



**UNDERSTANDING AND  
PREVENTING ABUSE**

**A WORKBOOK FOR  
ABORIGINAL  
YOUTH**

[WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA](http://WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA)

# UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING ABUSE

## A WORKBOOK FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH

### A NOTE TO TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS

This workbook for Aboriginal youth is one of many resources available to the public through an initiative called "The Healing Journey". This initiative helps to promote awareness of family violence prevention in Aboriginal communities.

The purpose of the workbook is to help guide discussion around dating violence and family violence issues from the perspective of teenagers. You can find the answer keys to the exercises in this workbook at [www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca).

On the website, you will also discover additional resources and more detailed information such as presentation tools, games and quizzes, safety plans for women and children, a teen dating pamphlet and more. We encourage you to contact us to order the entire Healing Journey toolkit and/or helpful resources.

This workbook does not contain a complete statement of the law dealing with abuse and family violence. Anyone who needs legal advice about a specific situation should talk to a lawyer.

This booklet was published collaboratively by:



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## WELCOME TO THE HEALING JOURNEY

This workbook for Aboriginal youth is one of many resources available to the public through an initiative called **"THE HEALING JOURNEY"**. Family violence is complicated and abuse is a very personal issue. However, family, friends and the community can all play a role in helping youth who are experiencing abuse whether in a dating relationship or at home.



This workbook contains activities to help you learn more about the following topics:

- recognizing the signs of abuse;
- understanding the increased risk of relationship violence in Aboriginal communities;
- preventing abuse in your own relationships;
- getting help for yourself or others living with abuse; and,
- identifying the role that family, friends and the community can play in dealing with family violence issues.

Depending on your interests, you can explore some or all of the activities and discussion questions in the workbook. We hope that you will discuss the ways that you and your friends can help prevent family violence in your community. Let us know how you do!

[WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA](http://WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA)

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## THE HEALING JOURNEY POP QUIZ

Take this quiz! It will help you to test your knowledge about family violence.

- 1) What are some types of abuse adults or children might face at home?
- 2) What is one thing people who have left an abusive situation can do to make their homes a safer place?
- 3) What is one of the factors that can lead to higher levels of abuse in Aboriginal communities?
- 4) What are two things that could prevent a person from leaving an abusive relationship?
- 5) What is one thing you could do if you knew a family member or friend was in an abusive relationship?
- 6) Family violence can happen to women, men, elders, youth, children and babies. What are some things that make a person more vulnerable to being abused?
- 7) What is the safest way to keep someone from finding out that you were looking online for help or information on family violence?
- 8) Where can Aboriginal women in your community go with their children if they need a safe place when they are leaving an abusive partner?
- 9) Which room (or rooms) in the house should you avoid if there is an abusive incident?
- 10) True or False – Children suffer abuse just by seeing or hearing abuse in their home.

You can find the answers to this quiz at [www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca).

## WHAT I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Teen dating violence is a serious issue. It includes a wide range of abusive behaviours. This exercise will help you to identify gaps in your knowledge and find the information you need.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write down what you already know about teen dating violence in the first column in the chart below.
2. After you have read the pamphlet, "**Teen Dating – Are You in a Healthy Relationship?**", and/or listened to a presentation on this topic, write down what you learned about teen dating violence in the 2<sup>nd</sup> column.
3. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> column, write down what else you would like to know about teen dating violence.
4. In the 4<sup>th</sup> column write down how you could find further information about the issues you listed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column.

<b>What I KNOW</b> List some things you already know about teen dating violence.	<b>What I LEARNED</b> Write down what you learned today about these issues.	<b>What I WANT to know</b> Write down what else you would like to know.	<b>HOW I will find out the information</b> Write down places where you can look or people you can ask for further information.
Example: Women are most often the victims of abuse.	Men can be victims of abuse too.	Who helps men who are victims?	Search Google for "male victims of dating violence".

