

**An Evaluation of the “Violence is Preventable” (V.I.P)
Program
2007-2008**

**Prepared for:
British Columbia /Yukon Society of Transition Houses
The National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC)**



Prepared by: Denise Buote, PhD
Arbor Educational & Clinical Consulting Inc.
dbuote@arboreducational.com
www.arboreducational.com

“The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the National Crime Prevention Centre nor the Department of Public Safety”.

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“VIP has provided a voice to children.”

- School Representative

Executive Summary

The “Violence Is Preventable” (VIP) program has touched the lives of approximately 5,000 youth and adults in British Columbia. The critical need for education and support for children and youth dealing with the ‘silent issue’ of domestic violence, and indeed violence in general, is underlined by the alarming rates of this form of abuse in our society. The adverse impact of domestic violence upon healthy child development necessitates a commitment to working towards the prevention of violence and reducing the long-term impact of experienced violence. Children and youth deserve to not be haunted by past experiences so that they can grow to have successful lives that allow them to contribute to society in a meaningful way.

The Children Who Witness Abuse (CWWA) programs provide psycho-educational support groups and individual counselling for male and female children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence in the past. The programs aim to assist children and youth to learn how to cope with the impact of exposure to domestic violence and break the intergenerational cycle of violence while also providing information and support for children’s non-offending caregivers.

In 2004, VIP was initiated in British Columbia with the goal of establishing a province-wide system that would provide children and adolescents with school-based support and education around issues of domestic violence. Leading this initiative was the B.C. Yukon Society of Transition Houses, a non-profit charitable society. VIP has been building on its previous activities and is now into its third evaluative phase. The findings of which is the subject matter of this report.

This third phase of VIP has been a collaborative effort involving 40 schools and 20 community agencies throughout B.C. Schools were chosen as the conduit to reach the children, youth and adults for they are the one institution that exists in Canada with which almost all children and youth will have some form of contact. The goal is to meet the critical need for violence prevention and education which can be met through delivery of educational presentations to children, adolescents and adults. By engaging community experts, school staff who have traditionally not addressed the topic of domestic violence, can receive the education and support that they need in order that they, in turn, support children and youth in positive ways.

The overall goal of the VIP is to contribute to the reduction of violence among communities as a whole, but more specifically to do so by beginning with the family. As with any program that strives to address critical societal problems, a multifaceted, step-by-step approach is required. VIP is a community-based program that is facilitated by the existing CWWA programs throughout the province. This integration of the program in a complementary way into an existing infrastructure increases the likelihood that sustainability of the program and

ideally expansion can be achieved. A challenge however is that as with all non-profit programs, sustainability has proven to be an ongoing issue due to the reliance on outside funders for a service that is offered free to those in need.

The intended outcomes of this particular phase were: to increase effective, sustainable support services for children in schools; to increase awareness and knowledge of the effects of domestic violence upon children and how to recognize and respond to children who are being victimized in this way; to support and change attitudes about the silence/acceptance surrounding domestic violence; and to create a system that can be used province wide to measure the impact of the VIP program upon children.

Key findings of the current evaluation included:

- Partnerships between the CWWA agencies offering VIP and schools have emerged relatively quickly within a short period of time.
- Both students and adults benefited from learning about domestic violence and ways that we can prevent violence from becoming a part of our everyday lives.
- VIP has touched the lives of students who come from diverse ethnic backgrounds through the use of a universal educational approach.
- Over 85% of educators indicated that they feel more able to recognize and support children who have been exposed to domestic violence and that that as a result of VIP, the climate of their school had changed in the positive direction.
- 93% of teachers who completed an Educator Program feedback survey indicated that services from children and youth exposed to domestic violence have improved.
- Youth who participated in the presentations reported a great deal of knowledge gain as to what constitutes unhealthy relationships vs. healthy relationships.

The strength of community-school partnerships cannot be overstated. Resources and expertise need to be leveraged in a positive way for schools cannot and should not be expected to address all the needs of children in the absence of outside support. Partnerships allow for the opportunity for schools to receive training and support from experts in order that they can increase their capacity to work effectively with their students. The uncertainty of funding, however, does pose many challenges for programs that are service and relational based for schools can be reluctant to adopt such a program if only available for one year. Educator buy-in is also greatly strengthened if they know that good programs will be present over the long-run.

It is important to note that educators wear many hats in schools however their training revolves around instructional issues with minimal exposure to child and adolescent development and no exposure to working with children impacted by violence and abuse. For an educator, it can be overwhelming to address the high

needs of some of the children. A high percentage of educators indicated positive growth in awareness and skills as a result of the VIP program, which speaks directly to the need to provide more educators with opportunities to learn about the issue of domestic violence and the impact that it has on children's social-emotional and academic functioning. School staff will come into contact with thousands of children over the years and with knowledge and skills they can learn through VIP, they can become more sensitive to the needs of the children and youth in their care.

This evaluative report also revealed that the VIP program faces challenges in that there is not enough staff to deliver the program. This issue of staffing is directly related to funding. Furthermore, the program does not have the official endorsement of the Ministry of Education which can at times mean it takes more effort to convince senior people at the school board level that the issue of domestic violence and its impact on children and youth needs to be addressed and that this is best done in schools where a preventative approach can be taken.

A second area of challenge from an evaluation standpoint, yet a major strength of the program, is that VIP is very responsive to the needs of the school and community which results in presentations and groups that are specifically tailored to meet the identified needs. From an evaluation standpoint, a diverse program that is not a prescribed curriculum is always challenging to evaluate as it becomes difficult to compare results across communities and across time given that the content changes to meet the needs of the given group. While it is more challenging from an evaluative perspective, this tailored approach highlights the richness and flexibility of this progressive program, the wealth of expertise that the VIP facilitators bring to the school setting in the way that they tailor the program.

The evidence gathered from the voices of children, youth and teachers that has been presented in this evaluation is clear. VIP fills a need that has long been overlooked. VIP has experienced great successes in a very short time and has shown itself to be a viable tool for increasing knowledge and awareness around issues of domestic violence and violence in the larger context. We know from extant research that breaking the cycle of violence is critical for individuals and society at large. By collaborating with schools, VIP can impact not only the current generation of students but also the generations to follow. This is an economically viable solution to a significant societal problem that will show a return on investment beyond the mere dollars spent for many years to come.

Project Overview

Project Background

The “Violence Is Preventable” (V.I.P.) project was initiated in 2004 in British Columbia with the goal of establishing a province-wide system that would provide children and adolescents with school-based support and education related to issues of domestic violence. Leading this initiative was the B.C. Yukon Society of Transition Houses (BCYSTH, established 1978), a non-profit charitable society which represents transition houses, safe homes, second stage transition houses, and Children Who Witness Abuse Programs that serve the needs of battered women and their children.

Phase one of the V.I.P project involved the:

- establishment of a provincial advisory group
- development of an overview of existing programs and models
- exploration of potential collaboration between the existing Children Who Witness Abuse (CWWA) Programs and B.C. schools
- development of a service delivery model and
- creation of a working document and manual for counselors to facilitate implementation of violence prevention activities in schools.

With the success of phase one, phase 2 of the V.I.P project saw the development and delivery of training and implementation of eight pilot projects in communities throughout B.C. In these diverse pilot communities, educational presentations and group interventions were delivered in schools by trained counselors selected from the Children Who Witness Abuse (CWWA) programs.

Phase three, the current phase and focus of this evaluation, has built upon the previous phases by adding twenty new communities throughout B.C. Within these communities, the focus has been development of partnerships with schools so that the critical need of violence prevention and education can be met through educational presentations to children, adolescents and adults. Furthermore, this process has enabled group interventions to continue to grow in number and scope. In terms of the evaluation process, it must be noted that a change of evaluators occurred halfway through (February 2008) the implementation of the program¹. As a result, a period of approximately five months passed with no evaluator leading the process.

¹ In order to become current with the evaluation, the second evaluator contacted each agency in March 2008 to discuss the agency’s status in regards to the use of the evaluation tools. Other key information was also gathered at this time.

What are the “Children Who Witness Abuse” (CWWA) Programs?

The Children Who Witness Abuse (CWWA) programs were established by the B.C./Yukon Society of Transition Houses in 1992, to provide psycho-educational support groups and individual counselling for male and female children and youth who had previously been exposed to domestic violence. The programs aim to not only assist children and youth to learn how to cope with the impact of exposure to domestic violence and break the intergenerational cycle of violence but also to provide information and support for children’s non-offending caregivers. Central coordination of these 93 B.C. programs is led by the BCYSTH and funded by the Ministry of Community Services. The key goals for the children and youth are:

- ▶ Express feelings in a healthy way
- ▶ Understand that they are not responsible for the violence
- ▶ Develop a safety plan
- ▶ Identify support networks
- ▶ Recognize their strengths and increase their self-confidence
- ▶ Identify cycles of violence
- ▶ Explore myths about violence and violence in the media
- ▶ Improve school performance and social skills
- ▶ Develop strong conflict resolution skills

The Need for Education and Support to Reverse a Troubling Trend

In 2004, Statistics Canada conducted a General Social Survey (GSS) in which 24,000 randomly chosen adults were asked to respond to ten questions regarding spousal violence (Statistics Canada, 2005, 2006). Of the sample, 7% reported at least one incident of domestic violence in the past five years. Given that the GSS is a representative sample of the Canadian population, it can be stated that 653,000 Canadian women reported being victims of domestic violence during this time period. Approximately 34,500 of these women live in B.C.²

Women are about 8 times more likely than men to experience violence in relationships, especially choking, threats with a weapon and sexual assault.

Statistics Canada, 2006

Findings revealed³:

- ▶ 81% reported having been pushed, shoved or grabbed;
- ▶ 61% were threatened with being hit;
- ▶ 44% reported having something thrown at them;
- ▶ 38% were beaten or choked;
- ▶ 36% were slapped;
- ▶ 27% were kicked, hit or bit;

² Note that it generally accepted that these numbers do not accurately capture the extent of the problem as domestic violence is under-reported.

³ Note that percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple responses from individuals.

- ▶ 16% were sexually assaulted;
- ▶ 37% reported emotional abuse in addition to physical violence.

Further to this, Aboriginal women were reported to be at three times the risk for spousal violence according to data from 2003. Compared to 37% non-Aboriginal women, 54% of Aboriginal women reported experiencing severe and life

“By college age, 40% of individuals report that they have been victims of violence in the past.”

Forke et al., 2008

threatening violence (Statistics Canada, 2005). Police statistics also support the findings that spousal abuse is more severe for Aboriginal women (Statistics Canada, 2006). “Over the past two decades, there are approximately 3,000 Indigenous women who have been murdered or have gone missing.”⁴

Children are often the silent victims of domestic violence.

Of the respondents, Forty percent of women reported that their children had either heard or seen at least one episode of domestic violence. We know from recent research that children and youth who witness domestic violence have poorer outcomes when compared to children and youth who live in homes where there is no domestic violence.

The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children

Among some of the particularly concerning research findings coming out of studies that examine the impact of domestic violence on children are that these children:

- ▶ Often display elevated rates of depression, aggression, delinquency, and other emotional problems (Steinberg et al, 1993; Edleson, 1999; Fitzgerald, 2004).
- ▶ Have lower academic achievement (Stalford, Baker, Beveridge, 2003)
- ▶ Have increased attendance problems due to stress induced ailments or fear for their mother’s safety (Bingham & Emde, 1997)
- ▶ Are at increased risk for long-term negative neurological changes as a result of chronic stress coupled with inadequate support (Carrion, 2006)
- ▶ As a group, show that boys who are exposed to domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners in adulthood (Strauss, Gelles & Smith, 1990).

In order to address the dire consequences that result from domestic violence, BC/ Yukon Society of Transition Houses sought to find the most effective way to touch the lives of children and youth in order that their futures would not have to be dictated by their pasts. To that end, schools were deemed the most appropriate venue for reaching as many

In 2006, amendments to the *Children’s Law Reform Act* require judges to consider family violence when hearing custody and access cases.

⁴ Quote from David Dennis (United Native Nations Society) in Vancouver 24hrs Newspaper, May 30, 2008

children and youth as possible in order to provide violence prevention education.

Schools as a Natural Connecting Point

In Canada, schools are the one institution that almost all children and youth will come into contact. In B.C., there are currently 651,625 students in public and independent schools⁵. Schools are the most effective way to educate all students regarding violence prevention. This critical need for education around violence prevention can be seen in the growing number of children who report being bullied at school. In fact, most bullying occurs at or close to schools (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2000). In a 2005 Pan-Canadian survey, 23% of B.C. principals reported that bullying was a problem at their schools (Statistics Canada, 2005).⁶ Further to this, other studies reveal:

- ▶ 1 in 5 children is bullied; 1 in 12 youth is regularly harassed in school by other students (Gladue, 1999).
- ▶ 60% of boys who were nominated as bullies in grades 6 to 9 had at least one court conviction by age 24; 35% to 40% had three or more convictions compared to 10% for the control group of non-bullying boys (Voices for Children, 2002).
- ▶ 56% of boys and 40% of girls in grades 6 and 8 had bullied someone that year (International study done for Health Canada, 1999).
- ▶ 43% of boys and 35% of girls said they had been bullied in that year (International study done for Health Canada, 1999).

There is a need to focus on violence prevention in schools and teach all children the various ways in which violence manifests itself (e.g., violence in the home, violence on the playground and halls). For children and youth who are or who have been victims of domestic violence, schools are often the safest place that they have in their lives. It is in schools that children and youth have a chance to form relationships with other understanding and well-informed significant adults who can assist in ameliorating the negative impact of domestic violence. This opportunity to provide these children with an alternative experience and assist all children in enhancing relational skills is critical to the well-being of our society.

By addressing issues of violence, we are also addressing the broader learning issues. We now appreciate that the social-emotional health of children is inextricably linked to academic accomplishments (Bar-On, Maree, Maree & Elias, 2007). Schools are increasingly becoming more open and proactive to addressing ways in which they can support their students to develop in all areas:

⁵ Statistics taken from 2007-2008 B.C. Ministry of Education
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reports/pdfs/student_stats/prov.xls

⁶ Survey based on 2,226 principals across the country

social, emotional, physical and cognitive⁷. By providing the necessary supports and addressing the negative impact of domestic violence children have a greater likelihood of experiencing success in their academic pursuits (Pepler, Catallo & Moore, 2000). We can build children and youth up in several areas of their lives by examining and effectively addressing the culture of violence in which some of our most vulnerable society members must live.

