“I would like to begin by acknowledging the land on which I’m speaking from today is within the traditional territories of the Lakwungen (Esquimalt, and Songhees), Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia’new, T’Sou-ke and W̱SÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples.”

“I also wish to acknowledge the territory that you are joining us from today.”
Learning Through Culture to Promote Healthy Youth Relationships

Shelley Cardinal
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Canadian Red Cross
Our Webinar Journey

1. Situate our learning today within Indigenous cultural worldview.
2. Understand the impact of colonization on today’s Indigenous youth.
3. Build “non-colonial programs” to address youth challenges
RED CROSS MISSION

To improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world.
Research Question

What aspects of the community mobilization process are working to bring about change?

In communities, we studied the Canadian Red Cross community mobilization process to explore how communities work for violence prevention and protection.
What We Have Learned about Violence Prevention, Protection and Pathways to Wellness
The Honour of Walking Together

As researchers and Indigenous leaders within the Canadian Red Cross, we’ve been privileged to walk together and to learn:

– about the effects of colonization and
– the cycle of violence within Indigenous communities.

Communities taught us:

– about disruptions caused by colonization, and
– the pathway to healing being reconnection or reintegration with *All My Relations.*
Contact

- Pre-1492: European explorers make contact with Native America and establish first contacts.
- 1492: Columbus's voyage leads to the first contact between Europeans and Native Americans.
- 1500: Later explorers establish more permanent contacts.
- 1600: European settlements expand further into the Americas.
- 1700: European influence in the Americas continues to grow.

Resources or Relations to ‘Resources’

- Pre-1492: Native Americans trade with Europeans for goods.
- 1492: Trade relations with Europeans begin.
- 1500: Trade relations become more formalized.
- 1600: Trade relations expand further.
- 1700: Trade relations continue to grow.

Slavery/Missing People

- 1800s: First reports of slavery in the Americas.
- 1900s: Slavery becomes widespread in the Americas.
- 1930s: Slavery is abolished in most of the Americas.
- 1950s: The focus shifts to missing people.
- 2000s: Efforts continue to address missing people issues.

EVENT | Pre-1492 | 1492 | 1500 | 1600 | 1650 | 1700 | 1750
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---
**Contact** | | | | | | | |
- Pre-1492: European explorers make contact and establish early relations. | | | | | | | |
- 1492: Columbus's voyage leads to the first contact between Europeans and Native Americans. | | | | | | | |
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HISTORY OF HARM
PATHWAY OF DISRUPTIONS

TIME

CONTACT
SLAVERY/MISSING PEOPLE
DISEASE
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS
MEDICAL RESEARCH IN INDIAN HOSPITALS
POLICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
STOLEN RESOURCES
DISLOCATION
SUBSTANCES
CONFEDERATION
INDIAN ACT AND INDIGENOUS POLICIES
SIXTIES AND MILLENNIAL SCOOPS
Pathways to Violence Across the Lifespan

- Child Abuse
- Relationship Violence
- And/or Bullying
- Dating Aggression
- Marital Abuse
- Gang Aggression
- Sexual Harassment
- Community Violence
- Workplace Harassment
- Elder Abuse
- Self Harm (e.g., suicide)
Colonization Caused Increased Violence

• Older Inuit speak of abuse within families and communities as stemming from the many harms which followed Contact (Fletcher et al., 2008).

• Lateral violence is a response to ongoing oppression from a powerful source: Members of the oppressed group feel powerless to fight back and they eventually turn their anger against each other (Middleton-Moz, 1999).

• The normalization of violence helps explain the rise in physical and sexual abuse, increased child neglect, rape, and spousal abuse.
All my relations...
All my relations...

Aajiiqatiiginiq (or the concept of consensus decision-making)

Pilimmaksarniq (or the concept of skills and knowledge acquisition)

Pijitsirniq (or the concept of serving)

Maligait (Big Law) 1: working for the common good

Maligait (Big Law) 2: respecting all living things

Maligait (Big Law) 3: maintaining harmony and balance

Qunuaqtuurunarniq (or the concept of being resourceful to solve problems)

Ayatimik Kamattiajniq (or the concept of environmental stewardship)

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What We Learned from the Communities

1. Solutions have to include culture
2. Importance of inter-generational involvement
3. Increase understand of the root causes of violence and associated challenges (colonization)
4. Create a strength based foundation
5. Need for community driven solutions
Kathleen

• > https://app.frame.io/f/38f3ad78-a6cd-49c9-b98a-7482289d2b39
PATHWAYS to HEALING

PHYSICAL
- Connecting to land and stewardship
- Access to essential elements — clean air, clean water, clean land
- Access to traditional medicines
- Nurturing, safe and healthy physical development
- Adequate and traditional food
- Appropriate clothing
- Secure housing
- Locating self, locating nation

SPRITUAL
- Reconnecting to all my relations
- Cultural ceremony, cultural practices, cultural freedom
- Acknowledgement of natural gifts: Every child is a gift

MENTAL
- Self-determination
- Traditional ways of knowing, being and doing
- Restorative justice (community responsibility and accountability)
- Learning — language, culture, songs, dances, names

EMOTIONAL
- Healthy relationships
- Family connectivity
- Support during difficult experiences
- Confidence
- Self-esteem
- Emotional safety
- Personal power
- Connectedness
- Happiness
- Belonging
- Identity
- Trust

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Learning Through Relationships

• Youth say that confidence and self-control can be fostered and enhanced through time on the land.

• The Young Hunters program in Arviat starts in school and moves to the land to foster youths’ relationships to food and the land. They learn from Elders and leaders about traditional values, knowledge, and protocols of Inuit cultural practices (e.g., stewardship, being respectful of all living things, working together, and team work).
Current Challenges & Ongoing Harms

• Intergenerational trauma
• Climate change (disrupts hunting and gathering, safe travel conditions, living conditions, wellness of All My Relations)
• Food insecurity (especially for nutritious, ‘country’ foods)
• Housing crises
• Mental Health
• Disease (i.e. TB epidemics, mental health crises)
Disruption of Family Relationships

• The greatest negative impact of colonialism for Indigenous peoples centers on family relationships.

• Intergenerational relationships were once at the center of Indigenous life and learnings. Today many families have been disconnected which has created relationship problems.
Learning in Relationships

• Many Inuit youth are entering romantic relationships with few models for healthy relationships.

• The romantic relationships of adult role models are sometimes marked by violence and aggression.

• Youth have been left with a fractured understanding of love and sexuality.
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 come into contact with 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 (pauktuuit.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 youths’ lives*
Examples of Activities for Indigenous Students

- When students were bullying each other in Inuktitut, teachers worked with students to develop lists of respectful and disrespectful words in Inuktitut (Canadian Red Cross).
- Using land based activities to help students learn about relationship to the land and *All My Relations*.
- Using politics courses to inform and empower students to understand land claims and their rights and protection instruments, such as UNCRC, UNDRIP.
Respond to Disclosures of Violence

It is important to listen to youths’ stories of violence and foster feelings of safety, support, and opportunity for improvement. This enables youth to share their stories free of judgement, and reduces the stigma surrounding youth violence which silences voices.

When youth are at risk, it is important for teachers (who are not mental health workers) to make a relational referral.
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.
Thank You