

# Creating Safety From Sexual Violence Through the Teachings of Our Grandmothers

Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition

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## Who are you?

- Name?
- Where are you from?
- What do you hope to get out of attending this workshop?

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## Restoring Our Natural Rhythm

- Honoring where we came from  
– *Strengthening Identity*
- Honoring what shaped us  
– *Healing Trauma*
- Honoring who we are right now  
– *Rebuilding Community*

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## Sugar Bush Camp



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## Addressing sexual violence another way:

- Bring it way back-  
Before colonization, before boarding schools,  
before relocation- to a time of safe, healthy  
communities
- What are some qualities of a safe community  
then and now?

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## Picking Sage- 3 Generations



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## Our Work with Native Youth

- Four Annual Girls Retreats
  - Statewide, all tribal affiliations, all ages
- Public Service Announcements for Radio
- A Quilt
- Public Awareness Posters
- Talking Circles
- Elders Panels
- Seasonal / Cultural Activities
- Giveaway and Honor Songs at pow-wows

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## Girls Retreats



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## Public Awareness Posters: Photography Project



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## Cultural activities as a tool to begin dialogue

- Strengthening identity
- Traditional values
- Sense of community
- Respect for all things
- Healthy roles and responsibilities
- Engaging all generations
- Hands on learning
- Having fun

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## Wild Rice Camp



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## Elders Panel



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## Talking Circle Questions

- Describe the goal of this time together-
  - remind of respect, privacy, and support
  - ask for questions and read body language
- Name, clan, community (or variation)
- Ice breaker-
  - If you *really* knew me, you would know...
- Example dialogue questions:
  - What does being Native mean to you?
  - What do you see, think, feel about the stuff on TV or the radio?
  - What does learning how to harvest wild rice teach us about community? Trust? Teamwork?

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## Talking Circles- Creating age appropriate dialogue

- Ask about healthy relationships between boys and girls- respect, boundaries, trust
- How are we influenced by TV, video games?
- What kind of messages are really learned from these things- race, gender, sexuality?
- What are your communities traditional teachings about sexuality, their bodies, etc.
- Ask straight up, who's fault is it when sexual violence happens? Address victim blaming

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## Making Birch Bark Dishes



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## Blueberry Picking



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## Honor Survivors



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## Creating a Circle of Support-

Dialogue / Exercises to identify resources youth can turn to within their own community

- Reframe sexual violence- what is it?
- What are the resources available right now?
- Acknowledge that perpetrators may be family, friends, and other trusted community members
- Talk about what we stand to lose by telling- family, home, friends
- Talk about what we stand to gain- safety, peace, balance
- Accountability doesn't mean without compassion
- Put the crime on the perpetrator- not the victim
- Support system exercises

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## Raising Changemakers

- TALK ABOUT IT!
- Come together as a community to talk about what will work for your area
- Seek out the Grandmothers and other elders to learn the original teachings
- Talk about historical trauma- colonization, boarding schools, racism, survival
- Shut the TV off- Go outside!
- Follow your instincts- and trust your own spirit

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## Questions?



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## Strategies For Success- Group Discussion

- Seeking out our Grandmothers-  
Restoring the natural cycle of teaching  
and learning
- Identify specific steps to strengthen and  
promote a safe community

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Contact Information:

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