



Locally Developed/Department Authorized Course Framework Template

Developed by: Linda McDonald, WLSS; Chris Stacey, YFNED	Date Developed: April 8th 2022
School Name: Watson Lake Secondary School	Signature of Superintendent:
Committee Approval Date:	Committee Chair Signature:
Course Name: Youth for Dignity 12	Grade Level of Course: Grade 12
Number of Course Credits: Two	Number of Hours of Instruction: 60

Department Authorized Prerequisite(s): None

Special Training, Facilities or Equipment Required: None

Course Synopsis: The curriculum forms the foundation of a modularized knowledge and skill development program for youth –the centerpiece of the Project –and addresses the issue of gender-based and relationship violence. The Youth for Dignity (YFD) curriculum is designed to reflect local cultural values, knowledge, protocols, customs, and different ways of knowing, and is grounded in the system of Dena Au’Nazen and the Local First Nation system of wellness based on the medicine wheel—fostering empowerment, dignity and respect in relationships and promoting socially just, culturally-appropriate and effective responses to violence.

Goals and Rationale: At national, territorial, and local levels, Indigenous women and youth face high levels of violence, particularly relationship violence. Indigenous youth represent a significant proportion of the Watson Lake community. As such, a deeper understanding of gender-based and relationship violence is at the same time a tool to prevent the violence happening currently in Local First Nation communities and an effective path to lasting positive social change. There are several outcomes and goals outlined for the course:

- Youth understand issues and causes related to gender-based and relationship violence and are able to communicate this knowledge with their peers, family, and community members
- Youth become empowered with the skills and tools needed to increase safety and respond to gender-based and relationship violence in their own lives, and in those of family and community members
- Youth are able to begin restoring and preserving the dignity of those who experience violence and unhealthy relationship behaviors
- Youth feel connected to Local First Nation culture
- Youth have strong advocacy, leadership, engagement and community skills to apply in their everyday lives
- Youth are mobilized to engage and network with other young people and the community-at-large in the prevention of gender-based and relationship violence

Yukon First Nations Perspectives: The program consists of a series of in-school modules integrated with youth-led initiatives. The curriculum for the program is youth-led, response-based and Local First Nation driven and is intended to assist youth in understanding and reducing youth gender-based and relationship violence. Given the need for community engagement in driving societal change, and the need to supplement community capacity, the project is guided by an advisory committee composed of student representatives, Elders, facilitators and key organizational partners to assist in the ongoing planning, implementation and evaluation of the project.

BIG IDEAS

Every person has an equal right to be valued, respected, and treated ethically

Relationship violence effects are multi-faceted with traumatic implications over a wide range of dimensions

Gender-based and relationship violence among youth requires a societal response in which individuals have key leadership roles to play

Engaging youth in knowledge-sharing and self-advocacy contributes to empowerment in fostering a supportive community-based prevention environment

An individual's and a society's ability to respond to and prevent gender-based and relationship violence deepens and expands over time

Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	Content
<p><i>Students are expected to do the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Co-create group norms and expectations •Identify their own Comfort Zones and recognize other people's Comfort Zones •Recognize when someone's dignity is threatened •Uphold the dignity of others •Participate in teambuilding activities involving trust and teamwork •De-bunk myths about gendered violence •Identify a victim's resistance •Identify the causes of gendered violence •Identify positive and negative social responses •Provide positive social responses •Identify their own social location and privileges •Know what about them makes them an activist •Organize campaigns and other social justice actions 	<p><i>Students are expected to know the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Basic YFD themes •Structure of the YFD Program •What Group Agreements and Comfort Zones are •Different definitions of dignity including their own •The Local First Nation meaning of dignity (Dene' Á' Nezen) •Current statistics on gendered violence in Yukon and across Canada •How victims resist violence •Local First Nation perspectives on gendered violence •That positive social responses uphold dignity and promote healing •The different levels of positive and negative social responses (interpersonal, group, community, societal, etc.)

