

**Government of the Northwest Territories Response
to the
NWT Action Plan on Family Violence (2003-2008)
A Framework for Action**

October 2004



Overview

Family violence is a serious and troubling issue in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Over the past few years, a number of actions have been taken to increase public awareness, support victims of violence and address the root causes of the problem. However, these efforts have not been enough – family violence continues to devastate the lives of many people and families.

This paper represents the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT's) Response to the NWT Action Plan on Family Violence (2003-2008) prepared by the Coalition Against Family Violence.

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes the hard work and dedication of the Coalition Against Family Violence in researching, developing and testing the *NWT Action Plan on Family Violence (2003-2008)*. Through their efforts, there is the solid basis for a plan within which all individuals, organizations and governments can work together to decrease the incidence of family violence in the NWT, thus improving the lives of all people affected. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Coalition for taking the initiative and putting together a comprehensive approach to what is one of our most difficult challenges.

Some adults and children have learned violent behaviors over generations and it will take a significant amount of dedicated time to make real change. Shelter usage indicates a disturbing trend in the NWT. Currently, shelter usage is five times the national average. As well, we know that many cases of family violence go unreported. As a result, we do not have a clear picture of the overall impact of family violence in the communities across the NWT.

The *NWT Action Plan on Family Violence* indicates that many partners have been and continue to be involved in the work to reduce the incidence of family violence in the NWT. The GNWT is committed to working in partnership with communities, regions, organizations and individuals to decrease family violence in the NWT. This work must be a priority for us all.

It is important to recognize that the GNWT can only commit to actions that are within its mandate. Aboriginal and Federal Governments also have key roles to play through their social programs. Continued collective participation is welcomed and necessary.

It is going to take everyone in the NWT to reduce and eliminate family violence. Partnerships between organizations, protocols for response to family violence, and a reduction in societal tolerance are all good first steps. This means that communities, governments and individuals need to take a zero tolerance stance on family violence.

This response is intended to build and/or strengthen partnerships with other organizations, communities and governments, so that together we can work towards the

complete elimination of all forms of violence in NWT society. The *NWT Action Plan on Family Violence* made 25 recommendations in eight major areas. These areas include:

1. Policy and Legislation
2. Working Together
3. Capacity Building
4. Training
5. Prevention
6. Education and Awareness
7. Services
8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

This GNWT response lists actions that it plans to initiate in each of the eight areas reflected in the Coalition's Action Plan. The GNWT's Framework for Action builds on the work that has been done to date and expands the attention being given to issues related to family violence.

Links to other Government Initiatives

The actions outlined in this response are consistent with the directions established in recent GNWT documents, including the *Government of the Northwest Territories Strategic Plan, June 2004* and *The GNWT Response to the Draft Social Agenda (2002)*

These broad directions documents outline key principles and goals of planned GNWT activity and provide a context for the actions planned to address family violence.

Conclusion

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that family violence is a serious social issue that must be addressed by the people of the NWT. Through dedication, commitment and hard work we can make a difference and reduce the prevalence of family violence. We can also improve support to victims and children that currently live with family violence in their lives. The GNWT is committed to continue working in partnership with individuals, communities, organizations and other governments to make a significant difference. Everyone has a role to play.

A Framework for Action

Policy and Legislation					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Develop terms of reference for the GNWT Policy and Legislation Review Sub-Committee.	1.1, 1.4	More consistent, congruent responses to family violence.	Terms of Reference.	Completed	Executive
Establish the Review Sub-Committee to review GNWT policies and legislation.	1.1, 1.4	More consistent, congruent responses to family violence.	Sub-Committee established.	Completed	Executive
Review GNWT policies and legislation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines that will be distributed to and used by GNWT departments in the review of existing and new policy and legislation. • Ensure that the policies and legislation are consistent and congruent. • Ensure that programs and services implemented through policies and legislations are accessible to those who need them. Provide recommendations on changes to existing policy and legislation.	1.1, 1.2, 1.4	More consistent, congruent responses to family violence.	Recommendations for change of policy and legislation.	August 2005	Executive