Maximizing Expertise

Schools are feeling increasing pressure to address the social side of learning, some of which falls out of the realm of educator expertise (e.g., child abuse, mental health issues and domestic violence). The complexity of these areas leads teachers to avoid certain topics due their limited knowledge and fear that they may cause more harm than help. To effectively address issues impacting the mental health of children, Tobler (2000) found that individuals who are in the mental health field are better at implementing such primary prevention programs than school-based staff. In the case of violence, appropriately trained counselors understand the complexity that violence has in the lives of children and youth. Although in B.C. schools we have counselors with a range of expertise, children's needs are unable to be adequately addressed by these professionals due to their limited time and large caseloads. By partnering with experts in the field, schools can address both the existing problems that some of their students face in regards to domestic violence and work toward providing a foundation of support in order that prevention work can be embedded in the curriculum for all students. Such school-community partnerships are increasingly becoming a powerful resource in that these "new relationships" link unconnected areas of the community and this shared response allows needs to be met for children and youth (Education Foundation, 2001).

The V.I.P. Project: Design Overview

The V.I.P. program is a comprehensive provincial strategy for connecting schools to the CWWA programs across B.C. BCYSTH offers central coordination of the VIP initiative including:

- ▶ Resource development
- ▶ Development and delivery of VIP training for CWWA counsellors
- ▶ On-going support and guidance to CWWA counsellors and their member agencies
- ▶ Province-wide awareness-raising, sustainability planning and advocacy
- ▶ Support for Aboriginal, multicultural and other identified communities
- ▶ Community development strategies and supports

⁷ In B.C., the Ministry of Education acknowledges the importance of the whole child with the inclusion of the Social Responsibility requirements that schools must implement to support child and youth development. To learn more, visit: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/social_resp.htm

For the purposes of this evaluation, the impact of three key activity areas were considered:

1. *Awareness Presentations*: The aim of these presentations is to educate educators, parents and other adults (e.g., foster parents, public health nurses, child care providers, and others who have a stake in the healthy development of our children) about children's exposure to domestic violence.
2. *Violence Prevention Presentations*: These presentations are designed for classrooms (Kindergarten to grade twelve) so that children and youth can learn about domestic violence. In addition to learning about domestic violence, these presentations also include topics such as unhealthy vs. healthy relationships, communication skills, and self-esteem.
3. *Group Interventions*: For children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence, multi-week psycho-educational groups are held for students in the school setting so that they may have the support needed to cope with the impact that domestic violence has had on their lives.

In early 2007, prior to the commencement of the V.I.P program, CWWA counselors from each of 20 communities attended a four-day training session to be trained in the V.I.P school-based model. It is important to note that prior to the V.I.P. training session, all the counselors had a significant amount of experience working directly with children who had been exposed to domestic violence. The focus of this training was to provide the support and tools to forge relationships with schools in each the communities. Participants received a V.I.P. binder and three DVDs to assist them with this endeavor. All of the twenty communities that participated in this project agreed to do ten presentations (awareness and/or violence prevention) or one group intervention during the 2007-2008 school year.

The Violence Is Preventable (2nd Edition) Binder Contents

- Section 1: The role of schools in the prevention of domestic violence
- Section 2: Building effective partnerships between CWWA programs and schools
- Section 3: Protocols for school use (e.g., handling disclosures)
- Section 4: Relevant legislation and policies when working with schools
- Section 5: Awareness presentations and workshops (preparation, agenda)
- Section 6: Guidelines for effective school-based violence prevention education
- Section 7: Implementation of effective CWWA school-based groups for children
- Section 8: Understanding and supporting Aboriginal students and communities
- Section 9: Using culturally sensitive approaches in delivering VIP in schools.
- Section 10: Evaluation of the VIP program
- Section 11: Additional handouts (e.g., fact sheet on domestic violence)
- Section 12: Resource List (e.g., educational contacts, story books, games)

**Three videos (with written guides) which can be used in presentations also accompany the binder. Two are designed for students (one for elementary and one for high school) and one for educators.

In conducting this work in the schools through the VIP program, the following outcomes guided the process:

- 1. To increase effective, sustainable support services for children in schools**
 - ▶ Increase opportunities for education about the impact of domestic violence, safety planning, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and the healthy expression of emotions for children in many classroom settings
 - ▶ Offer small group interventions to children who have witnessed violence in order that these children may heal and develop their resiliency. The implementation of these group programs will also support the healthy cognitive, social and emotional growth of children who may have experienced loss, fear, confusion, self-blame, unresolved anger, and trauma from their experiences at home.
 - ▶ Build sustainability through a collective effort (BCYSTH, CWWA counselors, school districts, provincial and federal government) of advocacy, publicizing feedback and evaluation results, promotion of the overall initiative, developing partnership and fund development opportunities, engaging in dialogue with inter-ministerial and inter-departmental groups.

- 2. To increase awareness and knowledge of the effects of domestic violence upon children and how to recognize and respond to children who are being victimized in this way.**
 - ▶ BCYSTH will coordinate and deliver training to CWWA in 20 new pilot sites over a two-year period. Utilizing the feedback and evaluation from the pilot sites in VIP Phase 2 to revise the VIP manual and training sessions, as well as the development of a Curriculum Toolkit for teachers. Given their expertise, VIP counselors will be able to assist teachers and other school professional as to how they can weave materials about domestic violence into the curriculum.

- 3. To support and change attitudes about the silence/acceptance surrounding domestic violence**
 - ▶ Provide resources and education to educators, support for CWWA counselors to create linkages with school districts, and take issues of family violence directly to children (both child witnesses and their peers) in order to open up dialogue and discussion about domestic violence and its impact upon children.
 - ▶ Provide therapeutic interventions as needed through systematic referral systems.

4. **Create a system that can be used province wide to measure the impact of the VIP program upon children.**
 - ▶ Develop evaluation processes and tools to conduct quantitative and qualitative evaluation of VIP in order to address the following questions: Did we do what we said we would do? What difference has our work made in to the lives of child witnesses of domestic violence? What have we learned from the project and how will evaluation results be used in succeeding years?

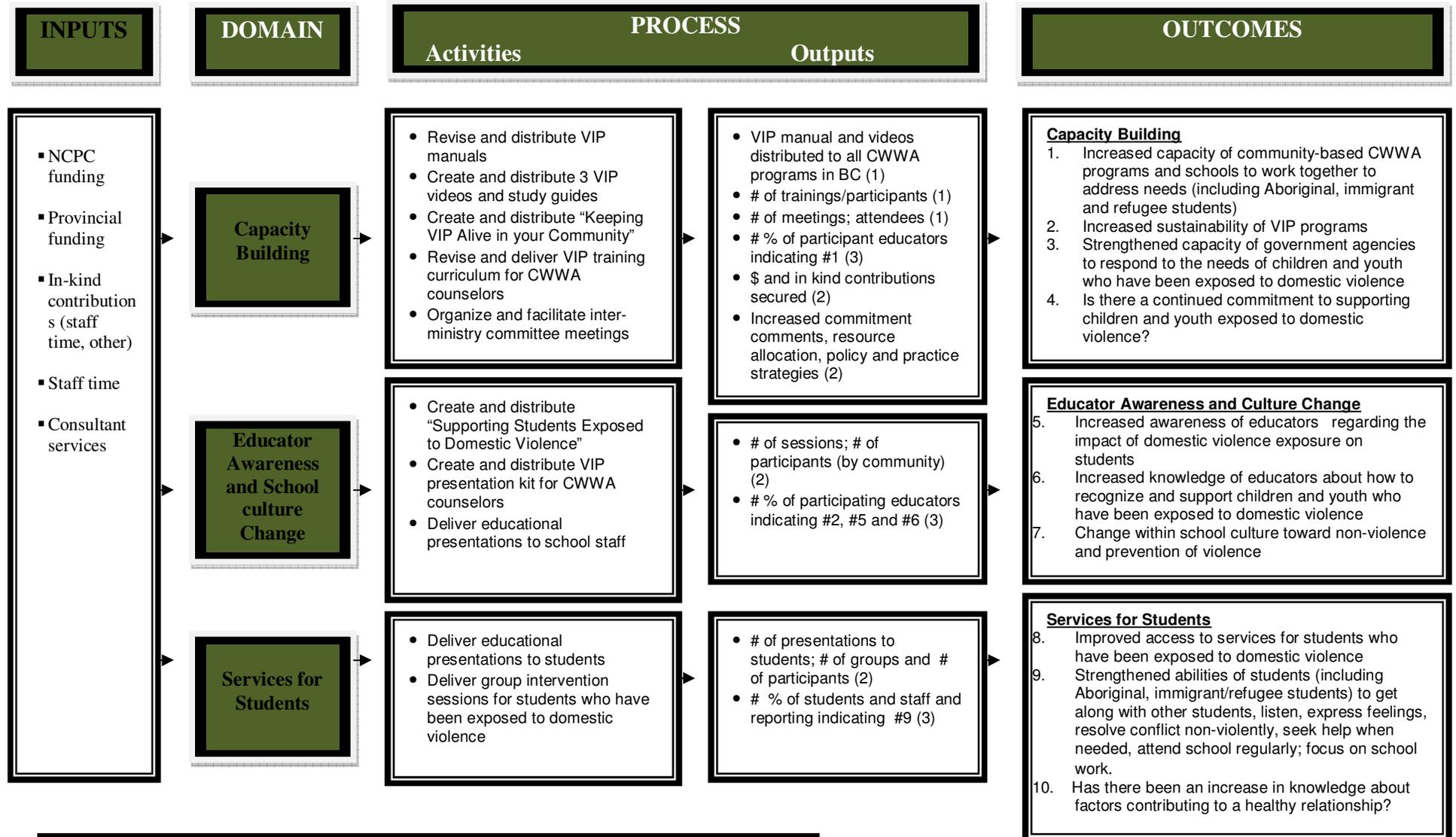
Evaluation Logic Model

What follows is an overview of the logic model for the evaluation of the V.I.P. program. This information in this logic model has been slightly modified from the original logic model. Please see Appendix A for a copy of the original logic model (June 2007). The modification includes the addition of two outcomes. (Capacity building outcome #4 and Services for Students outcome #9).

Data sources

1. BCYSTH records
2. CWWA records
3. Evaluator surveys

Logic Model for the Evaluation of the V.I.P Program



Also included is any qualitative data for each indicator (e.g., contributing factors, demographic data and any other descriptive data).

Evaluation Questions

The questions that this evaluation addresses are in three domains of the program. Each supports the other with the goal being a strengthening the VIP program throughout B.C so that as many children and youth as possible can receive services and support.

Domain	Evaluation Questions
Capacity Building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the VIP program increased the capacity of community-based CWWA programs and schools to work together to address needs (including Aboriginal, immigrant and refugee students)? 2. Is there increased sustainability of VIP programs? 3. Is there a strengthened capacity of government agencies to respond to the needs of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence? 4. Is there a continued commitment to supporting children and youth exposed to domestic violence?
Educator Awareness and School Culture Change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Is there an increase in awareness of educators regarding the impact of domestic violence exposure on students? 6. Is there an increase in educator knowledge regarding how they can recognize and support children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence? 7. Has there been a change within school culture toward non-violence and prevention of violence?
Services for Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Is there improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence? 9. Has there been a strengthening of student (including Aboriginal, immigrant/refugee students) ability in the following areas: getting along with other students, listening, expressing feelings, resolving conflict non-violently, seeking help when needed, attending school regularly and focusing on school work? 10. Has there been an increase in knowledge about factors contributing to a healthy relationship?

Methodology

Evaluation Design

The current evaluation utilizes a non-experimental design that incorporates both process and outcome evaluation data. Through a number of quantitative (e.g., statistics reports, Likert-type survey tools) and qualitative tools (e.g., key informant interviews, open-ended survey questions), data was collected to examine the overall implementation process of VIP and selected short-term outcomes.

The resulting examination of the implementation of VIP is critical given that the VIP program is relatively new and therefore capturing the learning through the implementation process is vital. This process allows for a close monitoring of the implementation integrity of the program so that the program's evolution can be strengthened over time. In general, the implementation of this evaluation is looked at from a macro rather than micro perspective. As the implementation of a strong program improves, the resulting effects should be seen through greater impacts in the outcome data.

In addition to examining the overall implementation process, short term outcomes for specific components of the VIP program were examined such as the short-term outcomes relating to the knowledge and skills gained by educators and students as a result of their participation in VIP presentations. This information was gained through the completion of feedback forms. For children and youth who participated in group interventions, behavioral and attitudinal changes were the focus and data was gathered through the completion of a pre and post test survey.

Number of Participants

The 20 sites chosen to be part of the VIP training represented Southern and Northern areas of B.C., both rural and urban. Six rural communities had populations of less than 5,000 people; nine communities had populations between 10,000 and 40,000 people and five communities were larger urban areas (greater than 75,000 people). There was notable variation in the economic conditions found within the communities. For example, some of the rural communities were heavily reliant on work related to the natural resource sector which was experiencing hardships at the time of this evaluation while the more urban areas did not appear to have such struggles. This is significant to note as it was reported that the needs of these communities, given the impact of a shaky economy, impacted the delivery of the program in various ways. One such example is the focus of the group intervention which incorporated coping with change and parental absence (one parent moved elsewhere to work).

In order for the new evaluator to establish a connection with the sites, become current with the project and gather key data, a telephone interview with each agency was conducted in the spring of 2008. Agencies were asked the rationale for adopting the VIP program. Twenty-five rationales were provided (some agencies provided more than one rationale). These responses were grouped according to themes and the result was three key emergent themes:

- ☛ VIP allows more children to be reached through accessing schools in order to work on prevention and intervention efforts (60%).
- ☛ VIP removes barriers for children and families so that they can receive the services to deal with the impact of domestic violence (20%).
- ☛ Knowledge about the impacts of domestic violence can be disseminated thus influencing prevention and intervention efforts (20%).

These three reasons are all inter-related with the main overarching rationale for the adoption of the VIP being the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of as many children and youth as possible through universal prevention education (both students and teachers) and provision of targeted services to those students impacted by domestic violence.

