

# Cultural Competency Training Module

Awareness and Skill Development  
for Service Providers working with  
Immigrant Victims of Domestic  
Violence



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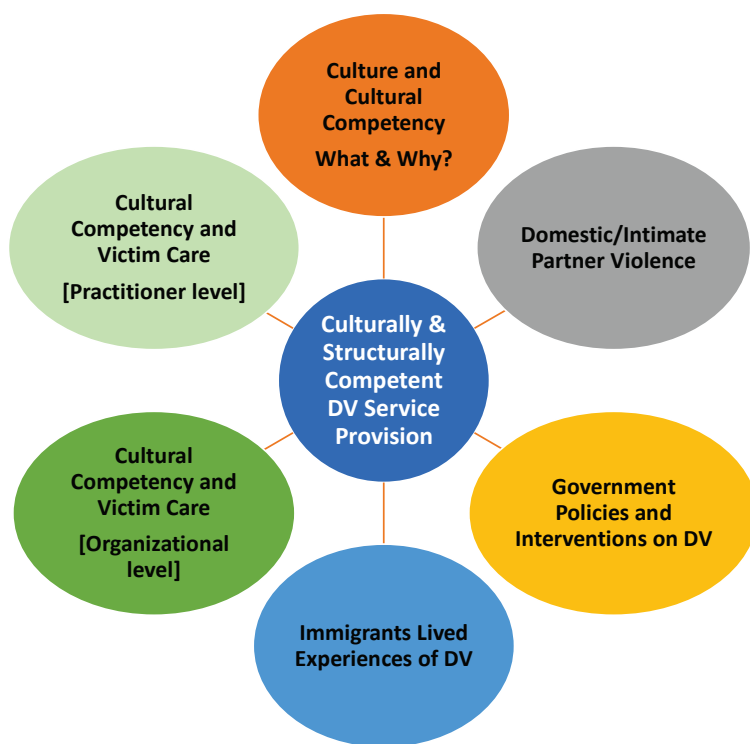


# Introduction

This training program is designed to equip service providers with knowledge to provide culturally competent services to immigrant victims of domestic violence

This training comprises six thematic modules

# Culturally Competent Domestic Violence Service Provision



## Background

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Canada has a substantial population of immigrants and refugees, with approximately one in every five individuals being born outside of Canada (Statcan, 2017). Immigrants face the challenge of adapting to Canadian laws and embracing cultural changes. While the process of settling into a new environment, coupled with the influence of cultural practices and patriarchal norms, can strain familial relations, and disrupt harmony within families. Unfortunately, there is a lack of awareness and services among Central Alberta advocates and community partners who support newcomer immigrants experiencing domestic violence. Although immigrant families face domestic violence issues similar to others, their circumstances are further compounded by various precarious factors that adversely impact their safety, health, and overall well-being.

Over the course of seven years, the Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association (CAIWA) and Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) conducted an extensive study on Action for Safe families: Domestic violence among immigrant families in Central Alberta, Canada (Baiju & Phiri, 2018), delving into the complexities faced by immigrant women enduring domestic violence in Central Alberta. The study shed light on unique vulnerabilities experienced by newcomers. Based on the study's findings and community input, several suggestions and recommendations were put forward. These recommendations aimed to foster cultural competence, address immediate and long-term safety concerns, provide comprehensive support services, and remove barriers hindering victims from seeking help. The recommendations included the development of:

- **Ongoing efforts towards cultural competence:** This entails developing the ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with individuals from diverse cultures. It involves fostering informed attitudes towards differences and acquiring knowledge about different cultural practices and worldviews.
- **Training and skills development across all sectors:** It is essential for professionals in all sectors to receive training enabling them to communicate effectively with immigrant victims of domestic violence. Building trust through communication is a key aspect of this training.
- **Crisis-oriented community-based counseling:** There is a need for accessible, confidential counseling services that can address the immediate needs of victims experiencing domestic violence.
- **Immediate and ongoing safety planning:** It is crucial to establish safety plans that consider the fears experienced by victims, providing them with necessary protection and support.
- **Education about justice system options:** Providing information about available options within the justice system can play a preventive role in combating domestic violence.

- **Provision of direct legal services and referrals:** Victims should have access to legal services directly or through appropriate referrals to accessible legal service providers.
- **Removal of obstacles to seeking help:** Efforts should be made to eliminate any barriers that hinder victims from seeking assistance and support.
- **Funding for comprehensive programs:** Funding should be allocated to programs that offer a range of services, addressing urgent needs, language acquisition, community programs, and employment services.
- **Identification of policy roadblocks:** Existing policies should be examined to identify any obstacles that might prevent victims from accessing the help they require.
- **Incorporation of domestic violence into religious programs:** Recognizing that many immigrants are religious, it is important to include discussions and support for domestic violence issues within religious programs.
- **Culturally sensitive services for children affected by domestic violence:** Services provided to children affected by domestic violence should be culturally sensitive, taking into account their specific cultural needs.

### Domestic Violence Collaborative Committee (DVCC)

Following the completion of the above study and community forums, CAIWA took the initiative along with other organizations in Red Deer and Central Alberta to address the domestic violence issues as identified above focusing on immigrants, better ways to support clients, and reduce systemic barriers. From these discussions the Domestic Violence Collaborative Committee (DVCC) was formed, with members and support from the following organizations:

1. **Red Deer College:** Provided research support, gave Research Ethics Board approval, had a research committee to guide.
2. **CAIWA:** provided administration of the project.
3. The **City of Red Deer:** funded the development of the Culturally Competent Training Modules.
4. **DV Collaborative Committee:** Consist of representatives from Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre, Central Alberta Sexual Assault Centre, The Outreach Centre, Community Legal Clinic of Central Alberta, Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters, and CCIG: Collaborative Change & Innovation Group, occasionally met and developed the Empathy Map as well as guided the progress of the training module.

From 2019 – 2023, the DVCC coordinated the development of the **Domestic Violence Culturally Competent Training Modules** that are published in this booklet. Along with the Blueprint project of Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters, the DVCC developed tools that were

intended to assist with the development of the training modules. First, the committee came up with three main strategies that fully summarized the long list of strategies that were identified during the research as follows:

- **Policy/Advocacy Work:** will undertake on systemic barriers affecting clients, effective service delivery, law enforcement, and the court system.
- **Cultural Competency:** identified by different stakeholders as an important component in addressing domestic violence in the immigrant population in Canada, will lead to a better delivery of services and better outcomes for clients. We defined cultural competency as the ability to understand, communicate and interact with people across cultures.
- **Efficient Service Delivery:** create a strong service among agencies, to provide a seamless transition for clients seeking services in Red Deer and Central Alberta.

### Domestic Violence Culturally Competent Training Modules

Members of DVCC knew that whether trying to create effective long-term solutions, or working toward changing practices on the ground, both required deep understanding of the problem(s) immigrants were facing along with a deep understanding of the immigrants themselves, who are experiencing these problems. They also recognized that when it came to newcomers, immigrants, or refugee individuals there were and are stereotypes, assumptions, and a fair bit of misinformation in circulation. Some of it from well-meaning individuals and unfortunately, some of the training material currently available, inadvertently reinforces these stereotypes.

So, when CAIWA mentioned they, together with the committee, wanted to address these misconceptions and create a training module that could be used by service providers, but also community members, churches, police or any group that could provide assistance to someone fleeing domestic violence, it was agreed the best place to begin was with an Empathy Map that included input from individuals with lived or living experience of domestic violence. Once created, it would act as a source of truth throughout a project and protect the training modules from bias or unfounded assumptions.

Having been introduced to Empathy Mapping during the Blueprint Project, CAIWA and the DVCC were able to refine the mapping process and not only establish common ground among committee members, but also were able to understand and prioritize client needs from the client's perspective. This grounded module development in client-centered needs, while preventing embedded biases into the modules based on the committee's own understandings or those driven by organizational strengths or short-comings. Because this was included early in the developmental stages, the exercise allowed researchers to enter the client's world and approach development from the client's point of view before creating solutions.

Finally, a subcommittee comprised of research professors and students from RDP and CAIWA's program coordinator met weekly for two years to work on the details of the training modules. While the DVCC met periodically to guide and give feedback on the training modules.

Together we are so pleased to say that we believe the modules when implemented will foster a respectful, inclusive, and equitable environment where immigrant victims of domestic violence can thrive. And it is our sincere hope that these modules will give all sectors of domestic violence service providers the tools to understand their own biases and have more respect for this unique population they serve.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association (CAIWA) is grateful to everyone who contributed to this document.

