

Empowerment and Employability:

***Using empowerment activities to support women who have
been affected by violence to improve their employability***

Developed by:



About the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL)

Since 1987, THANL has provided member organizations with guidance, training, research and community awareness initiatives. THANL is a strong collective voice in equality-seeking work in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. We lobby for the financial support needed to operate and establish new transition houses, participate in anti-violence activities in the province, and offer regular networking opportunities to staff and management.

Because of the criminal, social, and cyclical nature of violence against women, THANL believes that all levels of government and society must share in the responsibility to eliminate violence. We are committed to equality-seeking work in partnership with the all those interested in working to eliminate violence in our Province and around the world.

These are the services the Transition Home Association of Newfoundland and Labrador provides:

- Ongoing support to shelters throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Training to board members, administrators, staff and volunteers of shelters throughout the province.
- Promote networking through regular facilitation of conference calls and shelter administrator gatherings.
- Engage in public information, education, and advocacy.
- Analysis on the development of new shelters.
- Help with training, education and program development for shelter workers.
- Lobby the federal and provincial governments regarding legislation and policies that affect victims of family violence.
- On-going information and analysis to key Provincial Government departments involved in violence intervention and prevention initiatives.
- Compile Newfoundland and Labrador shelter statistics.
- Network, share information, and offer group development opportunities for THANL members.
- Liaise with and participate in consultations with other provinces and national bodies working in the area of violence prevention.

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Introduction

This manual was written to capture and share the best practices of a series of empowerment groups and activities that were carried out by ten transition and safe houses in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2011 to 2012. The purpose of the groups and activities was to support women who have been affected by violence by empowering them to move forward in their lives, and in particular, to help them to improve their employability.

Funding for the empowerment activities came from the ***Transitional Employment Supports for Women Experiencing Violence Initiative***, a multi-year project coordinated by the Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (THANL) and funded by the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (formerly Human Resources, Labour and Employment) with support from the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Women's Policy Office, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador also provided support to this initiative.

The expertise and experience that is shared in this manual comes from the staff and managers of the following shelters: Cara Transition House, Gander; Corner Brook

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Transition House, Corner Brook; Grace Sparkes House, Marystown; Hope Haven, Labrador City; Iris Kirby House, St. John's; Kirkina House, Rigolet; Libra House, Happy Valley-Goose Bay; Nain Transition House, Nain; O'Shaughnessy House, Carbonear; and Selma Onalik Safe House, Hopedale (currently under construction, but still running programs in the community).

In addition, several Women's Centres (including those run by the Corner Brook Status of Women Council, Gander Status of Women Council, and the Mokami Status of Women Council) either partnered with shelters to offer the empowerment groups or provided other supports, including their expertise. Further guidance in the creation of materials for the empowerment group sessions, as well as actual presentations on topics, also came from the staff of Advanced Education and Skills offices.

Thanks are due both to the wonderful shelter staff and partners who developed or adapted the material and methods covered in this manual and to the women who participated in the activities and provided their feedback and insight on how to improve them further.

The results of the empowerment activities were overwhelmingly successful as reflected in the evaluations by participants and in the number of participants who went on to immediately find jobs or sign up for further education and career training. This success was due in part to the holistic approach used in the empowerment activities. Underscoring everything was the philosophy that it is important to offer a circle of supports to address the different needs a woman might have as she moves forward in her life.

The activities and practices discussed in this manual also reflect the belief that supporting a woman to improve her employability is not restricted to teaching her new job skills. It

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may also include providing information on such topics as self-care, healthy living, self-esteem, healthy relationships, goal setting, effective communications, and much, much more. As one participant noted: "It's true we don't look after ourselves enough, we should be the first person we think of to look after because if we don't look after ourselves, how can we look after our families?"

Hand-in-hand with this philosophy is the recognition that a woman who has been affected by violence may need a wide spectrum of supports to be truly empowered. In keeping with this, and thanks to our funding, the shelters were able to support women to attend the empowerment activities by providing financial supports for babysitting and transportation costs where appropriate.

