

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:



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Public Health
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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

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