## FILL-IN-THE-BLANKS

This exercise will help you become familiar with the words and terms used in The Healing Journey toolkit. You will find these words in many of the key messages about abuse prevention. Take a minute to read the statements below and fill in the blanks with the most appropriate key words and phrases from this list:

reach out for help	witnessed family violence	unhealthy and abusive	listener
wrong	protection or help	strong	yourself
prevention	empower	cycle	against the law
strong	your fault	everyone	experienced abuse
witnessed	child protection	mind, body, spirit and emotion	

### INDIVIDUAL HEALING

1. It is never \_\_\_\_\_ if someone abuses you.
2. All abusive behaviour is \_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes it is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. It is okay to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Victims of abuse can restore the harmony of \_\_\_\_\_ when they take The Healing Journey.

### FAMILY HEALING

5. Children who have \_\_\_\_\_ violence often become involved in \_\_\_\_\_ relationships.
6. Many abusive partners \_\_\_\_\_ or witnessed \_\_\_\_\_ as children.
7. It is important that \_\_\_\_\_ in the family get help to end the \_\_\_\_\_ of violence.
8. Help your family members to get the \_\_\_\_\_ they need.
9. Sometimes just being a good \_\_\_\_\_ can help people.
10. Anyone who suspects a child is in danger must tell \_\_\_\_\_ authorities.
11. Care for \_\_\_\_\_ and your family.