In addition, another key component of many of the empowerment activities was connecting women to existing resources in their community, and in particular, to programs offered by Advanced Education and Skills. As one facilitator of an empowerment group said: "It's important for women to get to know what is in the community. It's great to have speakers come in to speak here in comfortable surroundings. There are things here (in the community) that the women don't know are here."

This sentiment was echoed in the comments of one participant's evaluation form: "This group has given me tools and information I would have never known existed. Thank you very much." Likewise another participant commented after visiting a job centre with the empowerment group that: "It's good to know that women are wanted in trades and that help is available at the schools. I no longer feel too old for any choice offered."

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About this Manual

This manual was not designed to be a “how-to manual” for running empowerment groups as there are many such manuals already in existence. In particular, two very useful manuals that several of our shelters referenced are:

- *The Empowerment Project: A Train-the-Trainer Tool-Kit for Delivering Self-Protection and Assertiveness Workshops to Women and Girls*, developed by Mary Whiteside-Lantz, Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre (available online at: <http://www.fsacc.ca/content/43742>)
- *Learning In Female Empowerment*, from the LIFE Project, developed by Hope Haven, Labrador City.

Rather, it is our hope that other organizations and groups can benefit from our experiences and will take the ideas, suggestions, and best practices covered in this manual to inspire the development of their own programs. One of the most exciting things about the funding that that we received for offering empowerment and employability activities is that transition house staff were able to use their knowledge of their own community to determine the best way to shape the programs they offered. For instance, some transition houses chose to offer closed 8 to 10-week empowerment groups, while a few offered open groups. Other transition houses, especially in some of the smaller communities, determined that shorter events and workshops were a better format for their community.

Thus, this manual is not meant to dictate what activities or structure will work best for another organization that plans to offer an empowerment group in their own community. But so that others do not have to start from scratch, we have included our learnings here

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for others to build upon. Those developing their own empowerment groups may also find the appendices of this manual helpful as it provides some samples of session topics, group advertisements, and other materials that were developed as part of our activities. We are pleased to share the things we learned along the way and hope they are a useful starting point for others working to empower women.

Deciding on What Kind of Empowerment Activity to Hold

Each of the ten transition houses who participated in this initiative determined what empowerment activity or activities would work best in their community. Factors that affected the structure they chose included the size of the community, resources available in the community, history of community participation in organized events, and areas where supports were needed.

Seven of the transition houses decided to hold empowerment groups for women. These were extremely well received by participants. In fact, several of the transition houses have gone on to hold additional group sessions with either new or the same participants.

In all the groups, participants commented on the importance of the social as well as the educational aspect of the group. By meeting regularly, the women created bonds with each other that provided an additional level of support that they hadn't had previously. As one participant commented: "I cannot stress the impact this group has had on me. It was exceptional. It made me stronger." And as another noted: "It's good to know there are others in the same position as me."

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The other three shelters focused on holding shorter and more targeted empowerment activities. In many cases, this enabled them to increase the number of women they reached and to focus on specific supports that they felt were needed by women in their community. Some of these events were directly focused on employability issues, while others supported women in other aspects of their lives (however, these still provided important information on community and employment resources and supports). These activities included:

- One-on-one sessions for women to teach them how to do their own tax returns and manage their finances.
- Two afternoon empowerment workshops that included self-care and spa activities. The focus on spa activities was chosen to reduce the stigma that is sometimes associated with empowerment groups. These events included group discussions, a video on domestic violence, and exercises in assertiveness and goal setting. Women were also provided with employment and other resource contacts in the community.
- A job support workshop for women that included discussions on job ads, qualities that employers value, and an introduction to online resume and career guidance tools.
- A two-night information workshop with a representative from Advanced Education and Skills to provide support on resume writing and budgeting.
- An information fair for women in a shopping mall, which included booths from government and community agencies that could support women in their lives and with improving their employability.

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- A “Tea and Talk” weekly drop-in group for women, which featured guest speakers from government and community agencies that could support women in their lives and with improving their employability.
- A four session workshop on healthy eating on a fixed budget for women starting new lives after being affected by violence.
- A day-long “Girl Talk” workshop for girls ages 11-16. Topics included healthy body image, dating violence, and healthy relationships.