In total, among the 20 community agencies, partnerships were formed with 40 schools.⁸ In these partnerships, the VIP program worked with schools to determine which of the key services (awareness presentations, classroom presentations or group interventions) would best meet the needs of students. Some agencies focused on more than one area in a school. In total:

- ☛ 18 schools received awareness presentations
- ☛ 27 schools received classroom presentations
- ☛ 16 schools received group intervention services

The following table outlines the number of participants who received services through the VIP program during the 2007-2008 school year. Following this table, the number of participants providing feedback is presented⁹. **Note that not all those who received program services were involved in the providing feedback for the evaluation.**

⁸ At the mid-year reporting (February 2008), VIP facilitators had contacted 65 schools in their work to develop partnerships. Not all schools formed formal partnerships with the VIP program

⁹ Not all agencies utilized the evaluation forms when conducting their presentations and groups; a small number of agencies designed their own forms. In cases in which these forms were sent to the evaluator, results will be included in the report.

Number of Children and Youth Who Participated in Classroom Presentations

Groups	Number of agencies that did presentations at specific grade levels	Total Number of Presentations	Total Number of Participants <small>(Note that some students participated in more than one presentation)</small>
Student Presentations (grades K-3)	5	41	316
Student Presentations (grades 4-6)	9	30	448
Student Presentations (grades 7-9)	10	66	1667
Student Presentations (grades 11-12)	6	80	1361
TOTALS	30	217	3,792

E= elementary

M= middle school

H=high school

As can be seen from the above table, there is a large jump in children and youth served from grades 4-6 to grades 7-12. The main reason for this large jump of children and youth served through the VIP program, appears to be that the VIP presentations mesh very well with the B.C. Ministry of Education's Health and Career Education at the grades eight and nine level and the Planning 10 curriculum.¹⁰ These two curriculums offer a natural fit for the discussion of domestic violence as well as the topic of healthy relationships.

Number of Children and Youth Who Participated in Group Interventions

Groups	Number of Sites (20 sites)	Number of groups	Number of sessions (Median)	Length of sessions (Median)	Total Number of Participants
Student Intervention Groups (grades K-3)*	5	9	3-12 (median= 6)	30min-1.5 hrs. (median = 1 hr)	60
Student Intervention Groups (grades 4-6)	4	10	4-10 (median = 8)	30 min.-1.5 hrs. (median = 1 hr)	89
Student Intervention Groups (grades 8-12)	3	9	5-16 (median = 12)	40 min -1.5 hr. (median = 1.5 hr)	58
TOTAL					207

*One CWWA offered in-class support for a Kindergarten and grade one class. This occurred once a week on an ongoing basis.

¹⁰ For a more detailed description of these two curriculums (grade 8 & 9; grade 10), see http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp_hce.htm

Who Were the Children and Youth Who Participated in VIP?

On the year-end site report, agencies were asked to provide an estimate of the diversity of children and youth served in their program.

Student Group	Number of Sites Indicating student population	Lowest % Reported	Highest % Reported	Median
Students who are Aboriginal	16	0%	80%	25%
Students who are Immigrants	5	0%	25%	10%
Students who are Refugees	3	0%	5%	1%
Students who are Visible Minorities	9	0%	30%	10%

Number of Staff and Other Adults Served in the VIP Program

Groups	Number of Sites (20 possible sites)	Number of Presentations	Total Number of Participants
Staff Awareness Presentations	13	29	338
School District Awareness Presentations	4	6	34
Union Awareness Presentations	1	1	7
PAC Awareness Presentations	4	8	164
Awareness Presentations Other (e.g., MCFD, youth workers)	3	14	396
TOTALS	26	58	939

Number of People Providing Evaluation Feedback

Groups	Number of Participants Providing Feedback	Number of Sites ¹¹	Percent (%) of ALL VIP Participants Providing Feedback
Students (Presentations) ¹²	532	5	15%
Students (Groups)	19 ¹³	3	9%
School Staff (Presentation Feedback)	45	2	13%
Educators (Program Feedback)	15	n/a	n/a
Agency Feedback	20	20	100%

¹¹ Site refers to a community (e.g., Nanaimo, North Vancouver, Terrace)

¹² There were also 18 thank you letters included from grade 10 students – excerpts from these letters are highlighted in the findings.

¹³ There was feedback provided by four groups however in one case, there was significant missing data (either a pre or post group survey) and in another case, the survey was designed by the agency and provided only feedback. Further to this, one group completed the prescribed evaluation forms and their own forms. When possible, agency data is also incorporated into the report.

Variables and Data Sources

The overall goal of the VIP is to contribute to the reduction of violence among communities as a whole but more specifically to start at the family level. As with any program that strives to address critical societal problems, a multifaceted, step-by-step approach is required. The VIP activities are designed to impact community members in several different ways. For example, for educators, building awareness and understanding of issues related to domestic is a first step; and for children and youth who have been affected by domestic violence, a space to share and heal is needed in order to minimize the long-term consequences of their adverse experiences.

The following table outlines the specific variables examined in this evaluation as well as the sources of data used to gather this information

Domain	Evaluation Variables	Source
Capacity Building	☞ Increased capacity for school-community partnerships	Agencies (1) Educators (2)
	☞ Sustainability outlook	Agencies (6, 8,9)
	☞ Increased government involvement supporting children who have been exposed to domestic violence	Educators (2) Agencies (1)
	☞ Continued/increased commitment to supporting children and youth exposed to domestic violence	Agencies (7)
Educator Awareness and School Culture Change	☞ Growth in awareness about the effects of domestic violence	Educators (2, 3)
	☞ Growth in knowledge about ways to help children/youth exposed to domestic violence	Educators (2, 3)
	☞ School culture change toward non-violence	Educators (2)
Services for Students	☞ Improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence	Educators (2)
	☞ Increase in the resiliency of children through VIP skills building (e.g., communication, healthy relationships)	Teacher/Students(5)
	☞ Increase in knowledge about factors contributing to healthy relationships	Student (4)

Sources of Data

- 1 = Agency interview (March 2008)
- 2 = Educator Program Feedback Survey
- 3 = Educator Presentation Feedback Survey
- 4 = Student Presentation Feedback Survey
- 5 = Pre/Post Group Intervention Surveys (teacher report and student report)
- 6 = Agency interview (June 2008)
- 7 = Agency survey
- 8 = Year end interview with school representatives
- 9 = Agency site report

Tools

The following instruments were developed in order to capture process and outcome data for the VIP program.

- ☛ **Student Presentation Feedback Form** (Appendix B): One page feedback form seeking input on three questions:
 1. What was the most useful part of the presentation?
 2. What was one thing you learned about that was good to know from the presentation?
 3. Suggestions on improving the presentation.

- ☛ **School Staff Presentation Feedback Form** (Appendix C): One page feedback form (noting parental Aboriginal or Immigrant background) seeking input on the three questions:
 1. Has the presentation increased your awareness regarding the effects on domestic violence on young people exposed to it?
 2. Has the presentation increased your knowledge about how to help young people who have been exposed to domestic violence?
 3. Suggestions for improving the program.

- ☛ **Pre and Post Teacher Report for Children's Intervention Group** (Grade 5 and younger) (Appendix D)

- ☛ **Pre and Post Student Survey for Child/Youth Intervention Group** (Grade 6+) (Appendix E)

The above two surveys address the same questions. For children who are grade five and younger, teachers are asked to provide feedback. For children/youth in grade six and above, they are asked to self-report. This survey addresses the following: parental Aboriginal or Immigrant background and an assessment of ability to:

1. Get along with others
2. Listen well
3. Express feelings appropriately
4. Resolve conflict peacefully
5. Asking for help when needed
6. Attend school regularly
7. Focus on school work

☛ **Educator Program Feedback Survey** (Appendix F): A survey examining perceptions of :

1. Improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence.
2. Increased awareness regarding the impact of domestic violence.
3. Increased knowledge about how to support children/youth that have been exposed to domestic violence.
4. The level of contribution that the VIP program has made to a school culture change toward non-violence.
5. The increased effectiveness of school-community partnerships as a result of the VIP program.

☛ **Agency Implementation Interview** - March 2008 (Appendix G): An interview aimed at highlighting the process of implementation. Questions included:

1. An overview of the community, including schools.
2. Rationale for agency adoption of the VIP program.
3. Number of presentations to student, staff and other community members conducted to date.
4. Number of child/youth intervention groups conducted to date.
5. Successes with the implementation of the VIP program.
6. Challenges with the implementation of the VIP program.
7. Feedback on VIP materials.

☛ **VIP Impact on Agency Commitment Survey** (Appendix H): Survey to examine the impact of the VIP program on the agency's policy, practice, programs, funding decisions and commitment in relation to providing services to children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence.

☛ **Agency Year-End Interview** - June 2008 (Appendix I): Agency representatives were asked to comment on the future of the VIP program in the community, supports and barriers to program sustainability and perceived impact of VIP on the community.

☛ **School Representative Interview** – June 2008 (Appendix J): School representatives were asked to comment on the perceived need for the VIP

program, impact that the VIP program has made in the school, challenges to implementation and successes of the VIP program.

- ☛ **Agency Site Report** –February and June 2008 (Appendix K): Agencies are asked to complete a report for BCYSTH outlining other funding and support secured, number of partnerships, presentations to staff and students and groups completed. In addition, the June 2008 report asks for feedback around demographics of participants, lessons learned, and the future of VIP.

Data Collection

Data collection was ongoing throughout the 2007-2008 school year. Agencies were asked to utilize the survey tools when doing any presentation for staff, community members (e.g. parents) or students and when conducting child/youth intervention groups. For presentations, agencies were asked, at the conclusion of a presentation, to invite all participants to provide their feedback via a one page survey. For child/youth intervention groups, children who were in grade six or higher were asked to complete a pre-group survey prior to the commencement of the intervention and then a post-group survey at the conclusion of the intervention group. For children who were in grade five or younger, their teachers were asked to complete a pre-group survey and then, at the end, a post-group survey. Interviews with each of the twenty agencies were conducted in March 2008 and then again in the summer of 2008 in order to gather information on the process of the implementation of the VIP program.

Data Analysis

Given that there was a combination between qualitative and quantitative data, data was analyzed in the following manner:

Qualitative Data: In order to capture the key findings from interviews and open response questions, data for each qualitative question was content analyzed separately. Responses were categorized into themes with attention noted as to the frequency of responses.

Quantitative Data: Using SPSS (a statistical computer software program), the various quantitative data gathered from surveys was entered in order that answers could be examined for frequency and where applicable, mean scores could be obtained.

The following tables summarize the data gathered, whether it is qualitative/quantitative and if it is outcome or process data.

Data Gathering Tool	Qualitative/Quantitative Data	Outcome or Process Data
Students (Presentations)	Qualitative	Outcome and Process
Students (Groups)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Outcome
School Staff (Presentation Feedback)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Outcome and Process
Educators (Program Feedback)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Process
Agency Feedback	Qualitative and Quantitative	Process
School representative interviews	Qualitative	Process

The following section provides a detailed look at the findings from this evaluation.

Findings

Introduction

In order to address the process and outcome of the VIP program, questions in each area of the evaluation (capacity building, educator awareness and school climate change and services for students) will be considered in turn. Findings from the data collected will be presented with discussion of these findings presented at the end of each of the three sections.

Capacity Building

VIP is a community-based program that is facilitated by the existing CWWA programs throughout the province. This integration of the program in a complementary way into an existing infrastructure increases the likelihood that sustainability, and ideally expansion, of the program can be achieved. A challenge however, is that as with all non-profit programs, sustainability is an ongoing issue due to the reliance on outside funders for a service that is offered free to those in need.

Has the VIP program increased the capacity of community-based CWWA programs and schools to work together to address needs (including Aboriginal, immigrant and refugee students)?

Through the BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses, the VIP binder and videos were distributed to all CWWA programs throughout the province. In addition, all programs received a copy of "Keeping VIP Alive in Your Community." These resources were highlighted in the BCYSTH Communique newsletter.

Further to the above resources, all CWWA programs received two copies of "Supporting Students Exposed to Domestic Violence." By having two copies, CWWA programs could share one of the copies with schools.

Specific to this evaluation, two training sessions of four days each were offered to the 20 CWWA programs in early 2007. In addition, the eight original pilot sites were extended the offer to attend this training in the event that retraining was needed or new staff was in need of training. Each of the 28 programs was encouraged to invite an educator from the school district to be involved with VIP.

One training was held in Southern B.C. (Vancouver) and another in Northern B.C. (Prince George). In total, there were 9 VIP trainees and 2 school district personnel in the training held Northern B.C. and 19 VIP trainees in the training held in Southern B.C.

This training provided the springboard for CWWA counselors to forge their relationships with the schools in their areas. With few exceptions, developing relationships with the schools was a new domain for CWWA programs.

In addition, 100% of educators (a total of seven) indicated through a general educator survey, that VIP had demonstrated that community-school partnerships can be effective.

“Working with [CWWA counselor] has made a huge difference – especially kids whose families can’t/won’t get them to their counseling appointments.”

-School Representative

Given that it is the first full year of the program, great strides have been made throughout B.C. Throughout the province, 40 schools have formed partnerships with VIP; 3,792 children and youth have participated in presentations to learn more about the prevention of violence; 207 children and youth have received more intensive support through multi-session group interventions; and 939 adults have been educated about domestic violence and its’ impact. Further to this, of the children and youth who have received services through VIP, in several sites a significant proportion of students have been Aboriginal (median 25%), Immigrant (median 10%), visible minority (median 10%) and refugee (1%). It is truly only through such school-community partnerships that the lives of this many students can be touched within one school year.

Is there increased sustainability of VIP programs?

This question must be looked at in two different ways:

1. Given the infancy of VIP and in light of the initial funding that allowed the VIP program to become part of school communities, will VIP continue in each of the communities beyond the initial funding?
2. Will VIP expand in the various communities and beyond? What will be the funding environment?

“For schools to support kids, it seems to be essential that we also find ways for families to connect with agencies who can support them. Rather than having teachers research these options, we were absolutely thrilled to have VIP come to us!”

-School Representative

The first question can be addressed as we look toward the 2008-2009 school year. The second question remains an area that will need to be explored as the coming school year unfolds.

Currently, the VIP facilitators are at different stages of integrating the VIP program into the community. Some are forging relationships with schools for the first time while others have relationships and processes in place and want to continue to refine this process and expand their services while balancing this with limited resources.

