

Second Story Women's Centre- Be the Peace- Project NS 11111

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research and consulting

Final Evaluation Report

Be the Peace

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1 Introduction

Second Story Women's Centre's Social Action Committee identified gender based violence as a priority in September 2010, launching the Making Change initiative in partnership with Harbour House and the local RCMP. An open forum in April 2011, held in Bridgewater, NS solicited interested individuals and groups to continue grass roots action as a Violence Against Women Action Coalition. It was this group that prompted a funding proposal to Status of Women Canada.

In 2012, funding was awarded by Status of Women Canada to Second Story Women's Centre located in Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia, to engage community partners in developing a coordinated community response to violence against women and girls over 3 years. The goal of the 'Be the Peace' project has been to increase community engagement and collaboration with the aim of reducing the rates of violence against women and girls. The project's title, 'Be the Peace', was a challenge to all members of our community to end interpersonal violence in all its' forms.

This project was designed to build lasting collaborations between community stakeholders (eg., tri-level government, community leaders, women's and community organizations, service providers, legal institutions, law enforcement agencies, school systems, etc.) to identify and respond to the specific needs of women and girls.

This report presents evaluation findings from the final year of the project.

2 Evaluation Methods

At the beginning of the project in 2012 a logic model and evaluation plan were developed in collaboration with the project coordinators. In the first year the evaluation included key stakeholder interviews, an online questionnaire for working group members and a feedback form and questionnaire for community forum participants. Similarly, year two collected data through stakeholder interviews, participant feedback forms and website and social media analytics. In the final year of the project, deep dialogue interviews were conducted with stakeholders. Administrative data and website and social media analytics were reviewed.

In years 2 and 3 the project logic model was adapted to reflect the goals and priorities of the Be the Peace Project during these phases.

2.1 Logic Model for Years 2 & 3

Project Activities – what are you doing?			
<i>Youth-Schools-Parents</i>	<i>Men-Women-People</i>	<i>Police-Justice-Comm. System</i>	<i>General</i>
Partnering with schools, parents and organizations	Engaging men and boys through programming developed in partnership with schools and community organizations	Developing broad-based partnerships to encourage system level change	Using a variety of communication strategies to increase awareness and educate about dimensions of the issue of violence
Working through existing systems to connect with youth	Providing opportunities for men and women to engage in meaningful conversations about gender based violence	Working to enhance services and supports for victims / survivors that include them in partnership	Synthesize, analyze and communicate promising practices
			With partners, identify gaps and opportunities to address them.
			Establishing a structure for continuing this work beyond the period of project funding.
Project Objectives – what are you trying to accomplish?			
<i>Youth-Schools-Parents</i>	<i>Men-Women-People</i>	<i>Police-Justice-Comm. System</i>	<i>General</i>
Increased understanding among youth to enable building of healthy relationships	Greater understanding of healthy gender roles, continued inquiry into what this means, and acceptance of diverse definitions	Establishing and strengthening partnerships between community members and service providers	Increased knowledge and enhanced understanding of violence against women and girls through public conversation, knowledge transfer and dissemination
Have youth and parents develop skills to think critically about what they see and hear	Men and boys are partners in ending gender based violence	Increased coordination, accessibility and responsiveness of restorative services for victims / survivors and their families and accountability, services and supports for offenders.	Increased empathy, acceptance and compassion through a strengthened understanding of what intimate partner violence looks like
Schools, parents and youth are partners in counteracting the barrage of	Boys have mechanisms for exploring and enacting healthy male dynamics and		Opportunities for healing, bearing witness and being heard

mass media violence promotion	increased capacity for healthy masculinity WITHOUT VIOLENCE		
	Girls have mechanisms for exploring and enacting healthy female dynamics and increased capacity for healthy femininity		Efforts are sustainable beyond period of project funding

Outputs – What can we measure? What can we see?

<i>Youth-Schools-Parents</i>	<i>Men-Women-People</i>	<i>Police-Justice-Comm. System</i>	<i>General</i>
# of meetings, events, and attendees	# of meetings, events, and attendees	# of meetings, events, and attendees	# of meetings, events, and attendees
Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding	Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding	Qualitative evidence of positive changes in practice and policy	Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding
Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change	Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change		Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change
Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)	Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)		Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)

Short-term Outcomes – What are the immediate changes?