**Report Authors:** Tabitha Phiri (CAIWA), Choon-Lee Chai (RP), Jones Adjei (RDP), and Halima Ali (CAIWA).

### **Domestic Violence Research Steering Committee (2015 - 2018)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Amanda de Boer                      | Canadian Red Cross                            |
| 2. Baiju Pallicka Vareed               | Red Deer College                              |
| 3. Darlene Wilson                      | Social Planning, City of Red Deer             |
| 4. Halima Ali                          | Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association |
| 5. Ian Wheeliker                       | Central Alberta Women's Emergency Society     |
| 6. Irving Kurz                         | DRVIC Collaborative Coordinator               |
| 7. Joy McCarty                         | Ponoka Victim Services                        |
| 8. Kate Castro                         | Central Alberta Women's Emergency Society     |
| 9. Laurie Carlson                      | Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association |
| 10. Lindsay Gibbons                    | Red Deer, Elizabeth Fry Society Ed            |
| 11. Lindsey Lubkey                     | Todayville                                    |
| 12. Cst. Pranchalee GILMAR (POONYAPAK) | Red Deer City, RCMP                           |
| 13. Tabitha Phiri                      | Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association |
| 14. Val Munro                          | Sylvan Lake, FCSS                             |

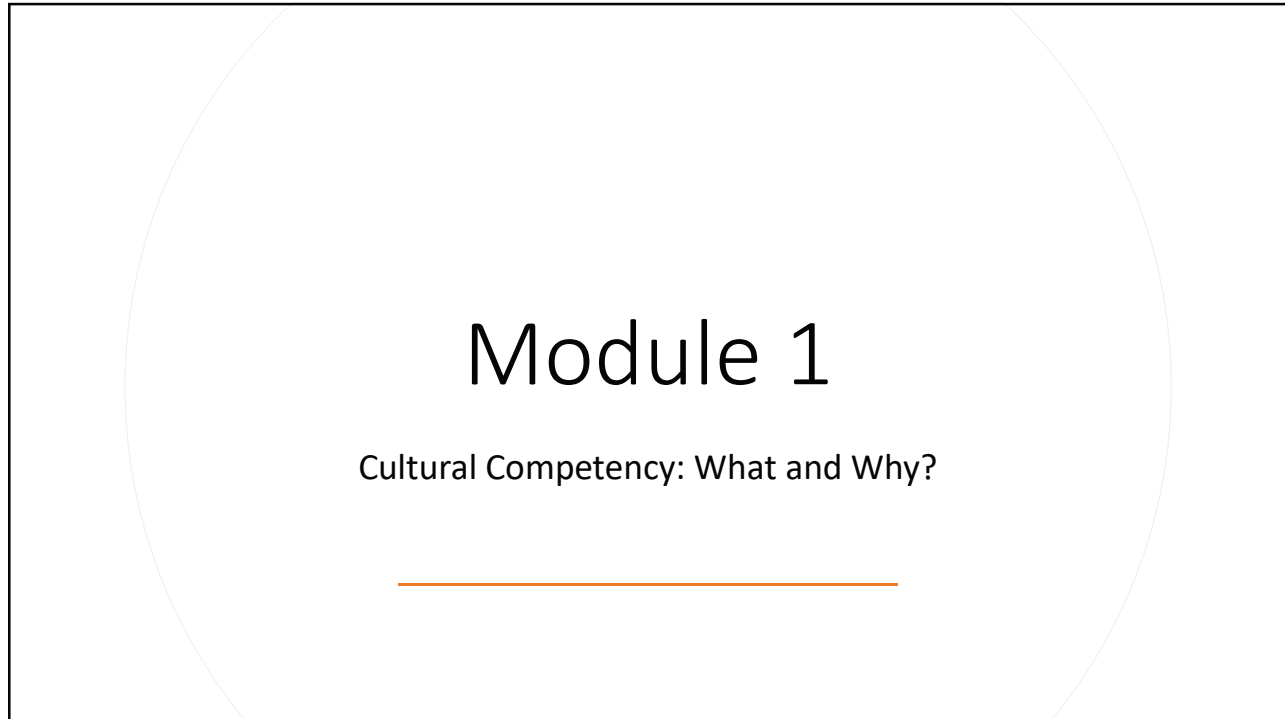
### **Domestic Violence Collaborative Committee (2019 – Present)**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Tabitha Phiri      | Chair (CAIWA)                                 |
| 2. Adriana Wildbore   | Secretary (CLCCA)                             |
| 3. Kristine Bugayong  | Secretary (CASASC)                            |
| 4. Halima Ali         | Executive Director (CAIWA)                    |
| 5. Choon-Lee Chai     | RDP Researcher                                |
| 6. Jones Adjei        | RDP Researcher                                |
| 7. Adriana Wildbore   | Central Alberta Community Legal Clinic        |
| 8. Candice Hrdlicka   | RCMP, Red Deer                                |
| 9. Carlia Schwab      | Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre |
| 10. Choon-Lee Chai    | Red Deer Polytechnic                          |
| 11. Halima Ali        | Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association |
| 12. Ian Wheeliker     | The Outreach Centre                           |
| 13. Jones Adjei       | Red Deer Polytechnic                          |
| 14. Kathryn York      | Collaborative Change and Innovation Group     |
| 15. Kellie Cummings   | Central Alberta Child Advocate                |
| 16. Kristine Bugayong | Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre |
| 17. Melanie Willerth  | Alberta Council of Women's Shelters           |
| 18. Nicole Orji       | Alberta Council of Women's Shelters           |

19. Patricia Arango Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre
20. Tabitha Phiri Central Alberta Immigrant Women 's Association
21. Teresa Lorenz Foster Legal Services

#### Reference

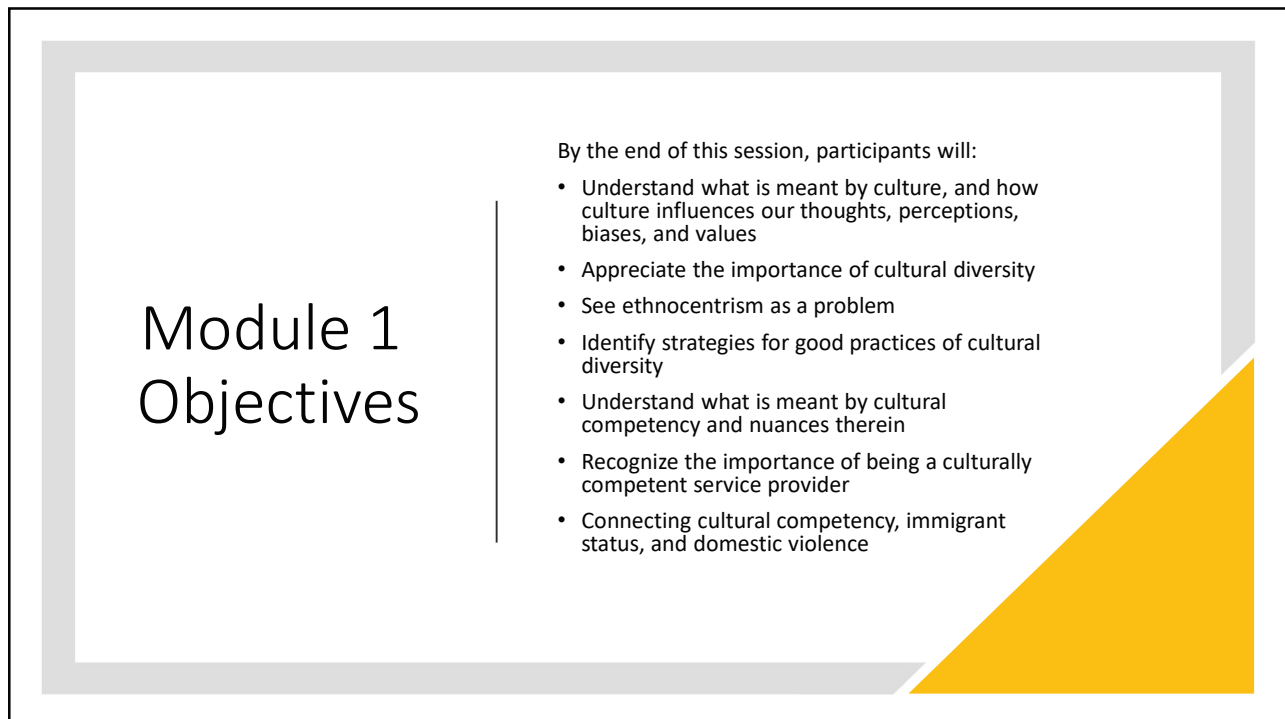
Baiju, B., Phiri, T. (2018) *Action for Safe families: Domestic violence among immigrant families in Central Alberta, Canada*. (Unpublished).

A title slide for Module 1. It features a large, faint, light gray circle in the background. The text is centered and reads "Module 1" in a large, black, sans-serif font. Below it, "Cultural Competency: What and Why?" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. A thin orange horizontal line is positioned below the subtitle.

# Module 1

Cultural Competency: What and Why?

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A slide titled "Module 1 Objectives". The title is on the left side in a large, black, sans-serif font. To the right, under the heading "By the end of this session, participants will:", there is a bulleted list of seven objectives. The slide has a gray border and a yellow triangle in the bottom right corner.

