

Fantastic Fathers



Community Services Presentation

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Workshop Goals

Participants will:

- Be introduced to the Fantastic Fathers Pilot Project intervention for domestic violence
- Understand the rationale for a parenting education approach for fathers
- Experience examples of the FF curriculum material and gain access to resources
- Consider and discuss the possibility of using the FF curriculum within their community



Fantastic Fathers



A Violence Prevention, Experiential
Education and Support Group for Dads

Why

Program Rationale 1

“ Many men appear to be more capable of developing empathy, acknowledge damage, and accept responsibility for violence in relation to their children than in relation to their partners.”

Breaking the Cycle: Fathering After Violence



Program Rationale 2

“Content on parenting may be an effective path towards attitudinal and behavioural change for the men, reducing the chances of their children’s continued or subsequent exposure to violence, as well as their partner’s experience of violence”

Breaking the Cycle: Fathering After Violence



Fantastic Fathers Pilot Project

One time contract awarded to the Victoria Family Violence Project, from the Ministry of Community Services

Objectives

- Develop and implement a curriculum based group for men with issues of violence
- Evaluate
- Present to BC communities



Victoria Family Violence Prevention

Mission Statement

“To stop the abuse of women by their intimate partners thus breaking the cyclic and often intergenerational pattern of family violence”

Counselling intervention and prevention services for partners who have used violence in intimate relationships

Provide family violence education to the public, schools and universities



Initial FF Project Development

Community Advisory Committee

Collaborative Working Group

Consultation with women servicing agencies

- ensuring the voices of women who have been abused is central to the project

Development of Guiding Principles for the project



Guiding Principles

Safety

Ensure the safety of women and children

Honouring Men

Fathers are important to children

Context for the Work

Fathers have a responsibility to respect children's rights

Collaboration

Coordination and consultation among providers of



Reparative Framework

Fantastic Fathers uses this theoretical framework devised to conceptualize the healing process between children and their fathers and the steps needed to be taken by fathers...

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changing abusive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modeling constructive behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stopping denial, blaming, justifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accepting consequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledging damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respecting mother's parenting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listening and validating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not forcing the process or trying to "turn the page"

Goals of Group Participation

- Engage and motivate men to overcome reluctance to participating in a process of change
- Educate men in a model of child-centered fathering
- Invite men to understand and take responsibility for their child maltreatment and violence against women in relationships
- Provide the tools to explore age appropriate child



Group Format

- **Presentation on Weekly Themes (14 weeks)**
“Becoming the Best Dads We Can Be”

Video Clips

Written Handouts

- **Discussions and Exercise Activities**
- **Home Assignments**
- **Mid-week phone check-in**



Small Group Community Brainstorming

- **Could a Fantastic Fathers Group be an important service in your community?**
- **What are the challenges that your community would face in developing the project?**
- **What are the strengths that you see in your community to meet these challenges?**
- **Who would you envision in your community advisory committee?**



Group 1

Introductions and Establishing Our Goals:



“Investing in positive relationships with our kids is the foundation of successful parenting”

Session #1

- **Why are fathers important in the lives of their kids?**
- **What is Positive and Compassionate Parenting?
Nurturing, Guidance and Modeling**
- **The Webster-Stratton, Positive Parenting Pyramid**
- **Personal Forces that act against our positive parenting**



Group 2

Family of Origin:



“Our own example is the most powerful parenting influence that our children experience”

Session 2

- **Life transforming benefits of being an involved dad**
- **What we learned from our own parents and hope to develop for ourselves**
 - Child development ages and stages, brain development
- **Setting an Example:**
 - “Kids will do what we do, not what we say”
- **Does the apple fall close to the family tree?**
 - Drawing our family of origin geneogram



Group 3

Becoming Our Own Positive Parent:



“Reframing our own self-messages into positive expectations models for our kids how to manage emotional experiences &

Session #3

- **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**
- **Quick relaxation breathing and muscle tension**
- **Overcoming the negative parenting we received through constructive self-dialogue**
 - What would your own compassionate father say?
- **Practicing reframing negative experiences into positive expectations**



Group 4

Staying Cool When Things Heat Up:



