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Preamble

During the summer of 2005, Inuit women from each of Nunavik's 14 communities and from the south met at Qilalugaq Camp near Puvirnituk, where they discussed issues they felt were important to their communities. They drafted a manifesto called "Stop Violence" and demanding that violence stops within families, including sexual violence against children. They invited all individuals and organizations to adopt it. They also recommended the creation of a women's association to strengthen the voice of Nunavik women. Saturviit was created in 2006 with the mandate to promote the interests and wellbeing of Inuit women and children.

The prevention project "Satulauqta!" (Regain our well-being!) was initiated by Saturviit in 2015 and is part of a global reflection among the regional and national actors. One of the needs identified by various regional committees in Nunavik was to develop a program that will put forward positive role models through the diffusion of their testimonies and their resilience strategies in order to break the cycle of violence.

This video presents the testimonies of four Inuit women from Nunavik (Arctic Quebec) who share their experiences and their reflections on family violence. Having themselves suffered from or witnessed violence in their community, they wish to break the silence. They pass on advice and hope to other women in order to restore peace in their community. They were filmed and recorded in Akulivik in March 2015, during the second Regional Women's Conference organized by Saturviit.

This DVD is to be used as a prevention tool to address the issue of family violence in Inuit communities. We recommend reading this brochure as a complement to the video. It intends to bring awareness on what is an abuse and what are the victims rights, and to share some Inuit perspectives on helping and healing. It also provides information about the resources available in Nunavik and Montréal for victims of violence. It is suggested that counseling support be available when diffusing the video. We hope that this tool will help victims to break the circle of violence and restore peace in their lives.



Family Violence in Nunavik

In the past, Elders in their camps dealt with violence right away. Inuit spouses and families needed to rely on each other to survive. Everyone — man, woman, elder, child — had a role to play in making sure that the family not only survived but prospered from generation to generation. Men's roles were to protect their families from hurting, not do to the hurting. Denying responsibility for causing harm only led to illness or hunger for the members of the camp. Silence and denial only led to continued suffering.

Many changes have happened in Inuit society in recent years. Through historic abuses — such as residential schools, the dog slaughter, and relocations — Inuit have seen dramatic increase in social problems and violence.

Substance abuse, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness caused by trauma experienced through loss of connection to Inuit culture, traditional roles and values and to the land, and unhealed hurt because of abuse suffered or witnessed as children, all feed continuing cycles of violence and abuse. The abuse creates a cycle of fear, shame, anger, addiction and violence that is transmitted from one generation to the other, from men to women, from adults to children. Some girls and boys have now been raised to believe that being abused is normal and just part of a woman's life.

Whether verbal, psychological, physical, sexual or financial, family violence against Inuit women, is a poorly documented subject. The limited statistics available are however alarming.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2009, aboriginal women were almost three times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to report having been a victim of a violent crime. In Nunavik, 49% of women reports have been sexually abused before they reach age 18, against a percentage of 18 among other women in Quebec. Among these Nunavik women, 65,5% reveals that a family member perpetrated the abuse.

This situation has a huge impact on the health of the Nunavimmiut. Many mental and physical health problems originate from sexual abuse suffered during childhood. Many victims stay silent and turn back the violence against themselves or their people. Numerous sexual predators have themselves been abused in their childhood and, in most cases, act under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The lack of resources, the housing shortage, and the economic poverty also contribute to the cycle of family violence.

The Participants

Lizzie Aloupa

Lizzie Aloupa, from Quaqtaq, is a former teacher certified through Kativik School Board and McGill University. She has training to facilitate workshops on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Sexual Abuse Prevention, and she has been working on awareness prevention since 1998 on different issues. She is currently a facilitator in the Good Touch/ Bad Touch program.

The message she wants to convey is that a person who is being abused in a spousal relationship has to take action to get out of harm's way. When a spouse does not see their abusiveness and justifies himself/herself, most likely they will not change because they do not see the wrong they are doing.

Annie Arnatuk

Annie Arnatuk, from Quaqtaq, is the president of Saturviit since 2014, and board member since 2010. She is married and has 8 children. She has worked as a social assistant for psycho-social services in Quaqtaq for 9 years. In 2008 and 2009, she had a 6-months healing therapy with a psychiatrist. In 2010, she attended the training Femmes et Démocratie organized by Saturviit about women governance. In May 2015, the Cégep Marie-Victorin recognized that she successfully cumulated 164 hours of professional training in social work intervention in first line services.