## Module 1 Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand what is meant by culture, and how culture influences our thoughts, perceptions, biases, and values
- Appreciate the importance of cultural diversity
- See ethnocentrism as a problem
- Identify strategies for good practices of cultural diversity
- Understand what is meant by cultural competency and nuances therein
- Recognize the importance of being a culturally competent service provider
- Connecting cultural competency, immigrant status, and domestic violence

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## Definition of Culture

- Culture refers to a way a group of people live
- Shared ideas, beliefs, systems of concepts and meanings, values, knowledge, ways of being, customs and often, language that arise over time within a particular group. This includes implicit assumptions, beliefs, and unwritten rules as well as taken-for-granted notions of what is normal. (Beagan 2015)



[Cultural Iceberg - YouTube](#)

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## Cultural Diversity

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] cultural diversity is:

- Embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind
- Source of exchange, innovation and creativity and is necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature
- It is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations



[The Challenges of Cultural Diversity -YouTube](#)

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# Importance of Cultural Diversity

- Approaching Cultural Diversity with a mindset that embraces differences allows individuals to experience the benefits of Cultural Diversity. This can lead towards:
  - Compassion
  - Innovation
  - Productivity
  - New Opportunities
  - Problem Solving

Source: [What is Cultural Diversity and Why is it Important](#)

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# The Problem of Ethnocentrism

- It is the attitude that considers one's own group, ethnicity, or nationality is superior to others ([Definition](#))
- Looking down on, and discriminate against people who practice a different culture than us

[What kind of Asian are you? – YouTube](#)

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## Good Practices of Cultural Diversity

- Recognizing that there is a large amount of cultures that exist, and each have their own differences
- Acknowledging that all cultural expressions are valid
- Valuing what cultures have to bring to the table
- Empowering diverse groups to contribute
- Celebrating differences and not just tolerating them

[Cultivating a culture of inclusion -YouTube](#)

Source: [Good Practices of Cultural Diversity](#)

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## What is Cultural Competency

### "Culture"

- Usually linked to ethnicity, language, or country of origin, categorizing users according to their origin and/or skin colour

### "Competence"

- A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations (Cross et al., 1989)
- Understood as the trainable capability of provider and organizations, recommending a series of "do's" and "don'ts" that define how we respond to migrants and ethnic minority needs (Garrido et al., 2019)

[Cultural Competence - YouTube](#)

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Cultural Competency is centered around the development of:



Knowledge

Learning about other cultures



Awareness

Developing an insight into an individual's own cultural attitudes, biases and values



Skills

Include rapport building across differences, effective communication, active listening, respect, use of open-ended inquiry, advocacy, use of culturally appropriate assessments and interventions and working with interpreters

(Beagan, 2018)

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## What is Cultural Competency

- Ability to understand and appreciate differences in people's beliefs and behaviors
- Recognizing and respecting variations that occur within cultural groups
- Ability to adjust practices to provide effective interventions for people from various cultures
- Improvement of knowledge and skills through repetitive engagement with diverse groups

(Beagan, 2015)

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## What is Cultural Competency

- Generally, culturally competent service and organization have the following elements:
  - Respect and appreciation of diversity
  - Awareness of the dynamics of diversity
  - Engagement of continuous professional education on cultures other than one's own
  - Advocacy for marginalized populations and work for their empowerment
  - Support an appropriately diversified workforce and organizational culture
  - Engagement of leadership roles in celebrating diversity

(Lockhart et al, 2010)

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## Why Cultural Competency

### Services are Culture-bound

- Services are not culturally neutral but informed by dominant Western middleclass cultural values, beliefs, and assumptions
- For instance, immigration and settlement process increase immigrant women's dependence on the nuclear family. They are reluctant to focus on their personal well-being but put their efforts into keeping the family together
- This phenomenon contrasts with the emphasis on individual identity of Western Society upon which the contemporary model of D/IPV service provision is based

(Holtman & Rickards, 2018)

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## Why Cultural Competency

### **Stereotyping and poor treatment of clients**

- Differences among groups frequently become the basis for stereotyping as well as rationalizing poor treatment for some preferential treatment for others



(Beagan, 2015)

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## Why Cultural Competency

### **Ineffective Intervention**

- An effective intervention had to be carried out within the context of cultural values and traditions. The intervention also had to be grounded in the premigration, migratory and acculturation experiences immigrants



(Hancock & Siu, 2009)

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## Why Cultural Competency

### Failing in harnessing potential resources of clients

- Immigrants have resources, such as friendship networks, which may not be recognizable to, or may not be aware of by, service providers

(Beagan, 2015)

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## Cultural Competency Benefits

Increase mental health and enhancing client engagement for services (Ahrens et al., 2021)

Has the potential to increase trust, understanding and communication between professionals and clients (Ahrens et al., 2021)

Allows culturally specific interventions, client goals and achievements to be effectively met (Ahrens et al., 2021)

Responding to diversity can increase workplace empowerment, develop greater control of work, self-determination and self-worth (Garrido et al., 2019)

(Ahrens et al., 2021; Garrido et al., 2019)

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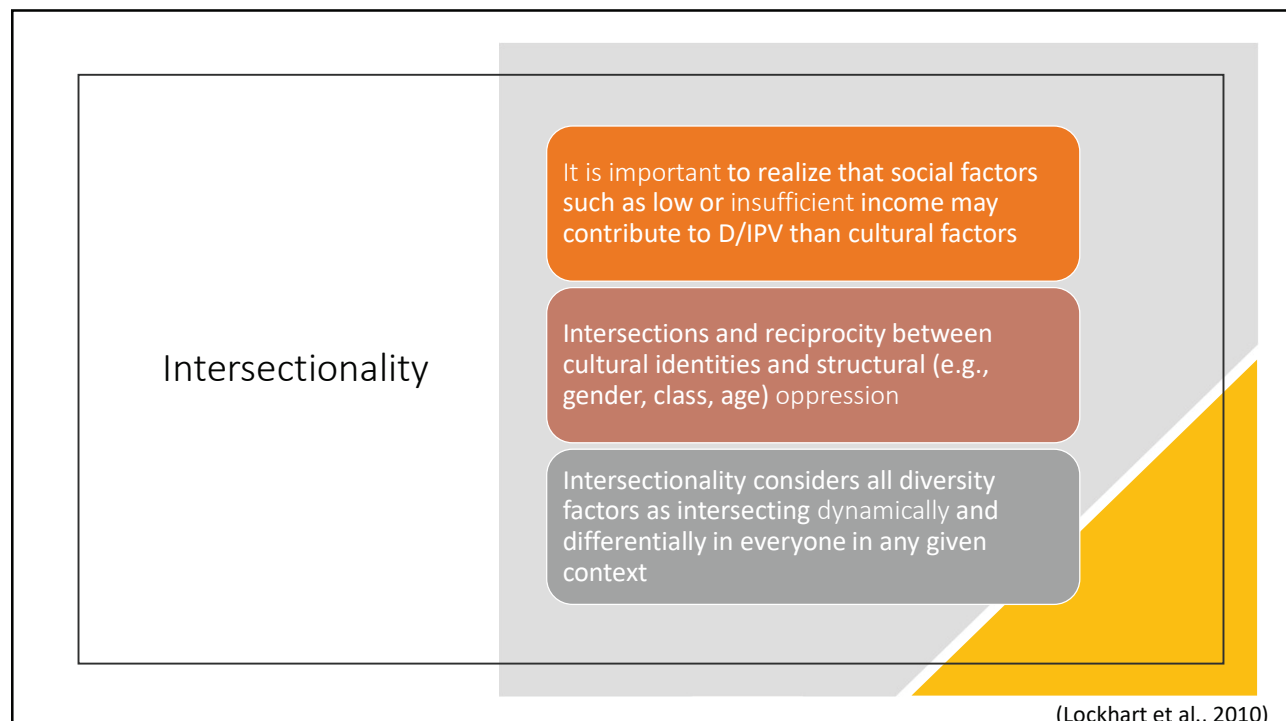
[Cultural Competency for Abuse Survivors - YouTube](#)

## Cultural Competency, Immigrants, and Domestic Violence

- Newly arrived immigrant women may be isolated and unaware of community resources to help women in abusive situations (Hancock & Siu, 2009)
- Immigrant women may want to hold onto some of their cultural values as they transition to their new life. The values of motherhood and self-sacrifice play an important role in shaping how immigrant women make sense of D/IPV and why they are hesitant to discuss, or even disclose incidents to service providers (Holtman & Rickards, 2018)
- They may be reluctant to seek help based on their assumptions (Holtman & Rickards, 2018)
- E.g., Immigrant women may not understand Canadian relationship ideals of autonomy and interdependency in the same way non-immigrant Canadians do

*Further explanation and analysis of this concept will be explored in Module 4: Immigration and Immigrants Lived Experiences*

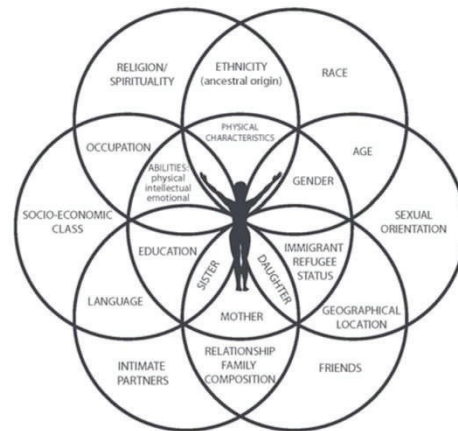
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Intersectionality is a conceptual framework, a methodology for practice and research, and catalyst for social and economic justice agendas to address social issues, such as those affecting women in our society who experience intimate partner violence

### INTERSECTIONALITY OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY



(Lockhart et al., 2010)

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# Module 2

Understanding Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence

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## Module 2 Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Learn about behaviors that constitute domestic violence
- Identify different categories of domestic violence
- Identify different types of harm caused by domestic violence
- Know about the dynamics of power and control
- Understand Impacts of domestic violence on children
- Recognize cultural impacts on understanding domestic/intimate partner violence

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## Domestic Violence Defined

Violent or abusive behavior directed by one family or household member against another ([Merriam Webster](#))

