

**VIOLENCE IS
PREVENTABLE**

VIP FACILITATOR GUIDE



AUGUST 2018



BC Society of
Transition Houses

VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE **VIP** FACILITATOR GUIDE



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Ministry of
Public Safety and
Solicitor General

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OVERVIEW OF THE VIOLENCE IS PREVENTABLE (VIP) FACILITATOR GUIDE

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH) is a member-based, provincial umbrella organization that, through leadership, support and collaboration, enhances the continuum of services and strategies to respond to, prevent and end violence against women, children and youth. BCSTH has the privilege of coordinating the PEACE (Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment) and Violence is Preventable (VIP) Programs and for children and youth. The PEACE Program (formerly the Children Who Witness Abuse program) is a free, confidential program across BC for children and youth aged 3 to 18 who have experienced domestic violence. The VIP program is a component of the PEACE Program and is a free violence prevention education program that is delivered in grades K -12 in BC by PEACE Program counsellors.

The purpose of the facilitator guide is to prepare and support PEACE Program counsellors in delivering VIP presentations in schools in their community. The facilitator guide complements the updated VIP 2018 curriculum that is now linked to the revised BC Ministry of Education (MOE) curriculum for grades K-12. The VIP curriculum is available for each VIP site and has been organized into four main topics that link to the MOE's Physical and Health Education Curriculum. The VIP curriculum topics are: violence against women and safety planning, emotional expression, self-esteem, and healthy relationships. The VIP facilitator guide and curriculum are designed to assist PEACE Program counsellors in both the preparation and the delivery of the VIP presentations to K – 12 students.

To provide support for the development of VIP in your community, the facilitator guide provides an overview of the history of the VIP Program, statistics and student feedback demonstrating the impact of the VIP Program in BC. It also provides guidance and resources on how to approach schools and encourage them to incorporate VIP into their curriculum. Finally, the guide provides steps on presentation preparation and delivery along with feedback methods and surveys for VIP presentations. The VIP resources are designed to be supplemented and revised going forward and contact BCSTH if you have recommendations. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that violence is preventable in BC.



OVERVIEW OF THE VIP PROGRAM

WHAT IS THE VIP & PEACE PROGRAM?

The VIP Program is a comprehensive provincial strategy linking BC schools with PEACE Programs for children and youth. In 2004, the VIP Program was initiated in BC to establish a province-wide system to provide students in grades K – 12 with school-based education and supports around issues of domestic violence primarily through school presentations and counselling. VIP is a violence prevention initiative started by BCSTH and facilitated through the PEACE programs in cooperation with local schools.

The VIP Program provides awareness and prevention school presentations in grades K – 12 and the companion PEACE Program provides psycho-educational counselling and support services if there are disclosures of violence. These complementary services are coordinated by the same PEACE Program, and in some cases, the same counsellor.

PEACE Programs use psycho-educational methods including group and individual support services in an age appropriate manner to help children and youth to:

- Label and express the feelings they have experienced regarding the violence they have experienced.
- Understand healthy ways of dealing with anger and expressing anger.
- Understand that they are not at fault for the violent actions of others.
- Teach safety skills, strategies and develop safety plans.
- Encourage open communication.
- Acknowledge loss and separation issues.
- Facilitate understanding of abuse and myths about violence against women.
- Explore other violence issues such as violence in the media.
- Encourage self-confidence.

The aim of the VIP Programs is to break the silence on violence against women and girls, and to provide safe spaces for students to speak about domestic violence. VIP offers free educational prevention



presentations to educators, parents, guardians and students and links school aged children and youth to PEACE Program counsellors and other support services for children and youth experiencing violence.

As the provincial coordinator of both the VIP and PEACE Programs, BCSTH supports VIP sites to:

- Facilitate partnerships between schools and communities, to respond to the emotional, social, academic and psychological needs of children and youth with experiences of domestic violence.
- Raise awareness among educators, school staff, parents and students about violence against women among school aged children and youth.
- Reduce the prevalence and severity of violence against women by providing education and awareness.
- Break the silence around domestic violence and engage children and youth in conversation.
- Change attitudes about violence against women.
- Connect children and youth experiencing domestic violence with appropriate services and supports.