Policy and Legislation					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Prepare and widely communicate plain language highlights of policies and legislation related to family violence and provide regular updates to the Coalition Against Family Violence.	1.1, 4.3, 6.3	More awareness of public policies/legislation that respond to and prevent family violence.	Communications plan; plain language versions of policy and legislation.	January 2006	Executive
Develop a gender equity analysis tool and policy to support policy development.	1.2	Gender equity in all GNWT policy and legislation.	GNWT gender equity analysis tool and policy for use.	March 2005	Executive
Use the gender equity analysis tool to analyze GNWT policy and legislation to ensure gender equality throughout.	1.2	Gender equity in all GNWT policy and legislation.	Policy and legislation that reflects gender equity.	March 2006	Executive
Establish an inter-sector implementation committee to guide the implementation of the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i>	1.3	Implement the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> .	A mechanism to guide the implementation of the Act.	Complete	Justice
Hire a coordinator to work with the Committee to implement the legislation.	1.3	Implement the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> .	A mechanism to guide the implementation of the Act.	Complete	Justice
Establish a dedicated crisis line – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for reporting.	1.3	Implement the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> .	24-hour access to the protection of the Act.	February 2005	Justice
Develop an evaluation framework including data collection and monitoring structure.	1.3	Monitor the impact of the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> .	An evaluation framework.	February 2005	Justice
Evaluate legislation.	1.3	Monitor the impact of the the <i>Family Violence Act</i> .	Data showing the impact of the Act.	Ongoing	Justice

Working Together					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Provide letters of support to the Coalition Against Family Violence in applying for federal funding to implement new projects and initiatives.	2.1	An NWT-wide coalition of representative groups working to stop family violence.	Letters of support for federal funding.	Ongoing	Executive
Provide in-kind support by supplying GNWT boardrooms with conference phones, paying long distance charges for Coalition meetings, photocopying materials and distributing packages for meetings when required.	2.1	Better use of resources to respond to and prevent family violence.	Meeting places where all representatives can take part either in person or on a conference call.	Ongoing.	HSS NWT Housing Corp. Justice ECE
Enhance human resource base dedicated to the issue of family violence. The Departments of the Executive, Health and Social Services and Justice have identified one position each to enhance the GNWT's ability to respond to family violence issues.	2.2	Improved services to people affected by family violence.	Increased support for the implementation of the <i>Family Violence Action Plan</i> and the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> .	Complete	Executive HSS Justice

Working Together					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Provide a coordination function for the development of an integrated response to family violence incidents in Yellowknife. This protocol development project would act as a pilot to test protocol development.	2.2	Fewer organizational barriers to responding to and preventing family violence.	Integrated protocols to test in Yellowknife.	January 2006	HSS
Based on lessons learned from the above pilot, develop a protocol template for the communities to use to develop their community protocols for an integrated response to incidents of family violence.	2.2	Better use of human and financial resources.	Integrated protocols in all the communities.	March 2006	HSS
Provide expert training and best practices information on family violence and how to develop an integrated response.	2.2	Fewer organizational barriers to responding to and preventing family violence	Best practices information for the NWT.	March 2006	HSS
Support the implementation of an integrated family violence response in NWT communities.	2.2	Better use of human and financial resources.	Integrated protocols in all the communities.	March 2006	HSS
GNWT Social Envelope Departments commit to continued collaboration on the issue of Family Violence.	2.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.1	Fewer organizational barriers in responding to and preventing family violence.	Continued collaboration on issues with stakeholders.	Ongoing	Executive
Departments will continue to encourage multi-year funding of volunteer service organizations where appropriate.	2.3, 7.1	Better use of resources to respond to and prevent family violence.	Wherever possible multi-year funding agreements with volunteer organizations.	Ongoing	HSS

Working Together					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
The GNWT will promote interagency collaboration at the community, regional and headquarters levels.	2.3	Better use of resources to respond to and prevent family violence.	Communities have stronger interagency groups.	Ongoing	HSS
The GNWT will monitor interagency work.	2.3	Better use of resources to respond to and prevent family violence.	GNWT participation in interagency work.	Ongoing	Shared between HSS, Justice, ECE and NWT Housing Corp.