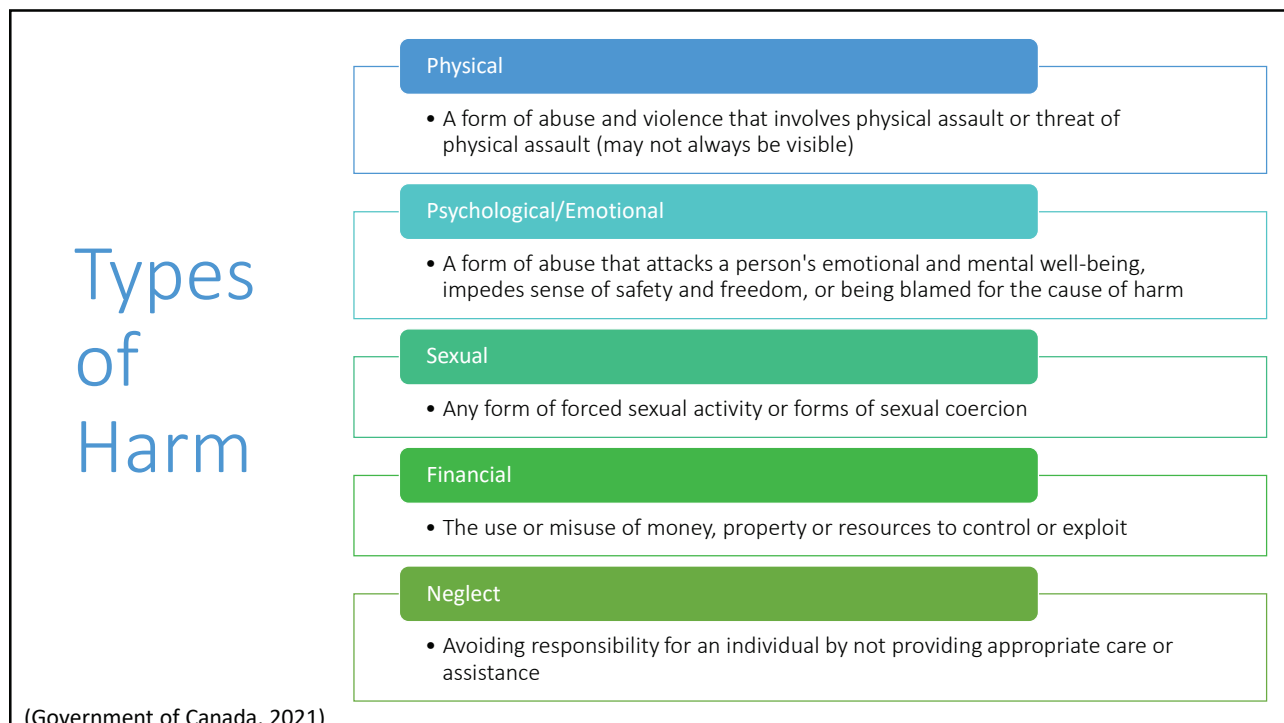
An umbrella term for types of violence aimed at an individual in which there is any type of relationship (Government of Canada, 2021)

This can include a single or multiple acts of violence that could have potential serious or fatal consequences (Government of Canada, 2021)

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Types of Violence (Government of Canada, 2014, 2021)	
Intimate Partner Violence	Violence or abuse that happens within a marriage, common-law or dating relationship, in an opposite-sex or same-sex relationship, anytime during a relationship, including while it is breaking down, or after it has ended.
Dating Violence	Violence between couples who are not married.
Gender-based Violence	Violence on so called "honour". Happens when family members use violence to protect the family's honour.
Child Abuse and Neglect	Includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Also includes neglect, and any violence that children see or hear in their families.
Elder Abuse	Is any action, behaviour or failure to act, by a person in a position of trust-like an adult, child, family member, friend or caregiver that causes or risks causing harm to an older adult.
Family Violence	Considered to be any form of abuse, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adult experiences from a family member, or from someone with whom they have an intimate relationship.

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## Power and Control: The Duluth Model

- Harm can happen in many forms as a result of an individual attempting to gain or assert power or control over another in the relationship (Government of Canada, 2018)
- Duluth Model is a way to identify the tactics used by an individual to gain power and control
- This wheel was created to describe domestic violence through the voices of those who experienced it, common abuse tactics and behaviors were noted in the stories
- Knowing the tactics of each of these wheels can help practitioners be aware of signs when working with women, children and immigrant individuals
- Note: This model may not be culturally sensitive (Hancock and Siu 2009)



Source: [Understanding the Power and Control Wheel](#)

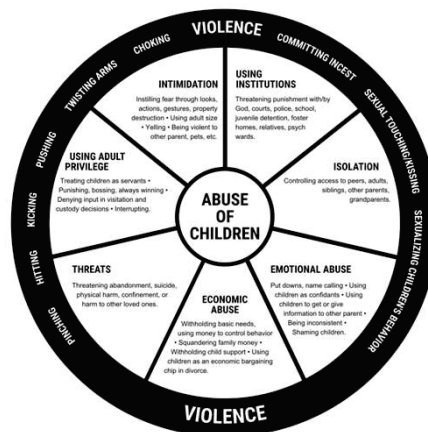
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## Impacts on Children

Children and adolescents experiencing domestic violence have increased risk for:

- Experiencing abuse such as emotional, physical and sexual
- Developing emotional and behavioral problems
- Experiencing adverse life experiences such as drugs and alcohol or living in group homes
- Continuing the cycle of domestic violence in their own relationships

(Holt et al., 2008)



Source: [Abuse of Children Wheel Poster](#)

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# Prevention

Primary Prevention: Stop family violence before it happens

Secondary Prevention: Stop family violence from recurring after it happens

Tertiary Prevention: Respond to long-term impacts of family violence

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# Module 3

Government Policies and Administration on Domestic Violence

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## Module 3 Objective

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Learn about Federal and Provincial legislations that address family violence in Canada
- Learn about provisions that protect victims of family violence
- Identify barriers that prevent immigrant women from utilizing the Criminal Justice System
- Learn about the Protection Against Family Violence Act (PAFVA)
- Learn about Clare's Law

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## Federal Legislation Addressing Family Violence in Canada

- Offences related to the use of physical and sexual violence
- Offences related to some forms of psychological or emotional abuse within the family that involves using words or actions to control, isolate, intimidate, or dehumanize someone
- Offences related to neglect within the family
- Offences related to financial abuse within the family

Source: [Criminal Code of Canada](#)

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## Barriers Preventing Immigrant Women from using the Criminal Justice System

(Tam et al., 2016)

### Cultural Beliefs

- Immigrant women are often pressured by families and communities to keep the violence secret because reporting the assaults to police would shame them
- They may also have no trust with law enforcement officials because of the negative experiences in their country of origin

### Fear

- The fear of damaging the ethnic communities' image and possible reprisal from family and friends
- Immigration status (sponsorship is often used as a weapon with the abusive partner distorting the truth about the process and threatening women with deportation if the abuse is reported)

### Integration Obstacles

- Social Isolation and language barriers prevent immigrant women from attaining the information they need about the Criminal Justice System

### Systemic Barriers

- Racial discrimination in Western Society
- Communication/Language Barriers

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## Criminal Code Special Provisions to Protect Victims of Family Violence

- When charges relating to family violence have been laid, criminal courts have a wide range of powers to release or detain an accused person.
- They can provide for release conditions such as "no contact" until the trial or appeal (Section 515).
- Even when no offence has been committed yet, where personal injury or damage is feared, courts can also order peace bonds or recognizances, which require an individual to agree to specific conditions to keep the peace (Section 810).
- Special consideration is given to the harm that comes from family violence. Because of the nature of the harm, sentencing provisions of the *Criminal Code* (Section 718.2) "make it an aggravating factor" for sentencing purposes when the offence involves abuse of position of trust or authority. Section 742.1 puts limits on the use of conditional sentences that would allow an offender to serve a sentence in the community.

Source: [Criminal Code of Canada](#)

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## Provincial Family Violence Legislation: Alberta

### Protection Against Family Violence Act (PAFVA), RSA 2000, c- P-27

- To provide immediate protection and safety for claimant and family members
- To serve as a deterrent to future family violence
- To enable safety measures to be put in place for other family members

### Additional Benefits of PAFVA

- Emergency protection orders (EPOs) provide protection to victims of family violence, can be applied for and issued 24 hours a day, and can be extended up to one year to provide longer-term protection;
- The claimant (and other specified family members) may remain in home;
- There is no cost to obtain an EPO
- Children can be better protected from violence;
- Stalking is included as family violence under PAFVA

Source: [Protection Against Family Violence Act, RSA 2000, c P-27](#)

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## Provincial Family Violence Legislation: Alberta

### Clare's Law

#### The Right to Ask

- Gives the option for Albertans to ask if their partner has a history of domestic violence
- Individuals can submit an application by using: [Alberta.ca/clareslaw](http://Alberta.ca/clareslaw)
- A third party can also access this information for someone they believe is at risk

#### The Right to Know

- Gives police officers the ability to disclose relevant past domestic history to individuals at risk. If they believe that an individual is at risk for domestic violence and/or abuse, they are able to share and disclose that information with that individual

#### The Right to Privacy

- Personal details will be safe guarded and only relevant details will be communicated
- To protect privacy, information will only be shared verbally, this includes information from trained professional supports

[Clare's Law - YouTube](#)

Source: [Government of Alberta](#)

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## Case Study #1

Fatima has been referred to your services after being charged with assault on her husband and there is an open file with Children's Services. Fatima is not the biological mother of her three-year-old daughter. Fatima's husband started courting a woman once he came to Canada (to become his second wife); she became pregnant and died by suicide when her baby was 2 months old. Fatima recently became a permanent resident of Canada, does not work, has language barriers and is waiting to be enrolled in an English-speaking class.

