

Community Safety Planning

for Indigenous Communities



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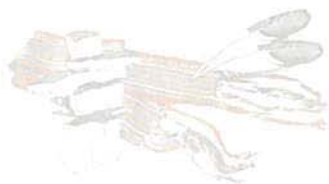
Priority for Indigenous Communities

Moving toward a healthier, safer home and community life

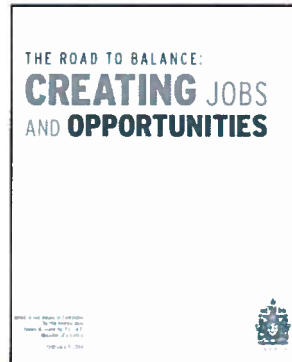
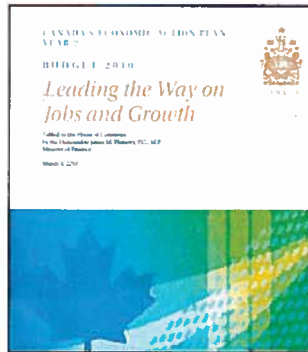
The identity and autonomy of Indigenous people has been harmed by colonialization, resulting negatively on safety and wellbeing. In particular, Indigenous people are over-represented in the criminal justice system, both as victims and offenders and Indigenous women and girls in Canada are disproportionately affected by all forms of violence.

There have been over 40 studies or inquiries conducted by various parties over the last 30 years calling on governments to improve the circumstances for Indigenous people in Canada.

Community Safety Planning is one way for Indigenous communities to move toward a stronger and safer future.



Government of Canada Priority

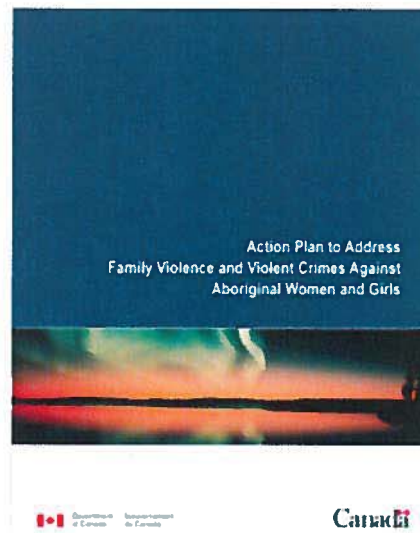


The Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative

The Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative was created in 2010 as component of the Government of Canada's investment to address the disturbingly high number of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Public Safety Canada received \$5.7 million to provide support for the development of Community Safety Plans (CSPs) in Indigenous communities.

Since then, Public Safety Canada has been working with Indigenous communities across Canada, providing support for the development of Community Safety Plans (CSPs).

The Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative was renewed in 2015 as part of the *2015 Government Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crimes Against Aboriginal Women and Girls*.



What is Public Safety Canada's Community Safety Planning Initiative?

Holistic community safety and wellness

Through the Aboriginal Community Safety Planning Initiative, and at the request of the community, PS provides a trained facilitator to work with a Core Group, selected to represent the Indigenous community, in the development of a CSP.

Using a community-driven approach, the facilitator guides the Core Group through workshops, in which members identify safety challenges, community strengths, resources, goals, and ultimately develop their path to a safer community. The majority of the work is done by the Core Group, with the intent that these members consult with and represent the broader community. The facilitator is available to offer support by phone while the Core Group works independently outside of the workshops, however, the resulting CSP will be finalized by the Core Group with the community members.

With a community-driven safety plan reflective of the community's unique people and circumstances, Indigenous communities are in a better position to implement solutions targeted to the specific needs of the community.

Goal of Safety Planning

To support Indigenous community healing through a community-driven process that works to address multiple safety and wellness issues, as determined by the community.



Guiding Principles

A strengths-based community development approach that works with Indigenous communities to tap into existing strengths and begin a process of positive change.

The Community Safety Planning process will:

- **Be holistic** - by encouraging the whole community to identify what the issues are in the community and to become active participants in the development of solutions.
- **Be culturally relevant** - the process should reflect each community's unique culture.
- **Encourage community involvement** - the people that live and work in the community need to be the ones identifying the issues and designing and implementing the solutions.
- **Recognize the gifts and strengths of individuals and the community** - the gifts and strengths already existing in the community are the ones they will need to draw on for the process to succeed.
- **Be respectful of each community's current state of development** – it is important to recognize that each community will be starting at different levels of readiness and capacity.
- **Be developed by and for Indigenous People** – it is important that the participants own the process.



Steps in the Process

Leadership commitment/support and creation of a Core Group

Before the process starts, it is important that the community leaders fully support the concept and demonstrate commitment. Public Safety Canada will provide information and be available to answer questions but will not actually start the process without having been invited, and having received written endorsement from the community leadership first.

Once the leadership has agreed to participate in this process, a key contact person should be identified, who will then form a core group of community members to engage in this process. Public Safety Canada can help with this process. The core group should be a good cross section of people with a variety of backgrounds, dedicated and passionate in their work in the community, i.e. mental health, safety providers, leadership, education, Youth, Elders, etc.