Capacity Building					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Work with GNWT departments and other governments to set up a mechanism to ensure that community proposals around family violence are looked at collectively to find solutions to funding.	3.1	Community driven approaches to building and supporting healthy families.	An inter-governmental committee to review proposals and make recommendations for possible funding.	January 2005	Executive
Include demonstration project staff in any inter-sector training that pertains to family violence.	3.1	Strong, caring, role model communities.	2 demonstration projects in the NWT.	Ongoing	HSS
Support the demonstration projects by providing access to existing resource people.	3.1	Recognition and support for approaches that build on the strengths of the community.	2 demonstration projects in the NWT.	Ongoing	HSS

Training					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Inventory training the GNWT is providing to personnel in the areas of family violence and policy and legislation that pertains to family violence.	4.1, 4.3, 6.2	Front-line workers and community caregivers trained to respond to family violence (whether this is part of their job responsibilities or not).	A document that lists all staff training around family violence.	January 2005	Executive
Establish a repository of information accessible by all residents of the NWT at the GNWT call center.	4.1, 6.2	Front-line workers and community caregivers trained to respond to family violence (whether this is part of their job responsibilities or not).	A toll free telephone number that allows instant access to information around family violence.	October 2004	HSS
Analyze gaps in training based on the inventory.	4.1	Consistent and effective responses to family violence.	A gap analysis.	March 2005	Executive
Develop a plan to address the gaps.	4.1	Consistent and effective responses to family violence.	A training plan.	May 2005	Executive
Provide training materials used by GNWT Departments to the NWT Status of Women Council for their library where appropriate.	4.1	Consistent and effective responses to family violence.	Training materials.	March 2005	Executive
Look at cross-training opportunities across government.	4.1	Front-line workers and community caregivers trained to respond to family violence (whether this is part of their job responsibilities or not).	Personnel better trained and able to respond to incidence of family violence.	Ongoing	Executive
Deliver training to service providers that have a direct role in the delivery of the new legislation.	1.3	Implement the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> , a legal tool to help victims of family violence.	Training delivered to those directly involved in the delivery of the new legislation.	February 2005	Justice
Provide ongoing training to direct service delivery agencies.	1.3	Effective use of the legislation to help protect	Training delivered to those directly involved	Ongoing	Justice

Training					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
		victims of family violence.	in the delivery of the new legislation.		
The GNWT will continue to support the delivery of leadership courses and workshops through the School of Community Government and other training mechanisms.	4.2, 7.1	Skilled facilitators to encourage and support self-help/support/healing/peer groups.	Better-trained community leaders.	Ongoing	MACA
The GNWT will continue to provide and include volunteer organizations in GNWT training where appropriate.	4.2	More supports to individuals/families affected by family violence.	Better trained community leaders and caregivers.	Ongoing	HSS ECE Justice
Provide access to GNWT training materials on legislation and policies respecting family violence to community organizations. GNWT departments work collaboratively to provide training to front line workers.	4.3	Consistent implementation, application and enforcement of legislation and policies respecting family violence.	Increase awareness by front-line staff of legislation and policies relating to family violence, increased access to training materials.	Ongoing	HSS Justice ECE