Other 2007-2008 Funding

Non-profit agency	\$6,350
Financial institutions	\$16,000
Government	\$2,000
Business	\$5,000
Other	\$9,950
In-Kind	\$7,234

In telephone interviews with VIP facilitators (n = 20) in June-August 2008, it was clear all the communities would like to continue with the VIP program in the Fall of 2008. Seventeen out of twenty (85%) indicated that they would continue VIP in the Fall of 2008. Three communities (15%) indicated that continuation would depend on funding as they have limited resources in their program and must continue to meet the needs of the children and youth through the CWWA program.

During 2007-2008, 14 of the individual agencies were able to secure a total of \$39,300 in other funding and \$7,234 in in-kind funding for the VIP program.

At the end of the year, five representatives from schools were interviewed and all five indicated that they hoped that, at a minimum, the VIP program would continue in its' present form but ideally, they hoped that it could expand over time due to the need for such a community-school partnership program.

Is there a strengthened capacity of government agencies to respond to the needs of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence?

To date, this area is at the beginning stages of development. Although no formal meetings have been held, various ministries have been involved in some way. The following is an excerpt from a report to NCPC in the 2006-2007 year that highlights one successful instance of inter-ministerial collaboration and recognition of VIP:

"At the VIP Video Launch, BCYSTH was able to make contact and profile the VIP Project to various community members. This included RCMP officers from New Westminster and Langley, Minister Ida Chong, Staff and the Superintendent from School District #35, counsellors from the Burnaby School District, staff from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, MLA Mary Polak, Acting Mayor of the City of Langley, City Counsellors from both the City of Langley and the Township of Langley and other community members."

Is there an increased commitment to supporting youth exposed to domestic violence?

In June – August 2008, all 20 agencies were contacted to gather information about the level of their agency's commitment to supporting programs, such as VIP, that address the needs of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence. One agency was unable to answer as due to a delay in the implementation of the VIP program, it was too early to examine issues of organizational change. One agency was not able to respond due to an absence

of the VIP facilitator. What follows are the results of this three question survey completed by 18 agencies.

Question			Comments
Has the VIP Project affected your agency's policy, practice or programs?	Y E S	11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Will focus more on school-based services in future (3 responses) ■ Developing policies/program for school outreach (2 responses) ■ Allocating more hours to VIP (3 responses). ■ Have already increased our time in schools. ■ Looking at creating a whole service area for children. ■ Agency now interacts more with the general public.
	N O	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CWWA has always had an educational role in schools (4 responses) ■ VIP operates separately from the agency as a whole (3 responses).
Has the VIP Project had any effect on your agency's willingness to fund or otherwise support programs addressing the needs of children and youth exposed to domestic violence?	Y E S	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funding is the same but the allocation has changed to focus on more in-school prevention work (6 responses) ■ Agency is looking for more funding to expand VIP Program due to success so far (3 responses). ■ Having "VIP" as a program gives it legitimacy (2 responses). ■ Interest from the outside in terms of financial support has led to increased agency support.
	N O	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Always have been committed to funding/supporting programs for children and youth exposed to domestic violence (2 responses) ■ Limited staffing and funding so agency must keep VIP small and within budget (2 responses). ■ Always have been open to looking at different ways of delivering services. ■ Large organization that does not give extra support to VIP.
Are you aware of any other ways involvement with the VIP Project has affected the level of your organization's commitment to the issue of children and youth's exposure to domestic violence?	Y E S	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organization has allowed flexibility to make changes (2 responses) ■ Schools are more supportive with VIP (a program) which makes it easier to deliver school-based services (3 responses).¹⁴ ■ Community is more aware of the agency (3 responses) ■ Looking at ways of expanding into outlying areas to reach more children. ■ The agency is more sensitive to the fact that the issue of domestic violence is everywhere. ■ More of a focus on prevention. ■ Looking at ways at focusing more on children in services (as opposed to primarily women). ■ Shifting time from office-based counseling to VIP. ■ See the need for the agency to work to get buy-in from the schools. ■ Have a satellite office due to success of VIP.
	N O	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Must seek out funding (grants etc.) as the agency will not provide extra funds. ■ Always have been committed (2 responses).

¹⁴ Five agencies (25%) noted that having a specific program designed for school delivery makes going into schools more legitimate. An additional 20% of agencies have always had a role in school-based education.

Capacity Building: Key Findings

- Partnerships between the CWWA agencies offering VIP and schools have emerged relatively quickly within a short period of time. To date, 40 schools throughout the province have partnerships with VIP.
- Both students and adults have had the benefit of learning about domestic violence and ways that we can prevent violence from becoming a part of our everyday lives.
- VIP has touched the lives of students who come from many ethnic backgrounds through the use of a universal educational approach.
- Despite limited time and resources, VIP programs have been able to raise a small amount of funds in order to contribute to their ongoing work with children and youth in schools.
- In terms of level of commitment, VIP facilitators report high levels of commitment to their work with children and youth exposed to domestic violence. All would like to continue VIP in the 2008-2009 school year. Some of the smaller agencies will need to assess funding as they must also fulfill commitments to the CWWA program.
- VIP facilitators see the tremendous value in reaching more children and youth through provision of services in schools and many agencies are planning to work towards increasing their capacity to offer school-based services.
- Schools report that they want to see the partnership continue and if possible expand due to the success of VIP.
- The areas of government support for services for children and youth exposed to domestic violence has yet to be explored.

Educator Awareness and Student Culture Change

One of the key goals of the VIP program is to increase the awareness and understanding that school staff has about the impact of domestic violence on the lives of children and youth. Through presentations at schools, staff can learn about the CWWA and VIP programs. In addition, VIP staff members are able to provide presentations on specific issues for school staff (e.g., dating violence, safety planning and skills, power and control). During the 2007-2008 school year, all presentations for Educators focused on providing basic information about domestic violence and introducing the CWWA and VIP programs.

Is there an increase in awareness of educators regarding the impact of domestic violence exposure on students?

Respondents: A total of 45 Educators (35 female; 5 male; 5 did not identify gender) from 5 different schools (2 different school districts) provided feedback after attending school-based presentations that focused around introducing school staff to the CWWA and VIP programs. As part of the presentation, many educators had an opportunity to view the VIP DVD entitled “In Every Classroom: Schools as partners in supporting children and youth exposed to domestic violence.” Five Educators had classes containing at least one parent who was Aboriginal and eighteen Educators reported that their classroom had at least one parent who was born outside of Canada. Educators were asked to complete the School Staff Presentation Feedback form (Appendix C) in order to reflect on the learning that occurred as a result of the presentation.

“As a teacher, I found the program very valuable and pertinent. I did not have most of the information or expertise to deliver this curriculum.”

82% of Educators¹⁵ reported that the presentation increased their awareness regarding the effects of domestic violence on young people who are exposed to it. Specifically, Educators (% of Educators providing the example noted in brackets) gave the following examples of the effects that they became aware of as a result of the presentation:

- ☛ The effect on children who witness domestic violence (e.g., behavioral consequences such as anger outbursts, withdrawal from activities and friends) (27%)
- ☛ The high number of children impacted by domestic violence (11%)

Also noted by the Educators were:

- ☛ The services available to help young people, such as the VIP groups (7%)
- ☛ The effectiveness of art in helping children to express their feelings (4%)

¹⁵ Two Educators did not respond to the YES/NO question

- ☛ The different behaviors that are considered to be domestic violence (4%)

In addition, through the completion of an educator program feedback survey (See Appendix F), 15 educators provided feedback addressing whether they felt that VIP has increased their awareness about the impact of domestic violence on children. Of the 15 educators, 12 (80%) educators indicated that VIP has led to an increase in their awareness and 3 (20%) educators indicated that VIP had not increased their awareness. Upon examining the comments of the three educators indicating no change in awareness, two of the three indicated that they already had a significant knowledge about the impact of domestic violence prior to the VIP program due to working with children on this issue.

Is there an increase in educator knowledge regarding how they can recognize and support children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence?

The same group of Educators as above (n=45) provided feedback to address this question through the school staff presentation feedback from (Appendix C). 87% of Educators¹⁶ reported that their knowledge increased as a result of the presentation. Examples of the knowledge that they feel increased are:

- ☛ The agencies and programs, including VIP, that are available that can assist young people who have been exposed to domestic violence (31%)
- ☛ The role of the teacher in being diligent about recognizing the signs of a young person who has been exposed the domestic violence (9%)
- ☛ The importance of not making assumptions about behavior before considering the child's experiences (4%)
- ☛ The importance of young people feeling that they have a safe place to be such as in the classroom (4%)
- ☛ The value of educating all young people about domestic violence (4%)
- ☛ The importance of reinforcing the message that "The fighting is never your fault." (2%)
- ☛ The importance of providing young people a chance to be with others who have been exposed to domestic violence (2%)

In addition, through the completion of an educator program feedback survey (See Appendix F), 14 educators provided feedback addressing whether they felt that VIP has increased their knowledge on how to identify and support students exposed to domestic violence. Thirteen (93%) educators indicated that VIP had increased their knowledge and one (7%) educators indicated that VIP had not increased their knowledge level due to extensive prior knowledge of the issue of domestic violence.

"Once this program was implemented, I was better able to lead discussions and ensure that my students had their needs and issues addressed."

¹⁶ Four Educators did not respond to the YES/NO question

A further question on the general educator survey asked whether the VIP program has increased the ability of the school to identify students exposed to domestic violence based on their behavior and performance. Fourteen educators responded to this question. Nine (64%) indicated that VIP had increased this ability whereas 5 (36%) indicated that they were not sure if VIP had increased the ability of the school to identify students. Two educators commented that they would like to see a professional development day that dealt specifically with issues of domestic violence.

Has there been a change within school culture toward non-violence and prevention of violence?

Through the completion of an educator program feedback survey (See Appendix F), 15 educators provided feedback addressing whether they felt that there had been a change within the school culture. Thirteen (87%) of the 15 indicated that there was a positive change toward non-violence and the prevention of violence. One educator responded ‘no’ however offered the comment, “It’s only a handful of students getting the education and support.” The remaining educator was unsure of whether there had been a difference and offered a similar comment – “Because the program was only implemented in two of the seven grade eight classes, I am unsure what kind of impact it had on the climate of the whole school.”

“As a result of VIP there has been more talking, more thinking.”

School Representative

Educator Awareness and Student Culture Change: Key Findings

“By bringing forward the issue of abuse and violence in a safe way in the classroom, every child knows that there are other adults out there who can help and that he/she is not responsible for solving the issues.”

School Representative

- Through presentations, over 80% of educators indicated that their level of awareness of issue of domestic violence has increased.
- Over 85% of educators indicated that they feel more able to recognize and support children who have been exposed to domestic violence.
- Over 85% of educators felt that as a result of VIP, the climate of their school had changed in the positive direction.
- Educators expressed an interest in learning more about domestic violence, a topic that is often not talked about in schools due to the lack of knowledge educators have about this domain.

Services for Students

Direct service to students in schools is one of the main goals of the VIP program. Currently, there is a paucity of services for children in need of emotional support due to ongoing cutbacks in the educational system. Furthermore, many families are not able to access outside services due to the high cost and/or lack of availability in their area and other barriers (e.g., transportation). Children who have been exposed to domestic violence represent a challenge for educators as they have not received training on how to best work with these students in order to best support their social-emotional and educational needs. By forming a community-school partnership, students in need of support can receive the services and educators can receive support on how to best promote the positive development of these children and youth.

Is there improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence?

Through the completion of an Educator program feedback survey (See Appendix F), 15 educators provided feedback regarding whether they felt that there is improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence. Fourteen (93%) of the educators indicated that they felt that there was improvement. (One educator was not sure if there had been improved access). Comments provided by the educators include:

“The in-school support is great.”

“Based on the students’ positive reactions and feedback to the program, the awareness of services has improved.”

“Children are exposed to violence on a daily basis – t.v., computer games, music etc. This project should be available to all kids, not just the ones who have been exposed to family violence. Too many children think violence is cool.”

School staff member

Has there been a strengthening of student (including Aboriginal, immigrant/refugee students) ability in the following areas: getting along with other students, listening, expressing feelings, resolving conflict non-violently, seeking help when needed, attending school regularly and focusing on school work?

In order to address this question, data was derived from the following:

1. Feedback from students (grade six and above) and teachers (for students younger than grade six) who participated in groups designed for students who have been exposed to domestic violence.

Student Group Surveys

Through the VIP program, schools were offered presentations or small group work with children who had been exposed to domestic violence. For this evaluation, four VIP counselors returned feedback that will be considered in this report. Feedback that was agency designed is highlighted in the report. Feedback that is evaluation designed is analyzed and presented in this section.

Group	Data Returned	Number Of Participants	Analyzed or highlights Included?
One	VIP Evaluation forms (pre and post) Agency designed forms (pre and post)	8 7	ANALYZED HIGHLIGHTS
Two	VIP Evaluation forms (pre and post)	5	ANALYZED
Three	VIP Evaluation forms (pre and post)	6 ¹⁷	ANALYZED
Four	Agency designed post feedback	3	HIGHLIGHTS

There were 19 children and youth who completed a pre and post VIP group survey (See Appendices D & E). Six of these participants were older than grade six and 13 were younger than grade six. There were 6 boys and 13 girls.

The pre and post group survey addressed 7 questions with an area for additional comments. For participants younger than grade six, the seven questions were completed at pre and post by the teacher. For participants older than grade 6, three additional questions were asked that addressed impact of the VIP participation as well as a question about whether one or more parent was Aboriginal and if one or more parent was born outside of Canada. Among the six older participants, one participant indicated that at least one parent was Aboriginal and two indicated that they were not sure. For the question as to whether at least one parent was born outside of Canada, two participants indicated that they had at least one parent born outside of Canada and two were not sure.

Highlight Activity

One group for girls worked on making a video in which all the girls shared their thoughts and opinions about some of the key issues facing girls today.

In order to examine change from the beginning of the group (n=19) to the end of group, the ratings of seven statements are considered. (Note that teachers completed the ratings for younger children so statements began with “This student...” however they are presented here as “I.....”).

¹⁷ In this group, there appeared to be 15 youth in the group however not all youth completed a post test so change could not be assessed for many of the group participants. In addition one agency included a pre and post survey that was based on number of people in the class raising their hands to agree with the statements. This was not included due to the unreliability of the data given that children were not able to answer confidentially.

