



# Webinar Series

## Learning Through Culture to Promote Healthy Youth Relationships

This webinar presented for the Community of Practice by Shelley Cardinal, National Director, Indigenous Relations and Research, Canadian Red Cross, discusses the impact of colonization on today's Indigenous youth, and provides direction on how we can build "non-colonial programs" to address youth challenges. Watch the webinar | View the presentation slides.

### History of Harm

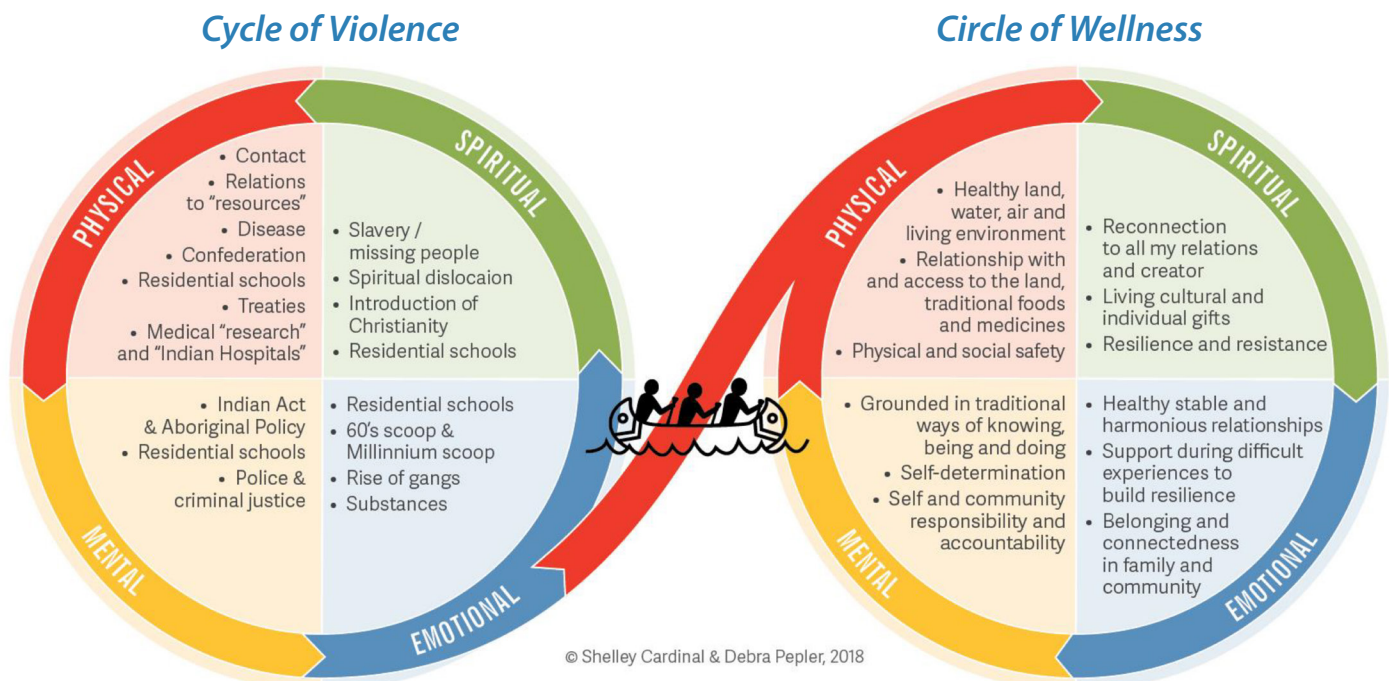
12 themes of Indigenous community disruption and active harm have been identified. These are contact, stolen resources, slavery/missing people, dislocation, disease, substances, confederation, medical research in Indian hospitals, Indian Act and Indigenous policies, residential schools, police and criminal justice, and the sixties and millennial scoops. These 12 different layers of harm are intertwined, and it is impossible to talk about one without the others.

**When we layer aspects of historical harm, it helps us understand current challenges. It is essential to understand these layers and their impacts when implementing new programs within communities.**

Researchers working in Indigenous communities must let go of current assumptions and biases about what they believe is needed, and instead learn from the community what it needs.