Prevention					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Look at the Social Agenda inventory of services, <i>A Living Inventory</i> , to see if it needs to be updated or reorganized.	5.1, 6.3	Increased awareness of family violence and community resources.	A document that breaks services down by program type and community.	January 2005	Executive
Provide best practices research available within the GNWT to the NWT Status of Women Council's library.	5.1	Programs/services that support healthy family, spousal/adult and inter-generational relationships in NWT communities.	A best practices guide for caregivers in the NWT.	August 2005	HSS
Research programs that other jurisdictions offer in healthy family relationships.	5.1	Programs/services that support healthy family, spousal/adult and inter-generational relationships in NWT communities.	A best practices guide for caregivers in the NWT.	March 2005	HSS
Develop an NWT best practices guideline based on research.	5.1	Programs/services that support healthy family, spousal/adult and inter-generational relationships in NWT communities.	A best practices guide for caregivers in the NWT.	August 2005	HSS
Support service organizations to help them better communicate the services they offer to their communities.	5.1	Healthier parent-child relationships. More NWT adults aware of and pursuing healthy relationships More NWT residents of all ages with healthy family relationships.	Better-informed public regarding programs and services available across the NWT.	Ongoing	HSS ECE Justice

Prevention					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Host the National Youth in Care Committee for a formation meeting in the NWT. The purpose to form an NWT Youth in Care Committee.	5.1, 7.1, 7.3	More NWT residents of all ages with healthy family relationships.	NWT youth more empowered to be part of the decision making process.	2006	HSS
Develop a Youth in Care Committee for the NWT to involve children over 12 and youth in decision-making.	5.1, 7.1, 7.3	More NWT residents of all ages with healthy family relationships.	NWT youth more empowered to be part of the decision making process	2006	HSS
Continue the implementation of the recently launched School Counseling Framework and Handbook that was developed to address the needs of students as identified in the <i>Student Support Needs Assessment 2000</i> . The Framework is built upon the values of respect and integrity that are central to the cultural curricula <i>Dene Kede</i> and <i>Inuuqatigiit</i> .	5.2, 5.3	More students with the knowledge to seek and access help to deal with family violence.	Counselors with the tools and skills to work with the range of issues affecting students including family violence.	Ongoing	ECE
Continue to offer training in Effective Behavior Support to school staff across the NWT to ensure that school-wide planning processes in this area are in place.	5.2	More students involved in healthy caring relationships.	Students who are able to choose healthy relationships and lifestyles.	Ongoing	ECE
Continue to promote the Skills for Healthy Relationships component of the Health Curriculum in grades 7-9.	5.2	More students involved in healthy caring relationships.	Students with a solid understanding of healthy relationships.	Ongoing	ECE

Prevention					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Continue to identify appropriate materials and tools for use in supporting the existing school health program.	5.2	More students involved in healthy caring relationships.	Information and education materials.	Ongoing	ECE
Continue to support the distribution of information related to the curriculum to divisional education councils and district education authorities.	5.2	More students involved in healthy caring relationships.	Information and education materials.	Ongoing	ECE
Continue to support Family Violence Awareness Week as a prevention mechanism.	5.3	More individuals/families choosing healthy ways to relieve stress, anxiety, anger and frustration.	Better awareness about family violence.	Ongoing	HSS
Build a link to family violence into the health promotion campaigns such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder and Healthy Living.	5.3	Less spousal violence and less child abuse/neglect.	Better-informed public about the effective of family violence and its impact on women and children and the cost to our communities.	Ongoing	HSS

Education and Awareness					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Develop and implement an attitude survey on family violence to get a baseline on attitudes.	6.1, 6.4	The ability to plan education and awareness campaigns focusing on the needs of residents of the NWT.	A baseline of information around attitudes and understanding of family violence in the NWT.	March 2005	Executive
Develop, produce and implement public education information.	1.3, 6.1	Implement the Protection Against Family Violence Act, a legal tool to help victims of family violence.	Public education materials.	February 2005	Justice
Develop a web page on a government website that provides information including education/awareness materials and links around family violence that is accessible to all residents of the NWT.	4.1, 4.3, 6.1, 6.2	Front-line workers and community caregivers trained to respond to family violence (whether this is part of their job responsibilities or not).	Family violence information available on the internet for all to access.	February 2005	HSS