By participating in the VIP Program, the PEACE Program agrees to deliver one or a combination of the following VIP activities:

- Awareness Presentations: For the educators and/or parents, guardians about domestic violence and violence against women and the impact it has on children and youth and how the PEACE Program can help.
- Violence Prevention Presentations: In classes or at a school assembly about domestic violence and violence against women and the impact that these experiences have on children and youth and how the PEACE Program can help.
- Group Counselling: Typically, within the school environment and conducted by the PEACE Program counsellors.



WHY IS THE VIP PROGRAM IMPORTANT?

Studies have shown that 3 to 5 children or youth in every Canadian classroom have witnessed their mother being assaulted.¹ Every year in Canada, 85,000 to 362,000 children witness or experience family violence.²

VIP assists and teaches not only children and youth but also school staff, parents and guardians about the impacts of domestic violence and violence against women in order to break the silence and intergenerational cycles of violence in families and our communities. VIP Programs provide educators with a VIP curriculum tailored to the MOE curriculum and associated PEACE Program support services to assist them to support children and youth. Schools are a natural connection point for VIP and PEACE to foster a safe supportive community for children and youth.

VIP TODAY

VIP is a program that is in demand and well received across the Province. During the 2016 – 2017 school year, 28 PEACE programs delivered VIP presentations in 97 K- 12 schools resulting in:

- 343 presentations to children and youth.
- 92 presentations to educators, parents and guardians.
- 497 adults participating in VIP.
- 5864 students receiving VIP presentations or groups.
- 116 children and youth were referred or self-referred to PEACE Program support services after participating in a VIP presentation.

During the 2015 - 2016 school year, PEACE Programs delivered VIP presentations in 82 K -12 schools resulting in:

- 612 presentations to children and youth.
- 424 adults participating in VIP.
- 6416 students receiving VIP presentations or groups.
- 142 children and youth were referred or self-referred to PEACE Program support services after participating in a VIP presentation.

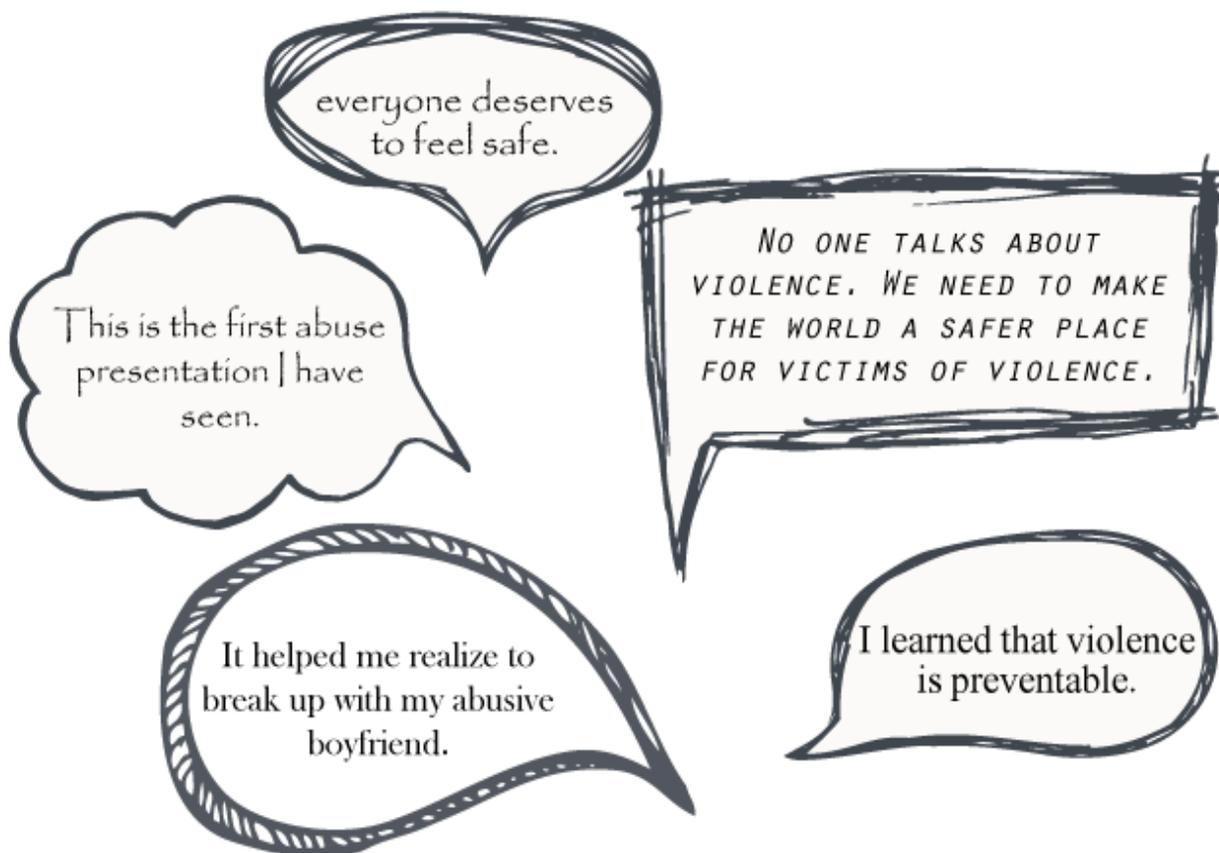
¹ Jaffe, P., Wolfe, D., & Wilson, S.K. (1990). Children of battered women, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