Looking Closer at Empowerment Groups

In our transition houses’ experience, empowerment groups were a powerful support for women who have been affected by violence and who were ready to move forward with their lives. In addition to being a very holistic approach to supporting women, the groups provided a safe, supportive environment for women to work on employment and other skills, meet with service providers who could support them, and prepare for their future.

Amongst the seven transition houses that offered empowerment groups as part of this initiative, there were some very different approaches – yet all received good evaluations from their participants. Evaluation form comments typically noted participants’ appreciation of the tools and skills they received in the groups (“I finally understand the difference between a resume and a cover letter!”) and the improvement in how they felt about themselves (“The most important thing I learned was that I am as important as everyone else”). These successes are likely due, at least in part, to the group facilitators

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knowing the needs and resources in their communities and structuring their groups accordingly.

If you are working with an organization that is thinking about starting a women's empowerment group, you may find it useful to consider the following elements (and our experience with them) when deciding on how to structure a group that will work in your own community.

Focus

When developing an empowerment group to help women improve their employability, one of the first considerations is how strong a focus to place on "finding employment" topics. The employment piece can either be a direct focus of all the group activities or can be brought in as one of many topics that the group touches on. This is an important consideration. It will affect how the group is advertised, what kind of participants it attracts, and what topics are covered in group sessions.

Within the groups run under our initiative, one focussed strongly on employment topics at every session (see Appendix A for list of topics for this and other groups). Five groups focussed some sessions on employment topics and others on other aspects of an empowered life – for instance, one week a session might be on resumes and covers letters and the next week it might be on healthy eating. Another group advertised their program as a craft group¹ run by the Women's Empowerment Group, and included employment

¹ The craft focus of this group had some interesting benefits. The women decided to sell the crafts they made and use the profits to support the running of the group. As a result the group became self-sustaining and the women gained experience in setting up a small business venture.

topics alongside craft lessons and conversations on healthy relationships. In each case, the shelter considered what would appeal most to the women in their community.

Group Size and Closed vs Open Groups

The size of the empowerment groups in this initiative ranged from four to fifteen participants. For the most part, the group facilitators felt that this size range allowed enough different viewpoints to carry on good group discussions while not getting too unwieldy. However, it was suggested by several of the facilitators that capping a class size at ten would be ideal.

Another consideration when developing a women's empowerment group is whether or not it should be open or closed. An open group means each session is open to any women in the community. One of the benefits of this approach is that the groups can reach larger numbers of women and women can attend just the sessions that they have a specific interest in. Two of the empowerment groups in the initiative held open groups and noted that they would use this approach again.

Closed groups, on the other hand, are ones that ask their participants to register in advance and that do not take in new members after the first or second session. The five groups that held closed groups all felt that the major benefit of a closed group was that it facilitated the bond and feeling of trust amongst participants. As one facilitator of a closed group commented: "People aren't ready in the first few sessions to speak. It can take several weeks before they begin to open up. If you enter a new woman into the group

along the way it changes the environment and then it makes it hard for the women to move forward.”

Participants and How to Attract Them

While the primary target of the empowerment groups held in this initiative were women who had been affected by violence, none of the groups made this a prerequisite for being allowed to participate. Likewise the groups were not overtly advertised as having this focus. As one group facilitator noted: “Women are smart. If they see that the transition house is offering something, they know what it’s about. That way, women who have experienced violence are more comfortable with coming and other women can come to the group as well.” (For some examples of how the groups were advertised, please see the Appendix B.)

In most of the empowerment groups, there was a mix of residents and ex-residents from the shelter and women from the community. It was left completely up to the group participants as to how they wanted to identify themselves. In a few cases, some of the closed groups did pre-interviews with the women interested in being involved. These interviews gave the women the opportunity to self-identify as a victim of violence,² if she wished, and allowed the facilitators to get a better sense of what participants wanted from the group. As one facilitator explained: “The pre-interviews were not to weed people

² Women were not asked if they have experienced violence, rather they were asked questions such as “Do you know what an abusive relationship is?” in case they wanted an opening to talk further about their own situation.

out. They were more to have a better idea of who was coming to the group and what their needs and personalities were.”