Annie wants to tell any victims of abuse that anybody who wants help can get help. She believes with all her heart that they can be overcomers. People have been silent too long in the Inuit land, and abuse must stop.

Niali Aliqu

Niali Aliqu, from Akulivik, is the secretary of Saturviit since 2014. She had been a local employment officer for the Kativik Regional Government very many years, until she recently moved to the position of assistant secretary-treasurer for the Northern Village of Akulivik. She has many certificates for counseling, and a diploma from the Centre director of the Childcare centre in Akulivik.

She is deeply concerned about the women who go through violence and abuse and she wants to give them hope to get over it

Pasha Arngaq

Pasha Arngaq, from Kangirsujuaq, is the mother of a girl. She graduated in pre-college studies in French in 1995. She works at the Nunaturlik Land Holding as economic development for Adventures Kangiqsujuaq. She is the current director of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada for the region of Ungava Coast in Nunavik, and board member of Nunalituqait Ikajuqatigiitut and the Education committee of the Arsaniq School in Kangiqsujuaq.

Here is her message: "My culture, my language and my surrounded environment are my life. We are too precious to be discouraged and to be disrespected in everyway. Human being is once in the lifetime; be proud to have this extraordinary amazing life. The communication is a key to have a healthy relationship. Speak-out, we will learn to love ourselves".

What are Abuse and Family Violence?

What is abuse?

- When someone hurts you, batters you or treats you badly, it is abuse.
- Abuse can be a one-time thing, or keep happening — it can be actions or words or even neglect.
- It can happen to anyone — it can come from your husband, your boyfriend, your brother, sister or cousin, one of your parents or an uncle or your in-laws or one of your grown-up children.
- Most abuse is also a crime, including threats, physical violence, criminal negligence, sexual abuse, criminal harassment, kidnapping and forcible confinement.
- Abuse is a pattern of
 - trying to control or isolate you by making you feel afraid,
 - getting power over you by making you feel confused, guilty, ashamed or uncertain about what will happen next,
 - stopping you from leaving when you don't want to stay,
 - silencing you.
- Abuse can be:
 - Physical — it is hurting your body on purpose against your will.
 - Verbal — it involves sarcasm, insults, yelling, degrading and humiliating comments, blackmail, threats or orders given in an aggressive manner.
 - Psychological or emotional — it involves putting down the other person: it translates into hurtful attitudes and words, and forced isolation, often motivated by jealousy. It damages self-esteem and self-confidence. It can be behaviour that is controlling, frightening, isolating or eroding your self-respect.
 - Sexual — it involves any sexual touching or sexual activity that you don't want. It damages the victim's feeling of safety, self-esteem and well-being. Certain victims consent to sexual relations in the hopes of maintaining the peace and avoiding violence.
 - Financial — it involves taking from you to benefit themselves. It is not having the power to make any decisions about your own money.

Family violence

Family violence includes all kind of abuse as well as acts of financial domination. It is not the result of a loss of control, but is rather a means chosen to dominate another person and assert one's power over that person. Family violence can be experienced in a marital, extra-marital, dating relationship, or between family members and at any age.

Abuse may begin because, among other things, jealousy, money, anger or loss of control. But it continues because someone believes they — and their feelings, wants, needs, hurts and uncertainty — are “more important” than someone they say they love. So they “allow” themselves to hurt that other person, often someone in their family who cannot fight back, such as a spouse, child or Elder. The person causing the hurt may not understand what they are doing. The family may need counseling to break the circle of violence and abuse and achieve well-being.

If you are uncomfortable or feel unsafe, then you are likely in an abusive relationship. If you have been battered once, it will get worse, not better, unless you do something to stop it. It's not love if you are afraid. In a healthy relationship, there is no fear.

Cycle of abuse

The cycle of abuse is made of repeated and alternating periods of abuse and periods of calm. The tension builds for a while until the person acts violently. After the “explosion” or violence, there is a period of calm or quiet. The person who was violent may say he is sorry and promise it will not happen again. He may promise to get help, or even threaten to kill himself. However, in time, the tension builds and he usually becomes violent again. The violence usually gets worse over time and happens more often.

Violence is intolerable

- Abuse is wrong within all families and communities, including Inuit families and communities. Although violence and abuse sadly exist across many societies and cultures, tolerating abuse has no part in Inuit culture or values.
- Abuse is not okay because someone “lost control” of themselves, or was drunk or high, or because you did or said anything.
- There is no excuse for abuse! It is never your fault.
- You are not alone.