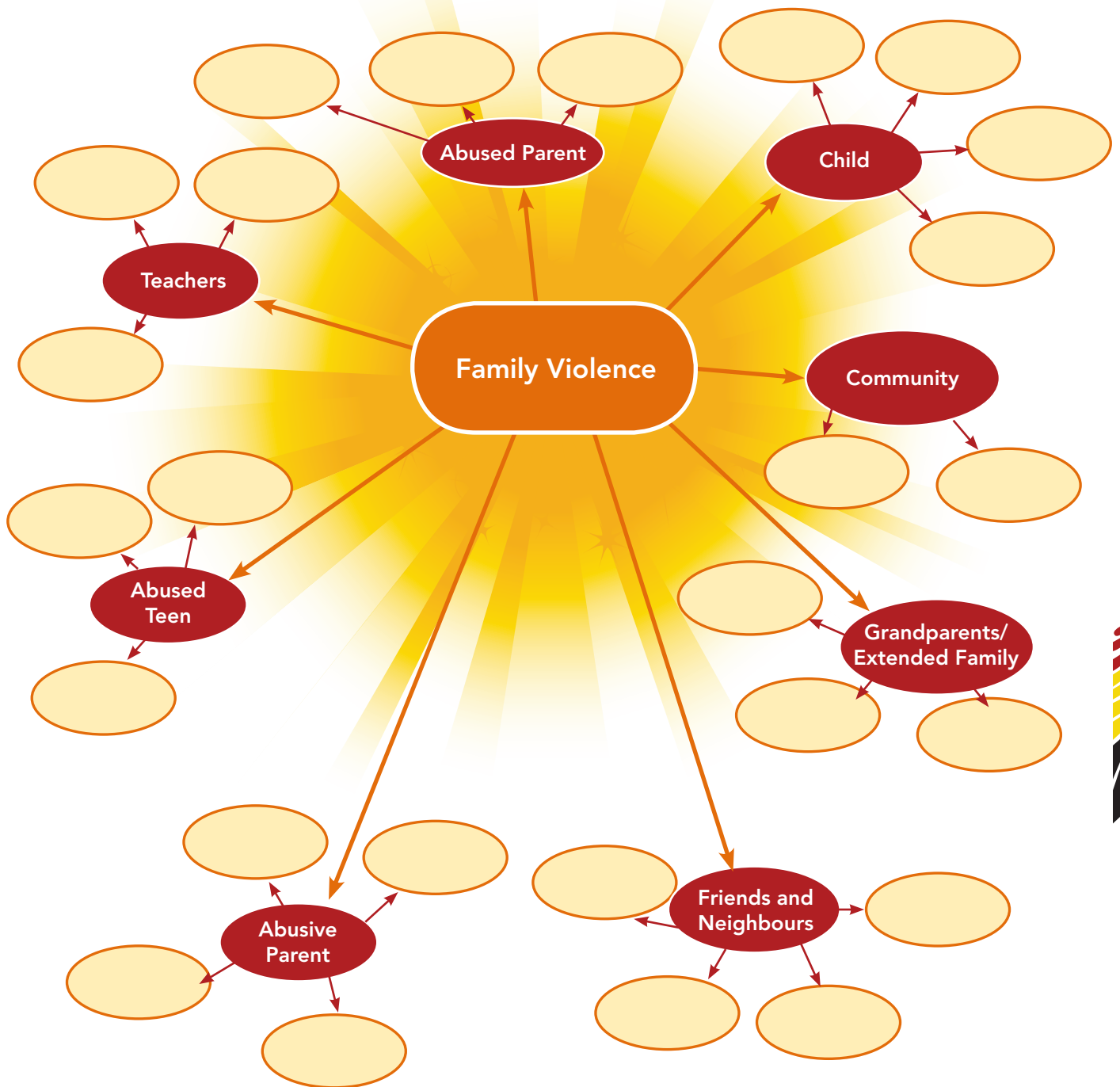
### COMMUNITY HEALING

12. Communities can help by creating a family violence \_\_\_\_\_ group or committee.
13. Communities can only be \_\_\_\_\_ when individual members are \_\_\_\_\_.
14. It is the responsibility of communities to \_\_\_\_\_ individuals to begin The Healing Journey.

You can find the answers to this quiz at [www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca).

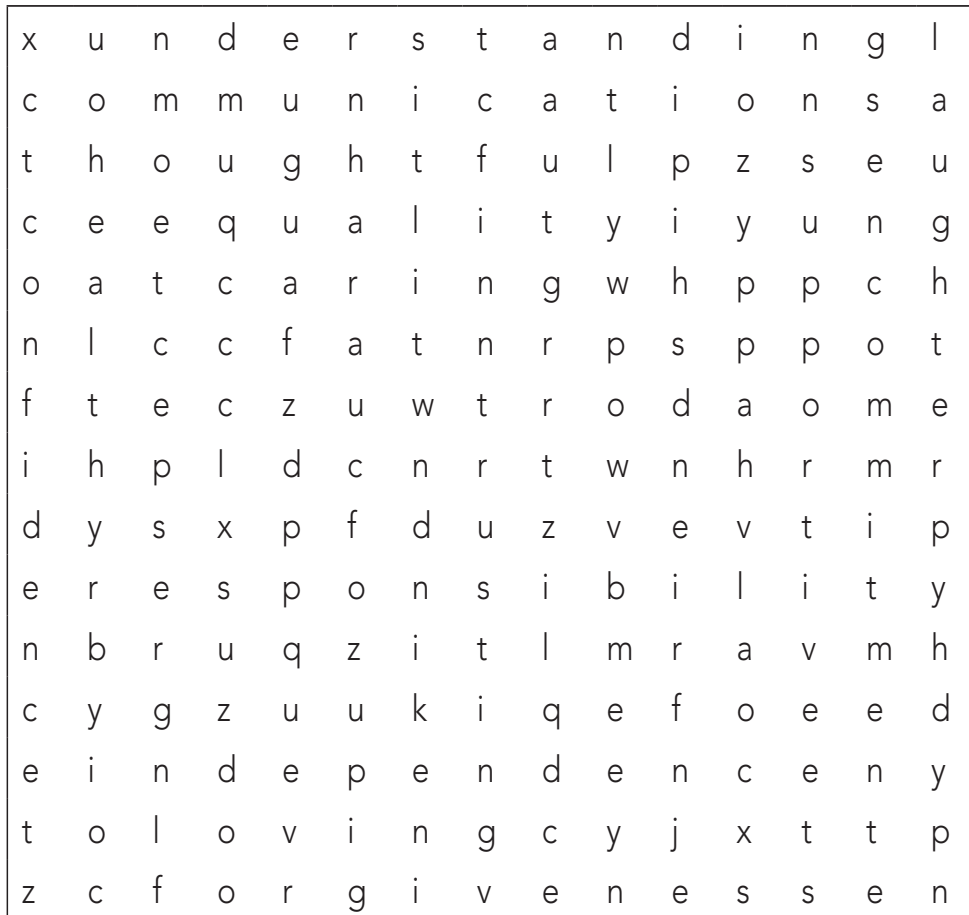
## HOW DOES FAMILY VIOLENCE MAKE PEOPLE FEEL?