In addition, most of the groups attracted a wide age range of participants – from 18 to 70. In several cases, group facilitators commented on the benefits of this. For instance, one facilitator said: “Age range doesn’t seem to be a problem. Some women have experience in life to bring, others are in the process of experiencing life. So when conversations in the group start, it’s amazing to see how someone else’s input can guide someone else – for instance, they might talk about how they solved a similar situation that someone is facing.”

The groups were advertised in a variety of ways – local media, shelter and community Facebook pages (where they existed), and flyers placed around the community. In addition, several of the groups worked with other community groups and service providers to provide referrals. These included doctor’s offices; Child, Youth and Family Services; Advanced Education and Skills; Victim Services; the RCMP; lawyers; and Legal Aid. (For a sample of a sheet that could be used with community agencies to identify community needs and encourage future referrals, please see Appendix C.)

Location, Duration, and Timing

Only a few of the transition houses that ran empowerment groups were able to hold sessions in their own facility as they needed a space that was separate from the living quarters of the women in the shelter. To counter this lack of availability of space in their own facilities, several of the transition houses partnered with the Women’s Centres in

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their community and held the sessions there. Others connected with other community partners such as Family Resource Centres and schools³ to obtain the needed space.

Several of the facilitators commented on the importance of having a comfortable space in which to hold the empowerment groups. They noted that a set-up with a couch and some chairs went a long way toward creating a comfortable environment where participants felt at ease. It was suggested that this kind of set-up also helped when guest speakers came in because it turned a “formal presentation into a friendly conversation on a topic.”

Most of the groups held either 8- or 10-week sessions. Without exception, participants in each of the groups asked for the group to be extended or for a second set of sessions to be held. While several group facilitators agreed this would have been ideal if resources allowed, they felt that the eight to ten sessions was enough for the core content to be delivered.

There was a wide range of when groups were held. While a few groups went with weekends, most groups chose a regular weekday to hold their sessions. Some groups held evening groups and offered babysitting supports, other held them during the day when it would be easier for women with school-age children to attend. In each case, a knowledge of the community helped to guide facilitators in their choice of the timing for the group.

Determining Content

In each of the empowerment groups, women were asked in the first session about what they were interested in having covered in group sessions. In many cases, the facilitators

³ For instance, one school offered their Home Economics Room for use in a session on how to cook healthy food.

started with a suggested list of topics as a starting point for discussion, but participants were then encouraged to make the list their own by adding or deleting topics. (Please see Appendix A for examples of the session topics that were decided upon.) In addition to ensuring that participants' needs are met, this practice of encouraging participant-driven content is an empowerment activity in itself. One facilitator noted "asking for feedback and following up on it empowers the women and makes them more independent... let's let the women tell us what they want."

Hand in hand with this practice is the concept that facilitators have to be open to the unexpected and ready to build on whatever is suggested. In one group, for instance, a woman suggested a field trip to the local fire station. Rather than telling the participant that this might be outside the range of normal group activities, the facilitator looked at ways to make it happen and to turn the experience into a learning opportunity about community resources and non-traditional careers for women.

Similarly, all the groups followed the practice of having participants determine what the group's "house rules" were going to be in the first session. Where needed, facilitators may have made suggestions for consideration, but for the first most part, the rules were generated by the participants themselves. (Typical rules included such things as: be respectful, let others have a turn to talk, use only "I" statements, etc.)

Another important consideration when structuring group sessions is whether the content is best delivered by the facilitator or if outside resources are needed. This might involve inviting a guest speaker to come present to the group or having the group take a field trip to another location to hear a speaker and/or learn about available resources. Both options have their own advantages.

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For instance, in one case a group invited a representative from Advanced Education and Skills to come talk to the group about the supports that were available to women seeking employment. After the presentation, the representative stayed on to have refreshments with the group. The facilitator of this group noted: “This allowed the women to get to know him better and they started asking him questions that they might have been afraid to ask in a formal office setting.”

On the hand, most of the groups incorporated a field trip into one or more of their sessions. This enabled the participants to become familiar with community resources that they might not have been comfortable accessing on their own. In fact, this approach was so successful that during one group’s visit to a local college, two participants filled out funding applications for further education on the spot.