<i>Youth-Schools-Parents</i>	<i>Men-Women-People</i>	<i>Police-Justice-Comm. System</i>	<i>General</i>
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Increased engagement of youth in conversations around healthy relationships and gender roles	Increased engagement of men and boys	Increased collaboration across groups working to end violence against women and girls to make victims' safety central.	Increased reporting of all forms of violence against women and girls
Youth project participants demonstrate critical thinking about mass media and impact on gender, identity, sexuality and relationships	Victims / survivors are engaged in ways that they choose	Services for parents and families, victims / survivors, offenders and children are coordinated, accessible and responsive	Community members have tools to take action to address violence whenever it arises
			Issue of violence against women and girls is part of the public conversation
Long-term Outcomes – What is the ultimate change?			
An end to violence against women and girls and the structures and social forces that sustain it.			
Community members and service providers are empowered through strong and collaborative partnerships to create positive change and coordinated results.			
Gender equity.			

3 Evaluation Findings

3.1 The importance of the process

Throughout the project stakeholders identified the process itself as one of the strengths of Be the Peace. The project invited the community to come up with the solutions to the problem that had been identified. In 2012, and each year after, all members of the community were invited to participate in a forum to learn about the project and identify ways they could help move the work forward. The goal of the project coordinators was to follow the energy and expertise that existed within the community. The process was designed to allow that to happen.

At the first community forum participants identified a long list of areas they wanted to work in. These included:

- Youth & Schools
- Gather the Women
- Gather the Men
- Substance Abuse and Violence
- Sexual Assault Response
- Restorative Justice
- Community Planning
- Interagency Network
- Neighbours, Friends & Families
- Parenting Support & Education
- New Germany Rural Families
- Spirituality and healing
- Arts and creativity

“I appreciate the processes – it was a very open process. Left space to think outside the box... Sometimes policy, history, frame of mind become a road block. Doesn’t feel like that has happened in BTP.” – Stakeholder

“BTP acted with integrity to the people that it was designed to serve. So careful, so considered, so safe, no demands, it was to find within yourself what you could bring if you wanted to and to take if you needed to.” – Stakeholder

These became the project working groups for the first year. Over that first year these working groups met. Some ran out of steam and some joined together. In years 2 and 3 there was interest in focusing the energy of the project. Community members coalesced around 3 key areas – youth, schools and parents with an emphasis on increasing understanding about healthy relationships; men, women and people with a focus on healthy gender roles; and the police, justice and community sectors to improve services and supports.

3.2 Project Reach

The reach of this project has been substantial. Over the 3 years there have been:

- 597 tweets;
- 197 page likes on Facebook; and
- 7294 website visits.

The project coordinators have:

- Attended 9 conferences and are presenting at 4 conferences in 2015;
- Made 50 presentations to more than 1200 people;
- Hosted 29 public events attended by more than 1995 people; and
- Participated in 4 radio interviews and more than 20 local newspaper articles.

3.3 Key Themes

Based on stakeholder interviews we know that over the 3 years Be the Peace has:

Year 1

- Created a safe, positive environment
- Used a collaborative approach
- Provided opportunities to learn
- Created a shared sense that positive change is possible
- Developed working partnerships that helped identify gaps, opportunities and priorities

Year 2

- Created opportunities for learning by bringing individuals and organizations together
- Provided opportunities for participants to feel empowered and more knowledgeable about community engagement and leadership
- Helped the sexual assault response working group receive additional funding
- Made progress on the establishment of a Community Dispute Resolution Centre
- Enabled the Healthy Relationships for Youth program to be offered in schools
- Created greater awareness of the issue of gender based violence

Year 3

- Created a safe, non-judgemental, inclusive space
- Connected all the individuals and organizations working in the area of gender based violence
- Increased the profile of Lunenburg County
- Developed capacity for collaboration across multiple systems

Across the project the challenge identified by stakeholders has been about the broad scope and sustainability of the project – whether the project was trying to do too much and if the work could continue beyond the term of the funding.

3.4 Specific Outputs and Outcomes

It is important to note that the evidence below does not include all meetings, presentations and events held over the 3 years of the project.