When one person is experiencing family violence or dating violence, it can affect many other people. In this exercise, you will get a better appreciation of the far reaching effects of abuse on family members, friends and the community. Think of the emotional, spiritual, physical and mental aspects of abuse. What might someone feel or think if they are being abused, acting abusively, or witnessing abuse of someone they know or love? Fill in the "web" below with words that describe the many faces of abuse. Who else might be affected? Add more bubbles if you need to.



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

It's good to be able to recognize abuse in your relationship; it's also important to know what is healthy in a relationship. Healthy relationships are built on love, respect, caring and happiness. They can make you feel good about yourself because you are valued and respected for who you are. Search the puzzle below to find words you may use when talking about a healthy relationship.



caring

supportive

loving

independence

fun

equality

commitment

thoughtful

respect

kind

happy

forgiveness

communication

trusting

responsibility

laughter

healthy

friendship

confidence

understanding

You can find the answers at [www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca).



## MEGHAN AND DAVE - WILL SHE STAY OR WILL SHE GO?

This exercise will help you to identify and discuss the different people in a youth's life and whether or not they would influence the decision to stay or leave an abusive relationship. The exercise is divided into three parts (1, 2 and 3).

In Part 1, you will read 10 scenarios about **MEGHAN AND DAVE**, a young couple who start dating. For each scenario you will get two options – A and B. These options describe how the people around Meghan might react. Circle either A or B based on what you think might happen. This is not a test. There is no right or wrong answer since either A or B could happen. In Part 2, you will rank your answers and discuss your decisions as a group. Part 3 will help you to consider the people in your own life who might influence your decisions. (Note: This exercise is based on the skit "**AN ABORIGINAL YOUTH'S CRY FOR HELP**" which you can find on the Healing Journey website at: [www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca). Consider putting on this skit in your classroom or at family violence prevention event.)

### PART 1 – MEGHAN'S DECISION TO STAY OR BREAK UP

1. Meghan and Dave are hanging out with a group of their friends. The conversation turns to the upcoming band election. Meghan mentions that she is going to help her aunt who is running for chief. Dave starts making comments that are sexist and degrading to women and tells Meghan that she shouldn't be helping her aunt with the campaign.

A. Afterwards, Meghan's friends tell her that she should listen to her boyfriend and quit working on the campaign. It would be really bad if Dave broke up with her because of it.

B. Afterwards, Meghan's friends tell her that Dave's comments are completely out of line and that he is not being a very supportive boyfriend.

2. Dave and Meghan are at the movies with friends. On the way out of the theatre, Dave sees Meghan laughing and joking with one of his friends. When they get to his car, Dave shoves her and accuses her of flirting with his friend. Meghan insists that she was just joking around. Dave yells and tells her that she's lucky he goes out with her and that she better not be cheating on him. One of Meghan's friends, Sarah, was watching all of this from a distance.

A. Sarah and Meghan are talking at school the next day and Sarah tells Meghan that most guys are overprotective of their girlfriends. Last night's incident just shows that Dave really cares about her.

B. Sarah tells Meghan that she's worried about her and that Dave had no right to shove her or yell at her.

3. Dave asks Meghan to come over to his house for pizza and a movie. Meghan thanks him for the offer but tells him that she has plans to go out with her friends. Dave is annoyed and complains that she never spends time alone with him anymore. Meghan gives in and cancels her plans with her friends.

