organizations and agencies can develop recreation, drama and arts programs for youth; and agencies can offer parenting courses and family activities. Land claims organizations and national associations can promote positive role models and honour leaders and elders for their work to strengthen Inuit.



## ACTION PLANNING

Groups and organizations at all levels need to develop actions that support the priorities in the Strategy, while addressing issues specific to its own membership or mandate. The Guide, **beginning on the next page of this book**, *Sharing Knowledge, Sharing Wisdom: A Guide to the National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities* – contains ideas, information and resources to help your group take effective action. It also provides a practical table that you can fill out to guide you as you develop your own community action plan.

## CONCLUSION

*The Inuktitut meaning of 'healing' is that you can speak of your thoughts and your feelings. When you can speak of your feelings, then you can stand strong.*

Inuk healer/counsellor.



We hope that you are inspired and hopeful rather than discouraged after reading the Strategy. While addressing violence and abuse can seem like an enormous task, Inuit across the Arctic are bringing our usual qanuqtuurunnarniq (resourcefulness and adaptability) and pijittsirarniq (service to others and leadership) to the task. Inuit communities have started youth theatre groups, organized land-based healing camps, launched a spousal abuse treatment program, provided culture-based counselling and are working in

schools to prevent violence. Inuit women and men are increasingly speaking out against violence, saying 'abuse is not the Inuit way!'

Breaking the silence about abuse is the first step. Stating, "NO MORE!" to violence and abuse is the next. Overcoming obstacles and truly working together will help us reach our goals.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Aboriginal Healing Foundation, *Aboriginal Domestic Violence in Canada*, Ottawa, 2003. Available at: [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca).

The Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, Chapter 14: Inuit Women, in *Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence, Achieving Equality, Final Report*, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1993, Ottawa. Available from Health Canada through inter-library loan.

Chansonneuve, Deborah, *Reclaiming Connections: Understanding Residential School Trauma Among Aboriginal People*, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2005. [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca)

Coalition Against Family Violence, *NWT Action Plan on Family Violence 2003 – 2008*, Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, 2005. [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca)

Levan, Mary Beth, *Creating a Framework for the Wisdom of the Community: Review of Victim Services in Nunavut, Northwest and Yukon Territories*, Department of Justice Canada, Ottawa, 2003. [www.canada.justice.gc.ca](http://www.canada.justice.gc.ca)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, *Sharing Knowledge, Sharing Wisdom: A Guide to the National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities*, Ottawa, 2006. [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, *Abuse Prevention Services in Inuit Communities: Analytical Report*, Ottawa, 2004. [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, *Inuit Healing in Contemporary Inuit Society: Analysis Report*, Ottawa, 2004. [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, *There is a Need so We Help: Services for Inuit Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, Ottawa, 2003. [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, *No More Secrets: Acknowledging the Problem of Child Sexual Abuse in Inuit Communities: The First Step Toward Healing*, Ottawa, 1991. [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council, *What Inuit Women Need to Know in Order to Deal with Abuse and Violence*, Iqaluit, 2003.

Trevethan, Shelley, John-Patrick Moore and Leesie Naqitarvik, *The Tupiq Program for Inuit Sexual Offenders: A Preliminary Investigation*, Correctional Service of Canada, 2004. [www.csc-scc.gc.ca](http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca)

## SHARING KNOWLEDGE



## SHARING WISDOM

### *A Guide to the National Strategy*

#### ***This Guide designed to be used by***

- \* Local committees – to develop plans to reduce violence and abuse in their communities;
- \* Agencies and organizations – to develop programs and services that work and meet Inuit needs;
- \* Regional, provincial and territorial organizations – to develop activities that support Inuit in reducing violence;
- \* Territorial, provincial and federal government departments – to improve services for Inuit and ensure that family violence, sexual abuse and crime prevention efforts are appropriate for Inuit;
- \* National Inuit and Aboriginal organizations – to advocate for Inuit-specific approaches to abuse prevention and to carry out national projects that help and
- \* International Indigenous organizations – as a model of an Inuit-led plan.

We invite YOU to use this Guide to assist your own efforts to end abuse and violence in Inuit communities.

#### **HOW WILL THIS GUIDE HELP?**

We hope that this Guide – *Sharing Knowledge, Sharing Wisdom* – will provide some inspiration; ideas and examples of successful initiatives that help you use the

*National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities.* There is knowledge and spirit within Inuit communities to address abuse issues. There are ideas and techniques from elsewhere in Canadian that are helpful. And just as important, we hope that a network of service providers, community leaders, government officials and survivors of violence continues to widen and grow strong, so that we can continue to share our wisdom, our knowledge and our commitment to end the abuse.

#### ***The Guide Includes***

- \* Information on community mobilization (page 10)
- \* Advice from the National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention on advocating for change (page 13)
- \* Facts and statistics you can use to convince others (page 16)
- \* Some thoughts on the root causes of abuse in Inuit communities (page 18)
- \* Inuit principles of healing and working together (page 14)
- \* Steps in planning activities and actions (page 20)
- \* Sources of information and help (page 21)
- \* Ideas, encouragement and examples – throughout.



## 1. MOBILIZING THE COMMUNITY TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

*Others have come before you.  
Together we are Strong.*

We need to get involved, to speak out against violence, to support victims, to hold abusers accountable and to make sure everyone who has been touched by violence has a chance to heal. We need to work together as agencies, as communities and as governments to make sure change happens.

Too often, people in communities work in isolation. Take for example, the scenario of a social worker in the community who may work with a woman who has been abused, but they may not communicate with the police about charges the offenders might be facing, or with the child protection worker who may not know that the children have witnessed violence. Another example is, a community group starts a support group but fails to let the whole community know it exists. These activities may make some difference in a community, but not nearly as much as a concerted community-wide effort to prevent abuse.