² <https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>



WHAT BC STUDENTS SAY ABOUT VIP

These quotations are from BC students who received VIP presentations in their schools. On the VIP presentation feedback forms the students expressed the following appreciation of the prevention curriculum.





VIP CURRICULUM AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The updated VIP 2018 curriculum aligns with the Ministry of Education (MOE) Curriculum and specifically the Physical Health Education Learning Standards and Curricular Competencies listed below. The VIP Program curriculum fills an important gap in existing violence prevention programs by focusing on the impact and needs of children and youth exposed to domestic violence and violence against women and linking to the MOE criteria.

Kindergarten – Grade 9

MOE Physical and Health Education Learning Standards and Curricular Competencies

- Identify and describe a variety of unsafe and/or uncomfortable situations.
- Develop and demonstrate respectful behavior when participating in activities with others.
- Identify caring behaviors among classmates and within families.
- Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being.
- Identify and describe feelings and worries.
- Identify and describe avoidance or assertiveness strategies to use in unsafe and/or uncomfortable situations.
- Develop and demonstrate respectful behavior when participating in activities with others.
- Identify and describe characteristics of positive relationships.
- Identify and apply strategies that promote mental well-being.
- Identify and describe feelings and worries, and strategies for dealing with them.
- Identify personal skills, interests, and preferences and describe how they influence self-identity.
- Describe and apply strategies for developing and maintaining positive relationships.
- Describe factors that influence mental well-being and self-identity.
- Describe and assess strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying.
- Describe and apply strategies that promote a safe and caring environment.
- Describe and assess strategies for managing problems related to mental well-being.
- Explore and describe strategies for managing physical, emotional, and social changes during puberty.
- Identify and describe strategies for avoiding and/or responding to potentially unsafe, abusive, or exploitative situations.



- Describe and apply strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships.
- Describe and apply strategies that promote a safe and caring environment
- Describe and assess strategies for promoting mental well-being, for self and others.
- Describe and assess strategies for managing problems related to mental well-being for others.
- Explore and describe how personal identities adapt and change in different settings and situations.
- Explore strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community.
- Explore and describe strategies for managing physical, emotional, and social changes during puberty and adolescence.
- Create and assess strategies for managing physical, emotional, and social changes during puberty and adolescence.
- Explore the impact of transition and change on identities.
- Propose strategies for avoiding and/or responding to potentially unsafe, abusive, or exploitative situations.
- Propose strategies for responding to discrimination, stereotyping, and bullying.
- Propose strategies for developing and maintaining healthy relationships.
- Create strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community.
- Propose strategies for avoiding and/or responding to potentially unsafe, abusive, or exploitative situations.
- Explore and describe factors that shape personal identities, including social and cultural.

Grade 10-12

MOE Physical and Health Education Learning Standards and Curricular Competencies

The criteria below reflect the new Grade 10 MOE PHE curriculum. The new MOE PHE curriculum for Grade 11–12 is in draft form and is anticipated to be finalized for the 2019 – 2020 school year. The VIP curriculum will be revised at that time to reflect those revisions.

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- Describe the role of children in families and society, including rights of children locally and globally.
- Describe the factors involved in interpersonal relationships including types, roles, functions, and importance.
- Describe the interpersonal relationship communication styles and strategies, including various methods of communication.
- Explore the components of safe/healthy relationships and unsafe/unhealthy relationships, and how to stay safe in a variety of interpersonal relationships.
- Explore the indicators of unhealthy/unsafe relationships, and actions that can be taken if relationships become unhealthy/unsafe.