Finally, several of the group facilitators commented on the importance of including an element of fun into the group sessions and ensuring they were a social event as well as an educational event. All of the groups offered refreshments and allowed time for the participants to interact socially and build relationships with the other members of the group. Some of the groups included social events, such as a movie night or makeover session, and made their last session into a celebration of what the women had achieved. The importance of the social aspect of the groups is reflected in evaluation comments from the participants such as “What I remember most about the group is the friendship that I felt in the sessions” and “I love our game of cards and talks after each session.”

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Other Considerations

When developing an empowerment group for women, you may find it useful to also consider the following elements as you plan:

- **Number of facilitators:** Most of the groups run under this initiative used a minimum of two facilitators at every session. While this might not seem necessary with a smaller group, one facilitator noted the value “of having an extra person there that could go off and talk to a women privately if they became upset or just wanted a one-on-one conversation while the group was still running.”
- **Confidentiality:** In all empowerment groups, the establishment of trust amongst participants and facilitators is key. In all the groups run under this initiative, the importance of confidentiality was emphasized at the first session and at the beginning of subsequent sessions. Participants were reminded that both the identity of participants and what they said was not to be shared with others. In some of the groups, participants were asked to sign a confidentiality form to emphasize its importance. (Please see the Appendix D for a sample of one of the confidentiality forms used.) As one facilitator noted: “We always tell people that this is a place where they can talk openly and freely without being judged. At the same time, everything that is discussed within these walls stays within these walls. We always make people aware of the confidentiality of the group.”
- **Supports offered:** Thanks to the funding for this initiative, the empowerment groups run in the transition houses were able to offer financial supports to participants to cover their childcare and transportation costs. A large number of participants indicated they would not have been able to attend the group without these supports. While not

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all community organizations have the financial means to cover these costs, doing so where possible can open up the empowerment group to some of the women who may benefit from it the most. Commenting on the importance of these kinds of supports for participants, one facilitator said: “Before these supports, all the women could see were obstacles in the way. So what we’re trying to do now is remove these obstacles so all who wish to come along have the opportunity. We had one woman with three children under the age of five. There is no way she could have attended the group without help with her childcare expenses.”

- **Materials for participants:** Outside funding support enabled the empowerment groups under this initiative to provide some resources for group participants. These supports were highly appreciated by the women. In most cases, participants received a group binder with the handouts and other materials from the group. In particular, these binders included contact information for resources and agencies in the community and helped the participants to follow up with their goals after their completion of the group. Other materials that were provided by some groups included empowerment books, journals, and memory sticks so that women could have electronic copies of the resumes and cover letters that they worked on in their sessions. (As one participant noted, “I don’t have a computer, so now I can take my resume on a memory stick to get it printed out somewhere when I need it.”)
- **Evaluation:** As with any program, evaluation is key to improving future sessions. In most of the empowerment groups run under this initiative, facilitators had participants fill out an evaluation form at the end of each session so that their impressions were fresh. (Please see Appendix E for a sample of a session evaluation form.) Several

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groups also asked participants to fill out an overall evaluation form at the end of the entire group. The feedback from these forms was invaluable in helping them to improve their groups both while they were still running and for when they offer them again.

- **Wrap-up and Follow-up:** Several of the empowerment groups run under this initiative provided certificates of completion to the participants. Facilitators who did this noted the women really appreciated the certificates and felt a sense of accomplishment from having “officially” completed something. Another important component of group wrap-up is ensuring that the women know where to go for future help. In all cases, the facilitators reminded the participants they could call or drop by the transition house if they needed assistance in the future.

In Summary

In our experience under this initiative, transition houses found that the holistic approach used in empowerment groups and activities was beneficial both to a woman’s overall well-being and in improving her ability to plan and look for employment. We would like to leave you with some comments from the participants in our empowerment activities and hope they may inspire you as you plan your own programs to support women to move forward with their lives.

“Age doesn’t matter when you are looking for work.”

“I liked that everyone listened to me in the group. That made feel like what I was saying was important.”

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“This group helped clarify for me why some people might not hire me. Now I know what to work on.”

“This group was very supportive. I was given tools to help myself grow and empower myself.”

“I have a typed resume for the first time in my life.”

“The most important thing I learned was how to care for myself and how think positively.”