Fatima's husband came to Toronto ahead of her. Fatime arrived a year later and then moved to Red Deer. He is a professional and well respected within their community. Fatima and her husband have a 19-year age difference. Before she immigrated to Canada, she has the victim of genital cutting and has been experiencing medial difficulties (admits to overusing pain medication). Fatima lives with extensive physical, emotional, verbal, and sexual violence by her husband. She is isolated and is only able to associate with her husband's mother and sister. Fatima's mother-in-law and sister-in-law also physically assault her; each day Fatima is subjected to some form of threat, guilt, shame, and/or fear from her husband or in laws.

One night the neighbours called the RCMP after hearing screaming and a disturbance next door. The police charged Fatima with assault after admitting to throwing an ashtray at her husband and scratching his arms (she could not communicate to the RCMP she was defending herself). Her husband speaks English very well and can remain calm in front of others. She was removed from the home and went to stay with an extended family member, who unknowingly was involved with criminal activity. Fatima borrowed money from the family member, and he starting exploiting her with drugs and criminal activity. Fatime has started using street drugs to cope.

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## Case Study #1



### Small Community:

Her husband and family members are well-known and respected. Fatima is worried about the secondary consequences of shame and disgrace for accessing services. She believes her husband is powerful as he is friends with two social workers. Fatima is also concerned her current situation (being exploited) will be exposed. What are the risks in information sharing on Fatima's reputation?



### Access to Services:

Fatima is coping through substance abuse, lives with undiagnosed PTSD/mental health disorders, fleeing IPV (husband has threatened her live multiple times), and is in financial crisis. This information will be helpful in receiving housing and other supports but may negatively affect outcomes in family court or with Children's Services. What are the risks in sharing this information?



### Gossip:

With Fatima's family being prominent in the community, what are the risks of information of her marriage becoming known and impacting her family back home?

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# Module 4

## Immigration and Immigrants Experiences of DV

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## Module 4 Objectives

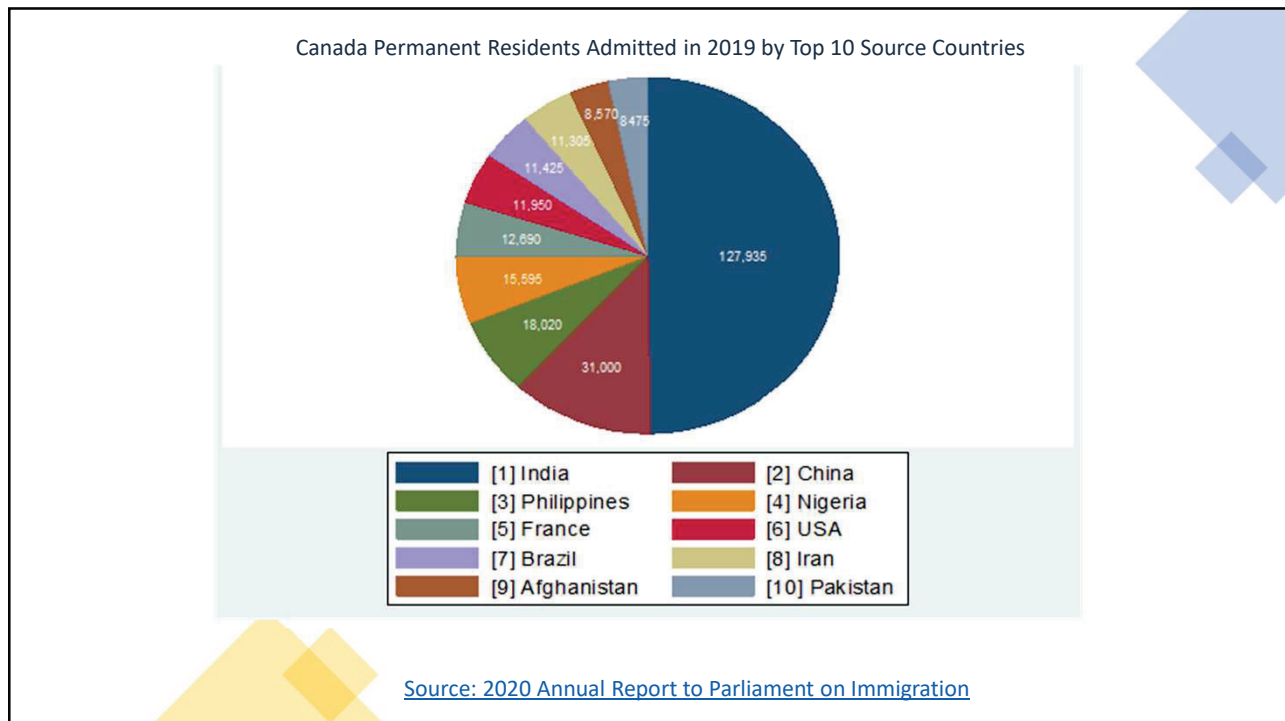
By the end of this session, participants will:

- Gain an understanding in immigrant statistics and categories in Canada
- Understand the importance of immigration to Canada, including the economic, labour force, and population renewal benefits
- Learn the unique issues immigrant women face with domestic violence
- Understand how cultural constraints may affect help-seeking among immigrant victims of domestic violence

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Why Immigration is Important to Canada: Economic Prosperity

Immigrants and temporary foreign workers **fill gaps in Canada's labour force** and help employers respond to vacancies in various sectors.<sup>6</sup>

Approximately **1 in 4 workers (26%) in Canada are immigrants.**<sup>7</sup>

As of 2016, there were **600,000 self-employed immigrants** employing over **260,000 Canadians.**

In a 2018 survey, **9% of small business owners** reported hiring temporary foreign workers to address job vacancies in the prior 12 month period.<sup>8</sup>

In 2019, **the labour market participation** rates of very recent immigrants was **71%** and recent immigrants was **76%.**<sup>9</sup>

In 2016, **over one third** of nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates in Canada were immigrants.<sup>10</sup>

**Immigrant** owners of small and medium-sized enterprises **are successful** in introducing a product, process or marketing innovation into the marketplace.<sup>11</sup>

**Many of those that immigrate** as children, or the children of immigrants, on average, **contribute to Canada's labour force** and go on to earn as much or more as the Canadian-born.<sup>12</sup>

[Source: 2020 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration](#)

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Why Immigration is Important to Canada: Population Renewal

Country	Population Growth Rate from 2016 to 2021 (%)
Saudi Arabia	9.0
Australia	7.5
South Africa	7.0
Turkey	6.5
Indonesia	6.0
Mexico	5.5
<b>Canada</b>	<b>5.0</b>
India	5.0
Argentina	4.5
Brazil	4.0
United Kingdom	3.5
United States	3.0
China	2.5
France	2.0
South Korea	1.5
Germany	1.5
European Union	1.0
Russian Federation	0.5
Japan	-1.5
Italy	-2.5

**Note(s):**  
The official name of South Korea is Republic of Korea. The following countries are part of the G7: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States.

[Source: Canada Tops G7 Growth Despite COVID-19](#)

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## Why Immigration is Important to Canada: Advancement of Canadian Society

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**Immigrants contribute to an educated Canada** – in 2019, 56% of very recent immigrants and 50% of recent immigrants working in Canada had a university degree.<sup>15</sup>
- 

**Immigrants are politically engaged** – in the 2011 federal election, 82% of citizens who immigrated as economic immigrants (principal applicants), and 68% of citizens who immigrated as refugees, voted.
- 

**Immigrant donors are generous** – immigrants who donated were, on average, relatively generous with various Canadian and international charities.<sup>16</sup>
- 

**Immigrants contribute to Canada's future** – the children of immigrants tend to achieve high levels of education and similar labour market outcomes as those born in Canada.<sup>17</sup>
- 

**Societal benefits go beyond those offered by economic immigrants.**  
For example: two out of three refugees become home owners after ten years<sup>18</sup> and refugees have the highest citizenship uptake rate (89%) of all immigration categories.<sup>19</sup>

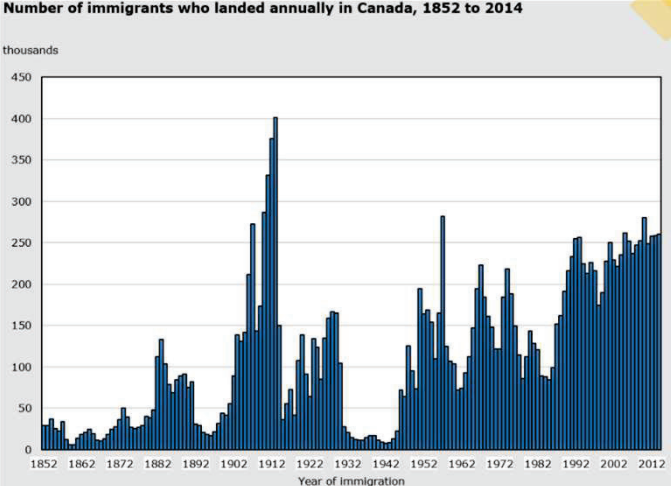
[Source: 2020 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration](#)

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## Immigration Categories in Canada

**Main categories:**

- Family Class
- Economic Class
- Refugee
- Temporary
- Non-Status Immigrants



**Number of immigrants who landed annually in Canada, 1852 to 2014**

Sources: From 1852 to 1979—Employment and Immigration Canada, 1982. For 1980—Immigration Statistics, Immigration and Demographic Policy Group, Catalogue no. MP22-1/1980. From 1980 to 2014—Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada.