For up-to-date grade-level information relating to MOE's Physical Health and Education Learning Standards and Curricular Competencies:

Grade K-9: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education>

Grade 10-12: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/10-12>



HOW TO INCORPORATE VIP INTO SCHOOLS

Prior to presenting the VIP program in schools, if possible obtain some background information that will help to tailor the VIP introduction and the ultimate school presentations to meet the needs of the local school community.

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Some Questions to Consider when Planning your Approach to Schools

- What do those at the school need to know before they can make a decision about whether they will partner with the VIP program? How can my program provide them with this knowledge?
- What are the social, cultural, developmental and economic needs of the school population? How can the VIP presentation speak to these?
- What other violence prevention programs are in place at the school already? What can VIP offer that is unique while complementing other programs?
- Who is the main contact and/or possible VIP champion at the school? Can s/he be involved in the presentation? If so, how?
- If in the past, the school was involved with VIP or the PEACE Program, how does that previous relationship impact the purpose and approach of the current VIP Program?

Steps to Take to Advocate for VIP and PEACE in the School Community

- Introduce the PEACE program, the PEACE Program counsellors and the supporting organization to the school.
- Connect with a variety of groups across the school system, including school boards, school librarians, administrators, teachers, parents, parent/teacher organizations and students.
- Establish an ongoing relationship between the PEACE program and the school so the school identifies the VIP Program as a resource and ally.
- Share the VIP curriculum, resources, pamphlets, post cards and wallet cards with the school to educate them about the Program.
- Discuss the impact of VIP using the information from the Facilitator Guide.



- Demonstrate to the school the link between the Ministry of Education’s curriculum and the VIP curriculum. Refer to the lists in the facilitator guide and the charts in the VIP curriculum that demonstrate the links.
- Explain how VIP will assist teachers.
- Explore and address any resistance school staff may have regarding the VIP presentations.
- Advocate with identified allies for violence prevention education within the school community and beyond.
- Sample letters to connect with schools, parents and guardians are included below.

Factors to Consider for School Presentations

- How much time is the school willing to allocate for the VIP presentation? Could there be a chance to offer a follow-up presentation if appropriate?
- Who will my audience be? (e.g., Administration? Teaching staff? Support staff? Parents/Guardians? Children? Youth?) How many people are expected to attend? Will those with decision-making power be at this meeting? What do they need to know most?
- What grades/age ranges will be reached?
- How can the VIP presentation be engaging and address different learning styles?

INFORMATION TO SUPPORT VIP ADVOCACY IN SCHOOLS

The Impacts in the Classroom

Below is a list of some behaviours that school staff may notice in children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence or violence against women that VIP addresses in its curriculum.

- Approval-seeking, fear of making mistakes.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Artwork, comments or actions that reflect violence.
- Control of others to get what they want.
- Adoption of gendered roles of power and control dynamics.
- Emotional outbursts or tantrums (uncontrollable sobbing, aggression, non-compliance).



- Internalized emotions (depression, sleep problems).
- Feeling unsafe or anxious.
- Isolation and/or withdrawal from peers and community.
- Atypical caretaking of others, including parents.
- Alcohol or drug use.
- Sense of hopelessness (self-harm or suicidal thoughts).
- Attempts to run away from home.
- Absenteeism and poor academic work.

What Schools Can Do to Support Students

If school staff notice behaviours that suggest students are responding to domestic violence and violence against women, below are recommended steps schools can take to support the children and youth.

- Partner with your local PEACE Program and arrange for VIP services to be offered in your school in grades K – 12 to help address the impacts.
- Have the school counsellor connect regularly with students.
- Provide structure and routine in the classroom to create a sense of security and stability for students.
- Help students deal with conflicts in the classroom non-violently.
- Help students learn skills to make connections with peers and to develop empathy for others.
- Always model acceptance of differences by valuing diversity and address forms of discrimination, stereotyping or harassment.
- Approach students consistently with composure and patience and model nurturing interactions with students.
- Create opportunities for appropriate noise and fun in the classroom.
- Consider adjusting expectations of homework and school work for students you suspect may be exposed to violence.
- Offer encouraging words and validation of their feelings to students.



