

# TS'ÍDĀNE A' NEZEN



## YOUTH FOR DIGNITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

Addressing gender-based and relationship violence among Youth in Watson Lake, Yukon

### What is this project about?

The *Ts'ídāne a' nezen: Youth for Dignity in Relationships* project aims to address gender-based and relationship violence among Youth in Watson Lake, Yukon. The project will be focused on knowledge and skill development among youth in Grades 8 to 12 at Watson Lake Secondary School. The project will consist of workshops and an annual youth-led event involving the community following the workshops.

### Why is this project important?

At national, territorial and local levels, Indigenous women and Youth face high levels of violence, particularly relationship violence. Indigenous Youth represent a significant proportion of the Watson Lake community. As such, a deeper understanding of gender-based and relationship violence is at the same time a tool to prevent the violence happening currently in Kaska communities and an effective path to lasting positive cultural change.

### Project Objectives

- 1 To increase the understanding and prevention of gender-based and relationship violence.
- 2 To mobilize youth to become anti-violence leaders in their community.
- 3 To increase the community's knowledge of gender-based and relationship violence issues.

### Workshop and Project Approach

Two distinct strengths-based and culturally-appropriate approaches – the **grounding in First Nations' Kaska Culture** and **Response- Based Practice (RBP)**.

RBP was developed through direct service work with victims of violence, including Indigenous peoples who survived residential schools. It is an approach that is solution-oriented, flexible to different contexts (cultural and historical) and that believes that everyone possesses pre-existing abilities.

Project led by:



**LIARD ABORIGINAL  
WOMEN'S SOCIETY  
(LAWS)**

In collaboration with:



Financial contribution from



Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

# Principles of Our Approach

## 1 CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE AND RELEVANT

*Respect for local culture, values, knowledge, protocols and customs - we will integrate different ways of knowing to create a culturally-safe process and approach.*

## 2 HOLISTIC

*We will consider the interrelated nature of all aspects of relationship violence: mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health, social, cultural, economic, and environmental.*

## 3 CAPACITY-DRIVEN AND EMPOWERING

*We will support Youth capacity building through collaboration and learning by doing and support community self-determination through communication and through opportunities for different levels of involvement.*

## 4 STRENGTH-BASED

*We will celebrate community assets and strengths, and design a process that showcases these strengths.*

## 5 COLLABORATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY

*Community (Elders, Youth, LAWS, partners, staff and facilitators) will be directly engaged in designing and implementing curriculum and research and evaluation initiatives.*

## 6 COMMUNICATIVE

*We will promote communication by communicating results in user-friendly ways.*

## 7 ETHICALLY-DRIVEN

*We will respect principles of self-determination in research and knowledge.*

## 8 ADAPTIVE AND REFLECTIVE

*We will engage in a process of continuous feedback, reflection, and learning to adapt and change as new information arises.*

## INTERVENTION RESEARCH

Intervention research will be built into the *Youth for Dignity in Relationships* project from the onset. **Our Intervention Research and Evaluation Plan** will focus on building knowledge on the impacts of this intervention approach, particularly:

- 1 If and how effectively it brings about change for Youth at Watson Lake Secondary School (WLSS) in terms of a reduction in dating / relationship violence
- 2 If and how effectively the project increases Youth connections to Kaska culture and the impact that this connection has on their understanding of dignity and responses to violence
- 3 If and how effectively it brings about increased awareness and motivation to address the issue for the Watson Lake Community

**Ann Maje Raider**, Executive Director LAWS  
majeraider@yahoo.ca

**Paula Hay**, Community Planner, Beringia Community Planning Inc.  
phay@beringia.ca

**Jeff Cook**, Principal, Beringia Community Planning Inc.  
jcook@beringia.ca

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