Each statement was rated on a 5 point-Likert scale (1 = “agree strongly”; 2 = “agree somewhat”; 3 = “neutral”; 4 = “disagree somewhat”; 5 = “disagree strongly”). Thus higher scores indicate greater disagreement with the statement.

Statement	Average Mean score at pre-group	Average Mean score at post-group	Improvement/decrease or no change
I get along well with other students.	2.6	2.6	No change
I am able to listen well.	3.0	3.1	Slight decrease
I am able to express feelings without getting hurt or scared.	3.2	3.1	Improvement
I am able to resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt or scared.	2.8	3.0	Slight decrease
I am able to ask for help when needed.	3.0	2.8	Improvement
I have no problems with school attendance.	2.5	2.3	Improvement
I am able to focus on school work.	3.3	3.1	Improvement

Overall, teacher and participants indicated small gains in four areas along with slightly lower ratings from pre to post group in two areas and no change in one area. Given that the groups are short in duration (6-8 sessions) and the focus is working with children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence, one would not expect to see dramatic change during such a short period. That results indicating that some gains have been made are promising and speak to the benefit that participants can experience as a result of participating in groups in which important interpersonal and intrapersonal topics are explored.

The six older students were asked three additional questions at the post group survey. These results are presented below.

Question	YES	NO	Not sure
Did VIP increase your awareness and understanding of how it affects young people when they are exposed to domestic violence?	4	1	1
Did VIP make you feel more able to support other young people who have been exposed to domestic violence?	5	0	1
Are there other ways VIP made a difference in your life?	2	1	3

Two agencies developed their own forms for evaluating their groups. Key findings

In one agency developed pre and post survey, girls reported increases from the beginning of the group to the end of the group in...

- I get along well with other kids.
- I usually feel safe and happy.
- I believe that I have the right to personal safety.
- I can seek help when needed.

These findings are powerful given that the girls in this group reported levels of support from their families that were in the neutral range at the beginning of the group and at the conclusion of the group.

In another agency feedback form that asked for children's opinions on four topics (anger, abuse, safety, and healthy relationships), participants reporting liking....

- Making an anger volcano
- Learning about the cycle of abuse
- Practicing using the phone to call for help
- Learning about healthy relationships by watching a movie.

Is there an increase in knowledge about factors contributing to healthy relationships?

In order to answer this question, feedback from students as to the learning that occurred through presentations conducted to classrooms of students was examined. These presentations covered a variety of topics directly related to promoting an understanding of those factors that support or impede the development of healthy relationships. In addition to talking to the students in order that they gain an understanding of domestic violence and the inter-related issues (e.g., self-esteem, help-seeking, cycles of violence), one of two DVDs was used in most of the presentations:

Very Important People: Elementary student's responses to children's exposure to domestic violence.

It IS a Big Deal: Youth responses to being exposed to domestic violence

Both of these DVDs explored the impact that domestic violence has on children and youth (i.e., children and youth tend to withdraw or act out). Key messages are emphasized during the DVDs: violence is not the fault of children/youth; many children and youth are impacted by domestic violence and it is not a good idea to intervene. An overview of the role of VIP is provided so that children and youth can see that help is available and is a positive choice.

“Our students come from homes where, for many, poverty, basic needs, emotional and economic stability are simply not everyday realities. As much as their parents may love their children dearly, sometimes the day-to-day survival becomes overwhelming. At these times, parents may get angry with each other and with their kids. It's difficult to understand why someone who loves you one minute would be yelling at you the next. VIP helped deliver the message loud and clear: IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT WHEN PARENTS FIGHT.”

School Representative

Presentation Feedback

Students who participated in presentations (60-90 minute presentations, with the exception of one classroom presentation that was 30 minutes in length) designed to provide universal education to students about issues related to violence were asked to complete a brief student presentation feedback form (see Appendix B) in order to assess the learning that occurred for them as a result of the classroom based presentations.

Respondents: In total, 532 students completed a presentation feedback form. These students were from four different sites in the province. Of the 532 students:

- ☞ 77 students were in grades six and seven
- ☞ 109 students were in grade eight
- ☞ 89 students were in grade nine
- ☞ 229 students were in grade ten
- ☞ 28 students were in grades eleven and twelve

NB: Grades six and seven; grades eleven and twelve are presented together as presentations were consistently done with the combined grades.

A key strength of the VIP is the tailoring of presentations to meet the needs of students in a particular school. This flexibility results in a varied array of topics that are covered during these presentations.

The following table outlines the topics that were covered at each grade level (note that not every topic is covered in one presentation – on average seven topics were covered) for the different grade groups. Topics covered also

depended on the CWWA counselor who was facilitating the presentation and the requests of schools.

Topics Presented By Grade Group

Topic	Grades 6/7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grades 11/12
Understanding feelings		X		X	
Expressing anger		X	X	X	
Assertiveness skills		X		X	
Forms of violence and abuse	X	X	X	X	X
Introduction to the VIP program	X	X	X	X	X
Introduction to the CWWA program	X	X	X	X	X
Icebreaker with class		X	X	X	X
Dating violence		X	X	X	
Gender roles and stereotypes			X	X	X
Violence in the media				X	
Impacts of being exposed to domestic violence	X	X	X	X	
Safety planning and skills	X	X	X	X	
Personal boundaries			X	X	X
Self-esteem		X	X	X	
Unhealthy vs. healthy relationships		X	X	X	X
Systematic forms of violence (e.g., racism, homophobia)				X	
Power and Control		X	X	X	X
Healthy sexuality		X		X	
Bullying		X	X	X	
How to help a friend who is being abused			X	X	
How to help a friend who is being abusive				X	
How to connect with help and supports	X	X	X	X	

Students were asked to respond to three questions:

1. What was the most useful part of the presentation?
2. What was one thing you learned about that was good to know from this presentation?
3. Do you have any suggestions on what to add to the presentation and on how to make it more useful?

All the answers from the students for each question were analyzed by grade the following grade groups: grades 6/7, 8, 9, 10, 11/12 in order to capture the emerging themes. By examining responses by grades, developmental differences can be seen. This can inform program delivery planning. After each table which summarizes the number of student responses by theme, selected comments that highlight each of the themes are outlined. Note that the top three response areas from each grade group are shaded.

**What was the most useful part of the presentation?
(Total of 558 comments)**

Key Learning Themes	Grade 6/7 (84 comments)	Grade 8 (108 comments)	Grade 9 (90 comments)	Grade 10 (241 comments)	Grade 11/12 (33 comments)
Information regarding abuse/anger/violence	32 (38.1%)	42 (38.9%)	52 (57.8%)	50 (20.7%)	16 (48.5%)
Video	7 (8.3%)	11(10.2%)	3 (3.3%)	69 (28.6%)	0
Knowing that there is help available (e.g., resources and people who care)	2 (2.4%)	10 (9.3%)	13 (14.4%)	37 (15.4%)	6 (18.2%)
Statistics about abuse	1 (1.2%)	2 (1.9%)	1 (1.1%)	27 (11.2%)	0
Learning that it is not good to intervene	5 (6%)	0	0	7 (2.9%)	0
Learning that it's never your fault	11(13.1%)	0	0	3 (1.2%)	0
Learning about the impact of abuse on people	2 (2.4%)	2 (1.9%)	0	3 (1.2%)	2 (6.1%)
Learning about what to do in an abusive situation	2 (2.4%)	4 (3.7%)	4 (4.4%)	8 (3.3%)	1(3%)
Knowing that you are not alone	3 (3.6%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (1.1%)	4 (1.7)	1 (3%)
Engaging in the activities (discussions, games) during the presentation	9 (10.7%)	15 (13.9%)	9 (10%)	24 (10%)	5 (15%)
Learning about myself	0	8 (7.4%)	0	0	0
"all of it"; "everything"	2 (2.4%)	5 (4.6%)	1 (1.1%)	7 (2.9%)	0
Prizes and treats	0	5 (4.6%)	5 (5.6%)	0	0
Other (e.g. "understanding"; "control your beliefs"; "how to make the world a better place")	8 (9.5%)	3 (2.8%)	1 (1.1%)	2 (0.8%)	2 (6.1%)

Examples of Comments:

What was the most useful part of the presentation?

Key Learning Themes	Examples of Comments
Video	<p>“Movie was good and very effective.”</p> <p>“Video was very thought-provoking.”</p> <p>“Video because you could see a person’s point of view who had experienced abuse firsthand.”</p>
Information regarding abuse	<p>“Finding out what a healthy family looks like.”</p> <p>“Discussing the different kinds of abuse.”</p> <p>“Going through the signs of an abusive relationship.”</p> <p>“The cycle of violence”</p> <p>“How you can stop violence and the effects on children.”</p>
Knowing that there is help available	<p>“Learning about the help groups available and the phone numbers”</p> <p>“If it ever happened to me, I would have help”</p> <p>“Learning about the transition house.”</p>
Statistics about abuse	<p>“Now I know how common it is.”</p> <p>“Information about soldiers and domestic violence. 101 soldiers have died but over 500 women have been murdered in Canada.”</p>
Learning that it is not good to intervene	<p>“When parents are fighting, don’t try to stop them.”</p> <p>“Keep yourself safe.”</p>
Learning that it’s never your fault	<p>“It’s not your fault.”</p> <p>“It’s not my fault.”</p>
Learning about the impact of abuse on people	<p>“Abuse makes you jumpy.”</p> <p>“Knowing how violence can affect someone’s life and communication.”</p> <p>“It was really descriptive to show others how one may feel.”</p> <p>“How domestic abuse has a ripple effect.”</p>
Learning about what to do in an abusive situation	<p>“Group discussions about family relationships, abuse and how youth deal with it.”</p> <p>“Different types of ways you can deal with things.”</p>
Knowing that you are not alone	<p>“I’m not alone.”</p> <p>“You’re not alone.”</p>
Engaging in the activities during the presentation	<p>“Brainstorming in groups”</p> <p>“Group discussions”</p>
Learning about myself	<p>“Learning that I don’t have to keep my feelings caged inside of me.”</p> <p>“I learned that I have a voice.”</p>
Other	<p>“”I found it very useful because I could relate to this talk because my parents argue a lot.”</p> <p>“I know a lot about abuse at home and in the school.”</p> <p>“Made me realize that I am lucky that I don’t have this in my family.”</p>

**What was the one thing that you learned about in the presentation that is good to know?
(Total of 524 comments)**

Key Learning Themes	Grade 6/7 (72 comments)	Grade 8 (104 comments)	Grade 9 (80 comments)	Grade 10 (240 comments)	Grade 11/12 (28 comments)
Help is available/Places to go	6 (8.3%)	17 (16.3%)	14 (17.5%)	88 (36.7%)	10 (35.7%)
Information about violence/abuse/anger/dating rights	32 (44.4%)	39 (37.5%)	54 (67.5%)	67 (27.9%)	11 (39.3%)
Statistics about violence	0	6 (5.8%)	3 (3.8%)	24 (10%)	3 (10.7%)
“It’s never your fault”	13 (18.1%)	3 (2.9%)	2 (2.5%)	16 (6.7%)	0
You are not alone. Others experience abuse.	6 (8.3%)	3 (2.9%)	2 (2.5%)	20 (8.3%)	1 (3.6%)
Never intervene	2 (2.8%)	4 (3.7%)	1 (1.3%)	16 (6.7%)	0
The impacts that domestic violence has on youth.	3 (4.2%)	6 (5.8%)	1 (1.3%)	6 (2.5%)	1 (3.6%)
Learned about myself (e.g., “need to work on my confidence)	2 (2.8%)	12 (11.5%)	0	0	0
That others recognize my qualities	6 (8.3%)	0	0	0	0
“All of it”	0	3 (2.9%)	0	0	1 (3.6%)
Other (e.g., “You should feel safe.”; “How to treat a girl better.”; “I’m in control”)	2 (2.8%)	11 (10.6%)	3 (3.8%)	3 (1.3%)	1 (3.6%)

“I haven’t personally experienced domestic violence but I’ve been pretty close to someone who has. Also, I used to live in an area where my neighbours fought all the time in their yard in the street - that was pretty scary.”
- Grade 10 high school student

“I learned that if you have experienced abuse, you don’t want to bottle it up and keep it to yourself.”
- Grade 10 high school student

Examples of Comments:

What was the one thing that you learned about in the presentation that is good to know?

Key Learning Themes	Examples of Comments
Help is available	<p>“Knowing that there are people out there you can trust and you aren’t the only one out there.”</p> <p>“More than one number to call. Depends on what you want, you’ll dial a different number.”</p> <p>“There is help out there.”</p> <p>“Always someone out there to help you.”</p> <p>“You need to let someone know if you are being abused.”</p>
Information about violence/anger/dating relationship rights	<p>“All the different types of abuse.”</p> <p>“Signs of an abusive relationship’</p> <p>“Everyone suffers from abuse in relationships”</p> <p>“More about the rights of a person when in a relationship.”</p> <p>“Why people stay in an abusive relationship.”</p>
Statistics about violence	<p>“3 in 5 kids in each class have experienced or seen violence.”</p> <p>“Surprised me that women get abused 9 times before they decide to leave their husband.”</p> <p>“More common than you think.”</p>
“It’s never your fault”	<p>“No matter what, it’s never your fault, even if your name occurs in the conversation”</p> <p>“to know it’s not my fault.”</p>
You are not alone. Others experience abuse.	<p>“You’re really not alone and you’re not the only person going through this.”</p> <p>“I’m not alone.”</p> <p>“That I’m not the only one that gets abused by my dad.”</p>
Never intervene	<p>“Not to try to stop my parents from arguing/fighting and never get in between them.”</p> <p>“Not to intervene”</p>
The impacts that domestic violence has on youth.	<p>“How people act out when they live in abusive homes.”</p> <p>“How devastating it is for individuals.”</p>
Learned about myself	<p>“Learning what choices you have and what choices you don’t have.”</p> <p>“I am dominant.”</p>
That others recognize my qualities	<p>“That other people recognize my qualities.”</p> <p>“What some people thought about me.”</p>
Other	<p>“That you should feel safe.”</p> <p>“That you should take more time to listen to people, don’t criticize.”</p>

**What can be added to the presentation to make it more useful?
(Total of 203 comments)**

Key Learning Themes	Grade 6/7 (16 comments)	Grade 8 (48 comments)	Grade 9 (42 comments)	Grade 10 (81 comments)	Grade 11/12 (16 comments)
Real life examples	1 (6.3%)	1 (2.1%)	2 (4.8%)	11 (13.6%)	1 (6.3%)
More facts and information	2 (12.5%)	10 (20.8%)	7 (16.7%)	21 (26%)	2 (12.5%)
More opportunity for students to share their stories; more interaction	1 (6.3%)	4 (8.3%)	3 (7.1%)	10 (12.3%)	3 (18.8%)
Improvements to the video	0	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.4%)	9 (11.1%)	1 (6.3%)
Strategies to deal with abuse	0	2 (4.2%)	1 (2.4%)	1 (1.2%)	0
Longer video/more videos	4 (25%)	6 (12.5%)	3 (7.1%)	2 (2.5%)	0
Group activities		1 (2.1%)	0	3 (3.7%)	0
More engaging (e.g. "more fun"; "skits")	2 (12.5%)	4 (8.3%)	4 (9.5%)	5 (6.2%)	4 (25%)
Prizes/candy	4 (25%)	9 (18.8%)	9 (21.4%)	2 (2.5%)	0
More visual aids	1 (6.3%)	1 (2.1%)	3 (7.1%)	1 (1.2%)	0
Games	0	4 (8.3%)	4 (9.5%)	3 (3.7%)	4 (25%)
Longer presentation	0	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.4%)	3 (3.7%)	0
More direct	0	1 (2.1%)	0	3 (3.7%)	0
Less biased (e.g., "Men get abused too.")	0	0	0	1 (1.2%)	1 (6.3%)
Other (e.g., "less worksheets")	1 (6.3%)	3 (6.3%)	4 (9.5%)	6 (7.4%)	0

"I was really interested in this because I myself as a child went through this with my parents and I am currently in foster care. When you said that the children would hear this more than seeing it, I found that really true because I would normally hear rather than see it....."