### Circle of Wellness

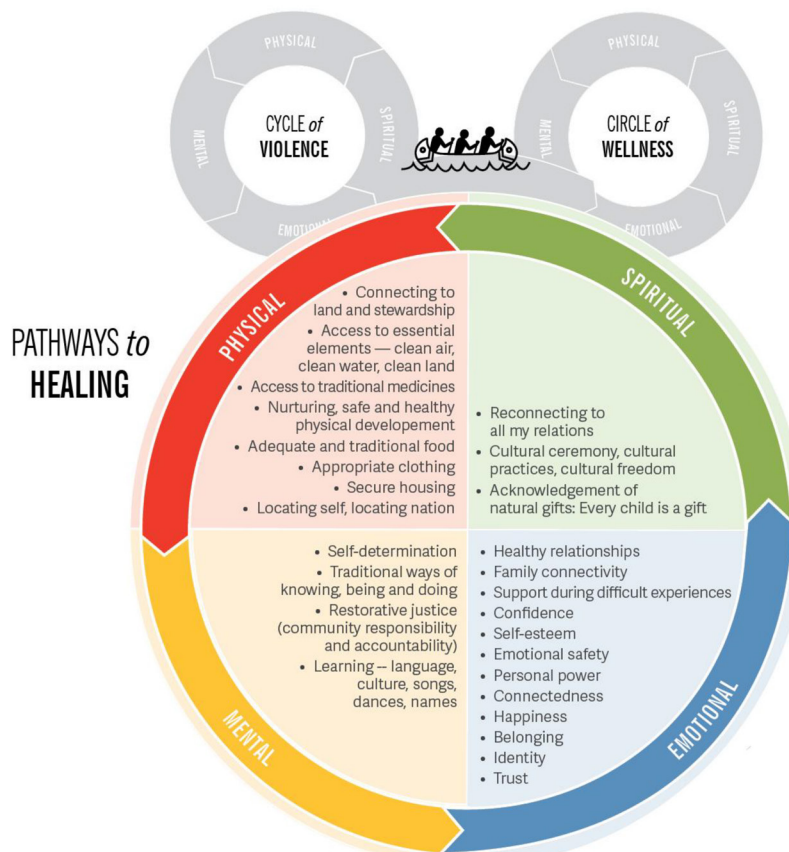
The Conceptual Model that explains the changes needed to move from The Cycle of Violence (i.e. history of harm) to the Circle of Wellness (i.e. healthy community) can be used as a guide for researchers to better understand the needs of communities in order to work towards wellness in communities.



## 5 Ways to Better Support Communities

- 1. Solutions must include culture.** Programs and services that include culture are better integrated into community.
- 2. Recognize the importance of intergenerational involvement.** Solutions must be family- and community-based, not focused on the individual. For example, we cannot ask youth to go to adults for help, without also speaking to adults about how to help.
- 3. Increase understanding of the root causes of violence and associated challenges.**
- 4. Create a strength-based foundation.** A researcher does not necessarily have a good understanding of historical harm just because they have an understanding of Residential Schools. A strength-based foundation incorporates the Circle of Wellness
- 5. Need for community driven solutions.** It is up to the community to determine what their circle of wellness looks like and not up to an outsider or someone who does not belong to that community to decide for them.

## Pathways to Healing



## Learning about Relationships in School and Home

Risk factors for youth engaging in teen dating violence include:

- Mental health problems
- Alcohol related deaths in the family (Rasmus et al., 2014)
- Violent school environments (Kaspar, 2013)

These factors are of a cyclical nature; the more youth encounter risks, the more at risk of dating aggression.

## Guidelines for Programming

Programming should *respect, honour, and give space* for Indigenous language, culture, spirituality, and healing practices

- Both perpetrators and those harmed deserve healing journey support (pauktuutit.ca)
- Schools can adapt resources drawing from cultural contexts and by including Elders and knowledge keepers (Wexler et al., 2017)
- Teachers can emerge as healthy relationship role models in youth's lives

## How do we Meet the Challenges

Promoting healthy youth relationships and preventing violence requires:

- Understanding the context of harm
- A lot of ongoing effort and persistence
- Encouraging efforts to find ways to overcome the challenges and keep moving toward solutions.



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*This document was created by PREVNet based on Shelley Cardinal's webinar and is not a reflection of the Public Health Agency of Canada*