3.4.1 Youth, Parents and Schools

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
# of meetings, events, and attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 parenting support and education working group meetings • 15 youth and schools working group meetings • 3 engaging boys working group meetings • 6 planning meetings for gender specific programming for middle school students in two schools • 10 parent cafes (about 150 people engaged) • Presentation to 35 teachers and guidance counselors in South Shore Regional School Board • Presentation to Principals, VP's in South Shore Regional School Board • Presentation to 10 members of Child and Youth Network • Presentation to 80 students at Bluenose Academy during Health Day • Youth Forum at Bluenose Academy with 65 grade 8 students • Youth Forum at Bluenose Academy with 45 grade 6 students • Presentation to all grades 6 and 9 students at Hebville Academy for social justice day • Facilitation Skills session for 30 students in the Healthy Relationships for Youth Program • Presentation at New Germany High school Health Expo • Organized Jackson Katz speaking at Bridgewater High School assembly to about 350 young people • Partnered with Mermaid Youth Theatre to tour a production on healthy relationships and violence prevention in 3 Lunenburg County Schools • Voices of Youth on the South Shore (VOYSS) youth forum for 45 youth (aged 15 to 21) and 25 adults in Lunenburg and Queens County
Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders said they had seen increased awareness at the school board level of the importance of engaging students on these topics • Parents talked about needing to have more dialogue • Youth reported they hadn't had these conversations before and thought they were valuable
Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth forum participants said they felt more capable of handling all situations and life in general. In particular, they felt more capable talking about gender and gender stereotypes and mental health issues as a result of the forum • Adults who attended the youth forum felt more capable of listening and letting youth be heard

Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders interviewed said safe spaces were being created in schools for youth to have conversations with peer facilitators Youth, teachers, principals and parents demonstrating understanding that more conversations like this are needed
Short term outcomes	Evidence
Increased engagement of youth in conversations around healthy relationships and gender roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Relationships for Youth program offered to grades 9- 11 students in 2 schools in the first year and 4 schools in the second year Gender specific programming offered for grades 7 and 9 students in 2 different schools as a pilot project Senior administrators were supportive of getting Healthy Relationships for Youth programming in all schools
Youth project participants demonstrate critical thinking about mass media and impact on gender, identity, sexuality and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project provided opportunities for youth to learn and use new skills Youth participants talk about thinking differently and are engaging differently in their classrooms about these topics with each other

3.4.2 Men, Women and People

Outputs	Evidence
# of meetings, events, and attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 Gather the Men working group meetings 4 Gather the Women working group meetings 3 meetings of the Engaging Boys working group 4 meetings of the Gather the People working group attended by 17 people 12 meetings of the Survivors Advocates working group attended by 6 individuals Finding Voice workshop attended by 12 individuals Feminism in 2015 workshop attended by 23 people Exploration of Healing workshops attended by 25 people Into the Heart of Gender series attended by 20 people Story catching/Story-telling workshop for International Women's Day attended by 15 people Community Dialogue –Reflections on Rehtaeh Parsons attended by 14 people 4 Rise and Release Cafes attended by a total of 40 people 2 One Billion Rising Events attended by a total of 150 people
Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals who attended the lecture series on the Fall of Patriarchy and the Rise of Violence Against Women thought it created useful dialogue, increased their understanding of the dynamics of social change and gave them a greater awareness of the role of men and boys

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater understanding of stereotypes, the need for healing and common ground • Stakeholders interviewed said they had gained a greater understanding and appreciation of the perspectives, opinions and experiences of others
Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men have committed to continuing to meet and learn through a partner project and facilitator • Survivor advocates have expressed great appreciation for opportunity to speak honestly in a safe environment • Survivor advocates have moved along in their lives to reclaiming purpose and have more comfort in speaking publicly • Men and women have been willing to come together repeatedly to talk about gender issues even though it is very challenging
Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTP provided opportunities for survivors to speak their truth in public • People are talking about BTP as a movement • People continue to attend events, meetings, workshops and presentations • Pieces of the work are continuing within other community groups
<i>Short term outcomes</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
Increased engagement of men and boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders have seen increased engagement of men and boys • Men have met continuously in self organized way over 3 years • 6 classes of boys at 2 schools have been engaged in 12 week sessions to discuss relationships and sexuality issues • Of the youth who attended last public forum 2 of the 3 were boys • Men have been invited, attended and engaged in all meetings (with exception of gather the women, exploration of healing, feminism)
Victims / survivors are engaged in ways that they choose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders said the community forums were designed in a way that validated the voices of victims and survivors • Individuals chose to participate in a group and supported each other through legal process • Survivors spoke at justice building in Bridgewater • Survivors offered feedback and ideas for treatment of victims and survivors in the system • Poetry and music were produced by victims