### **What is Community Mobilization?**

Community mobilization is a term developed in the crime prevention field to describe efforts to get the whole community united around a particular issue. It is very similar to community development and capacity development.

*Community mobilization means that lots of different people and groups are working together on the same goal.*

### **Who Should Get Involved?**

It has become clear to activists and concerned community members working on many different social issues that to be effective, the community itself must be involved in solving problems. Those most affected by the problem need to help define the issues and create solutions. All parts of a community need to be involved:

- \* youth, adults and older adults;
- \* boys and girls; women and men;
- \* Elders;

- \* both victims/survivors and abusers, and family members who are affected;
- \* those with disabilities, special education needs, single parents and other distinct groups; and
- \* community agencies, community organization, political bodies, government representatives and concerned citizens.

### **Learning From Others**

There are many examples of successful mobilization on crime issues in other communities in Canada. While Arctic communities have unique features and it is important that the methods we use follow Inuit ways, we also can learn from and adapt successful methods used in the South. And we can apply knowledge we have developed in addressing other challenges, such as economic development, employment training, preserving culture and many others.

### **Qualities of Successful Mobilization**

National research identified these common features of successful community efforts to reduce crime, including violence and abuse.

- \* Make a commitment to address issues that matter to the community: community members come together in kitchens, schools, community centres and other locations to talk about common concerns and rally around an issue.
- \* Take a step-by-step approach: successful communities 1) identify issues that are important, 2) consider possible solutions, and 3) decide on specific actions that they then carry out.
- \* Invest in capacity: successful communities use the skills and knowledge they already have, but make sure they develop their capacity by learning from others, practicing new skills and looking for help elsewhere.
- \* Choose and support good leaders: leaders are critical to success, but must be carefully chosen. A good leader has commitment, trusts in others and is good at building alliances and partnerships.
- \* Work together: In all the communities studied, working together requires ongoing, and sometimes challenging efforts to bring people together, raise

awareness and reinforce their feeling of being a part of the solution.

- \* Make linkages: it is important to inform and invite participation by everyone that is involved in the issue, for example, social services, health services, schools, police, justice officials, women's and men's groups, elders, etc.
- \* Succeed at something: nothing succeeds like success! Communities that are able to organize a successful event or activity early on are more likely to keep working together and achieve even more!
- \* Use all available resources: you need to draw on:
  - agencies that already have a mandate for this work;
  - individuals that are able to help as a part of their job;
  - volunteers;
  - people with specific skills such as writing, facilitating meetings, as well as access to different sources of funding, donations, etc. Ask for what you want: the worst that can happen is that they will say no! (Then you can ask again in a different way!)

Adapted from: *A Portrait of Sustainable Crime Prevention in Selected Canadian Communities*, Carleton University, 2004, and available from the National Crime Prevention Centre, Ottawa.

*Ask for what you want: the worst that can happen is you will hear, "no!" (then you can ask again in a different way!)*

### **Want to know more?**

The National Crime Prevention Centre at Public Security and Emergency Preparedness Canada has many publications related to crime prevention and community development. Call them toll-free at: 1-877-302-6272; telephone: 613-941-9306 or visit their web site: [www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/res/cp/pub-en.asp](http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca/res/cp/pub-en.asp)

### **What are we aiming for?**

It is important that each community, regional organization or level of government define its own specific goals and objectives in reducing abuse and violence. The material below is intended to provoke thought on what your aims and intentions are in preventing abuse and violence in Inuit communities. What do you think healthy relationships should be like? Do you think we can achieve zero tolerance for abuse and violence? What would this look like in your community or organization?

Do you agree with the following statements? Discuss them with your friends and colleagues, those who work in the family violence and crime prevention fields, and community leaders.

### **Healthy Relationships/Freedom from Abuse**

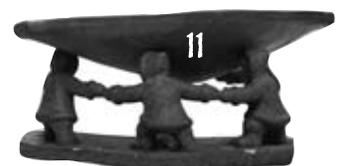
- \* Every woman, child and man has a right to a life with no violence in it.
- \* Living with someone who hurts you is dangerous for your health and for your feelings.
- \* Adults must help children if they are being hurt.
- \* No one deserves to be abused – no matter what.
- \* Survivors of child sexual abuse and child abuse are not to blame for that abuse and they need help in healing from the abuse.
- \* There is no excuse for abuse. Being drunk or high or worried is not a reason.

Adapted from: *From Dark to Light: Regaining a Caring Community*, The Status of Women Council of the NWT, call toll-free: 1-888-873-0285, telephone 867-920-6177, web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca).

### **Zero Tolerance for Violence**

Zero tolerance for abuse means...

- \* No amount of violence is acceptable and the reduction of abuse and violence is a high priority.
- \* Those with responsibility for public safety have an obligation to take effective action against abuse and violence.



- \* Victims must not be blamed for the violence committed against them.
- \* The rights of the victim in the legal system are at least equal to the accused.
- \* Individuals and communities have a responsibility toward ending violence and promoting healthy relationships.

Adapted from *Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence, Achieving Equality: The Final Report of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women*, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1993 (available through inter-library loan).

### **Want to know more?**

- \* Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada has two publications, available in Inuktitut and English: *Does Your Boyfriend Beat You?* (about relationship violence) and *No More Secrets* (about child sexual abuse), call toll-free: 1-800-667-0749; telephone: 613-238-3977; web site: [www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq](http://www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq)
- \* The Aboriginal Healing Foundation has published *Aboriginal Domestic Violence in Canada*, call toll-free: 1-888-725-8886, telephone: 613-237-4441, web site: [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca)
- \* The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence has many publications and videos on different types of violence and abuse, call toll-free: 1-800-267-1291; telephone: 613-957-2938; web site: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf)
- \* Each Territory and Province has government departments and non-profit organizations that address family violence and crime prevention. For links to these organizations, go to [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/), then to Links.

