

August 21, 2019

## Concurrent Workshops

### *Developing skills to serve as a steward for supportive environments*

*Six concurrent workshops will be offered to enhance skills in practice and policy that support environments to promote population child and youth mental health through the life course.*

#### **6. An Intercultural Approach to Gender-Based Violence Prevention in Newcomer Communities**

Presenters: Briana Miller and Zahra Dhubow, YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs, Halifax

The YMCA provides newcomer children, youth, and their families with a variety of program and outreach services. Our approach is to deliver community-based support that is inclusive and welcoming. We also provide on-site services for students at several partner schools. Since 1992, our YMCA has been working in partnership with schools and other partners in our community to support the settlement of families new to Canada. YMCA School Settlement Support Staff work on site at elementary, junior and senior high schools to provide practical assistance to immigrant children, youth, and their families. Our programs help newcomers to Canada settle in NS while also supporting the community in understanding the issues and barriers they face. Our YMCA offers several programs to help immigrants feel at home and engaged in our community. The Gender-Based Violence Prevention GBVP Project started in September 2017 to build capacity within our YMCA programs and services in this area and to develop tools and resources on an intercultural approach to GBVP. Over the past year, the project has delivered presentations on the topic at conferences and facilitated workshops with over 50 different service provider organizations and 200+ people. The agenda includes: definitions and information about gender based violence and settlement, key concepts in the areas of violence prevention and working with newcomers, engaging youth in the topic, youth programming, disclosures and referrals, closing and evaluation. This session includes discussion about challenges that newcomer youth face through a video presentation of a project by immigrant youth who participated in a forum theatre weekend to explore their experiences. Concepts that are discussed are: sexism, racism, being an ally, recognizing and preventing violence. The importance of awareness around intercultural communication and diverse communities is illustrated through the workshop activities and discussion, as youth need skills and information to be in healthy relationships, to challenge sexism and racism and to get help if they are experiencing crisis related to GBV.

#### **How does your workshop make a connection with the theme Supportive Environments for Child and Youth Mental Health – Our Shared Responsibility!?**

The workshop focuses on supporting newcomer families and recognizing the challenges that newcomer youth face as well as their assets and resilience. The newcomer youth video highlights first voice experiences and shows youth as leaders in starting a conversation about GBVP through our action research project with them.

#### **What will others learn from your workshop?**

- An awareness of diversity in Canada with a focus on Immigration.
- Raising awareness about gender-based violence in Canada and its prevalence.
- How to work with newcomers and be culturally responsive. Recognizing signs of GBV and interventions around prevention and referrals.
- More information about the anti-violence and settlement sector resources and approaches.

## **How will your workshop help participants prepare for scaling up or delivering policies and programs?**

We have tools and resources to share that have been developed through the project. We have created a guide for working with newcomers on GBVP. There is a report on working with men and boys on GBVP issues. There is a video facilitator guide that included definitions, conversation starters and youth statistics on violence in Canada.

### **Presenters**

Briana Miller

GBVP Project Coordinator, YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs

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Briana is the Coordinator of the local GBVP project at YMCA Immigrant Services. Briana has over 13 years of professional work experience with youth, working in youth programs, workshops, consultations and work in the community. She worked for four years with the YMCA Youth Outreach Program. Understanding the realities, needs and lived experiences of youth has given her a lot of knowledge, connection to the communities, and real understanding of youth needs around intersecting identities. In another position, she led youth consultations about sexualized violence for the Nova Scotia Provincial Sexual Violence Strategy. She also led mental health programs, which involved organizing arts based peer supportive spaces for community members to reduce stigma and promote mental health. She works from a philosophy of empowerment and building/ supporting the capacity and resiliency of communities.

Zahra Dhubow Project Facilitator

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