A. Meghan's friends are upset that she never hangs out with them anymore. They think about talking to Meghan about this, but they don't want to interfere.

B. Meghan's friends decide to talk with her about how much time she's been spending with Dave. They tell her that Dave should not be making her feel guilty for wanting to see her friends.

4. Meghan was supposed to meet Dave after school. She is 15 minutes late. When she shows up, he yells at her for being late. She answers that she always has to wait for him and that this was the first time she was ever late. He grabs her arm and tells her to “shut up”. She pulls her arm away and tells him that he’s hurting her. Dave apologizes and drives her home. When Meghan gets home, her mother notices the mark on her arm and asks Meghan what happened. Meghan gets angry and says she slipped in the hallway at school.

A. Meghan’s mother is worried because she’s noticed other marks and bruises on Meghan. She decides to talk to Meghan about her concerns but her cell phone rings and she has to take the call.

B. Meghan’s mother tells her that they need to talk about her relationship with Dave. She assures Meghan that they can talk about anything and that Meghan can trust her.

5. Meghan’s best friend, Carla, has noticed that Meghan has changed over the past couple of months. Meghan isn’t as happy anymore. When their group of friends hangs out, Meghan is quiet. Carla has also noticed that Meghan has had a lot of small bruises that she tries to hide.

A. Carla talks to their group of friends and tells them that they need to talk to Meghan about Dave. The other friends don’t want to say anything because Dave is popular and they don’t want to embarrass him. Carla agrees with them and says nothing to Meghan.

B. When Carla can’t convince their friends to talk to Meghan about Dave, Carla decides to speak to Meghan anyway. She tells Meghan that Dave is not treating her right and that’s it’s changing who she is as a person. Carla tells Meghan that she should leave Dave.

6. Meghan has been spending all her free time with Dave. He is getting more possessive and controlling and the bruises are getting bigger. One day at school, she notices a poster about dating violence. She decides to make an appointment with the school counsellor.


A. Meghan begins to tell the counsellor about her problems with Dave. The counsellor interrupts her and tells her that all couples have arguments from time to time.

B. The counsellor really listens to Meghan and tells her that he is concerned about her safety. He tells Meghan that they need to inform the principal, her parents and the police.

7. Dave sees Meghan standing at the lockers and talking to her friend, Joe. She and Joe are smiling and laughing. Dave comes over and screams at Meghan for being alone with another guy. He slaps Meghan across the face so hard that she falls down.

A. Joe knows he should do something but is scared. Meghan is his friend but Dave is the captain of the hockey team and Joe doesn’t want to do anything to make Dave mad at him.

B. Joe immediately goes and gets the principal.



8. Dave gets mad at Meghan and grabs her wrist so hard that it cracks. Meghan screams in pain. Dave realizes that her wrist is seriously injured and that Meghan needs to go to the hospital. Dave tells her that he's really sorry and that it won't happen again. When they get to hospital, the nurse asks what happened. Meghan says she almost fell down the stairs and that Dave grabbed her to stop her from falling. The nurse is suspicious of Meghan's explanation.

A. Since the nurse has no proof that Dave did anything to Meghan, she decides not to get involved.

B. The nurse decides that she needs to speak to Meghan alone, without Dave present. The nurse also calls Meghan's parents to tell them about her suspicions.

9. Meghan's parents come to the hospital. Meghan sticks to her story about almost falling down the stairs. Meghan's mother is not convinced. She tells Meghan's father that she thinks there's something going on with Dave.

A. Meghan's father is friends with Dave's father. Meghan's father says that Dave seems like a good guy and doesn't believe that he would do anything to hurt Meghan.

B. Meghan's father takes it very seriously that his wife is worried about Meghan. Meghan's father decides to talk to Meghan and tell her that he is worried. He tells Meghan that she can be honest with them and that she has nothing to fear and nothing to be ashamed of.