- Grade 10 high school student

"I think the topic should be discussed in school a lot more."

- Grade 10 high school student

Examples of Comments:

What can be added to the presentation to make it more useful

Key Themes	Examples of Comments
Real life examples	<p>“A true story. Success stories.”</p> <p>“More interviews with people who have experienced it before and not obvious acting.”</p>
More facts and information	<p>“Not just dad-mom, have child mom abuse.”</p> <p>“Talk about how physical abuse is.”</p> <p>“Talk more about emotions.”</p>
More opportunity for students to share their stories; more interaction	<p>“Take ten minutes out of the period to let kids tell their stories related to the topic.”</p> <p>“ More class participation.”</p> <p>“Leave more room for discussion.”</p>
Improvements to the video	<p>“Better actors for the videos.”</p> <p>“Video should be a little more intense so it can really send the message across.”</p> <p>“Movie should cover more types of abuse.”</p>
Strategies to deal with abuse	<p>“Demonstrations of abuse and then resolving the problem.”</p> <p>“Teach how to act around someone with family problems.”</p>
Longer video/more videos	<p>“ More videos”</p> <p>“Longer video”</p>
Group activities	<p>“More group activities.”</p> <p>“Let people choose their own groups.”</p> <p>“Do some role playing.”</p>
More engaging	<p>“More dynamic.”</p> <p>“More interesting.”</p>
Prizes	<p>“Candy as prizes.”</p>
More visual aids	<p>“Show pictures of things.”</p>
Games	<p>“More games.”</p>
Longer presentation	<p>“Bit more time and not so rushed.”</p> <p>“Maybe make it three days, not two.”</p>
More direct	<p>“More to the point. Life isn’t candy-coated.”</p>
Other	<p>“You could be more blunt and to the point. Don’t sugar-coat things or skirt them – it won’t help us if you do.”</p> <p>“Less of the card stuff.”</p> <p>“It was wonderful.”</p> <p>“It was fantastic.”</p> <p>“It was a well-developed presentation. Keep it up.”</p>

Services for Students: Key Findings

- 93% of teachers who completed an Educator Program feedback survey indicated that services from children and youth exposed to domestic violence have improved.
- Youth who participated in group interventions experienced modest gains in four areas (expressing feelings without getting hurt or scared; asking for help when needed; focusing on school work and attending school regularly).
- Youth who participated in the presentations reported a great deal of knowledge gain as to what constitutes unhealthy relationships vs. healthy relationships.
- Youth who participated in the presentations reported that the most helpful parts of the presentations were: learning about violence, abuse and anger; learning about where to go for help should they be in an abusive situation or know someone else who is in that situation; hearing that it is never the child/youth's fault and knowing that they are never alone (help is there for them and others have experienced this abuse).
- Youth enjoyed having a chance to share ideas and engage in discussions with their peers around issues of violence and violence prevention.

Interpretation of Findings

The VIP program is in its' infancy stage yet in the last year 5000 children, youth and adults (school staff, district staff, PAC, MCFD staff, child and youth workers) have participated in VIP activities throughout the province of British Columbia. These VIP programs are delivered by trained CWWA counselors who are experts in working with children and youth exposed to domestic violence. CWWAs have shifted their role to include along side their longstanding work of office-based services for children and youth, their other role as VIP facilitator in the schools. This expansion of their role exemplifies their commitment to trying to impact the lives of more children, youth and adults.

Capacity Building

The strength of community-school partnerships cannot be overstated. Increasingly more schools are recognizing that in order to best serve students in schools, there needs to be the inclusion of partnerships (John Hopkins University, Centre on School, Family and Community Partnerships, 2008). Schools cannot and should not be expected to be able to address all the needs of children in the absence of outside support. Partnerships allow the opportunity for schools to receive training and support from experts in order that they can increase their capacity to work effectively with their students. At the same time, support can be provided to students by trained professionals who are experts in their field. Specifically for the merits of this report, experts in the area of domestic violence prevention and intervention.

By June 2008, the VIP had formed active partnerships with 40 schools. These schools found throughout the province educate a diverse student body, including students who are Aboriginal, immigrant, refuge and visible minorities. Educators who provided feedback all indicated that the collaborations achieved through the VIP program have increased the capacity of schools and communities to work together to address the needs of children and youth.

Funding for such programs appears to always be an issue. Despite little time or resources, various VIP programs have raised a modest sum among them throughout this past year – close to \$40,000 in funding and \$7,000 in in-kind funding. The uncertainty of funding poses many challenges for programs that are service-based and relational based. First, schools can be reluctant to adopt such a program if they view it as being available for only one year. Educator buy-in is greatly strengthened if they know that good programs will be present over the long-run. Developing a process for services to be effectively integrated takes time and commitment from both school and community organizations. In the absence of funding, services can sometimes be delivered on a more ad hoc basis thus reducing the overall positive impact. VIP facilitators that had pre-existing relationships with schools prior to the VIP program had the greatest ease in working with schools and developing systems of program implementation. For example, one VIP facilitator delivers the program to all the grade nine students in the school. It is an accepted process and has been effective.

Second, uncertain funding does not allow for long-term planning in order to expand the program. At the end of June 2008, school representatives indicated that they hoped that at a minimum, VIP would provide services at the same level but they hoped that the program would expand in order to address the needs in their school that existing school-based staff cannot address. If there was sustainable funding, schools could plan with community agencies as to the best way to integrate the program into the schools over the course of the year so that the maximum number of students would receive services.

The next step is to engage government agencies in order to raise awareness about the VIP program and the role that it plays in the schools in working with children and youth in both a prevention and intervention capacity. By highlighting the effective school-community partnerships that have emerged, the benefits that students and school staff have experienced from their involvement with VIP, and the critical way in which VIP can assist in the healthy development of B.C. children and youth, a case can be made for increased levels of support.

There is absolutely no doubt as to the high level of commitment that VIP facilitators have in providing education and support for children, youth and schools. They have always provided services to children in the community. VIP complements and enhances the work being done by providing agencies another avenue to reach more children and youth by going to schools and thereby eliminating barriers to service. Over half of the agencies indicated that as a result of the VIP, there has been a greater focus on school-based services and that these agencies are highly supportive of this resulting shift. A small number of agencies (20%) in the province have had a history of doing work in schools and they will continue in this manner. The benefits of going to the setting where most B.C. children can be found on a given day and providing both universal and targeted services is a powerful mechanism for impacting the lives of many over the long term.

Educator Awareness and School Cultural Change

Educators wear many hats in schools however their training revolves around instructional issues with minimal exposure to child and adolescent development and no exposure to working with children impacted by violence and abuse. For an educator, it can be overwhelming to address the high needs of some of the children. Without sufficient training, the fear is that more harm will be done by giving students incorrect messages. This leads to an avoidance of certain topics within the classroom and in the school. Coupled with this is the fear that if difficult issues are brought up, the child or youth may not be able to cope and the educator may not have the skills to help that student reintegrate and function in an adaptive manner. Most schools in B.C. have some access to a school counselor although their time is very limited due to large caseloads. Elementary school counselors often have the responsibility of serving multiple schools. This makes it very difficult for them to provide direct ongoing services or deliver

prevention education. In addition, not all counselors feel comfortable working squarely in the area of violence prevention and intervention as it may not be an area of expertise for them. VIP can assist in this role given their community presence and knowledge and skills in this subject area.

Through presentations to educators throughout the province, VIP assisted in increasing awareness of the impact that domestic violence has on children and youth. 82% of educators¹⁸ indicated that presentations increased their awareness. This highlights the need for greater education efforts so that teachers can gain some understanding of the area of domestic violence. It is necessary that we help educators reduce their discomfort of the topic so that children and youth can find solace in their support.

87 % of educators¹⁹ also reported that as a result of the presentations, they have increased their knowledge about how to recognize and support children and youth exposed to domestic violence. Furthermore, at a year-end survey, 87% of educators felt that the VIP program had influenced school culture toward non-violence and prevention of violence.

The high percentages of educators who indicated positive growth in awareness and skills as a result of the VIP program speaks directly to the need to provide more educators with opportunities to learn about the issue of domestic violence and the impact that it has on children's social-emotional and academic functioning. Over the years, school staff will come into contact with thousands of children and with the knowledge and skills they can learn through VIP, they can become more sensitive to the needs of the children and youth in their care. These children and youth can then in turn get much needed support so that they can experience success in their school and personal environments.

Services for Students

93% of educators indicated that VIP has increased the level of service that children and youth exposed to domestic violence have in order to assist them to effectively cope. In total 209 children and youth participated in intervention groups throughout the year. These groups focused on specific issues of domestic violence but also other issues around violence, self-esteem, effective coping skills. Each group was tailored, in collaboration with school input, to best meet the needs of that specific group of students. Findings from those participants who were involved in the evaluation indicated modest growth in some areas, no change or a slight decrease in others.

¹⁸ In the Educator program feedback survey, a year end survey, 80% of educators indicated that the VIP program has increased their awareness.

¹⁹ In the Educator program feedback survey, a year end survey, 93% of educators indicated that the VIP program has increased their knowledge about how to recognize and support children and youth exposed to domestic violence.

The group surveys need some discussion as there is some question as to whether one evaluation form can accurately capture the learning that occurred from pre to post group. For this evaluation, standard questions were used for all groups and this brings up a couple issues. First, children and youth who participate in intervention groups have moved beyond their involvement in preventative services and hence can be seen as having more significant distress which manifests through internalizing and/or externalizing problems. Although only modest results were found, one would not expect to find dramatic results after one group intervention. Second, survey tools are best designed to fit the focus of the group so that it is the learning that occurs in the group that is the focus of measurement. This is of course challenging since every group is unique but in order to truly examine impact, this would be a necessary step. In fact, many of the VIP facilitators chose not to use the prepared evaluation tool as they felt, after designing their group that the survey tool did not address the content that was to be presented in the group.

In future evaluations, this survey will have to be closely attended to so that true impact can be measured. This challenge was in many ways unanticipated as, at the outset, it was assumed that groups would address very similar issues. After working with schools in the collaboration process, it was clear that groups would vary. For example, some schools did not feel ready to have a group that focused solely on domestic violence and as a result had groups that addressed more broad issues of violence. This relates directly to the need to consider school readiness as it relates to having more open discussions about the often silent topic of domestic violence. For older youth, when more general questions were asked about the impact of VIP groups, 67%²⁰ indicated that VIP had increased their awareness and understanding of how domestic violence impacts people's lives. This indicates that VIP has made an important contribution to the lives of youth.

In addition to group interventions, VIP did presentations for 3,792 students in elementary, middle and high schools on issues related to domestic violence. Of the 3,792, a total of 532 students participated in the evaluation (14% of presentations were done in elementary schools and 86% were done in high schools). Feedback from students indicated that they placed high value on learning about issues of violence, anger and abuse. Even at the end of the presentation, a significant number indicated that they would like to learn more information. Older students increasingly valued the information about where to go for help should they or a friend experience abuse in a relationship. This increase in the indication that the resources are important information coincides with the increase in dating during the later high school years.

The learning that students indicated as a result of participating in a presentation was varied and powerful. One of the key messages that VIP passes along to children and youth is that domestic violence is "not your fault." In the feedback,

²⁰ 17% indicated "not sure" and 17% indicated "no"

many students indicated that this was an important message that they learned. Some students indicated that they now know “It’s not my fault.” Indicating that amongst these groups of students were included children and youth who have experienced domestic violence. This finding was very significant when one considers that not only are the children and youth impacted by domestic violence receiving that message but so too are all of their peers. This increase in understanding builds the capacity for student dynamics to change in a positive direction. The unspoken becomes spoken and isolation is reduced among students.

VIP has experienced great successes in a very short time. The program is not just about addressing a moment in time issue but rather aims to promote a violence free environment and the development of healthy relationships over the long term. We know from extant research that breaking the cycle of violence is critical for individuals and the society at large. By working with schools, VIP can impact not only the current generation of students but also the generations that follow.

The Future Needs of VIP

Each agency, on the year end site report, was asked to comment on the future directions and needs of the VIP program. Nineteen agencies²¹ offered feedback on the directions and needs of the program that they felt were important.

What would you like to see happen with the VIP program in the future?

