The Fundy Network
International Institute Restorative Practices Conference
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HEALING APPROACH TO SENIOR ABUSE
RESPONSES TO SENIOR ABUSE

1980-2000 - establish senior abuse as an issue

2000-2010 - create a formal provincial plan to prevent senior abuse through awareness

2010 and on - continued prevention and awareness, but also develop senior focused responses
First Seniors’ Safety Program created in Annapolis County in 1996.

New Programs since 2008
SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To ensure that seniors continue to feel safe in their homes.
SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To work in strengthening the lines of communication between our seniors and the police.
SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To enhance the well being of our senior population through education and awareness of health and safety issues.
SENIORS SAFETY PROGRAMS

To increase crime prevention practices and decrease potential senior abuse among seniors in their communities.
CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS

- Adult Protection
- Care Coordinators
- Police
- Health Clinics
- Mental Health
- Friendly Visitors
- Recreation
- Nurse Practioners
- Affordable Housing
WHO ARE WE SEEING

- Living alone with Dementia
- Living with Mental Illness
- Lonely, Isolated, Depressed
- 911 Calls
- Widows/widowers
- General Fears
- Victims of Abuse
THE REALITY OF SENIOR ABUSE

Seniors:
- Are not aware what they are experiencing may be a crime
- Feel fear or shame that a family member is hurting them
- Need the abuser for errands, appointments, to maintain independence
- Do not want the abuser to get in trouble with police
THE REALITY OF SENIOR ABUSE

Seniors:
- Just want abuse to stop
- Isolated and just want to have friends
- Does not want to cause family friction
- Blame themselves
- Afraid to be labeled “senile”
SENIOR ABUSE

Family:

- Caregiver fatigue, lack of resources
- Disagrees with seniors judgment
- Feels entitled to the money, might hope to pay it back
- Addictions to drugs or gambling
SENIOR ABUSE

Police:

- Lack evidence
- No crime
- Senior doesn’t recognize the situation as abuse
- Civil matter not criminal matter
- Futile Charge
WHAT OUTCOMES DOES THE SENIOR SEEK?

- The harm to cease
- Support - a voice
- Respect
- Accountability
- Relations back to a good place
- Support and guidance to resolve problems
- Support to proceed with more formal actions
WHAT CAN A RESTORATIVE APPROACH OFFER IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES?

• A safe and managed process for difficult discussions
• A chance for accountability
• A future focused plan of support
• A chance to explore underlying issues and seek solutions
• Support for all parties
WHAT PARTIES ARE INVOLVED?

Adversarial System

The Victim, offender and community members have a limited role in the resolution of the offence.

Restorative System

Each is given an active role in the resolution of the offence.
HOW IS SUCCESS MEASURED?

Adversarial System
Success is measured by how much punishment has been imposed.

Restorative System
Success is measured by how much harm has been repaired or prevented.
All restorative models provide an opportunity to:

- Hold the offender accountable in a more meaningful way
- Repair the harm caused by the offender
- Reintegrate the offender
- Achieve a sense of healing for the victim and the community
- Includes facilitator, co-facilitator, offender, supporters, victim, victim supporters, community representatives, investigating officer
WHAT DOES A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SESSION LOOK LIKE?

A Face to Face Meeting To:

- Talk about the impact of the crime
- Identify what steps are needed to make amends
- Make an agreement outlining how the offender will make reparation
- Examples: victim-offender mediation; family group conferencing; sentencing circles
OUR TEAM IN THE FUNDY REGION

Service Providers
First Nations Representatives

Seniors
Elder Law Specialists

Researchers
Acadian Representatives

Government Representatives
African Nova Scotian Representatives
OUR VALUES

Connections
- Humility
- Compassion
- Open Mindedness
- Fairness
- Justice

Community Building
- Respect
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Listening
- Trust
- Love

Healing
- Wisdom
- Accountability
- Helpfulness
- Non Judgment
- Everyone has a story

Everyone has a story
GOALS OF THE FUNDY NETWORK:

• Develop a shared vision for a healing response to senior abuse and pilot program model

• Build awareness and commitment to a healing approach to senior abuse through outreach and knowledge sharing

• Outline a cross organizational approach for restoratively grounded responses to elder abuse

• Create a program that is culturally safe to all Nova Scotians and respects diversity
OPPORTUNITIES

Healing
Advocacy
Accountability
Reconciliation
Peace
Forgiveness

Relationships
Support
Today’s presenters from the Fundy Network:

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Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

~Mark Twain