SAMPLE LETTER TO SCHOOLS FROM THE VIP PROGRAM

Date:

Dear _____:

The Violence is Preventable (VIP) Program is a comprehensive provincial strategy started in 2004 linking British Columbia schools with the Prevention, Education, Advocacy, Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) Programs for children and youth. VIP offers free educational prevention presentations to educators, parents, guardians and students and links school aged children and youth to PEACE Program counsellors and other support services for children and youth experiencing domestic violence.

Studies have shown that 3 to 5 children or youth in every Canadian classroom have witnessed their mother being assaulted.³ Every year in Canada, 85,000 to 362,000 children witness or experience family violence.⁴ VIP and PEACE Programs provide educators with tailored awareness and prevention curriculum and support services to assist them to support children and youth.

VIP is a program that is in demand and well received across the Province. During the 2016 – 2017 school year, 28 PEACE programs delivered VIP presentations in 97 K- 12 schools resulting in:

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Evaluations from students indicate their appreciation of the VIP curriculum and PEACE Program support services.

The VIP prevention curriculum is designed and divided by age ranges to meet the needs of students in classrooms from K-12 and to address topics linked to the Ministry of Education's curriculum to empower students to develop an understanding of healthy living and relationships. VIP presentations include:

³ Jaffe, P., Wolfe, D., & Wilson, S.K. (1990). Children of battered women, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf>

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- Awareness presentations for educators and/or parents, guardians about domestic violence and the impact it has on children and youth and how the PEACE Program can help.
- Violence prevention presentations in classes or at school assemblies about domestic violence and the impact that these experiences have on children and youth and how the PEACE Program can help.
- Group counselling within the school environment and conducted by the PEACE Program counsellors.

For more information about the VIP or PEACE Program in your area or to schedule a VIP presentation please contact:

PEACE Program Counsellor's Name and contact information

Organization's Name and contact information:

Sincerely,



SAMPLE LETTER FOR THE SCHOOLS TO SEND TO THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Date:

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As part of the Ministry of Education’s curriculum for grades K-12, the (School Name) has invited the (Organization Name), to provide educators, staff and students with presentations from the Violence is Preventable (VIP) Program.

(Organization Name) will be visiting our school on (Date/s) and will be facilitating (The description of the presentation/s).

The VIP program is a violence prevention education and awareness program that provides educators, staff, parents, guardians and students in BC information and resources regarding healthy relationships, domestic violence and safety.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the content and nature of the VIP Program, please feel free to contact (VIP presenter name and contact and School name and contact).

Our school district is pleased to have the VIP Program delivered to our school community because it provides practical prevention information and links to community resources and support services provided by (Organization Name).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns and your cooperation and support is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

School Administrator’s or Educator’s Name



VIP PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION PREPARATION CHECKLIST

I have confirmed

- The date and time of my presentation.
- The audience for and location of my presentation and whom to connect with upon arrival.
- Equipment the school can provide me and how I will access this equipment in time to set up for the presentation (e.g., DVD player, lap top, access to Wi-Fi, projector, speakers, screen, extension cord, power bar, flip chart, white board, etc.).
- The presentation curriculum and handouts.

Possible Presentation Materials

- USB Flash Drive with VIP Slide Set and resources.
- Handouts.
- Worksheets.
- The PEACE Program Organization's brochure.
- BCSTH brochures.
- The VIP postcards for the particular ages presenting to (e.g., K-4 card, 5-7 card and 8-12 postcards).
- The VIP wallet cards with contact information added.
- PEACE Program counsellor's business cards.
- Any materials for a specific curriculum activity (e.g., art supplies, magazines etc.).
- Adult and student feedback forms.
- Flip Chart and markers.
- Lap top, access to Wi-Fi, projector, speakers, screen, extension cord and power bar.



LEARNING STYLES

People and students learn in different ways and therefore it is important to consider different learning styles as part of your VIP preparation. Below are some examples of learning styles.

What are some different learning styles?

- Visual Learners: ***learn through seeing...***

They may think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including: diagrams, overhead transparencies, power point presentations, DVDs, flipcharts and hand-outs.

- Auditory Learners: ***learn through listening...***

They learn best through lectures, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say.

- Tactile/Kinesthetic Learners: ***learn through moving, doing and touching...***

Tactile/Kinesthetic persons learn best through a hands-on approach, actively participating in things like role plays and small group activities.