3.4.3 Police, Justice and Community

<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
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<p># of meetings, events, and attendees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Sexual Assault Response Working Group meetings (this group later became an independent project of 2nd story women's centre and has continued) • 11 Interagency Network Working Group meetings • 10 Community Dispute Resolution Centre meetings • 11 Restorative Justice Working Group meetings • 3 meetings of the Partners in Justice working group • 3 HUB meetings • Presentation to 20 members of N.S. Domestic Violence Action Plan Implementation Committee • Presentation to 35 people through NS Advisory Council Status of Women • Presentation to 8 people at Safe Communities Initiative Leadership Table • Promising Practices: Responses to Sexuality, Sexual Violence and Pornography attended by 36 people • 8 people participated in a Dialogue on Domestic Violence as part of a Dept of Justice initiative • Hosted a restorative legal system panel called "What would a restorative justice system for women look like?" attended by 100 people • 2 presentations to a total of 70 Dalhousie University social work students
<p>Qualitative evidence of positive changes in practice and policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Shore Health changed their protocols on sexual assault • A number of organizations are developing collaborative protocols on sexual assault as part of the now independent SASLQ project • Policy review and position statements adopted by municipalities with a commitment to continue education about address gender based violence • Trauma informed training provided for police, RCMP and other service providers • Commitment from local police and RCMP for continued training and education on how they work with intimate partner violence • Community services altering process and services with regard to child protective services
<p>Short term outcomes</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<p>Increased collaboration across groups working to end violence against women and girls to make victims' safety central</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders report increased collaboration across organizations and agencies • Stakeholders report stronger working relationships between organizations • HUB model in development among all major stakeholders including community organizations and government agencies to improve services and fill gaps
<p>Services for parents and families,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual assault services working group has received

victims / survivors, offenders and children are coordinated, accessible and responsive	<p>additional funding for their work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress has been made towards a Community Dispute Resolution Centre as a consortium of organizations and citizens HUB model in development (see above)
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3.4.4 General

Outputs	Evidence
# of meetings, events, and attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 meetings of alcohol and violence against women working group 4 meetings of Exploration of Healing working group 10 session series on healing modalities 15 meetings of Community Planning/Hosting Team (Strategic Thinking) working group 15 strategy meetings with Second Story Women's Centre staff 2 meetings of Engaging the Business Community working group Presentation to 30 people at the Growing Green Festival 6 Neighbours, Friends and Families presentations to a total of 94 people Multiple presentations to Mayors and Wardens Lunenburg and Queens Counties Presentation to Lutheran Ministerial Skills building workshops delivered to 78 people Presentation to 9 nurse practitioners Presentation to South Shore Women in Business Presentation to Lunenburg Board of Trade Executive Presentation to 60 people at the Lunenburg Chowder Luncheon Hosted 3 public forums with 300 people overall
Qualitative evidence of individuals and groups seeing the issues differently and demonstrating increased understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders thought public events had resulted in greater awareness of the issue of gender based violence Individuals said they were more aware of the prevalence of violence within their communities, the services available, the service gaps and the impact of gender roles
Qualitative evidence of positive behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders have identified positive behaviour changes Stakeholders identified changes in their own approach to work and relationships
Qualitative evidence of increased engagement (more people are taking action, actions are noticed and voices are being heard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders identified higher level of community engagement with the issues People are identifying BTP as movement Community members think BTP has raised the public discourse about gender based violence to a high level
Short term outcomes	Evidence
Increased reporting of all forms of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data available but perception of service providers is

violence against women and girls	<p>that there has been an increase in reporting and individuals help seeking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are calling BTP and Second Story Women’s Centre with requests for assistance and information
Community members have tools to take action to address violence whenever it arises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders said they had learned how to collaborate and build partnerships, about Appreciative Inquiry and facilitation, and how to find and use their own voice. • Stakeholders said they felt empowered and had learned about community engagement and leadership • People know where they can go for help, and seeking help and advice more readily • People have more information
Issue of violence against women and girls is part of the public conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that gender based violence is now a part of a public conversation has been unanimous across all stakeholder interviews • BTP has raised public discourse about gender based violence • BTP has initiated conversations with journalists about reporting on violence against women

4 Conclusions

Over the course of 3 years the Be the Peace project has been very successful in meeting its intended outcomes. The project has engaged a significant number of people, sparked a county-wide conversation about gender based violence, and engaged men and boys in that conversation. They have successfully brought this conversation into the education system and provided meaningful opportunities for youth to engage. BTP has increased collaboration across organizations and agencies and changed policies and practices related to gender based violence.

The Be the Peace project will have a lasting impact through the work that is continuing around Sexual Assault Services of Lunenburg Queens (SASLQ), the Community Dispute Resolution Centre, the HUB model for interagency collaboration, and a project focused on gender based violence and the justice system which is currently in development. The Gather the Men group will continue to meet independently, Healthy Relationships for Youth will continue to be offered in high schools and, depending on funding, gender specific programming for middle school students will also continue to be offered. Municipalities have committed to continuing to review their policies and develop protocols related to gender based violence. Many community members have also gained skills through the project and been introduced to a collaborative model of community engagement they may not have experienced before. It remains to be seen if this way of working has been sufficiently institutionalized for it to continue beyond the period of this particular project.