- Identify language that blames victims or conceals violence
- Organize events, campaigns and other social justice actions
- Participate in events by providing leadership in various roles

- Yukon First Nation perspectives on positive and negative social responses
- Multiple kinds of oppressions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism)
- Wherever there is oppression there is resistance/activism
- Different ways to be an activist
- Yukon First Nation examples of activism
- Accurate language to describe violence and resistance
- That using inaccurate language can conceal violence or obscure perpetrator responsibility
- How to organize events, campaigns and other social justice actions
- How to create tangible social change

Big Ideas – Elaborations

- Disclosure of trauma is voluntary, and recognizes the need for safety, empowerment and choice (**Big Idea:** Relationship violence effects are multi-faceted with traumatic implications over a wide range of dimensions)
- Students are taught communication and problem-solving skills. Curriculum is delivered using interactive, skill-base strategies that do not rely solely on information and lecturing, but opportunities to apply knowledge and practice using skills. Youth actively participate in making safety and justice a community priority by deciding and working together on public awareness campaigns and presenting them to community members (**Big idea:** Gender-based and relationship violence among youth requires a societal response in which individuals have key leadership roles to play)
- The Youth for Dignity methodology provides a framework for a trauma-informed approach emphasizing the following principles: trauma awareness; safety and trust; opportunity for choice, collaboration and connection; recognizing pre-existing strengths; and skill-building (**Big Idea:** Engaging youth in knowledge-sharing and self-advocacy contributes to empowerment in fostering a supportive community-based prevention environment)
- The curriculum is designed to account for the interrelated nature of all aspects of relationship violence – the medicine wheel dimensions of mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health, as well as its social, cultural, economic, and environmental aspects. (**Big Idea:** Relationship violence effects are multi-faceted with traumatic implications over a wide range of dimensions)

Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

See Facilitator’s Guide and Curriculum Precipis for details

Content – Elaborations

Module 8 is replaced by a ‘Special Project’ – a youth-led community recognition event that is planned, organized and prepared by the students.

See Facilitator’s Guide and Curriculum Precipis for further details

Recommended Instructional Components:

The curriculum is organized into a series of seven 1-day and 2-day modules and a special project, offered in sequence over the months of October, November, December, January, February, March, April, and May.

Topics and discussions will align with students' pre-existing knowledge, understanding and learning needs. Students are expected to perform the curricular competencies in increasingly complex environments and contexts.

Due to the potentially emotional nature of the topics, the daily plan is designed as an arc, with daily beginnings and endings being undemanding and entertaining—including teambuilding or games--and the middle involving in-depth conversations and topical activities. The arc contributes to containment, building safety and security as a nest for in-depth work, and returning to a sense of calm at the end of each day.

Recommended Assessment Components: Ensure alignment with the [Communicating Student Learning E-book](#) and the [Principles of Quality Assessment](#)

Evaluation is a continual, pivotal process involving student input through student post-completion evaluations of each program module, annual input from the community through community recognition events, and annual input from key stakeholders through the project's advisory committee.

Intervention research focusses on assessing the impact of the program on youth and the community in understanding and reducing youth gender-based and relationship violence. The intervention research process is cyclical, reflective of annual progress and indicative of planning adaptations for each ensuing year.

The knowledge dissemination process includes youth-led initiatives and may include, for example:

- presentations by youth to elementary students and/or to the general body of secondary school students
- creating informative videos
- writing stories inspired by discussions with Elders about youth gender-based and relationship violence and its impacts on the community and culture

The culminating 'Special Project' is an event focused on the community and beyond at which students share their learning. Its organization and format are determined by the class. Initiatives could include, for example: a youth-led forum, conference presentation, or community recognition events in which students present their work to peers, parents, friends and community.

Sustaining knowledge, collaborations and impact are key to ensuring that the project continues to reduce youth gender-based and relationship violence in the community. Sustainability measures include the ongoing involvement of peer mentors, accreditation of the initiative and continuous partner support

Learning Resources: see Youth for Dignity (YfD) Curriculum Precis final document as well as YfD Facilitator Guide document (attached)

Additional Information:

Module 1: Orientation and Recruitment

Module 2: The Basics

Module 3: Dignity (*Module integrated into other modules*)

Module 4: Context of Gendered Violence

Module 5: Positive and Negative Social Responses (*Module integrated into other modules*)

Module 6: Oppression and Activism

Module 7: Power of Language

Special Project: Campaign and Social Change –Community Recognition Event