10. Dave and Meghan are alone. He pressures her into having sex with him. Meghan tells him she isn't ready but he gets angry. He forces her to have sex. Meghan calls her cousin, Susan, and confides in her about what happened.

A. Susan tells Meghan that it's her job to keep Dave happy. She tells Meghan not to make a big deal about it and to just be careful she doesn't get pregnant.

B. Susan recognizes that Meghan was sexually assaulted and tells Meghan that it's not her fault. Susan tells Meghan's parents what happened.



## PART 2: GROUP DISCUSSION - HOW DID YOU SCORE?

To score your answers from above, give yourself 1 point for every A you chose and 3 points for every B. Then add your total number of points to get your Grand Total. Depending on your score, Meghan may stay or go.

TOTAL NUMBER OF A'S IS \_\_\_\_\_ X 1 POINT = \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF B'S IS \_\_\_\_\_ X 3 POINTS = \_\_\_\_\_

MY GRAND TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

- Compare your score to the ranking scheme below to find out whether Meghan would stay or go!

### 21-30 POINTS = GO

Meghan will most likely realize that she is in an abusive relationship and leave Dave. The support of Meghan's family and friends has helped her see that she deserves to be treated with love and respect.

### 16-20 = UNSURE

Meghan has been receiving mixed messages from her family and friends. She is confused. She might end up leaving the relationship or she might stay.

### 10-15 POINTS = STAY

Meghan is likely to stay in the abusive relationship. Her friends, family, and the community are giving her mostly negative messages.

- Compare your score with others in small groups or as a class. Depending on how you felt the people around her responded, Megan would either stay in the relationship or break up.
- Where did your score fall? Did Meghan stay or go? How is your outcome different from others in your group?
- Were the scenarios realistic? What other kinds of abusive situations might someone find themselves in?
- What factors do you think would most influence someone to make a decision about breaking up?
- In reality, a young person is most likely to receive a mix of positive and negative messages. What could we do to make sure that the people who could influence Meghan are supportive?

### PART 3: PEOPLE WHO INFLUENCE ME

After you complete the exercise and discussion, consider how much influence these people have on your own decisions

Rate the following people from 1-3:

A rating of 1 would be **NOT VERY INFLUENTIAL**.

A rating of 2 would be **SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL**.

A rating of 3 would be **VERY INFLUENTIAL**.

Friends		Teacher	
Mother		School Counsellor	
Father		Elder	
Brothers/Sisters		Police Officer	
Cousins/Aunts/Uncles		Other _____	

## SUDOKU PUZZLE

The theme of this Sudoku puzzle is: "Why do people stay in abusive relationships?" The words that you need to insert in the puzzle suggest nine of the reasons.

To solve the puzzle:

Each box in the shaded grids (3x3 cells) must contain one of the nine reasons.

Each row of nine boxes must contain all of the reasons.

Each column of nine boxes must contain all of the reasons.

Denial	No Money	Shame	Children	Fear	Blame	No Support	Loyalty	Trapped
Blame	Fear		No Support		Loyalty			
No Support	Loyalty	Children		Denial		Fear		
Fear	Children			No Money		Denial		Loyalty
Shame	Trapped						Blame	
No Money		Loyalty		Blame			Children	Shame
Loyalty		No Support		Trapped		Shame	Fear	
Trapped			Shame		No Support		No Money	Denial
Children		No Money	Denial	Loyalty		Blame		

Stumped? You can find the answer key and more information on recognizing the harm of interpersonal violence online at [WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA](http://WWW.THEHEALINGJOURNEY.CA)

**ABUSE IS NEVER THE VICTIM'S FAULT. REACH OUT FOR HELP.**  
**KNOWING WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP IS THE FIRST STEP OF THE JOURNEY.**

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

This exercise will help you to explore some of the situations where family, friends and community members who witness abuse might do something to help prevent further abuse. However, each person's response to violence is different depending on the people involved and the situation. Even when people know something is wrong, they may be afraid to get involved or they may not know what to say or do. Read the situations below. In the right hand column put the number of the "possible action" (listed below) that reflects how you would most likely react. There is no "right" answer. Simply choose one or more of the possible actions. Select "other" to include a different action.