## **2. WORKING ON COMMUNITY ISSUES**

*Like the roots of a tree, the causes of family violence are complex. Working to end the violence requires a multi-dimensional approach - protecting, supporting and education on one hand and working to change the systems that feed the violence on the other. By working together - men and women, governments and society - in a coordinated way, we **can** improve the response to and prevent family violence.<sup>v</sup>*

Working together on community issues is about forming relationships, working well with others and being as effective as possible. There are lots of resources to help. Likely there are skilled and knowledgeable people in your community or organization, who have successfully addressed a social, economic or political problem. They can provide advice or get involved in ending violence and abuse.

### **Possible Allies**

There are lots of groups and organizations that want to help. Here are some possible sources of information, encouragement, expertise, resources and partnerships.

- \* Inuit elders, healers and informal caregivers
- \* Directors of women's shelters, mental health programs and healing programs
- \* Inuit regional and national organizations
- \* Territorial, provincial and national Aboriginal organizations
- \* Shelter associations and crime prevention groups
- \* Schools, colleges and universities
- \* Police services and associations
- \* Health organizations
- \* Justice and corrections groups

### **Want to know more? Take a look at:**

- \* *Women's Voices in Leadership* by the Status of Women Council of the NWT, call toll-free: 1-888-873-0285, telephone: 867-920-6177, web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership)
- \* *Community Action Resources for Inuit, Métis and First Nations: Toolbox*, Canada's Drug Strategy, Health Canada, call toll-free: 1-866-225-0709; telephone 613-957-2991; web site: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs)
- \* *Building Partnerships to End Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Rural and Isolated Communities*, BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs, telephone: 604-633-2506, web site: [www.vcn.bc.ca/bcasvacp](http://www.vcn.bc.ca/bcasvacp)

## ADVOCACY FOR CHANGE

Change does not always come easily. It takes concerted effort to get others to make the issue of violence and abuse a priority for action. The National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention has this advice on advocating for social and justice issues such as violence and abuse.

### 1. ON INFLUENCING GOVERNMENTS (HAMLET COUNCILS, REGIONAL INUIT ORGANIZATIONS AND PROVINCIAL, TERRITORIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS)

- \* We need to believe that we can influence governments. Leaders have been elected to address issues that are important to citizens and they are spending our money!
- \* We need to engage political leaders and government staff in the issue. Some ways to do this:
  - demonstrate that the problem is getting worse, not better;
  - show that many community members are concerned about it;
  - provide facts and real-life examples and
  - obtain support from organizations such as Inuit Land Claims organizations.
- \* Decision-makers may want to address violence, but may not be sure what to do. The complexity of the issues prevents them from moving ahead. You can help them by providing solutions (ideas and concrete recommendations) rather than problems, and by focusing on one issue at a time.
- \* Develop a strategy that answers these questions that political leaders may have (and the staff that works for them):
  - What is the problem? Is it my problem?
  - What are some ways I can help?
  - What will happen if I don't act?
  - How much will it cost?
- \* Write letters and briefs in words that governments understand. Those working in government who are supporters of abuse prevention can help with this.

### 2. ON RAISING FUNDS FOR INITIATIVES

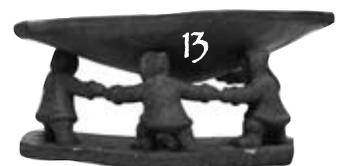
- \* Governments want to see results from funded projects. Include a clearly written plan of action in a funding proposal, as well as specific outcomes and ways to measure them. Get help from someone who has written successful proposals if you can.
- \* Use language that matches the funder's priorities, whether that is crime prevention, community development, violence against women, family violence, etc.
- \* Good projects are not done in isolation but involve those affected (the audience) and other relevant bodies (the stakeholders).
- \* It is better to wait and apply for larger sums of money (for example, \$30,000 rather than \$5,000) once the right people are involved and a practical, results-driven plan can be put in place. Small projects can be useful to get a group going, and then it needs to develop a longer-term vision.

### ***Tips for Building Alliances and Influencing Leaders***

- \* Develop a strategy:
  - Decide what the message is.
  - Know what you are asking for.
  - Set a goal and a timeline for achieving it.
  - Make your case plain and simple.
- \* Overcome your own fear and make it safe for leaders as well – no personal attacks, no 'Us' and 'Them', no threats.
- \* Be persistent! Keep going back.
- \* Be prepared to educate and communicate.
- \* Use personal contacts in organizations to help you.
- \* Make official presentations at the highest level possible, for example, from the president of your organization to the president or theirs.

### ***Want to Know More?***

Look at *The Community Tool Kit* created by the NWT Coalition Against Family Violence. The tool kit contains three booklets:



- \* Make a Presentation to Leaders
- \* Lead a Community Meeting on Family Violence
- \* Lead a Community Workshop on Family Violence

Call toll-free in the NWT: 1-888-234-4485; telephone: 867-920-6178; or go to [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/familyviolence\\_coalition.html](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/familyviolence_coalition.html)

### 3. ACTION CAN BE A FORM OF HEALING

#### ***Your Own Healing Path***

More and more Inuit are coming to terms with abuse they have suffered or inflicted on others. This can be a painful process, but one that can lead to much healthier individuals, families and communities. This is how the ongoing cycle of abuse can stop. Everyone's healing journey is unique.