[Source: 150 Years of Immigration in Canada](#)

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## Factors Preventing Victims from Leaving

Financial Dependence

Fear of losing their children

Wanting to keep the family together

Fear of judgement

(Raj & Silverman, 2002)

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## Immigration, Immigrants and the Issue of Domestic Violence

Immigrant women may face unique barriers with IPV/DV than non-immigrant women such as:

Language, service, and financial barriers

Social/cultural isolation

Legal dependency

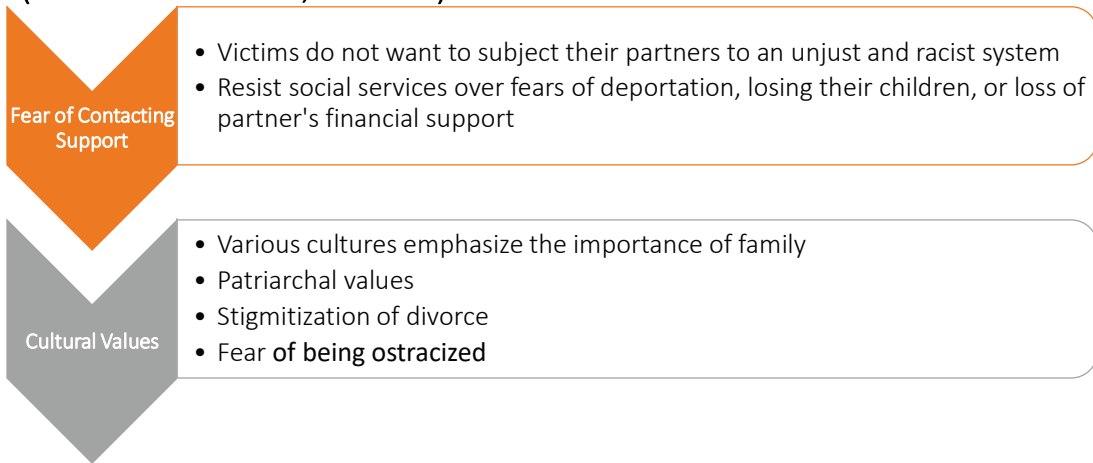
Complex pathway towards citizenship

Lack of sense of security over immigration status

(Ahrens et al., 2021; Holtman et al., 2017; Hancock et al., 2009)

50

## Role of Culture, Domestic Violence Victimization, and Help-Seeking Behaviours Among Immigrants (Ahrens et al., 2021)



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## Cultural Impacts on Understanding Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence

Patriarchal Society

Cultural Script

Binary Processes Around Gender Roles

Isolation and Dependency

Differing Perceptions


(Ahrens et al, 2021; Hancock et al., 2009; Holtman et al., 2017)

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Immigration Status  
and Domestic Violence  
Victimization:  
Lingering Fear of  
Deportation



### Sponsored Spouses

- Victim may be **threatened** that their spouse will **withdraw the sponsorship** if the victim does not conform to the abusive situation
- The sponsoring spouse has **the right to withdraw the sponsorship** in process up to the moment that the victim is granted permanent residence
- This form of control is often used by abusive spouses to **make the victim stay in the relationship**


(Anderson, 1993; Hrick, 2012)

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Immigration Status  
and Domestic Violence  
Victimization:  
Lingering Fear of  
Deportation



### Refugee Claimant

- If a refugee claimant is being abused by the spouse or partner during refugee process, the victim often doesn't know that they **have the right to separate their refugee claim** from the abuser
- The victim may believe that they will be **granted refugee status only if they stay with their abuser**, particularly if their claims are based on similar circumstances
- Victims often don't know that **they have the right to ask that their refugee claim be reopened** if they have been denied the opportunity to tell their story during the hearing


(Anderson, 1993; Hrick, 2012)

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## Immigration Status and Domestic Violence Victimization: Lingering Fear of Deportation



### Non-Status

- Non-status victims are **particularly vulnerable** when experiencing abuse because they have **no legal status**
- This often makes them too **afraid to call the police** when a domestic violence incident occurs
- They fear that police involvement will **lead to deportation**
- Many non-status victims are afraid to access any social services because they **fear that their lack of status could become known**


(Anderson, 1993; Hrick, 2012)

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## Immigration Status and Domestic Violence Victimization: Lingering Fear of Deportation



### Immigrant Status

- Victims with status may be **manipulated by their partner** in various ways that are unique to the newcomer experience
- For example, the spouse or partner may **prohibit them** from learning English/French or from working, keeping them isolated in the home, threaten to take custody of the children, threaten to alienate them from their cultural community by telling people they are a bad spouse/parent, etc.

(Anderson, 1993; Hrick, 2012)


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## Immigration Status and Domestic Violence Victimization: Lingering Fear of Deportation



### Important Information

- [Conditional permanent residence](#) no longer applies to anyone in Canada
- If a victim receives their Confirmation of Permanent Residence on or after April 18, 2017 and it indicates that they "must cohabit in a conjugal relationship with your spouse or partner for a continuous period of 2 years after the day on which you became a Permanent Resident", this requirement no longer applies
- If the victim was under investigation for not complying with the requirement to live with your spouse or partner, they are no longer under investigation
- Victims whose sponsorship is withdrawn while in process, and those without status, have the right to remain in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds
- A settlement worker or lawyer will be needed to assist in gathering evidence, understanding the legal requirements, prepping the application, etc.

(Anderson, 1993; Hrick, 2012)

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# Module 5

## Cultural Competency and Victim Care – Organization

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## Module 5 Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

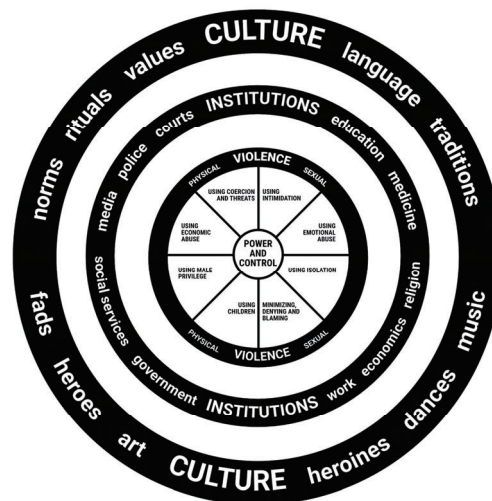
- Understand several culturally competent strategies at the organizational level for immigrant women who are victims of DV/IPV to facilitate respectful and efficient interactions
- Understand key features of organizational culture, commitment, and support

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## The Culture Wheel

- The Culture Wheel emphasizes the different layers that are at play and reinforce power and control in domestic violence situations.
- Organizations can implement strategies and train their service providers and to work with victims and perpetrators to highlight the way personal, cultural, and institutional levels either contribute to or end domestic violence.

[Source: The Culture Wheel](#)



DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

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## Culturally Competent Strategies

Strategies can be implemented at two main levels:

Organization

Practitioner

Strategies by Kirmayer (2012) and Ahrens et al. (2021) to enhance:

Trust

Understanding

Communication

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## Strategies at the Organizational/Institutional Level

Organizations and institutions must attend to cultural concerns and norms in their policies, governance, and community engagement to provide culturally competent care.

Ahrens et al., (2021)

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## Intervention Techniques at Organizational Level

Adapting existing interventions for specific cultural groups

Building new interventions based on specific cultural traditions

Providing culturally-specific referrals

(Ahrens et al. 2021; Bui, 2003; Nguyen & Anderson, 2005; Senturia et al., 2000; Shiu-Thornton et al., 2005; Tran, 1997.)

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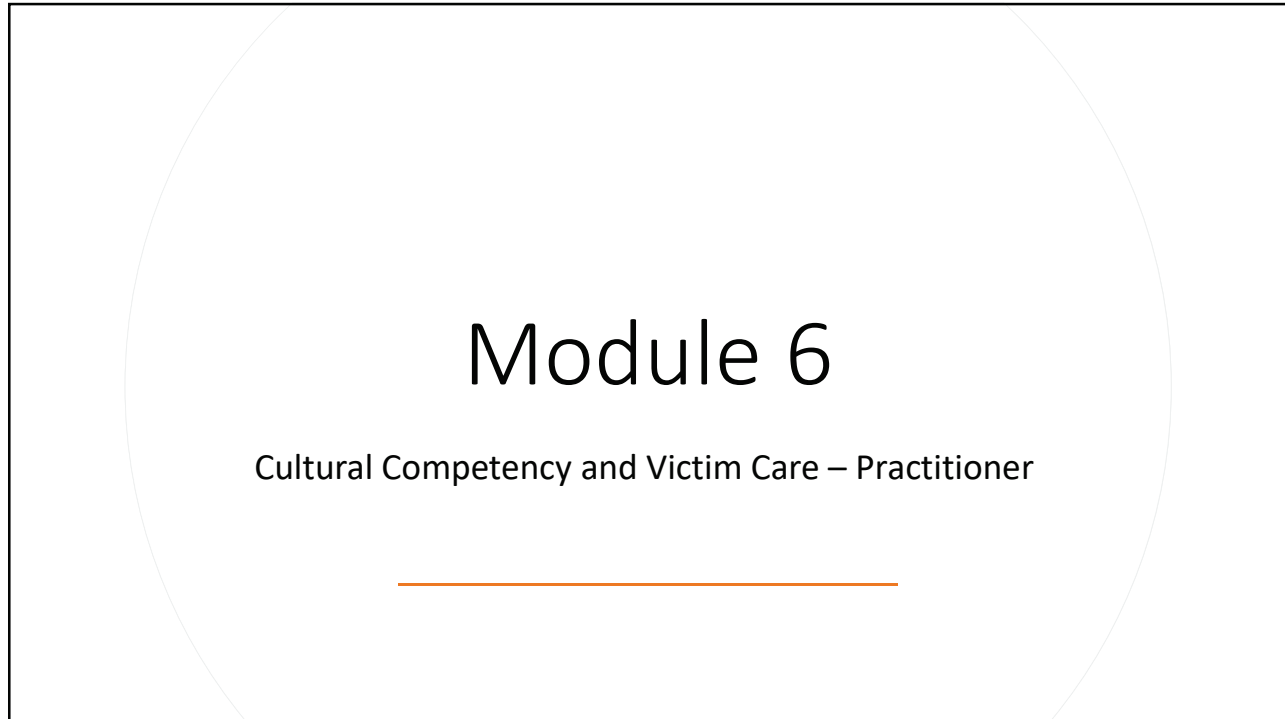
## Strategies at the Organizational/Institutional Level

