



# **PROMOTING HEALTHY FAMILIES TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A COMMUNICATIONS APPROACH FOR ENGAGING IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITIES ONLINE**

## **HAMILTON URBAN CORE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

### **Who Are We?**

- Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre is an inner city community health center and a leader in the provision of high quality primary health services and programs in more than 15 languages
- The Centre provides responsive, accessible health and health related services to people in the inner city who are poor and marginalized, and living with chronic and complex health and social conditions

### **Violence Against Women (VAW)**

- VAW is a public health concern that occurs in all communities
- It is connected to the determinants of health; negative health effects result from unhealthy families experiencing violence, and abused women are more likely to use health services
- Immigrant and refugee communities do not typically access services and supports, especially those within the VAW sector

## **NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS AND FAMILIES (NFF) CAMPAIGN**

### **What is NFF?**

- NFF is a public education campaign to raise awareness of the signs of woman abuse so that people who are close to an at-risk woman or abusive man can help

### **NFF Immigrant and Refugee Campaign in Hamilton**

- During the 2014-2015 NFF Immigrant and Refugee Communities Campaign in Hamilton, Hamilton Urban Core determined best practice approaches to address violence against women in immigrant and refugee communities
- Best practice approaches include: 1) cultural safety; and 2) healthy families

### **Communicating about VAW in Immigrant and Refugee Communities**

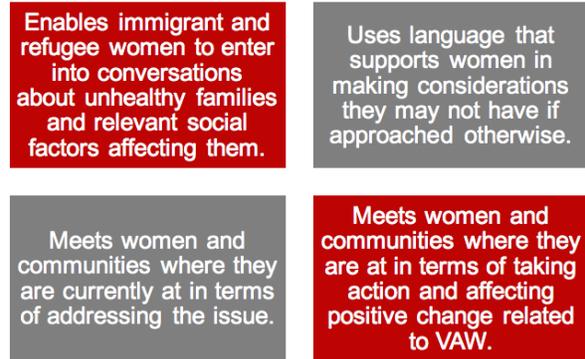
- To overcome barriers and address violence against women in immigrant and refugee communities, the starting point must be promoting healthy family relationships
- The healthy families approach is culturally safe; it drives a model of service that is reflective of and responsive to the specific needs of communities



**Culturally safe** communications work to improve overall health and well-being by producing positive, inclusive, and participatory environments and interventions through:



Utilizing a **healthy families** communications approach within immigrant and refugee communities is an engaging and culturally safe method that:



## ONLINE COMMUNICATION: USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE HEALTHY FAMILIES

- **Implications for Online Communications**
  - Online platforms provide an opportunity for outreach, engagement, and knowledge exchange with immigrant and refugee communities
  - Taking a culturally safe approach and promoting healthy families in immigrant and refugee communities to address violence against women easily extends to online communications strategies
- **Social Media: An Effective Online Tool for Connecting with Immigrant and Refugee Communities**
  - Research shows that a large portion of newcomers, immigrants and refugees are present on social media platforms, specifically Facebook, and one reason for this is to seek support services (Taylor, 2011)



- Facebook is a great place to instigate and continue dialogue, link people to internal and external resources, answer the audience's questions, and receive feedback
- Social media enables community building in an online setting, working to further foster discussion and engagement

**Note:** The usage of social media as a communication tool should be conducted through a culturally safe and healthy families lens in alignment with best practices, as well as your organization's social media policies

**Reference:** Taylor, A. (2011). *Social media as a tool for inclusion*. Retrieved from <http://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/social-media-tool-inclusion>