*Healing always involves talking about pain and journeying back to the root causes of current problems in order to move forward. ...Inuit healing is about telling one's own story to someone who sees and describes the world in a similar way.<sup>vi</sup>*

It is important to really think about and carefully choose a counsellor, healer or knowledgeable friend to help you on your journey. Good helpers are caring, non-blaming, and focused on those they are trying to help. Good healers have the respect of the community.

#### ***Common Characteristics of Good Inuit Healers***

- \* Warm
- \* Enthusiastic
- \* Empathetic
- \* Humorous
- \* Self-confident
- \* Focused on the behaviour, not blaming of the individual
- \* Respectful of those whom they counsel
- \* Believe strongly in the importance of Inuit culture
- \* Practical
- \* Respectful of Inuit cultural values, elders and Inuit ancestors

- \* Aware of the realities of contemporary Inuit society
- \* Assertive
- \* Able to discuss sensitive topics such as sexual abuse
- \* Believe that people can change.

Taken from *Inuit Healing in Contemporary Inuit Society* by Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2004. Available at: [www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq](http://www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq).

*Being involved in community action against violence and abuse can be healing in itself, because people are taking control of their lives.*

It is critical that both individual and community solutions to violence and abuse in Inuit communities are based on Inuit approaches and wisdom gained over generations. More and more, documents are being written to preserve Inuit knowledge and healing/counselling methods. For example, according to research conducted for Pauktuutit's Nuluaq Project, healing involves a process rather than an action; one that relies on an individual's readiness to change and resolve their problems through self-examination and self-awareness.

These principles of healing can be applied to the action we take in communities to address violence. In fact, taking action on violence at the community level is a form of healing. Being involved in community action against violence and abuse can be healing in itself, because people are taking control of their lives and helping to prevent others from experiencing the pain and grief they have suffered.

#### ***Inuit Principles of Healing and Community Action***

These six guiding principles of Inuit Qaujimajangit (Inuit knowledge) have evolved through time and form the basis for Inuit counseling practices. They have been selected by Inuit cultural experts/counselors as the key principles in taking action on violence and abuse, and are included in this Strategy. These principles can guide us in effective joint actions to prevent abuse and promote healing.



## APPLYING INUIT PRINCIPLES OF HEALING

<b>1. Piliriqatigiinnngniq – working together for the common good.</b>	
<p>This principle implies knowing one’s role within a family, community or organization and making judgments and decisions that benefit everyone rather than a few.</p>	<p><b>Individuals</b> can resolve personal grievances in order to work better with others.  <b>Community agencies</b> can clarify mandates then find ways to complement each other.  <b>Community and regional organizations</b> can be of service to all members of communities.  <b>Governments</b> can develop policies that help heal communities.</p>
<b>2. Avatikmik Kamattiarniq – environmental wellness.</b>	
<p>This principle can be interpreted as a balanced and healthy interconnectedness of the mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions of the individual, the family, and the community.</p>	<p><b>Individuals</b> can strive for personal wellness and balance in their lives.  <b>Community agencies</b> can develop programs that nurture all aspects of clients and support staff.  <b>Community and regional organizations</b> can address violence prevention as a part of economic, social, and political development.  <b>Governments</b> can promote holistic programs.</p>
<b>3. Pijittsirarniq – service to others and leadership.</b>	
<p>These concepts together contribute to the common good and are not mutually exclusive, but inherently part of the same ideal of wisdom in Inuit culture.</p>	<p><b>Individuals</b> can speak out against violence and support victims.  <b>Community agencies</b> can enforce zero tolerance toward abusive behaviour.  <b>Community and regional organizations</b> can publicly declare abuse prevention a priority issue.  <b>Governments</b> can lead by example.</p>
<b>4. Pilimmaksarniq – empowerment.</b>	
<p>Inuit can and should use all sources of appropriate information, gathering it and using it to right social and spiritual wrongs, and to work toward a balanced and strong Inuit society.</p>	<p><b>Individuals</b> can educate themselves about abuse.  <b>Community agencies</b> can raise awareness and help foster people’s strengths.  <b>Community and regional organizations</b> can develop capacity in communities.  <b>Governments</b> can work closely with Inuit to develop funding priorities.</p>



## APPLYING INUIT PRINCIPLES OF HEALING continued

### 5. Qanuqtuurunnarniq – resourcefulness and adaptability.

Inuit have great capacity to be creative, flexible, and solution oriented.

**Individuals** can move from describing problems to developing solutions.  
**Community agencies** can focus more on prevention rather than crisis intervention.  
**Community and regional organizations** can develop new ways of working on community issues.  
**Governments** can support innovation and experimental programs.

### 6. Aajiiqatigiinniq – cooperation and consensus.

The Inuit healing process is successful only to the extent that it is reciprocal, based throughout on the opinions and contributions of both client and counselors, leaders and community members, each recognizing the value of the other’s perspective. Thus, solutions are reached by consensus and therefore are sound.

**Individuals** can practice assertive, non-violent communication.  
**Community agencies** can use an inclusive process to reach decisions.  
**Community and regional organizations** can reach out and empower communities.  
**Governments** can consult and collaborate at every opportunity.

### Want to Know More?

This Strategy and Guide are available in Inuktitut and English from Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, call toll-free: 1-800-667-0749; telephone: 613-238-3977, or download it from the web site: [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

## 4. MAKE THE CASE FOR ABUSE PREVENTION

If we want to convince others that abuse is an important issue, we need as much information as possible. Decision makers want facts such as.

- \* How big is the problem?
- \* Is the abuse physical, verbal, sexual, emotional?
- \* Are the victims women, men, children, adults, elders, or others?
- \* How does violence and abuse in Northern communities compare to Canada as a whole?
- \* What are the effects of violence on people and on communities?

