

FANTASTIC FATHERS

Presentation to:

**The Ending Relationship Abuse Society of BC
Annual Conference and AGM**

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Fantastic Fathers



A Strength-Based, Experiential
Education Initiative for Fathers

IMPORTANT:

Only well-trained facilitators should use this resource in working with men who have used abuse in their relationships. Many challenges can arise that require skilful handling, including victim blaming, collusion with the abuser, cultural issues and participant distress. Safety and ethical considerations demand that programs and groups such as Fantastic Fathers operate in close collaboration with tables such as a cross sector community based committees whose mandates include the safety of women and children

Goals:

Adhering to a set of guiding principles, our initiative is designed to:

- Engage and motivate men to overcome reluctance to participating in a process of change
- Educate men in a model of child-centered fathering
- Transfer the knowledge gained in curriculum development, group process and positive outcomes to service providers across the province.

Goals (cont.)

- Invite men to understand and take responsibility for their:
 - Child maltreatment
 - Neglect, absence, physical and sexual abuse
 - Violence against women in relationships
- Provide the tools to explore age appropriate child misbehaviour strategies

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"

Accountability Guidelines

Fantastic Fathers has **12** guidelines in 4 categories:

Categories include:

1. *Accountability to the safety and well-being of children*
2. *Accountability to safety of children's mothers*
3. *Responsibility to fathers*
4. *Accountability to communities*

Guiding Principles

FF has developed **20** values-based principles in 4 categories to consider when considering delivering a Fantastic Fathers Curriculum in any community.

Categories include:

1. Safety
2. Honouring Men
3. Context for the Work
4. Collaboration

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

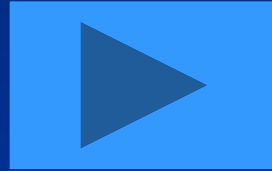
Program Rationale 2

“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

Program Rationale Video

Children See Children Do



Group Format

- Presentation on Weekly Themes (15 weeks)
 - Becoming the Best Dads We Can Be
 - Video Clips
 - Written Handouts
- Discussions and Exercise Activities
- Home Assignments
- Mid-week phone check-in

Group 1

Introductions and Establishing Our Goals:



- Why are fathers important in the lives of their kids?
- Positive and Compassionate Parenting:
Nurturing, Guidance and Modeling - kids will do what we do, not what we say

Group 2

Family of Origin:



- Does the apple fall close to the family tree?
- What we learned from our parents and hope to develop for ourselves

Group 3

Becoming Our Own Positive Parent:



Overcoming the negative parenting we received through
constructive self-dialogue

Group 4

Staying Cool When Things Heat Up:



- Controlling ourselves not others
- Modeling for our kids how to cope with frustration

Group 5

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



- Grief, Loss, Trauma and Substance Use
- Committing to Non-Violence

Group 6

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



- Becoming part of the solution and not the problem
- Developing individual commitment and group support for non-violence

Group 7

Developing Positive, Balanced and Child-Centered Parenting:



Building our parenting relationship on a solid foundation

Group 8

Communication Skills:



Active Listening and Empathy

Group 9

Empathy, Problem Solving & Non-Violent Communication:



Responding supportively to emotional behaviours...
encouraging our kids to learn how to think, not
what to think

Group 10

Family Structure - Clear, Specific and Simple:



Developing household rules, expectations and agreements

Group 11

Avoiding Parent Traps



Providing Clear Expectations and Reminders:
Avoiding the escalation of conflicts through
preventative interventions for misbehaviour

Group 12

Letting the Consequences

Do the Teaching:

Natural and logical
consequences, time-out
and removal of privileges



Group 13

Reparative Relationships



- Supporting and respecting the mothers of our children
- Taking responsibility for our influence over our kids

Group 14

Taking Care of Ourselves:



- **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 15

Program Evaluation and Celebration:

- Discussion on personal experience of participation, feedback on potential program improvements
- Client Satisfaction and Self-rating Scales
- Recognition for the path we have traveled

Program Evaluation

Pre-group

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

Group

- Weekly group feedback rating form
- Weekly phone check-ins

Post-group

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