### Possible Actions:

1. Do nothing.
2. Get advice from an adult.
3. Get advice from my friends.
4. Try to stop the abuse as it is happening.
5. Talk to the person being abused after the incident.
6. Talk to the abusive person after the incident.
7. Contact the police or band constable.
8. Other \_\_\_\_\_.

SITUATION	POSSIBLE ACTIONS
Although your bf has never talked about it, you believe your friend is being abused.	
You see a parent on the playground punishing a child with a slap across the face.	
The couple in the house next door is having a loud argument and you can hear things being smashed.	
After your friend ends the relationship, the other person starts posting pictures and spreading really bad rumours and lies on Facebook .	
Your friend says he doesn't trust his girlfriend so he is following her, sending her constant emails, and checking her laptop when she's not looking.	
Your friend tells you that his parents were drinking and fighting all night and that he was afraid and didn't get much sleep.	
You are pretty sure that a friend who is only 13 years old has been pressured or forced into having sex.	
You can hear your friend in the next room screaming at her partner. When you go in the room the argument stops and they act like nothing was wrong.	
You are at the teen centre and somebody starts telling sexist jokes and telling his girlfriend how stupid she is when she objects.	

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Review your answers as a group and discuss why the answers might be different from person to person. Were any of the situations above particularly difficult to answer? Think about why it was difficult to answer them. Consider the following:

- Why would you do nothing? Which adults would you talk to?
- What advice would you ask for? Would your actions put you or others at risk?
- What would you say to the person being abused?
- What would you say to the person causing the harm?
- How did you decide whether or not you would contact the police?

## WHAT CAN I DO TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE IN MY COMMUNITY?

This exercise will explore the role that different people can play in reducing the risk factors for abuse and violence in their community. There are lots of things that might put someone at risk, like addictions, dropping out of school, getting pregnant and so on. Use the chart below to list the risk factors that teens face in your community. Think about what needs to be done to reduce these negative factors both by you (column 3) and the community (column 4). There can be more than one action taken to reduce the risk of violence. What can you do to help in your community? You may not be able to do it alone, so think about who you could ask for help.

After you complete the chart, have a discussion about who should see your ideas. How can you, or your class, work to reduce the risk and protect members of your community? You may want to invite your principal, community leaders or youth group representatives to meet with your class to talk about these ideas. You might consider writing a letter to your chief and council.

Risk factors that teens face in the community	What can be done to reduce the risk?	What can YOU do to reduce the risk for yourself or others?	Who in your community can help?



## GETTING HELP – MY PERSONAL RECORD

This exercise will help you think about the programs, services or individuals in your community that could support youth who need help. Create your own personal record.

### SCHOOL AND GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### TEEN/YOUTH CENTRE

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS AGENCIES

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### TELEPHONE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUTH

Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868

Others:

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### POLICE-BASED SERVICES

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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### TRANSITION HOUSE

Type of help available:

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Contact information:

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## ONLINE RESOURCES I CAN CHECK OUT

The Healing Journey  
[www.thehealingjourney.ca](http://www.thehealingjourney.ca)

Kids Help Phone  
[www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

What's the Deal?  
[www.deal.org](http://www.deal.org)

Aboriginal Youth Network  
[www.ayn.ca](http://www.ayn.ca)

National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence  
[www.nacafv.ca](http://www.nacafv.ca)

Native Women's Association  
<http://www.nwac.ca/>

RespectED  
[www.redcross.ca/RespectED](http://www.redcross.ca/RespectED)

CyberTip.ca  
[www.Cybertip.ca/app/en/respect\\_home](http://www.Cybertip.ca/app/en/respect_home)

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence  
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/chn-rcs/aboriginal-autochtones-eng.php>

Others:

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