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Appendices

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APPENDIX A: Ideas for Topics and Speakers for Empowerment Groups

Here are some of the topics covered, speakers invited, and field trips that were taken in the empowerment groups that were part of our initiative. We hope that they will inspire you to develop your own.

The following topics were used in the empowerment group that chose to have an employment focus at each session:

- Introduction (getting to know the participants)
- Values and Goals – in life and at work
- Self Esteem and Assertiveness (and how this can affect you at work)
- Assertiveness and Communication (for eg., examining your body language when speaking to a work colleague versus a family member)
- Harassment in School and the Workplace
- Resume Writing (included a field trip to a career centre)
- Visit to the local Advanced Education and Skills Office (included an introduction to funding programs, supports)
- Self-care, Self-love, and Dressing for Success

The following sessions were held in the groups that had a range of employment topics and other empowerment topics:

Employment Related

- How to Write a Strong Resume and Cover Letters
- Eliminating Barriers to Female Employment
- Life Skills versus Job Skills (How are they different and how are they the same?)
- Presentation from a local business college on their programs and funding opportunities
- Field trip to local college (allowed participants to see the facilities and to learn about programs and funding supports)

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- Field trip to local Advanced Education and Skills Office
- Presentation from the WISE Program (Women Interested in Successful Employment)
- Field trip to a local fire station

Other Empowerment Topics

- Self Esteem and Self Care (many of these included a makeover to add an element of fun to the session)
- The Benefits of Eating Right and Staying Active
- Decision Making
- Healthy Relationships
- Types of Abuse
- Respectful Communication in Relationships
- How to Cook Healthy Food
- How to Budget
- Craft demonstrations – including embroidery and painting
- Knowing Your Legal Rights (including information on divorce, child custody, emergency protection orders, etc.)
- Presentation from a RCMP officer on How to Stay Safe at Home and at Work
- Presentation from a RCMP officer on Self Defense
- Presentation from the local Child, Youth, and Family Services worker on The Impact of Violence on Children
- Presentation from the local Mental Health and Addictions Counsellor on Stress Management and Self Esteem
- Presentation from a survivor of domestic violence who has rebuilt her life

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APPENDIX B: Sample Advertisements for Empowerment Groups

An Invitation

Women's Empowerment Groups

Starting [date] Once per week for 8 weeks, 6pm-8pm at the Family Resource Centre.

This dynamic group meets weekly, focusing on a particular topic, to explore practical life skills in everyday life.

What happens – a short talk on the topic is followed by an interactive, facilitated group discussion that explores the topic of conversation. Our group is open to all, is non-denominational and welcomes those wishing to develop Daily Life Skills, Self-understanding & Employment skills in a friendly supportive environment; come and discover and nourish your authentic self!

All Women's Empowerment Group meetings are provided free of charge for women age 17 & up. This is a closed group.

Registration on first-come first-serve basis. To register or for more information please call [contact info]. Sponsored by [name of transition house]

The [name of transition house] will be offering empowerment sessions...

To help women effectively prepare and learn how to navigate resources to help them become employable.

When: [dates and time]

Where: [location]

Duration: 8 weeks

Cost: Free, transportation and child care funds provided.

To register or for information call [phone number]

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*Empowerment Group
Finding the New You*

A series of workshops will commence [date and time]. These sessions will run for 8 weeks, every Tuesday night. Registration is fee and space is limited. Call [phone number] by [date].

Some topics that will be discussed: Assertiveness, Self Care, Relationships, Communication Skills

Inquire about transportation and child care expenses.

*** [For an open group, where individual sessions were advertised]

Food for Thought – Empowering Women Through Education

Ask yourself...

What is stopping me from finding and keeping a job?

Join us as [speaker name] from Advanced Education and Skills discusses what we can do to eliminate some of the barriers that keep us from being employed.

[Time], [Location]

To register, please contact [phone number]

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APPENDIX C: Sample Needs Assessment Form for Use with Community Agencies to Gather Information and Promote Future Referrals

LIFE
Agency Survey

Page 1

Name of Agency: _____

Name of agency representative: _____

LIFE is a program developed by Hope Haven for all females in the community. This 10-week program will begin in January 2005 and will provide life skills training to the women involved.