- Institutional policies of equity, anti-racism, cultural diversity and awareness.
- Ensuring that administration and staff are representative of ethnocultural composition of communities served.
- Enhancing cultural competence through staff training.
  - Increasing community education and outreach.

(Ahrens et al., 2021)

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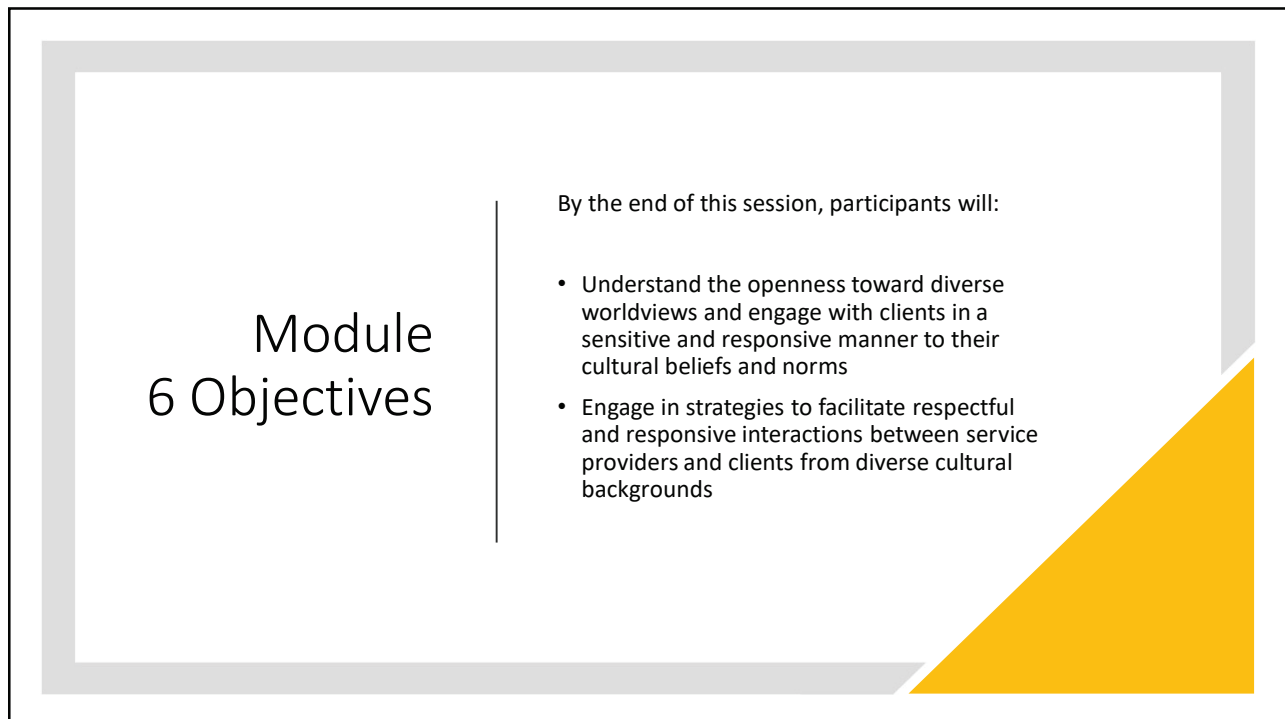


A title slide for Module 6. The text is centered within a large, faint white circle. Below the subtitle, there is a horizontal orange line.

# Module 6

Cultural Competency and Victim Care – Practitioner

65

A slide titled 'Module 6 Objectives'. The title is on the left, and a list of objectives is on the right, separated by a vertical line. The slide features a grey border and a yellow triangle in the bottom right corner.

## Module 6 Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the openness toward diverse worldviews and engage with clients in a sensitive and responsive manner to their cultural beliefs and norms
- Engage in strategies to facilitate respectful and responsive interactions between service providers and clients from diverse cultural backgrounds

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## Strategies at the Practitioner Level

Connecting with  
staff from similar linguistic or  
cultural backgrounds

Challenge your own beliefs, listen,  
and learn.

Advocate for clients and aid in  
network building

(Ahrens et al., 2021; Curtis et al., 2019; Foronda et al., 2016;  
Garrido et al., 2019; Watcher et al., 2019)

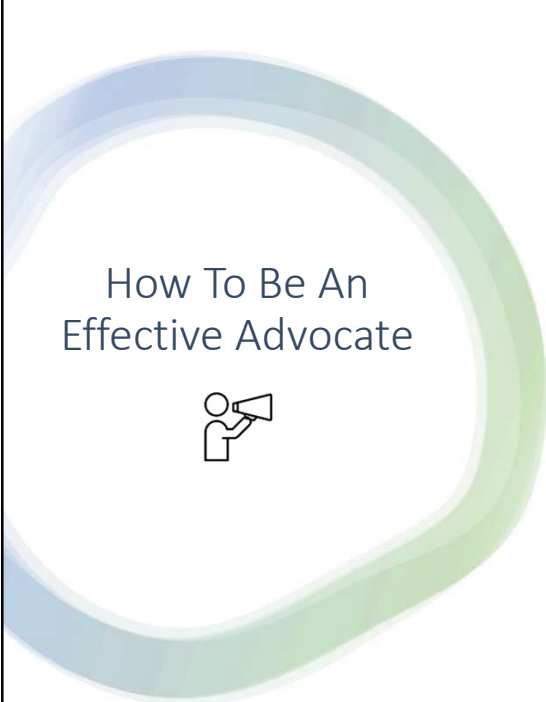
67

## Survivor-Centered Approach


"The act of giving voice and empowering women to  
make decisions about their lives and families"

(Goodman & Epstein, 2007)

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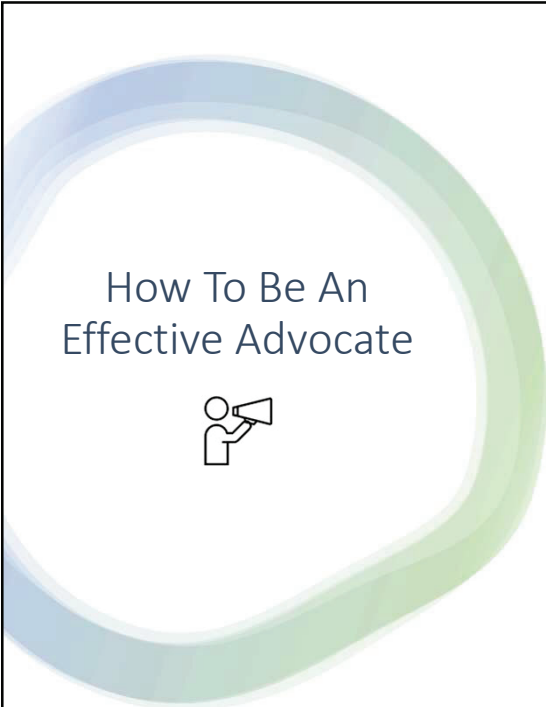
## How To Be An Effective Advocate




- Know the local resources that can help you offer comprehensive support
- Do not involve or function as immigration law enforcement
- Do not collude with abuser's tactics to control through immigration procedures
- Examine assumptions about culture and different immigrant groups
- Know the rights of non-citizens
- Know the rights in the immigration system
- Ensure access to accurate legal immigration advice

(Lockhart & Danis, 2010)

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## How To Be An Effective Advocate




**Practitioners should consider asking themselves or their clients:**

- Is the victim safe? Make a safety plan.
- What is the most comfortable language to use?
- Accessing an interpreter? Avoid using children.
- Does victim want police involvement? Ask victim.
- Does victim need medical attention? Ask victim.
- Assist victim access needed services.

Source: [Battered Women's Justice Project: Advocate's Guide](#)

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## Bridging the Gap



- Creating an alliance between professionals and clients (Bhogal, 2019).
- Going beyond the boundaries of traditional models and guidelines (Bhogal, 2019; Watcher, 2019).
- Connecting traditional and non-traditional services (Watcher et al., 2019)

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## Intervention Strategies

- Adapting current intervention strategies (Ahrens et al., 2021)
- Ask difficult questions (Fisher-Borne et al., 2015).
- Including the abusive partner in intervention practices (Wachter et al., 2019).