Services					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Review the NWT Housing Corporation's facility utilization by community. If surplus units are identified, the NWT Housing Corporation will consult with community partners on appropriate uses for any surplus units.	7.1	Better response to family violence.	A list of surplus housing available by community.	January 2005	NWT Housing Corp
Communicate to the public that on-call social workers are the first point of contact for obtaining emergency shelter in a family violence situation.	7.1	Better response to family violence.	Residents of the NWT know what resources are available to help them 24 hours a day.	December 2004	HSS
Train front-line staff including social workers in the community about the Family Violence Protection Act and the remedies available to them under the Act to respond to a family violence emergency.	7.1	More community capacity to respond to family violence.	Trained front-line staff to aid clients in applying for emergency protection orders.	February 2005	Justice
Research best practices for abuser programming supported by current community expertise.	7.2	Healthier family relationships.	Best practices to aid in the development of an NWT program for families who are experiencing abuse.	January 2005	HSS
Culturally appropriate programming for victims, abusers and witnesses of family violence.	7.2	Healthier family relationships.	Identifiable programs for families who are experiencing abuse using the best practices model (above).	January 2006	HSS

Services					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Develop a profile of services needed for children and youth 0-18 years with mental health or addictions issues that require residential treatment.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A profile of the service needs of children over the next 10 years.	January 2005	HSS
Identify current service gaps in services for children with mental health and addiction issues.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A report that includes existing services as well as overall service needs for the territory over the next 10 years.	January 2005	HSS
Determine the utilization of current treatment beds for children and youth with mental health and addictions issues within the NWT and project future needs over the next 10 years.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A report that includes existing services as well as overall service needs for the territory over the next 10 years.	January 2005	HSS
Develop a profile of children with disabilities in the NWT.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A report that provides information on children with disabilities in the NWT.	January 2005	HSS
Identify current services and gaps in services for children with disabilities.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A report that identifies existing services as well as overall service needs for the territory over the next 10 years.	January 2005	HSS
Rewrite the standards pursuant to the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> (CFSA) to target children's developmental needs.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	Updated CFSA Standards.	January 2005	HSS

Services					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Develop a program model for children and youth with mental health and addictions needs in the NWT.	7.3	Improved/enhanced services for children affected by family violence.	A program model.	January 2006	HSS
Define the housing needs of youth, women, elders/seniors and persons with disabilities, by community through the <i>2004 NWT Community Survey</i> .	7.4	Community plans to address the housing needs of victims of family violence in each NWT community.	A profile by community on housing needs	January 2005	NWT Housing Corp.
Review program delivery with respect to the NWT Housing Corporation's 10-year plan.	7.4	Community plans to address the housing needs of victims of family violence in each NWT community.	A profile by community on housing needs.	January 2005	NWT Housing Corp.
Review the Corporation's facility utilization by community. If surplus units are identified, the NWT Housing Corporation will consult with community partners on appropriate uses for any surplus units.	7.4	Community plans to address the housing needs of victims of family violence in each NWT community.	A list of surplus housing by community	January 2005	NWT Housing Corp.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability					
Action	Recommendations From the NWT FVAP	Expected Outcomes	Deliverables	Expected Completion Date	Departmental Lead
Establish an inter-departmental task team, which would include the NWT Bureau of Statistics to develop standardized definitions within government and analyze the data needed to provide evidence of the effectiveness of the programs and services provided within government.	8.1	Single comprehensive definition of family violence used by all agencies.	Inter-departmental agreement on standardized definitions	January 2005	Executive
Develop a draft protocol for information sharing that complies with the <i>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> .	8.1	Protocol arrangements for maintaining and sharing data.	A mechanism for collecting and sharing data around family violence	May 2005	Executive
Coordinate an inter-sector working session to facilitate the standardizing of family violence definitions and data collection requirements across the system with government and volunteer organizations.	8.1	Standardized data collection processes and systems.	Standardized agreement on definitions	March 2005	Executive
Participate in the monitoring activities by providing information and regular updates to the Coalition Against Family Violence on the actions agreed to in this response.	8.2, 8.3	Regular reporting on intended results.	Information on the progress of the implementation	Ongoing	Executive