The target group for this program is women aged 16 to 50 who are at risk of being abused, are currently in abusive relationships, or are fleeing abusive relationships. By completing this survey, your organization can help identify what life skills training would be most beneficial to these women.¹

Please answer the following questions as they relate to your organization.

1. How would you rate the need for a "life skills" program for women in the target group described above? (Please circle one.)

1	2	3	4
No Need	Slight Need	Moderate Need	Critical Need

2. Please rate the following topics from most important to least important for our target group (1=most important through 15=least important)

_ Assertiveness/Self Defense	_ Physical Wellness
_ Communication Skills	_ Nutrition
_ Anger Management/Conflict Resolution	_ Parenting
_ Decision Making Skills	_ Mental Wellness
_ Self-Esteem/Empowerment	_ Addictions
_ Healthy Relationships	_ Independent Living
_ Budgeting	_ Boundaries
_ Job Readiness/Resume Writing	

3. Please list any additional topics your organization sees as important life skills:

4. Please indicate the number of agency referrals made by your organization on a monthly basis: _____

5. Please indicate the number of women between the ages of 16 and 50 who access your services on a monthly basis: _____

6. Please provide your organization's definition of "life skills". _____

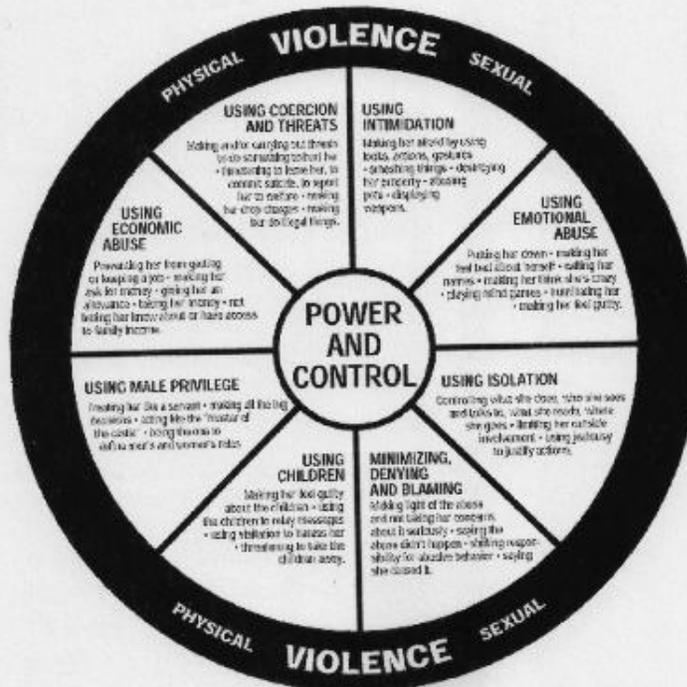
Hope Haven in partnership with The Government of Canada's National Crime Prevention Strategy

THANL gratefully acknowledges the support of Advanced Education and Skills for our empowerment and employability initiative.

7. Would your organization be willing to provide information relating to the topics listed in question two and/or three for research purposes? Yes No
If yes, which topics? _____

8. Please provide any suggestions or comments for this program.

Thank you for your contribution in the development of the LIFE program.



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Reproduced from the Learning in Female Empowerment manual produced by Hope Haven, Labrador City

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APPENDIX D: Sample Confidentiality Form Used in an Empowerment Group

Empowerment Group Oath of Confidentiality

I _____ do willingly promise to hold in confidence all confidential matters relating to the Empowerment Group sessions, including information about participants and staff, except where required by law.

I will NOT repeat to anyone anything about the private matters that I have heard while participating in the empowerment sessions.

Signature:

Date:

Witnessed by: [Staff signature]

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APPENDIX E: Sample Session Evaluation Form

Empowerment Session Evaluation Form

Empowerment Session: [Name of session]

	Strongly disagree		Neutral		Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I'm glad I experienced this session.						
This session was informative.						
I feel inspired.						
I would recommend it to others.						
I felt comfortable to talk freely.						

The three things I remember most are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The one thing I would change is: _____

Please feel free to use the space on the back of this form for any additional comments or suggestions.

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