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## Intervention Strategies

Risk Assessments: Validated risk assessment tools can assist in safety planning by assessing and analyzing potential risks and identifying individuals at high risk (Canada, 2014).

Danger Assessment for Immigrant Women (DA-I) is a culturally competent revised Danger Assessment.

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Case Study #2


Amina is a refugee woman living in Red Deer with her husband. She came to Canada a few years back and found out that her husband has another wife who is living in her home country. Amina is not fluent in English and depends on her husband for almost everything. Recently, her husband has been physically and emotionally abusive towards her and has threatened several times that if she reaches out to anyone and discloses the violence, he will send her back home.


Amina has severe PTSD and is dependent on medications which are covered by her husband's work. She has been taking ESL classes in an agency where her husband works too. She is concerned if she reveals her situation, she won't be able to take the classes and she might be sent back home where she does not want to move because of the political crisis there. She is fearful that her husbands' violence might escalate if she discloses what he is doing to her.


She has also accessed mental health services in an agency where she has seen a therapist who has been helping her to deal with her PTSD. She is highly stressed that if she mentions the violence, she will be withdrawn from this service as well. One night her husband became so extremely verbally abusive that she wanted to call the police, but previous experiences with authority made her frustrated, and she is afraid to interact with police and feels more vulnerable because of her language barrier. She is extremely overwhelmed and does not know what to do.

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## Case Study #2







**Intersectionality:**

Are the service providers aware about cultural humility and intersectionality when dealing with women of colour?

**Cultural Awareness:**

In Amina's culture the husband is the head of the house, and it is acceptable for him to "discipline" his wife as he sees fit. How might a service provider engage Amina in conversation regarding domestic violence while still remaining respectful of Amina's culture and beliefs?

**Client-Centered Approach:**

Amina is concerned that her husband will discover that she is seeking help outside the house. Therefore, she may be inclined to resolve her problems informally and within her current support circle. How might a service provider engage with Amina through her support circle?

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**DV Collaboration Committee Acknowledgement**

1. Tabitha Phiri – Chair
2. Adriana Wildbore – Secretary
3. Kristine Bugayong – Secretary
4. Halima Ali – Executive Director CAIWA
5. Choon-Lee Chai – RDP Researcher
6. Jones Adjei – RDP Researcher

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#### DV Collaboration Committee Members

1. Adriana Wildbore - Central Alberta Community Legal Clinic
2. Candice Hrdlicka - RCMP, Red Deer
3. Carlia Schwab - Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre
4. Choon-Lee Chai – Red Deer Polytechnic
5. Halima Ali – Central Alberta Immigrant Women’s Association
6. Ian Wheeliker – The Outreach Centre
7. Jones Adjei – Red Deer Polytechnic
8. Kathryn York - Collaborative Change and Innovation Group
9. Kellie Cummings – Central Alberta Child Advocate
10. Kristine Bugayong – Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre
11. Melanie Willerth - Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters
12. Nicole Orji – Alberta Council of Women’s Shelters
13. Patricia Arango – Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support Centre
14. Tabitha Phiri – Central Alberta Immigrant Women’s Association
15. Teresa Lorenz - Foster Legal Services

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## Resources and Toolkits

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## A. Rapworkers.com

Cultural competency in depth

Self-assessments

Checklists for culturally competent service deliveries, policies, and procedures

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## B. Battered Women's Justice Project

[www.bwjp.org](http://www.bwjp.org)

Guides and resources to assist providers with immigrant victims of DV/IPV:

- how to more effectively respond to battered immigrant women
- how immigration status is used as a weapon in domestic violence cases
- the options open to immigrant victims
- the documents they need
- and when a referral to an immigration attorney should be made.



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# THINK AND

What really matters?  
Major preoccupations  
Worries and fears

Fear of being deported and losing their kids.

Many clients have experienced damaging interactions with colonial culture.

Feel guilty - that they brought this onto themselves. They don't want to bother anyone or disrupt.

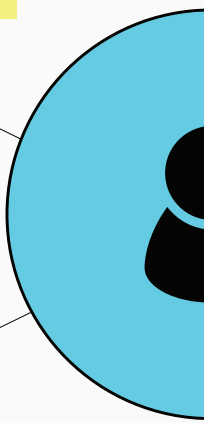
Active listening. Sometimes people need time if English is not the first language. Intake on what person would like in terms of meeting their needs. It may be a cultural, language, gender or sexual need that the agency can support with

Being uncomfortable that they won't be understood and won't be able to communicate their concerns.

Look forward to hearing, "How may I help you?" Indicates that they have control over the services for helping.

# HEAR

What is heard?  
What matters?  
What hurts and pleases?



Once they hear they are being referred to (i.e.) RCMP, Lawyer. Presents fear and reluctance. Inherent mistrust of gov't or authority.

Culture of not wanting to bother other people. They can come when they are ready and the service will be waiting for them.

Hearing the message that we are happy you have come, we welcome you. Hearing basic messages of support and concern.

Staff may inadvertently talk down to those where ESL.

Lower the tone - some cultures who are more expressive are asked to calm down when this is not the case.

Phone menus are difficult to navigate if ESL.

Being told that, "I can't understand you."

They are not powerless, and they have control over what services to receive or reject.

Hearing that they have choices, not pressured to make an instant decision. They have choice and power of informed consent.

Cultural competence - not understanding the culture of the person. For instance someone who does not make eye contact is assumed to not be honest or serious in accessing services.

# SAY AND

Attitudes, and Behaviour

Sol agency has different languages and Indigenous languages.

Direct eye contact be seen as a challenge, confrontational. This is the same with hand gestures - can be seen as derogatory, insulting or intimidating.

Be mindful of pronouns and names people wish to be called. Resist the temptation to shorten or nicknames.

# CAUSES PAIN

Fears, frustrations, obstacles

Building bridges into communities - build relationships from a culturally respectful way. Want to work toward positive referrals that clients feel comfortable referring others to your service.

Being told, "We don't help people like you." Careless answer that caused hurt to the client and damaged the reputation of the organization.

When calling an org and told, "We can't understand you." The first point of contact is so critical to the individual seeking help and knowing that they will be respected and assisted.

Miscommunication - sometimes how staff phrase a question and you may not understand based on how the question is framed. Be clear the kind of questions you are asking.

Clear, simple language questions, carefully presented. Please can you repeat? In a calm and patient voice.

Be patient with the accent. Control facial expressions - i.e.) frustrations

Canadian culture is to sit quiet while they are talking which can be interrupted that the staff isn't understanding. Better for staff to provide audio feedback while the client is speaking (i.e.) yes, hmm, ok, etc.

If the client repeats, due to nonverbal confirmation, which might lead to the client being labeled as hyper or difficult to work with. While the client may interrupt that the organization does not care or is not interested.

# ND FEEL

counts  
occupations  
aspirations

People assume that others know and understand the system, example:  
Investigations can take a longer time period and when a woman doesn't understand this she may be pressured by others to recant because she thinks no one is helping her

Want the significant other to be corrected, not punished or charged. Do not want the aggressor to be thrown into jail.

Belief that the man is the head of the house - has the right to correct me. If the man is removed the eldest son steps into the role, which can lead to secondary abuse. The eldest son does not need to be of adult age to assume this role (i.e.) 9 years old.

Reputation, financial concerns, what is the family of origin going to say, church, what will they think about me? Being judged.

Bring shame upon the family, children's reputation. Extended consequences beyond the victim. "Mother is bad, so daughter also bad." Therefore staff need to consider second and third generation implications.

Reluctant to seek help as he is a good provider, man of the house, belief that I am here to support him not the other way around.

If there could printed material available in airports, in the mall, where they can easily access and printed in other languages.

Lack of any material in language other than English

CanTalk is a great service

Signage that reassures that immigration status does not impact service delivery.

Printed material that outlines what services are available at each stage of the immigration process.

The position of the environment. Seating arrangements can be intimidating (i.e. professionals on one side and client on the other).

# SEE

Environment  
Printed material  
On the website

Greetings in different languages.

Donor wall - names can be intimidating.

Beware of what is on the walls - and the images used.

The painting on Family Services represented different people - felt welcome.

On agencies website - all white, middle class images. Need a variety of images that represent the community.

Staffing that is representative of the community members.

# ND DO

appearances  
towards others

Finger calling - is very offensive to many cultures.

When asked multiple times, "What is your name again?" Confers that staff may not be very interested in the individual or their situation.

Nonverbal communication can be so painful. When no greeting, no expression - just leave to get another staff person. This is very insulting and hurtful.

Assumptions - because someone has an accent or ESL then assume that they do not understand or do not know what they want or require.

There are others that will normalize the abuse within the home (i.e.) what do you expect, they are... or they are from...

"You're in Canada now..." This is Canada..."

Awareness of body language and how it can impact a relationship and trust.

Facial expressions that we may think that are cute, can be received very differently.

# CREATES GAIN

Wants/needs, measures of success

Different flags or signage to identify as a safe place. The flag opens the door for them (i.e.) 2SLBGT+, country flags.

Signage, welcome, greetings in multi-languages.

Training, especially intake training and first point of contact training.

CanTalk resources

Some refugees are illiterate even in their own language - so flags, symbols, pictures are better than words.

Cultural safety is an approach to working across ethnic and other differences to make systems and organizations responsible for ensuring that environments are safe for everyone. This approach is compatible with and is often an embedded component of trauma and violence informed approaches. Cultural humility is ongoing reflection and learning about diverse cultures and experiences