Unfortunately, there still isn’t very much specific information available on abuse and violence in Inuit

communities. A great deal more information is needed in order to develop effective prevention and intervention programs. However, there is some information available. This section provides some statistics and facts on abuse issues that might be useful in convincing others that the problem is a serious one.

Create a fact sheet using some of the points below and facts about violence and abuse specific to your province, territory, region or community. Make sure your information is accurate, and list the source of the data.

For more detailed facts and statistics on violence and abuse in Inuit and other Aboriginal communities, see ***Making the Case for Abuse Prevention*** on the Nuluaq Project web site at [www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq](http://www.pauktuutit.ca/nuluaq).

### ***Spousal Homicide***

- \* The spousal homicide-suicide rate (when a spouse kills a partner then kills him or herself) in the Northwest Territories/Nunavut is three times the national average (however, this was based on a small number of cases).<sup>vii</sup>
- \* The spousal homicide rate (one spouse kills the other) in the Northwest Territories has been considerably

higher than in other regions of Canada every year from 1994 to 2003 (again, this was based on a small number of cases).<sup>viii</sup>

### **Comparing Reported Violent Crimes in Nunavut and Canada**<sup>ix</sup>

Rates of violent crime and youth violent crime are reported for Nunavut because it has the largest proportion of Inuit in its population (estimated at 85%), and therefore provides the best available crime rates for Inuit.

Please note: these figures represent **reported** crimes and are only a portion of the abuse and violent acts that occur. Likely, family abuse and violence in Nunavut is even less likely to be reported compared to other parts of Canada, due to the continued stigma about family violence, gaps in police services and lack of faith that victims will be treated fairly.

- \* Nunavut's overall violent crime rate was eight times that of Canada overall in 2004. In Nunavut, the rate was 7,884 per 100,000 compared to 946 for Canada.
- \* In 2004, 2,337 violent crimes (physical assault, sexual assault, robbery and homicide) were reported to police in Nunavut, or one violent crime for about every 13 people. In Canada, there was one violent crime reported for every 106 people.
- \* Violent crime decreased very marginally in both Nunavut and Canada between 2003 and 2004.

### **Physical Assault**

- \* The rate of reported **physical** assault in Nunavut is nine times that of Canada as a whole – 6,629 reported crimes per 100,000 people, compared to 732 for Canada.
- \* In 2004, almost 2,000 criminal assaults were reported to police in Nunavut (1,965), or one assault report for every 15 people. In Canada, there was one reported assaulted for every 43, 642 people.
- \* The assault rate dropped somewhat in Canada between 2003 and 2004, but stayed the same in Nunavut.

### **Sexual Assault**

- \* The rate of reported **sexual** assault in Nunavut is almost 13 times (12.7%) that of Canada as a whole – 941 reported sexual assaults per 100,000 people, compared to 74 for Canada.
- \* In 2004, 279 sexual assault crimes were reported to police in Nunavut, or one assault report for every 106 people. In Canada, there was one reported assault for approximately every 1,357 people.
- \* Reported sexual assaults dropped by 6.4% in Nunavut between 2003 and 2004, however, this might be due to less frequent reporting.

### **Homicide**

- \* Nunavut reported four homicides in 2004, a small enough number that comparisons with Canada could be misleading. However, using these figures, the homicide rate in Nunavut is seven times that of Canada (13.5 per 100,000 compared to 1.9).

### **Want to Know More?**

Here are some places to get more information on violence against women, family violence and violent crime.

- \* Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada: toll-free: 1-800-667-0749; web site: [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)
- \* Statistics Canada: telephone toll-free 1-800-263-1136; telephone: 613-951-8116; web site: [www.statscan.ca](http://www.statscan.ca)
- \* National Crime Prevention Centre, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, telephone toll-free: 1-877-302-6272; 613-941-9306; web site: [www.prevention.gc.ca](http://www.prevention.gc.ca)
- \* National Clearinghouse on Family Violence: telephone toll-free: 1-800-267-1291; telephone: 613-957-2938; web site: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/nfcv-cnivf](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/nfcv-cnivf)



*It is all about your upbringing. If a child was abused at a very early age, sexually or physically, then that's all they know and they will continue to abuse. And it is up to the community to stop that abuse with education and awareness. The root cause comes from shame, guilt and what you've learned from a young age.*

**Inuit Healer/Counsellor**

Inuit counsellors, healers and Elders all agree that it is critically important to look at the many root causes of abuse in Inuit communities in order to end the ongoing cycle of abuse. The diagram above shows how the National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention views the root causes of abuse. It is important for every community and organization working toward prevention of abuse to have a discussion on root causes. Action we take must address not just the “symptoms” of abuse, but the historical and social conditions that have led to the much higher rates of abuse and violence now than in the past.

Here are some quotes from survivors of abuse and those who work in abuse prevention. Think about what they have to say about the root causes of abuse. Do you agree? What other root causes do you see? How can we work to address the root causes of abuse, not just the symptoms?

*When women gave birth surrounded by their family, they were cared for throughout the pregnancy and labour, and newborns were immediately welcomed. Removing birth from this family environment has affected family relationships. For example, the bonding between fathers and infants and between grandparents and grandchildren is delayed.*

Special Report on Traditional Midwifery,  
*Suvaguuq: National Newsletter on Inuit Social  
and Cultural Issues,*  
Vol. X, No. 1, 1995, p. 9

*I believe that child sexual abuse is the main reason for a lot of addictions, violence and health problems we have today ...Sexual abuse had been happening for years. Ten years ago I spoke to an Elder who was 72 years old, it was very emotional, but I spoke to her because I wanted to know how it was growing up in her younger days. [I] also spoke with*

*another Elder who was 66 years old who moved to my community when she was in her teens. Both Elders have told me that they have never told anyone about being sexually abused because they were ashamed.*

Survey participant quoted in *There is a Need so We Help: Services for Inuit Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse,* Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2003, p. 1

*“... many children are exposed are exposed regularly to spousal assaults, verbal abuse and ridicule. Communication in many families is nonexistent. Teenagers are rejecting their Elder's ways while having no alternatives to replace them. They become lost and confused, angry and frustrated without knowing why, and naturally turn to each other, where there is no mature wisdom to be gained. Drugs, solvent and alcohol abuse, and promiscuity all become replacements for the family nurturing they lack. They spiral downwards in anger and despair...”*

*Applying Inuit Cultural Approaches in the Prevention of Family Violence and Abuse,* Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, 2005, p.7-8.