Theme	Number (%) of 19 Agencies Indicating this theme	Quotes
Funding issue	8 (42%)	<p>“Full concrete funding’</p> <p>“Funding for time and travel”</p> <p>“Additional funding from government to promote and deliver VIP.”</p> <p>“We are a victim of our own success. We would like more funding to hire more support staff so we can accommodate more schools.”</p> <p>“Continued funding and a commitment made to include school outreach and presentations as an ongoing part of CWWA work.”</p> <p>“Additional funding available to the agencies who are going to the schools doing the work.”</p> <p>“I would also hope that the VIP project would continue to support communities with funding in order that these programs can be offered.”</p> <p>“Increased funding”</p>
Expand in our community	6 (32%)	<p>“Get into high schools.”</p> <p>“Have teachers want presentations in their class.”</p> <p>“Expansion of grade 8 presentations and more groups.”</p> <p>“Have VIP groups offered however District is not ready yet.”</p> <p>“Continue to increase partnerships with schools in the community.”</p> <p>“Tailoring the program to fit the unique nature of our community”</p>
Adoption of VIP by Ministry of Education and Boards of Education	4 (21%)	<p>“Official support for the program.”</p> <p>“Continued advocacy for VIP take place at the provincial level to help with individual sites gaining access and credibility at the school Trustee and District Board Levels”</p> <p>“I would like BCYSTH to create a link with the school boards...”</p> <p>“...for more provincial BCYSTH Ministry of Education Collaboration”</p>
Training opportunities	2 (11%)	<p>“Continued training”</p>
Networking among VIP facilitators	2 (11%)	<p>“An opportunity for those of us who have done VIP to reconnect and look at what people have done, what they found useful or not, resources and brainstorming around challenges.”</p> <p>“Communication between VIP sites facilitated by the BCYSTH.”</p>

²¹ One agency had not implemented VIP during the 2007-2008 school year and thus was not able to comment.

Theme	Number (%) of 19 Agencies Indicating this theme	Quotes
Integration of VIP in a specific course.	2 (11%)	“VIP has been integrated into the Planning 9 Course at [high school]. We will continue this in the 2008/2009 school year.” “More front work provincially by BCYSTH – like getting an agreement that all grade 5 (an example) students will receive awareness presentation/package.”
More school counselor involvement	1(5%)	“The counselor runs a school-based program and deals with some of these issues.”
BCYSTH general support	1(5%)	“Continued support”
Resources	1(5%)	“ Full PowerPoint presentations for various audiences”

“Teachers are reluctant to offer services that may not actually exist or may not be there for longer than a year.”

School Representative

Lessons Learned

Through the course of implementing the VIP program, agencies noted several key lessons that demonstrate challenges to be overcome and successes that have been experienced. The following summarizes these important lessons to be considered as the VIP program moves forward.

Challenges

- There is always the challenge of finding enough time to plan and deliver the program.
- There is not enough staff to deliver the program. CWWA time is quite limited given that many are part time and they have other responsibilities within the agency.
- Not having the endorsement of the Ministry of Education sometimes creates a need to work harder to convince senior people at the school board level that the issue of domestic violence is one that needs to be addressed with children and youth and that it is best done in schools where a preventative approach can be taken. At the school level, sometimes several schools need to be approached before finding a school that is willing to address the issue in their school.
- Schools find the topic of domestic violence difficult as historically they have not had enough information and training on this issue. There needs to be a great deal of effort in order to make the topic less “off-limits” for staff. At the same time, some teachers feel that they do not require this type of preventive work for their children or they feel that they cover this topic in other ways in the curriculum.
- Schools are limited in their ability to do prevention work so there needs to be time and effort to help them build capacity. Along with this, there is the need to be clear on the boundaries of services that VIP can offer and processes for schools to work together (e.g., communication flow)
- Some teachers are reluctant to identify students who could benefit from VIP or teachers are not aware of students who are impacted by domestic violence.
- There is a perception among a small number of people that domestic violence impacts men and women equally so education efforts must address with misperception.
- Schools are inundated with various programs and teachers sometimes hesitate to take on programs as they feel that there is limited instructional time given the demands of the curriculum.
- Presenting to school groups requires a certain level of comfort and proficiency with presentation skills. This can be challenging for a VIP facilitator who is more comfortable in one-on-one settings or small group settings.
- Given that the funding is not long-term, schools are sometimes hesitant to adopt a program that may not be sustainable from year to year.

Successes

- The VIP program allows the presenter to be flexible in the way that the material is presented to various groups. By having this flexibility, content and activities can be tailored to the needs of each group and community so that they can experience benefits.
- Students looked forward to participating in the presentations and groups. They were eager to find out how they could help reduce and prevent violence.
- There were some strong partnerships formed with schools, in particular with the school counselor. This facilitated communication and ease of implementation of VIP.
- With the presence of VIP programs, schools identified the need to provide education and support to students exposed to domestic violence. In addition, teachers and parents received needed education about the issue of domestic violence.
- By having the presentations and groups in the schools (that did not result in extra work for schools), more children and youth received services to which they would otherwise not have access.
- Students had an opportunity to share their experiences of violence with others in a safe space.
- In some schools, school staff such as counselors and teachers gave time to help make VIP work in the schools.
- By linking the VIP presentations with selected course learning outcomes, the appeal to have a presentation in the class was much higher.
- Schools are increasingly requesting presentations and groups which is a success (and at the same time a challenge due to time and resources).
- Having routines to intervention groups assisted a great deal in ensuring that the groups run smoothly.
- Choosing a title for the group that was inviting helped get more youth into the group.
- CWWA can assist children and youth who disclosed abuse in a timely manner.

In a year end interview with agencies, here is what VIP facilitators had to say.....

“We had 21 kids sign up for a group after a presentation to 150. All were really eager. Most kids came to most sessions.”

“Level of interaction between the students really went up, especially when they learned that others were struggling with similar issues.”

“Seeing the kids and how much they enjoyed the program, just being there.”

“Girls wanted to learn how to stick up for themselves. A lot of girls had never been connected to other service providers. For them to open and trust was huge.”

“Teachers seeing the presentations and feeling the resources are there.”

“Becoming a presence in the community.”

“I see a lot of kids downtown and they will say “Hey [VIP Facilitator], how’s it going?” and then their parents ask them “Who is that?” and they will tell their parents what they learned.”

“Makes me much more accessible to youth.”

“The classroom climate shifted over time. The kids learned basic communication skills, turn-taking, boundaries.”

“Getting everyone on board – school district, teachers.”

“The last two high school groups we ran – all males. They all pretty much showed up each week and wanted to come back. They wanted to be there and really enjoyed it.”

“There is a demand from schools for the program.”

“Making links in the community.”

“Certain students have talked to their teachers about violence and have sought help.”

Reflecting on the Evaluation

In evaluating the VIP program, several challenges and successes are worthy of note. One area of challenge was that as a result of the period in which there was no evaluator, the use of the evaluation tools was limited in many of the communities hence a great deal of data was not able to be presented in this evaluation report. The absence of someone guiding the evaluation process (i.e., connecting with communities, answering questions etc.) inevitably makes the process more difficult and likely to result in less use of evaluation tools.

A second area of challenge from an evaluation standpoint, yet a major strength of the program, is that VIP is very responsive to the needs of the school and community thus presentations and groups are very tailored to meet the needs of specific groups. In delivering the presentations and conducting groups, careful attention is paid to collaboration with the school community in order to expand and strengthen the community-school partnerships. VIP facilitators are very sensitive to the readiness of schools to adopt a program that addresses the issue of domestic violence, a subject that is not commonly discussed in school settings. From an evaluation standpoint, a diverse program that is not a prescribed curriculum is always challenging to evaluate as it becomes difficult to compare results across communities and across time given that the content changes to meet the needs of the given group. At every point, the evaluation must consider the context of the community which increases the complexity of the work. Although more challenging from an evaluation standpoint, this tailored approach highlights the richness and flexibility of the program, the wealth of expertise that the VIP facilitators bring to the school setting in the way that they tailor the program and the progressive nature of the program. It is much easier to implement a prescribed program however we know that exemplary programs are ones that can take into account the community context (Nation et al., 2003).

There were however many successes in the evaluation process. The twenty communities involved in the VIP project were all highly committed, so much so, that although the VIP facilitators are incredibly busy, they took time on two occasions to have telephone interviews with the evaluator in order to explore their experiences in implementing the VIP program.

The support from the coordinating office was outstanding. They were involved in the process all along the way and provided all the needed support and documents as the needs arose. When coming on at the midpoint of the evaluation, BCYSTH assisted in making sure that this transition was as smooth as possible so that the work could continue in a timely fashion.

Finally, the people involved in VIP are not just doing a job. They are advocates for children and youth who are scared to speak, they are cheerleaders for those children who feel they are not worth loving and they are the ones telling children and youth that they are not alone in their struggles.

Conclusions

The VIP program has touched the lives of approximately 5,000 youth and adults in the province of British Columbia. The need for education and support for children and youth around the silent issue of domestic violence and indeed violence in general is clear given the alarming rates of children who witness or are themselves victims of domestic violence. The adverse consequences of domestic violence on healthy child development necessitates a commitment to working toward the prevention of violence and reducing the long-term impact of experienced violence. Children and youth deserve to grow up and have successful lives that allow them to contribute to society in a meaningful way.

Schools offer a rich opportunity to make a difference in the lives of all children and youth and this can be strengthened through partnerships with community agencies. It is in the school setting that most children will spend a substantial amount of their time. Children who have had negative relational experiences in the past can have a chance to learn alternative ways of relating in the world through the modeling and care of competent adults. Through community-school partnerships, school-based services can be offered to children and youth who need to heal from exposure to violence. At the same time, universal prevention efforts can assist in reducing the prevalence of violence and work towards creating a positive shift the culture of a school and ultimately the community at large.

Through engaging community experts, school staff, who have traditionally not addressed the topic of domestic violence, can receive the education and support that they need in order that they, in turn, can support children and youth in positive ways. By talking openly about prevention and intervention, silence is broken and children and youth can reach out for the support that they need so that their past does not predict their future. This commitment to children and youth has the power to interrupt a negative developmental trajectory thus allowing children and youth learn how to have healthy relationships that will support their development throughout life.

The evidence from the voices of children, youth and teachers presented in this evaluation is clear. VIP fills a need that has been long overlooked. VIP offers an opportunity for increasing knowledge and awareness around issues of domestic violence and violence in the larger context. Children and youth are given a chance to talk about how issues of violence have impacted their lives. At the same time, they learn about healthy ways to move forward in their relationships with others. They connect with others and ultimately grow.

**"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."
*Martin Luther King, Jr.***

Recommendations

Resource Development

1. Review the feedback of students as to what the areas of greatest impact were for them as a result of the presentation. In addition, review the suggestions for changes that students provided. Work to incorporate those changes into program delivery.
2. Develop a collection of ready to use and tested materials for presentations and group interventions for the various ages and grades. By having ready to use ideas, including templates, VIP facilitators who have limited time will find planning easier. In addition, VIP facilitators who may be less experienced in working with large school groups can feel more confident with a selection of activities from which they can plan.
3. Examine the VIP curriculum and BC Ministry curriculum (both the social responsibility goals²² and individual course curriculum) and explicitly outline the learning goals that VIP addresses. In this way, schools can be made aware of how VIP serves both BC Ministry requirements (thus addressing the issues that teachers have in viewing a program as taking away from instructional time) while at the same time, providing some students with more intensive services that link directly with the social responsibility goals of the BC Ministry of Education.
4. Provide a structured process for VIP facilitators to network with each other. This networking can include opportunities for sharing ideas, discussing successes and challenges and extending the VIP program. In addition, it offers an opportunity for peer mentoring among the various communities in B.C.

Evaluation

5. In evaluating the program in the future, include initial training and ongoing contact with agencies to ensure higher return rate of survey tools.

Ministry of Education Support

6. Continue to advocate for Ministry of Education support of the adoption of a province-wide initiative for sustaining the VIP program, emphasizing the strength of community-school partnerships and the increase in capacity for children and youth to receive much needed services.

Funding

7. Examine ways to secure long-term funding at a higher level in order that more VIP facilitators can provide support in each community.

²² For social responsibility goals, see http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/social_resp.htm

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Appendices

- A. VIP Logic Model (June 2007)
- B. Student Presentation Feedback Form
- C. School Staff Presentation Feedback Form
- D. Pre and Post Teacher Survey for Intervention Group
- E. Pre and Post Student Survey for Intervention Group
- F. Educator Program Feedback Survey
- G. Agency Implementation Interview (March 2008)
- H. VIP Impact on Agency Commitment Survey
- I. Agency year end interview (June 2008)
- J. School Representative Interview
- K. Agency site report

Appendix A. VIP Logic Model

BC /Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Revised June 29, 2007

Program outcomes

	Outcomes	Indicators	Data source(s)	Data collection
1	Increased capacity of community-based CWWA programs and schools to work together to address needs (including Aboriginal and immigrant/refugee students)	# and % of participating educators indicating these outcomes; comments about the outcomes and what resources and activities contributed to them	Educator questionnaire	Annually, by evaluator
2	Improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence			
3	Change within school culture toward non-violence and prevention of violence			
4	Increased awareness of educators regarding the impact of domestic violence exposure on students	# and % of participating educators indicating this outcome; comments about the outcome and what resources and activities contributed to it	Educator questionnaire	Annually, by evaluator; At end of educational presentations and interventions, by CWWA counsellors
5	Increased knowledge of educators about how to recognize and support children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence	Same as # 4 above	Same as # 4 above	Same as # 4 above
6	Strengthened abilities of students (including Aboriginal and immigrant/refugee students) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get along with other students • Listen • Express feelings • Resolve conflict non-violently • Ask for help when needed • Attend school regularly • Focus on school work 	# and % of secondary students reporting these outcomes; # of elementary students observed by educators to have demonstrated these outcomes; comments about the outcomes; numbers of respondents who self-identify as Aboriginal and/or Immigrant/Refugee who indicate these outcomes	Student and educator pre- and post-assessments of student abilities and issues	At beginning and end of group interventions, by CWWA counsellors
7	Increased sustainability of VIP programs across BC	\$ and in-kind contributions secured, by community, from alternative sources; description of resources	CWWA agency financial records, project logs	Annually, by CWWA counsellors
8	Strengthened capacity of government agencies to respond to the needs of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence	Comments from agency reps on increased commitment, allocation of resources, development of policies, practices and strategies	Surveys/ interviews	Annually, by evaluator

Program activities and outputs

	Types of activity	Indicators (output measures)	Data source	Responsibility
1	Revise and distribute VIP Manual	VIP manual and videos distributed to all CWWA programs across BC (approx. 93).	BC/Y records	VIP Coordinator
2	Create and distribute 3 VIP videos and video-related study guides			
3	Create and distribute "Keeping VIP Alive in Your Community: A Guide to Project Sustainability"			
4	Create and distribute "Supporting Students Exposed to Domestic Violence: A Teacher's Guide"			
5	Create and distribute VIP presentation kit for CWWA counsellors			
6	Revise and deliver VIP Training curriculum for CWWA counsellors			
7	Training of CWWA counsellors funded by VIP	# 1-day (6-7 hour) sessions, # participants	BC/Y records	VIP Coordinator
8	Deliver educational presentations to teachers, administrators and students	# of sessions (by community), # of participants (by community)	CWWA counsellor records	CWWA counsellors
9	Deliver group intervention sessions for students who have been exposed to domestic violence	# of sessions (by community), # of individual participants (by community), total # of incidences of attendance	CWWA counsellor records	CWWA counsellors
9	Organize and facilitate inter-ministry committee meetings	# of meetings, description of mix of participants	Minutes	VIP Coordinator

Program inputs

	Type of resource	Indicators	Data source	Responsibility
1	NCPC funding	\$302,625 for 2005-2009	Budget	VIP Coordinator
2	Provincial funding	\$198,000 for 2005-2009		
3	In-kind contributions – staff time, other	\$67,600 for 2005-2009		
4	Staff time	28 CWWA counsellors, 1 FTE Project Coordinator, BC/Y staff, # FTE?	Administrative records	
5	Consultant services	\$ value of contracts		



Appendix B: VIP Student Presentation Feedback

To be Completed by Students (Grade 6 and up) *After the Presentation*

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses - Updated August 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how the VIP project has made a difference and how it could improve. The results will help us do a better job of helping young people in the future.