Being a Victim

Loneliness and being afraid to talk

- A victim of violence and abuse may feel alone, ashamed or afraid to talk to someone about what is happening. People may be telling her to stay quiet for the sake of the family.
- In many communities, women are blamed and put down if they talk about the abuse or leave their partner. And in many places no one tells you that abuse is wrong and may be a crime.
- One of the hardest parts of being abused is knowing you want the hurting to stop, but not knowing whether talking about it or changing anything will make things better or worse.
- Also, it is hard to leave when you still love your partner. You are not alone if you feel this way and it is not wrong or bad to love him.
- Many people have found ways to stop the violence and live happier lives — for themselves and for their children.

The importance of speaking out and getting help

- You are not helping or protecting someone who has hurt you or someone in your family or a friend by not talking about it, because the violence will continue. Hiding the actions of the abusers does not help that person to heal.
- Thinking and talking about abuse is difficult, but anyone who is being hurt or who is hurting others should get help.

The sake of the children

- Parents must put children's needs first.
- It is shocking and overwhelming for children to see or hear a parent being abused. Children may hide, try to be invisible, try to be super "good", feel helpless, feel terrified, feel like it is their fault, and feel alone. Children then are scarred for the rest of their lives. They know that violence and abuse is going on, even if you hope they do not.
- Children may develop many problems that can even change their lives when they grow up. They may have physical problems, school problems, social and relationship problems, they may turn to drugs and alcohol, cutting themselves or even suicide.
- When you are being abused, it is very hard to take care of your kids. And they may learn from watching the person who is being abusive that they don't need to respect you.
- Encourage your children to reach out and spend time with a relative, elder or friend who can give them support while you make the necessary changes in your life.
- If your kids are also being abused, get help right away. Child abuse is against the law. Children must be protected from abuse.

Emergency Plan and Getting Help

Having an emergency plan

An emergency plan is knowing what you will do when he attacks you again. It means being ready for that next attack. It is better to see the signs that he is going to be violent and act before the attack. Remember, usually the abuse doesn't stop by itself. An emergency plan is really important for you and your children!

- Memorize the phone number of the police. If language is an issue, find someone who can help you with the call. If you don't get a response right away, don't give up and keep trying.
- Memorize the phone number of friends and relatives you trust. You can arrange to say a code word or phrase to them that means they should call the police.
- Plan how you would get to the health centre, hamlet office, church or friend's house if you had to get somewhere with other people in a hurry.
- Leave some clothes, money and other valuable survival items at a friend's house in case you have to leave quickly, or have a hidden bag with the things you will need.
- Have with you important papers (birth certificate, health cards, social insurance card, etc.), money or other means for payment, clothing, driver's license, house keys, children's clothes and favorite toys.

Where can you get help?

- The police can protect you and your children and help you to find the services you need.
- Nurses, community health workers and social workers can help you get medical treatment and information about family violence, and can help direct you and your children to other services.
- Victim services workers or court workers can give you information and help you find the services you need.
- In some communities, women's safe shelters can give you and your children a temporary place to stay, food and clothing, as well as counseling, and they can help you get legal, financial and other services.
- School community counselors can help you get the information and services you need, if you are still in school.
- You can call telephone crisis lines for help.
- You can meet the local justice committee in your community if there is one.
- Relatives, friends or elders may give you support, or a place to stay.
- The priest or minister can give you information and help you find the services you need.
- Legal aid offices can tell you your rights and help you get a lawyer.
- People are there to listen to you and protect you and your children.
- You will find crisis lines numbers and other resources at the end of the brochure.



To build up your courage and strength

- Talk to someone you really trust. You don't have to tell everything, just what you feel comfortable saying.
- Go to places and groups such as sewing groups, recreation programs, Alcoholics Anonymous, churches, friendship centers.
- Spend time on the land.
- Engage in spiritual practices such as traditional ceremonies, prayer, healing circles.
- If you think you have addiction problem, see the local addictions counselors and ask about treatment programs for you.

Source: Justice Canada 2014.

Inuit Guides for Helping and Healing

If you know someone who is being abused: believe, ask and connect

(Pauktuutit 2015)

Believe them

If someone experiencing family violence tells you about it you should believe them. It is not up to you to investigate or question when someone shares they are being hurt. Your reaction may also help the person to open up about the violence they are experiencing to others, including social workers, police, nurses, and other support workers. Be a good friend and believe them.

Possible things to say:

"Thank you for sharing this with me."

"It can be difficult to talk about these things."

"I'm glad you felt comfortable to tell me about this."