*“I think the intergenerational impact is the main one. When the [new] system of government came, changes were made [in how Inuit live and govern themselves]. A lot of our people are still living in that place where they had to obey; they had to listen to what was being brought to them.*

*I believe we need to go back in and understand what we went through as children. When adults were sexually abused as children, they tended to become abusive themselves when they get older, so again it all goes back to dealing with some of the root causes. I see the intergenerational effect as being the really big one because I know we're probably into 4th, 5th, and 6th generations now that this keeps getting passed on.”*

Inuit counsellor/healer, quoted in  
*Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities,* 2006,  
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, p.??.

## ***THERE'S NO ONE HERE HEALTHY ENOUGH***

It can be very difficult to work with people who have experienced trauma. Trauma is a very serious physical, mental or emotional injury.

People often can't deal well with trauma. Someone who has experienced trauma may have certain situations that trigger a traumatic reaction.

What we can do... What I can do?

- \* Start where people are at and with the circumstances that actually exist.
- \* Check your assumptions. Have you explored all the community resources, all possible approaches, and all possible resource people?
- \* Reassess your goals and your assumptions about what healthy means in the circumstances.
- \* Accept the circumstances without losing faith in yourself, in people, or in life in general. This is the essence of mature leadership.
- \* Think about it. Talk about it. What else can you do?

Taken from: *Women's Voices in Leadership: Facilitator's Manual*, Status of Women Council of the NWT, call toll-free: 1-888-873-0285; telephone: 867-873-0285; web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca)

## ***WANT TO LEARN MORE?***

To learn more about trauma, check out these resources from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, call toll-free: 1-888-725-8886; telephone: 613-237-4111; web site: [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca).

- \* **Reclaiming Connections: Understanding Residential School Trauma Among Aboriginal People: A Resource Manual**
- \* **Historical Trauma and Aboriginal Healing**
- \* **Aboriginal People, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy**

## **5. WHO CAN HELP**

The following six priorities were identified during this initiative, as important for the prevention of abuse. Each includes ideas or actions that can be taken to address these priorities at the community, regional, provincial/territorial and national levels.

Below you will find six topic areas to help you develop your own action plan. **Please see page 24** for a work sheet. Each topic below has examples of **actions being taken right now** in the North to prevent violence and abuse. Let these examples be an inspiration for increased efforts in your organization or community!

### ***1. Make abuse a priority issue***

In order for change to happen, leaders at the community, regional, provincial, territorial and national levels must be committed to reducing violence and abuse.

- \* The Northern Village of Kujuuq has endorsed National Strategy to Prevent Abuse in Inuit Communities
- \* Hall Beach is establishing an inter-agency coordinating committee to address abuse issues

### ***2. Raise awareness and reduce tolerance for abuse***

In too many communities, denial and fear prevent individuals from reporting abuse, and sentences for abusers are considered too lenient. Efforts are needed to raise awareness and change attitudes toward abuse.

- \* Spousal Abuse is not the Inuit Way by Peter Irniq, Nunatsiaq News, February 2006.
- \* The YWCA of Yellowknife created silhouettes of women who had been killed by family members and displayed it at the legislature.
- \* Nunavik Regional Police Force speak regularly in schools and to community groups about violence prevention

### ***3. Invest in training and capacity development***

Inuit counsellors/healers and non-Inuit counsellors and mental health professionals need additional training in



abuse issues, culturally-competent care and Inuit healing methods.

- \* The three women's shelters in Nunavik have pooled resources for training
- \* National Aboriginal Health Organization – Ajunnginiq Centre has training resources – Ikajurniq, Basic Counselling Skills

#### **4. Sustain front-line workers and community services.**

Front-line workers are experiencing burn-out and often do not feel supported by their organizations and communities. They need additional support, contact with others and adequate employment benefits.

- \* The National Inuit Women's Shelter Association has just been formed

#### **5. Deliver services that heal**

To be effective, prevention and treatment services must be culturally sensitive, include Inuit healing practices and Inuit healers, and whenever possible, be delivered by Inuit.

- \* Living a Healthier Lifestyle women's healing circle in Cape Dorset, Kanayuk Salomonie is involved with this service.
- \* An Inuit Spousal Assault Program has been set up in Rankin Inlet, Emiline Kowmuk is the coordinator.
- \* Tunngasuvvingat Inuit in Ottawa has an Inuit Women's Healing Circle, Pam Stellick is the Program Manager.

#### **6. Expand programs that build cultural strength and prevent abuse.**

Programs and services that strengthen Inuit individuals, families and communities are essential to a long-term strategy to prevent abuse in Inuit communities.

- \* Junior Rangers program in Clyde River.
- \* Somebody's Daughter program in Kivalliq Region – Bernadette Dean is the coordinator with the Kivalliq Inuit Association.

- \* Makitautik Centre in Kangirsuk aims to provide programs for developing social, traditional & cultural skills, individual and group counselling, spiritually-based counselling & programs related to substance abuse and family – Jeannie Nungak is the counsellor for the centre.

Again, we urge you to talk to others, use the resources that are available, and get involved!