The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. Completed surveys will be seen only by VIP staff working on the evaluation. All responses are anonymous, and the reporting will leave out any details that could reveal your identity.

What was the most useful part of the presentation for you today?

What was one thing you learned about that was good to know from this presentation?

Any suggestions on what to add to the presentation and on how to make the it more useful?

Thanks for filling out this survey



Awareness Presentation Feedback

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses - Updated June 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how VIP makes a difference and how it could become more effective. The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. All responses are confidential and will be reported anonymously.

Date: _____ School: _____

Your role: Educator Parent/primary caregiver Other
 Your gender: Male Female Other

Are one or more of your parents Aboriginal? (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, non-status First Nations)	Were one or more of your parents born outside of Canada?
Yes No Not sure	Yes No Not sure

1. Has this presentation increased your awareness regarding the effects of domestic violence on young people who are exposed to it?
 Yes No
 If yes, please give examples of effects you became aware of:

2. Has the presentation increased your knowledge about how to help young people who have been exposed to domestic violence?
 Yes No
 If yes, please give examples of this increased knowledge:

3. Do you have any suggestions about how VIP could make more of a difference?
 Yes No
 Comments:

4. Additional feedback or comments:

Student *Pre-Service* Evaluation (Grade 5 & Under)

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

To be completed at the time of referral, submitted to the Children Who Witness Abuse counsellor, and kept in secure, confidential files.

Referring teacher's name, school: _____

“ “ phone, email: _____

Student's initials: _____ Referral date: _____

Student's gender: Male Female

Type of service: Individual Group

Are one or more of the parents Aboriginal? (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, non-status First Nations)

Yes No Not sure

Were one or more of the parents born outside of Canada? Yes No Not sure

Part 1: For each question, please indicate how much you agree with the statement on a scale of 1 to 5, and add any relevant observations.

1. Gets along well with other students.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

2. Able to listen well.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

3. Able to express feelings without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

4. Able to resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

5. Able to ask for help when needed.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

6. No problems with school attendance.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

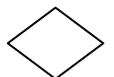
Comments:

7. Able to focus on schoolwork.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

8. Other than those identified above, what are some of the most significant areas of strength and challenge for this student?



Violence Is Preventable (VIP) Project

Student *Post-Service* Evaluation (Grade 5 & Under)

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

To be completed approximately four weeks after the end of the group, submitted to the CWWA counsellor and kept in secure, confidential files.

Student's initials: _____ Exit date: _____

Type of service: Individual Group

Referring person and contact info: _____

Are one or more of the parents Aboriginal? (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, non-status First Nations)

Yes No Not sure

Were one or more of the parents born outside of Canada?

Yes No Not sure

For each question, please indicate how much you agree with the statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with one being 'agree strongly' and 5 being 'disagree strongly', and add any relevant observations.

1. Gets along well with other students.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

2. Able to listen well.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

3. Able to express feelings without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

4. Able to resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

5. Able to ask for help when needed.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

6. No problems with school attendance.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

7. Able to focus on schoolwork.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

8. What changes, other than in the areas already covered, have you observed in this student's strengths and challenges?

Appendix E: Pre/Post Student Survey for Intervention Groups

To be Completed by Students (Grade 6 and up) Before the Service

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how the VIP project has made a difference and how it could improve. The results will help us do a better job of helping young people in the future.

The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. Completed surveys will be seen only by VIP staff working on the evaluation. All responses are anonymous, and the reporting will leave out any details that could reveal your identity.

Part 1: For each question, please circle a number to show how much you agree with the statement, and add any comments.

1. I get along well with other students.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

2. I am able to listen well.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

3. I am able to express feelings without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

4. I am able to resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

5. I am able to ask for help when needed.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

6. I have no problems with school attendance.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

7. I am able to focus on schoolwork.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

8. Any other comments?

Were you: part of a VIP group with other youth or: Receiving one-on-one support from VIP

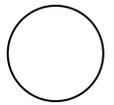
Are you: Male or Female

Are one or more of your parents Aboriginal? (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, non-status First Nations)
Yes No Not sure

Were one or more of your parents born outside of Canada? Yes No Not sure

So that we can compare this with your survey after the service, please give your initials: _____

Violence Is Preventable (VIP) Project Survey -



To be Completed by Students (Grade 6 and up) After the Service

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how the VIP project has made a difference and how it could improve. The results will help us do a better job of helping young people in the future.

The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. Completed surveys will be seen only by VIP staff working on the evaluation. All responses are anonymous, and the reporting will leave out any details that could reveal your identity.

Part 1: For each question, please circle a number to show how much you agree with the statement, and add any comments.

1. I get along well with other students.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

2. I am able to listen well.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

3. I am able to express feelings without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

4. I am able to resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt or scared.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

5. I am able to ask for help when needed.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

6. I have no problems with school attendance.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

7. I am able to focus on schoolwork.

1	2	3	4	5
agree strongly	agree somewhat	neutral	disagree somewhat	disagree strongly

Comments:

Part Two: Please check a box for each question and add any comments.

8. Did VIP increase your awareness and understanding of how it affects young people when they are exposed to domestic violence?

Yes No Not sure

Comments:

9. Did VIP make you feel more able to support other young people who have been exposed to domestic violence?

Yes

No

Not sure

Comments:

10. Are there other ways VIP made a difference in your life?

Yes

No

Not sure

Comments:

Date: _____ School: _____

Male

Female

Are one or more of your parents Aboriginal? (First Nations, Metis, Inuit, non-status First Nations)

Yes No Not sure

Were one or more of your parents born outside of Canada?

Yes No Not sure

So that we can compare this with your previous survey, please give your initials: _____

Thanks for doing this survey!

Appendix F: VIP Educator Program Feedback Survey

Educator Survey

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how this project has made a difference and how it could become more effective. The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. All responses are confidential and will be reported anonymously.

1. Has VIP resulted in improved access to services for students who have been exposed to domestic violence?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
2. Has VIP increased your awareness regarding the impact of domestic violence on children and youth who are exposed it?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
3. Has VIP increased your knowledge about how to identify and support students who have been exposed to domestic violence?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
4. Has VIP increased the ability of the school to identify these students based on their behaviour and performance?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
5. Do you feel VIP has contributed to a change toward non-violence in the school culture?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
6. Do you have any suggestions about how VIP could make more of a difference?
Yes No Not sure
Comments:
7. Any additional feedback or comments:

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Please circle the answer that best describes how true the statement is for you.
Please add any comments you feel are important.

	Not at all true	A little true	Somewhat true	Quite true	Very true	Comments
1. VIP has resulted in improved access to services for students who have exposed to domestic violence.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. VIP has increased my <u>awareness</u> regarding the impact of domestic violence on children and youth who are exposed to it.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. VIP has increased my <u>knowledge</u> about how to identify and support students who have been exposed to domestic violence.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. VIP has increased the ability of the school to identify these students based on their behavior and performance.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. VIP has contributed to a change toward non-violence in the school culture.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. VIP has demonstrated that community –school partnerships can be effective.	1	2	3	4	5	

Appendix G: VIP Agency Implementation Interview

Agency Interview

Date of phone interview:

Interviewee:

Community:

Phone #:

Issues to Explore:

1. Overview of community
2. Overview of schools in service area
3. Decision rationale for adoption of VIP
4. Number of classroom presentations with children
5. Number of presentations with educators
6. Number of presentations with parents
7. Number of children's groups
8. Evaluation forms used in the implementation
9. Successes with VIP
10. Challenges with VIP
11. Any focus groups conducted re: success stories
12. Usefulness of binder and videos

Violence Is Preventable (VIP) Project – Inter-Agency Survey

BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses – Updated June 2007

The purpose of this survey is to gather information on how this program makes a difference and how it could become more effective. The choice to participate in the survey is up to you. All responses are confidential and will be reported anonymously.

Please circle your response.

1. Has the VIP Project affected your agency's policy, practice, or programs?

Yes No Not sure

1a. If yes, please describe:

1b. What contributed to this?

2. Has the VIP Project had any affect on your agency's willingness to fund or otherwise support programs addressing the needs of children and youth exposed to domestic violence?

Yes No

2a. If yes, please describe:

2b. What contributed to this?

3. Are you aware of any other ways involvement with the VIP Project has affected the level of your organization's commitment to the issue of children and youth's exposure to domestic violence?

Yes No

3a. If yes, please describe:

3b. What contributed to this?

4. Any other comments?

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Appendix I: VIP Year End Telephone Interview

Year-End Interview

Name: _____

Agency: _____

1. **Complete VIP Impact on Agency Commitment Survey (Appendix H)**
2. Where do you see the VIP program going in the future in your community?

3. What will support this plan?

4. Are there barriers to this plan?

5. What are some success stories

Appendix J: School Representative Interview

School Interview

1. Do you feel that the VIP program fills a service need at your school? (Please circle)

YES

SOMEWHAT

NO

Please comment:

2. Given your experience with the VIP program to date, what future do you see for the VIP program in your school?

3. What have been the biggest challenges at the school level in implementing the VIP program?

4. What have been some successes of the VIP program at your school?

Appendix K: Agency Site Report

Violence Is Preventable Site Activity Report #2

Hi VIP Project Sites! Please fill out the below information with your Executive Director.

Once completed and signed, please send this back via mail to:

BCYSTH: 325-119 West Pender Street Vancouver, BC V6B 1S5

A \$2000 Honoraria has been allocated to each VIP Project site. This honoraria is meant to support the work and contribution of your CWWA program and host agency to this project. Upon completing this last report, your site will be issued the second payment of \$500.00. This may take up to 4 weeks to process. \$500.00 will be given at the end of the school year once all evaluation data is collected from your site including surveys, and participation in a conference call and the final activity report has been completed.

If have any questions or need support completing this activity report, please contact Rhiannon Wong at rhiannonwong@bcysth.ca or 1-800-661-1040 ext 229.

Thank you all for the amazing work and dedication to this project!

VIP Project Agency: _____

VIP CWWA Counselor(s) Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____



Your VIP Activities Since the completion of the 1st VIP report to the end of school term:

Total # of new schools contacted regarding the VIP Program	
New Contributions Secured by Your Agency from:	Total \$ Amount
Non-Profit Organizations	
Financial Institutions	
Government Agencies (not including core funding to CWWA program)	
Businesses/ Corporate Agencies	
Estimated monetary value of other In- Kind Contributions from partner schools , agencies, programs: such as, program space, facilitation support, resources, equipment,	
Donations	
Other: _____	
Total Contributions =	\$ _____

New VIP Partner Schools in Your Community:

Partner School #1:

Name of School: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Contact Person(s): _____ Email: _____

*(BCYSTH may email this person to participate in a brief evaluation survey)

Type of VIP Service implemented (please tick all that apply): _____ Awareness _____ Classroom _____ Group

Partner School #2:

Name of School: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

*Contact Person(s): _____ Email: _____

Type of VIP Service implemented (please tick all that apply): _____ Awareness _____ Classroom _____ Group

Partner School #3:

Name of School: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

*Contact Person(s): _____ Email: _____

Type of VIP Service implemented (please tick all that apply): _____ Awareness _____ Classroom _____ Group

Partner School # 4:

Name of School: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

* Contact Person(s): _____ Email: _____

Type of VIP Service implemented (please tick all that apply): _____ Awareness _____ Classroom _____ Group

New Awareness Presentations to Adults:

	Total # of Presentations	Total # of Participants
Presentations to School Staff		
Presentations to School Districts		
Presentations to School/Staff Unions		
Presentations to Parent Advisory Committees		
Presentations to Other Groups:		

New Classroom Presentations:

Total # of Classroom Presentations given to Students to date:		
Total # of Elementary Schools Presented at		
Total # of Middle Schools Presented at		
Total # of High schools presented at		
Grades Involved: (please fill in all that apply)	# of Presentations to date in each grade range	# of Students who participated in presentations to date in each grade range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten – Grade 3 • Grades 4-6 • Grades 7-9 • Grades 10-12 		

New Group Sessions:

	Grade Range of Participants	# of Sessions Provided	Length of Session in Minutes (ex. 30 minutes)	# of Participants in Group
Group #1 Offered				
Group #2 Offered				
Group #3 Offered				

If your VIP Program has any documents, resources, articles, etc of interest that you would like to attach to let BCYSTH know more about your VIP initiative please list these below and submit with your report

CWWA Counselor Name: _____ CWWA Counselor Signature:

Executive Director Name: _____ Executive Director Signature:

Date: _____

What have been some of the biggest challenges for you implementing VIP in your community?

Are the schools that you have been working with over the past school year interested in continuing the VIP project?

Would your agency be interested in implementing VIP in your community in the next school year?

If a small amount of funding is available, would your agency be interested in continuing to implement VIP in your community next year?

What are some further resources that BCY can provide to make the implementation of VIP easier?

What can BCY do to help you implement VIP next year?