Ask them what they want to do

If someone is being hurt, they should be given control of the situation. They should decide what they would like to do next, and when. It is not up to you to tell someone how to feel or how to act. As a friend, you should ask them what they would like to do next, and that you will help them.

If a child tells you about violence, sexual abuse or neglect, they cannot decide what to do. It is your obligation to tell the police or youth protection immediately.

Possible things to say:

"What would you like to do now?"

"Whatever you decide to do, I support you."

(To a child) "I'm going to call someone I trust, so we can find help together."

Connect them to supports

When someone decides that they need help, you can be the friend that helps them connect to services. They may not be in a safe position to find resources, so you can offer to look for help. Elders are a source of support and guidance. Social workers are there to help you navigate services, and can help someone to pick out and strategize what works best for them. There are many phone numbers and websites that can help someone to find support.

Possible things to say:

"I'm here for you, and we can find help together"

"If you want, I can call this number with you"

"Do you want to go to find help together?"

Inuit elders traditional beliefs on helping

(Korhonen 2006)

Important traditional values that lay the foundation for connection, caring, respect, and hope:

1. Patience

- a. Tomorrow is another day.
- b. Problems can be solved.
- c. Life will get better.

2. Perseverance

- a. Never give up.
- b. Keep trying.
- c. Difficulties can be overcome.

3. Love and Caring

- a. Among family members and community members.
- b. Listen to each other, help each other, teach each other.
- c. Show love and caring daily.

4. Communication

- a. Talk out problems.
- b. Become a good listener.
- c. Solve conflicts and restore to harmony.

5. Awareness of self and others

- a. Think about how your own behavior affects others.
- b. Pay attention to others so you will recognize if they need help.

6. Confidentiality and Respect for others

- a. Do not gossip or lie.
- b. Do not tell other people what you know about someone's feelings or problems.

7. Personal responsibility

- a. Take responsibility for your own behavior.
- b. Apologize if you do something wrong.
- c. Take responsibility for being helpful to others.

Resource Phone Numbers

Police services

Local services in NunavikLocal code + 9111

Medical or psychological assistance

CLSC (nursing station)Local code + 9090

Except : Puvirnituaq819 988-2957

Kuujuaq819 964-2905

Youth Protection "signalements" (to report a case of child sexual or physical abuse)

Ungava (Kuujuaq)819 964-2905, ext. 331 or 365

Hudson (Puvirnituaq)1 877 535-2345

After hours you contact your local Youth protection services or your community's emergency social services line, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Women's shelters

Native Women's Shelter in Montréal(514) 933-4688 / 1-866-403-4688

Initsiaq (Salluit)819 255-8817

Tungasuvvik (Kuujuaq)819 964-0536

Ajapirvik (Inukjuak)819 254-1414

(To have access to shelters in Nunavik, women have to make a request at their local social services.)

Men's services

Qajaq network1 877 964-0770

Unaaq Men's Association (Inukjuak)819 254-8060

Makitautik Centre – Half-way house (Kangirsuk)819 935-4844

Legal and judicial process

Sapumijit Crisis Lines – Crime Victims Assistance Centre (CAVAC)

Kuujuaq1 866 778-0770

Kuujuaaraapik1 888 929-3742

Inukjuak1 888 254-8170

Salluit1 888 255-8328

Puvirnituaq1 888 988-2867

Alcohol and drug addiction

Isuarsivik Treatment Centre in Kuujuaq1 866 964-9994

Residential Schools

Health support workers1 877 NUNAVIK (1-877-686-2845)

Crisis line1 866 925-4419

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 www.kidshelpphone.ca
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 1 877 717-5252
 info@rqcalacs.qc.ca

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Free Help and Crisis Lines

Kamatsiaqtut (Nunavut)	1 800 265-333
<i>(Services in Inuktitut every night 7pm to midnight)</i>	
Quebec National Crisis Line (24/7)	1 866 277-3553
SOS Violence conjugale	1 800 363-9010
Kids Help Phone	1 800 668-6868
.....	www.kidshelpphone.ca
Mental Health Crisis Line	1 888 893-8333
Suicide and Crisis Hotline	1 800 448-3000

Other services for victims

For Victims of sexual assault (CALACS Montreal)	1 888 933-9007
National Office for Victims (Public Safety Canada)	1 866 525-0554
Centre for relief of sexual assaults	1 514 529-5252
.....	1 877 717-5252
.....	info@rqcalacs.qc.ca

Correctional Services

Services to victims by Correctional Services of Québec	1 866 909-8913
Services to victims by Correctional Services Canada	1 866 806-2275



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Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik

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