#### **WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

- \* Check the Pauktuutit web site regularly for news and information on promising practices and success stories – [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)
- \* Contact the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to read about and contact healing projects currently underway in Inuit communities: 1-888-725-8886; tel: 613-237-4111; web site: [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca).
- \* Contact Pauktuutit to be referred to members of the National Advisory Committee on Abuse Prevention from your region: 1-800-667-0749; tel: 613-238-3977

#### **STEPS TO PLANNING A PROJECT**

##### **Set goals**

- \* Set realistic, achievable goals. People gain confidence, skills and courage as they reach goals.
- \* Review the mandate of your agency, group, political party or community association to make sure these goals fit.

##### **Assess strengths, resources and needs**

- \* List the needs, resources and challenges in your community or region.

##### **Research and develop resources**

- \* Involve people outside your immediate group to gain their insights.
- \* Find out how people have handled things elsewhere.
- \* Research various funding sources if you need money.

##### **Involve the community**

- \* Involve the wider community
- \* Present your ideas to your local government if appropriate.
- \* Go on the radio and ask for help.

- \* Assess your community's needs and strengths.
- \* Include other agencies and groups that have a similar mandate.
- \* Inform the community of progress.
- \* Involve people who can influence community opinion.
- \* Write a short summary, do a radio phone-in show, visit agencies, do community fundraising events, have a walk-a-thon, do local TV ad or movie nights.

#### **Find staff and volunteers**

- \* Find the staff and volunteers you need. Look first inside the community. Only use people outside the community if there is a special benefit.

#### **Coordinate details**

- \* Look after all the details that help make your project successful.

For example, you may need to write a proposal, do fundraising, book a meeting room and equipment and decide how to evaluate a project.

Taken from: *Women's Voices in Leadership*, Status of Women Council of the NWT, call toll-free: 1-888-873-0285, telephone: 867-920-6177, web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership)

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND HELP**

This section lists some useful sources of information on abuse and violence, becoming a better leader, building more effective partnerships and advocating for change.

### ***Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF)***

75 Albert Street, Suite 801  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5E7  
Tel: 613-237-4441  
Fax: 613-237-4442  
Toll Free: 1-888-725-8886  
E-mail: [programs@ahf.ca](mailto:programs@ahf.ca)  
Web site: [www.ahf.ca](http://www.ahf.ca)

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation supports Aboriginal people in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the legacy of physical and sexual

abuse in the residential school system, including inter-generational impacts. A good deal of knowledge has been generated through funded projects, and reports are available on Aboriginal domestic violence, Aboriginal Elder abuse, Aboriginal sex offending, the residential school legacy and historical trauma. Some titles are:

- \* *Aboriginal Domestic Violence in Canada*
- \* *Reclaiming Connections: Understanding Residential School Trauma Among Aboriginal People*
- \* *Historical Trauma and Aboriginal Healing*
- \* *Aboriginal People and the Residential School Legacy*

### ***Ajunnginiq Centre***

The Ajunnginiq Centre is the Inuit-specific centre of excellence of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO). Some resources available on their web site include:

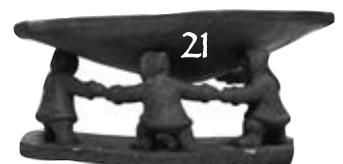
220 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1200  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5Z9  
Tel: (613) 237-9462  
Toll-free: 1-877-602-4445  
Fax: (613) 237-8502  
E-mail: [inuit@naho.ca](mailto:inuit@naho.ca)  
Web site: [www.naho.ca/inuit/](http://www.naho.ca/inuit/)

- \* *Ikajurniq: Basic Counselling Skills: Inuit Voices, Modern Methods* (Summary translated into Inuktitut)
- \* *What is Mental Illness?*
- \* Fact sheets on alcohol use.

### ***INFORMATION CENTRE ON ABORIGINAL HEALTH (ICAH)***

National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO)  
220 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1200  
Ottawa ON K1P 5Z9  
Toll-free: 1-877-602-4445  
Phone: 613-237-9462  
Fax: 613-237-1810  
Email: [icah@naho.ca](mailto:icah@naho.ca)  
Web site: [www.icah.ca](http://www.icah.ca)

ICAH is a database of information and web-based resources, programs and services, health careers, and



scholarships and bursaries related to First Nations, Inuit and Métis health. Topic headings include: child abuse, family violence, guidelines and best practices, historical trauma, sexual abuse and sexual violence.

### **Justice Canada**

\* Abuse is Wrong in Any Language: This booklet is written in plain language for women who may be experiencing family violence. It contains information about Canadian law, women's rights, and where to go for help. Various types of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) are described. Safety tips for women who have children are offered. A poster is available as a companion piece. Available in English, French and limited quantities of Innuinnaqtun and Labradorimuit. To order this publication call Justice Canada at 613-957-4221.

### **NATIONAL ABORIGINAL CIRCLE AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE (NACAFV)**

396 Cooper Street, Suite 301  
Ottawa, ON, K2P 2H7  
Tel: (613) 236-1844  
Fax: (613) 236-8057  
E-mail: [nacafv@bellnet.ca](mailto:nacafv@bellnet.ca)  
Web site: [www.nacafv.ca](http://www.nacafv.ca)

NACAFV is a national membership-based organization whose mission is to reduce family violence in Aboriginal communities. It has a lending library of violence-related materials, and many links to other relevant organizations.