A firm commitment by the core group is crucial to the success of this file. Based on past experience, there is a time commitment of approximately 3 hours/month where the core group is required to attend meetings for the planning and implementing of the community development activities. The core group is also required to attend workshops that the external facilitator would deliver to help the process get started. Consistency of attendance and participation is crucial to help build, and maintain momentum. An investment of time and energy up front will lead to more integrated working relationships that will eventually make work easier in the long run.



Steps in the Process

Milestones

There are four phases to the process, the timing of which will vary according to the community's needs. However, within each phase, there are many accomplishments or milestones to achieve along the way. Each phase, except for the Virtual Outreach phase, is accomplished through a 2-3 day workshop.



Virtual Engagement is the process of preparing the community to participate in the development of a CSP. A PS employee will work with the community to help identify the Core Group, provide information of what will be expected throughout the process, confirm the community is ready, and introduce the facilitator.

Relationship Building happens throughout the process, however, when the facilitator meets the community for the first time, focus will be on revisiting commitment from the community leadership, and creating the mandate and terms for the Core Group to work together. Core Group members will need to understand the process and its importance well, in order to engage their community throughout the process.

Action Planning starts when the Core Group is working well and ready to start working out components of the CSP, including a vision of the future. Through workshops, the facilitator will use "The PATH" exercise to help the Core Group develop short, medium and long-term objectives and goals for the community.

Safety Plan Development starts in the planning phase, however, through the final workshop, the facilitator will focus on refining the components of the CSP and setting the Core Group in motion to inspire and motivate their community in delivering this plan.



Challenges & Perseverance

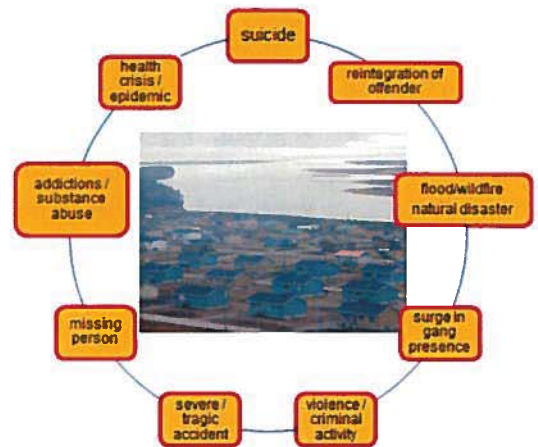
Completing the CSP and implementing the plan

Communities electing to work with PS to develop a CSP are often facing difficult challenges and are sometimes in a state of crisis.

Events can readily arise that impact the positive energy and hard work of the community, such as a severe accident or crime, reintegration of an offender or death or suicide, among other tragedies or challenges.

Elections also often result in leadership turnover, which requires the newly elected members to take time to review priorities before moving forward in their new mandate.

If a community process slows down, Public Safety Canada will encourage the community to maintain momentum but does not impose deadlines. Indeed, the goal for Public Safety Canada is for the community to arrive at a strong plan to guide efforts at enhancing safety and wellness of the community. However, it is the will and perseverance of the core group and the community at large, that will be the key to reaching that goal.



The Resulting Plan

The eventual Community Safety Plan may include:

- An outline of the community's all-inclusive approach toward community healing
- A recognition of the community's strengths and weaknesses
- Agreed-upon community goals
- Activities to support each goal
- Timelines for the activities
- A group or person responsible for carrying out each activity
- Resources (human, financial, information, readiness, etc.) required to carry out the identified activities
- An Action plan to address community issues

Available Supports

Throughout the process, the community will have the guidance of a Public Safety Canada program manager, who will keep in touch and check-in on the process.

A facilitator under contract with Public Safety Canada, who has been trained in the Community Safety Planning process, will deliver workshops in the community - usually three 2-day workshops over several months. The same facilitator will provide coaching, research, mentorship and other training supports as requested by each respective community.



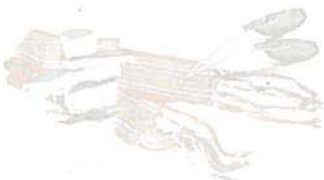
Is It Worth It?

Successes to date

To date, 24 Indigenous communities have completed a Community Safety Plan.

Evaluation of program findings suggest that:

- The Safety Planning process has helped communities see the potential of addressing safety issues through a collaborative approach using existing resources.
- Linkages have been made among different departments within First Nations government and Indigenous communities have benefited from becoming connected to other community networks.
- Community agencies are learning to work together as equal partners.
- Community engagement has improved.
- Communities have developed new programs (operated by volunteers) to respond to family violence or support addiction treatment.
- Communities are prepared to use other funding opportunities more effectively.
- One community is now delivering enhanced family counseling including parenting courses.
- Some communities have developed stronger roles for youth, which prepares them to take on a leadership role in affecting positive change.



Your Contact



To inquire further about the Aboriginal Community Safety
Planning Initiative

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