“We are responsible for our own actions and can stand up for ourselves without using our anger to control others”

Session #4

Controlling ourselves... not others

Modeling for our kids how to cope with frustration

**Being Assertive ... not Passive, Aggressive or
Passive-Aggressive**

Relaxation exercises, positive self-reminders

Using the Non-violent communication script

Personal Coping Plan



Group 5

Resolving Personal Issues in Order to be Able to Give to Others :



“Giving is a selfish act: We gain more for ourselves
by giving to others”

Session # 5

Understanding the impact of our own unresolved issues affecting our ability to parent our kids

Personal support for grief, loss, trauma and substance use – Community resources

Why are men more hesitant to seek and accept support



Group 6

Understanding the Impact on Children Who Have Witnessed Abuse Against Their Mother:



“It is our responsibility to protect our children from the trauma of violence”

Session 6

The relationship of violence in the family, childhood trauma and mental health

Childhood developmental identification with parents

Forgive for Good: Freedom from resentment

“The Best Revenge is a Life Well Lived”

Developing individual commitment and group support for non-violence



Group 7

Developing Positive, Balanced and Child-Centered Parenting:



“Attention is reinforcing: so catch them being good!
If you want to see more of a certain behaviour ... pay
attention to it”

Session 7

Parenting Pyramid - Building our relationship
on a solid foundation: “Be their biggest fan!”

Child-directed play and undivided positive
attention

Practicing clear, specific and genuine praise

Attention is Reinforcing

“Catch them being good!”



Group 8

Communication Skills:



“ The two biggest mistakes parents make when they deal with their kids misbehaviour are: too much emotion and too much talking”

Session #8

Preventative measures: ignoring, distracting and offering choices and positive activities

Active Listening, Empathy and Problem Solving

Responding to Emotional Behaviour



Group 9



“Kids need our support to learn How to Think...
not ... What to Think”

Session #9

Collaborative Problem Solving: Encouraging our kids to learn how to think, not what to think

Practice giving clear and specific directions

- Offer positive reasons to cooperate
- Clear and specific praise when they do

Practice responding supportively to emotional behaviour



Group 10

Family Structure - Clear, Specific and Simple:



“It is not the severity but the certainty of a consequence that makes a difference”

Session # 10

Developing household rules, expectations and agreements

Holding Family Meetings

- Involving the kids in identifying household expectations and consequences

Developing and using Incentive Charts

Behavioural interventions for Conduct Disorder



Group 11

Avoiding Parent Traps



“Kids respond best to clear reminders that offer them positive reasons to cooperate”

Session #11

Reviewing preventative approaches

Using Grandma's Rule: Providing clear expectations and reminders

Practicing the "If _____ Then _____" Formula

- Remembering to describe desired behaviours and positive reasons for cooperation



Group 12

Letting the Consequences

Do the Teaching:

“When we become emotionally reactive, the issue will become our reaction and not their behaviour”



Session #12

Natural and logical consequences

- Staying calm so that focus is on their behaviour

Quiet time, time-out and removal of privileges

The importance of follow-through

Avoiding physical force at all times

- Waiting for a peaceful moment to remove privs



Group 13

Reparative Relationships



“Our ability to work supportively with the mother or our kids is critical to their sense of wellbeing and healthy development”

Session #13

Supporting and respecting the mothers of our children

Why the quality of the co-parenting relationship is so important to the healthy development of our kids

Using our parenting skills within our adult relationships:
- Active listening, Empathy and Problem Solving

Investing in improved co-parenting: Personal success plan



Group 14

Taking Care of Ourselves:



Session # 14

Putting it all together - positive but realistic expectations of our kids and ourselves

Maintaining personal support and developing action plans to meet our own goals

Group participation closure: Feedback discussion recognition and celebration.



Program Evaluation

Pre-group

- Interviewing participants and partners
- Participant Self-rating Scale Forms

Group

- Weekly group feedback rating form
- Weekly phone check-ins
- Monthly phone check-ins with partners

Post-group

- Participant Self-rating Scale Forms
- Exit interviews Participants and Partners
(Consultant)



Lessons Learned

- Facilitators Reflections



Feedback from Participants