For more information on learning styles:

www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm#What%20are



HOW TO HANDLE DISCLOSURES BY STUDENTS IN PRESENTATIONS

Do's

- Give the student your undivided attention.
- Listen calmly.
- Take the complaint seriously.
- Try and contain the child or youth to not share their story in a large classroom setting and try and take some time away from the large group to listen (helpful if you have a co-facilitator).
- Explain exactly what will happen once the disclosure has been made so the student is not mislead.
- Reassure the student it is not their fault.
- Consult with appropriate school staff (principal, teacher, school counsellor, child and youth worker).
- Create an atmosphere of safety and trust.
- Assist the student in making a personalized safety plan.

Don'ts

- Mislead the student that the crisis has passed.
- Minimize the situation.
- Promise secrecy.
- Make promises of what may or may not happen.
- Sound shocked or embarrassed.
- Take sole responsibility for supporting the student.

Message for the Students

- Violence is never okay.
- They are not alone.
- There is support and help available and when appropriate provide those referrals.
- There are safe places for women, children and youth to be sheltered.
- There are places where offenders can get help if they want the violence to stop.



USE OF FEEDBACK SURVEYS IN VIP PRESENTATIONS

As part of school based presentations, VIP Programs distribute VIP presentation student feedback surveys in grades 5 through 12 and adult VIP awareness presentation surveys for the adult participants. Sample survey forms are provided below.

These surveys allow students and adults who attend the VIP presentations with an opportunity to provide feedback and to shape how the VIP presentations are delivered in the future. The feedback allows VIP and PEACE Programs to reflect on their presentations and delivery and determine how they can be improved and what was successful. The feedback also helps the VIP and PEACE Programs to collect valuable statistics as to the impact of the prevention program.



SAMPLE FEEDBACK SURVEYS

ADULT VIP AWARENESS PRESENTATION SURVEY

To be completed by adults after the presentation.

We want to hear what you thought of the presentation. Your feedback is very important to us, but it is your choice whether you complete this survey. All of your answers are confidential and will be reported anonymously. Thank you for your time.

School District: _____

1. Your role (circle): Educator Parent Guardian Other(describe): _____
2. Please circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the sentence.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Pretty true	Quite true	Very true
Before the presentation, I had knowledge about the impact that domestic violence has on children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
This presentation increased my awareness regarding the effects of domestic violence on children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
This presentation increased my knowledge about how to help children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence.	1	2	3	4	5
I see a role for the VIP program in our school system.	1	2	3	4	5
I think that community-school partnerships, such as the one with VIP, make schools more able to meet the needs of students.	1	2	3	4	5
I am interested in learning more about the impact of domestic violence and the ways that educators and community members can make a difference in the lives of children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5

3. What is something that you heard in today’s presentation that you feel will stay with you?
4. Do you have any suggestions about how to make the presentations better or suggestions for VIP in general?



VIP PRESENTATION STUDENT FEEDBACK SURVEY

To be completed by students in Grade 5 – 12 after the presentation.

We want to hear what you thought of the presentation. This will help us understand what students found useful and how we can make VIP even better. Your thoughts are very important to us, but it is your choice whether you complete this survey. You do not need to write your name on this survey – all your answers are anonymous (no one will be able to match your answers to you). Thank you.

Please circle the number that best describes how much you agree with the sentence.

	Not at all true	A little bit true	Pretty true	Quite true	Very true
I learned about the signs of violence and abuse.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned that everyone deserves to feel safe.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned about the places where I can get help if I am experiencing violence and/or abuse in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned about self-esteem, and tips about how to build and improve my self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned how important emotional expression is and tips on how to manage my emotions in a healthy way.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned about healthy relationships.					
I think that the things I learned today are important for me to know.	1	2	3	4	5
I think all students should get a chance to have a VIP presentation in their class.	1	2	3	4	5

1. For you, what was the most important part of the presentation?



CONCLUSION

BCSTH thanks the VIP and PEACE Programs for the difference they are making in the lives of BC children and youth. The VIP facilitator guide and VIP curriculum are designed to be supplemented and revised going forward and contact BCSTH if you have recommendations. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that violence is preventable in BC.

Please visit the [BCSTH website](#) and [Directory of Member Programs & Services](#) for more information regarding the VIP and PEACE Programs in BC.