### **National Clearinghouse on Family Violence**

Public Health Agency of Canada  
(Address Locator: 1907D1)  
7th Floor, Jeanne Mance Building  
Tunney's Pasture  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B4  
Telephone : 1-800-267-1291 or (613) 957-2938  
Fax : (613) 941-8930  
Email : [ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca](mailto:ncfv-cnivf@phac-aspc.gc.ca)  
Web site: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf)

The National Clearinghouse on Family Violence is a national resource centre for information about family violence. The NCFV offers: publications and videos on

violence against women, spousal abuse, child sexual abuse, child abuse and elder abuse; directories and referral services; a library reference collection and a bi-annual newsletter. Here are some titles that might be of use.

- \* Family Violence in Aboriginal Communities: An Aboriginal Perspective - Overview Paper
- \* A Handbook for Health and Social Service Professionals Responding to Abuse During Pregnancy
- \* Breaking the Pattern: How Communities Can Help
- \* Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2005
- \* Handbook on Sensitive Practice for Health Professionals: Lessons from Women Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse
- \* Guidebook on Vicarious Trauma: Recommended Solutions for Anti-Violence Workers
- \* Making the Decision to Care: Guys and Sexual Assault
- \* Resource and Training Kit for Service Providers: Abuse and Neglect of Older Adults
- \* Breaking the Links Between Poverty and Violence Against Women: A Resource Guide

### **NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION CENTRE**

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada  
222 Queen St., 11th floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0P8  
Tel: 613-941-9306  
Toll-free: 1-877-302-6272  
Fax: Funding programs: 613-952-3515  
Other inquiries: 613-941-7863  
E-mail: [info@prevention.gc.ca](mailto:info@prevention.gc.ca)  
Web site: [www.prevention.gc.ca](http://www.prevention.gc.ca)

The National Crime Prevention Centre offers information, expertise and four funding programs in support of community crime prevention. Information, available in English and French, includes the following:

- \* A database of funded projects
- \* Information and research on community mobilization
- \* **A Crime Prevention Tool Kit: Working Effectively with Persons with Disabilities Against Crime**



- \* **Women and Violence: Education Is Prevention**
- \* **Compendium of Promising Crime Prevention Practices in Canada**

### **NWT Family Violence Coalition**

4th Floor, Northwest Tower, Box 1320,  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9,  
Phone: toll free in the NWT, 1-888-234-4485,  
or 867-920-6177  
Fax: 867-873-0285  
Web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca)

The NWT Family Violence Coalition (FVC) is a group of people representing service agencies, government departments, education, seniors, and the police who work on issues related to or a consequence of family violence. The coalition's members are from Yellowknife, with some territorial groups represented. The Coalition has created a **Family Violence Action Plan and Community Tool Kit**.

In the last four years, the Coalition has:

- \* organized the first annual NWT Family Violence Awareness Week, held the second week in October;
- \* created public awareness campaigns with posters and community information packages, and
- \* researched and published **Family Violence in the NWT: A Survey of Costs, Services, Data Collection & Issues for Action**.

### **Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada**

56 Sparks Street, Suite 400  
Ottawa, ON, K1P 5A9  
Tel: 613-238-3977  
Toll-free: 1-800-667-0749  
E-mail: [nuluaq@pauktuutit.ca](mailto:nuluaq@pauktuutit.ca)  
Web site: [www.pauktuutit.ca](http://www.pauktuutit.ca)

Pauktuutit has been working on violence against women for more than two decades. You can find many publications on family violence, sexual abuse and violence against women on our web site.

The NULUAQ PROJECT (click 'abuse' on the Pauktuutit home page) has resources on abuse prevention as well as a database containing information on over 600 agencies and organizations involved with Inuit abuse prevention.

### **Women's Voices on Leadership Project**

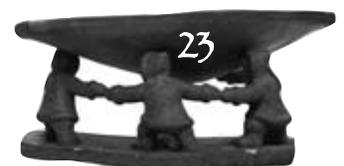
Status of Women Council of the NWT  
4th Floor, Northwest Tower,  
P.O. Box 1320  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9  
Tel: 867-920-6177  
Toll free: 1-888-873-0285  
Fax: 867-873-0285  
Web site: [www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership](http://www.statusofwomen.nt.ca/leadership)

The Women's Voices on Leadership project at the Status of Women Council of the NWT promotes and establishes networks of supportive women who can help each other achieve leadership. The Council also will work with schools, colleges, government and non-government organizations to develop partnerships and programs to support women's leadership skills. These 3 resource books are available:

- \* Women's Voices in Leadership: Facilitator's Manual
- \* Young Women in Leadership
- \* Legal Rights Handbook

### **Footnotes**

- i. Crime Statistics in Canada 2004, *Juristat*, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Vol. 25, No. 5, p. 18.
- ii. Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Iqaluit, Nunavut, personal communication, May 2005.
- iii. Taylor-Butts, Andrea, Canada's Shelters for Abused Women, *Juristat*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 2005, Statistics Canada.
- iv. Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, There is a Need so We Help: Services for Inuit Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse, Ottawa, 2003.
- v. NWT Coalition Against Family Violence, NWT Action Plan on Family Violence 2003-2008 – Revised Final draft, May 2003, p.i .
- vi. Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, Inuit Healing in Contemporary Inuit Society, 2004, p.11.
- vii. Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, p. 62. Available at [www.statscan.ca](http://www.statscan.ca)
- viii. Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, p. 49. Available at [www.statscan.ca](http://www.statscan.ca)
- ix. Information for the tables was taken from Crime Statistics in Canada 2004, *Juristat*, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Vol. 25, No. 5, p. 18.





**ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT ABUSE IN INUIT COMMUNITIES**

***1. Make abuse a priority issue***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***2. Raise awareness and reduce tolerance of abuse***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***3. Invest in training and capacity development***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***4. Sustain front-line workers and community services***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***5. Deliver services that heal***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***5. Deliver services that heal***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

***6. Expand programs that build on strengths and prevent abuse***

Action	Steps	We will know it's working when:	Partners	Target Date

