**Invitation for Applications**

**Introduction**The World Health Organization (WHO) defines sexual health as: “a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled” (WHO, 2017). According to this framework, sexual health promotion includes awareness and fulfillment of sexual rights and strengthening skills to develop healthy relationships that are free of violence.

Youth dating violence includes harmful and violence behaviours that can be emotional, psychological, physical, and/or sexualized in nature. Although most research efforts have used university-aged samples, findings suggest that these behaviours often begin before university. Canadian researchers (Senn, et al., 2014) have found that over half (59%) of a sample of women between the ages of 17 and 24 years had experienced some form of non-consensual sexual experience since turning 14 years old. Additionally, Canadian police reported there are more sexual assault survivors who are girls and women under the age of 24 years (Statistics Canada, 2018). In a study using provincial administrative health databases, it was shown that rates of sexual assault cases in Ontario from 2002-2016 were highest for young females aged 15 to 19 (Muldoon et al., 2019). In a national survey, 21% of LGBTQI2S+ high school students reported physical assault or harassment based on their sexual orientation (Taylor et al., 2011).

**Project Overview**

The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) and the Centre for Sexuality (C4S) are adapting a comprehensive relationship and sexual health education (RSE) curriculum and evaluating its impact as an intervention for youth dating violence. This project aims to help enable youth to develop and practice the skills needed to make healthy decisions with regards to their sexuality and relationships. Evaluations of sexual education programming has often focused primarily on outcomes related to use of contraception and delayed initiation of sexual activity. This project will address an omitted evaluation outcome: healthy sexual relationships free of violence.

The current project aims to contribute to sexual health promotion through the implementation of a comprehensive relationship and sexual health education (RSE) program to youth (approximately aged 12-19) in Canada.

As part of this project, CPHA and C4S are seeking to collaborate with six community organizations, including non-profit organizations, organizations and institutions supported by provincial and territorial governments (e.g. regional health authorities), and other community-based agencies across Canada, to deliver and evaluate the RSE program in school and community-based settings in their respective communities. Three community collaborators will be selected for the first (2020/2021) year.

**The Centre for Sexuality’s (C4S) Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Program**

Formerly called Comprehensive Sexual Health Education, in 2018/2019 the program was updated and retitled to Relationship and Sexual Health Education (RSE). The change better reflects the program content and that its importance extends beyond basic anatomy, information on sexually transmitted infections, and condom demonstrations.

RSE content supports informed, responsible decision making via increasing and facilitating knowledge acquisition, personal insight, motivation, and strengthening personal and interpersonal skills to bolster youth identity and agency; promotes behaviour consistent with personal values and individual choice; and enhances capacities needed to meet current and future developmental demands around healthy bodies, healthy relationships, and healthy sexuality.

The content relates to three core and interconnected domains: sexual and reproductive health promotion and education, healthy and respectful relationships education, and violence prevention and consent skills promotion.

RSE programming includes RSE-School and RSE-Community. RSE-School is designed for youth in grades 7-12 enrolled in public schools and certain private/charter schools. RSE-Community is designed for youth under 24 experiencing barriers who are not enrolled in traditional school-based education. RSE-Community sessions can be delivered in community settings such as agencies, treatment facilities, specialized school settings, and hospitals.

**RSE Guiding Principles**

1. Rights and gender equity based
2. Creative and curious
3. Empowering and transformative
4. Youth informed
5. Holistic
6. Inclusive
7. Preventive and protective

**Collaboration Opportunity**

Currently, we are currently seeking collaboration with three community organizations or agencies for the first round of program implementation. The selected collaborators will join our community of practice, receive training in program facilitation, deliver the curriculum in their community, and be involved in the evaluation of the RSE program as a dating violence prevention strategy.

**Applicant Eligibility**

We are seeking out applications from organizations and agencies across Canada who are interested in implementing both RSE-School and RSE-Community in their region. Eligible agencies include non-profit organizations, organizations and institutions supported by provincial and territorial governments (e.g. regional health authorities), and other community-based agencies. Three sites will be selected for the 2020-2021 school year and will implement the program in *both* the school and community settings.

This program is an adaptation of C4S’s current curriculum, making this a pilot project and as such, we currently will be unable to provide the programming in French during the first round’s timeline. If you are interested in implementing this program in a Francophone setting, please submit your application and you will be considered for Round 2 (the 2021-2022 school year). This incorporates the additional time required for CPHA to process Francophone applications and to translate all of the materials. You are invited to submit your application during the current round of submissions, or you can contact youthRSE@cpha.ca to discuss opportunities for translation/adaptation and forthcoming opportunities for applications and collaboration available for Francophone settings.

**Collaboration Requirements**

1. Selected applicants will be required to participate in a 2-day training alongside other collaborating organizations prior to any implementation of the program; travel will be required and covered.
2. We will require that the selected organizations are willing and able to maintain the fidelity of the RSE curriculum. Organizations that have other comprehensive sexual health education or dating violence prevention programs running are welcome to apply; however, the current collaboration opportunity is available specifically for the RSE program training and delivery. The selected organizations must be able to maintain the fidelity of the curriculum, or may work with CPHA and the C4S to adapt as needed for the local context.
3. We will require the willingness and capacity to participate in intervention research activities (e.g. interviews, pre- and post-evaluation surveys), as well as knowledge mobilization efforts (e.g. sharing lessons learned with other organizations).

**Application requirements**

1. Applicants should have a demonstrated commitment to: trauma-and violence-informed approaches, health equity, sexual and reproductive rights, cultural safety, evidence-based decision making, and harm reduction.
2. Applicants should have a demonstrated capacity to engage youth throughout the project; as such, we are looking at applicants who have a demonstrated understanding of promising practices in youth engagement.
3. We are looking for applicants who are committed to delivering and evaluating the curriculum over a minimum of two years (preference will be given to organizations who are committed to implementation and evaluation past the proposed end of this project).
4. We require two letters of support for this application; one must be a letter from the community organization where you will be implementing in the community setting, and one must be from the principal or superintendent of the school where you will be implementing the classroom settings.

**Please note:** we are looking to implement in settings across Canada, so location may be taken into account if we have multiple applications from the same province or city.

**Outcome measures**

Throughout this project, we will be evaluating:

* Prevalence of youth dating violence
* Increased capacity to prevent dating violence
* Feedback from students who participated in the program
* Feedback from facilitators who delivered the program

**Benefits for Collaborating Site Participants**

This unique opportunity will provide the training and support to collaborating organizations to successfully implement relationship and sexual health education while simultaneously engaging in a learning and evaluation process that will enhance overall agency capacity. The financial costs to participate in the process will be subsidized by CPHA. The following are some of the key potential benefits for participants in our community of practice:

* Be an initial site for the wide scale dissemination of the evidence-based RSE program
* Increase ability to attract and retain funding through community, municipal, and provincial funders who are familiar with CPHA, C4S and their demonstrated impact
* Opportunity to participate in a training process that prepares participants to be facilitators and enhances their knowledge and skills to engage with youth within the field of sexual and relationship health and education
* Engage and receive training and evaluation support for the implementation of the program
* Participate and contribute to ongoing cutting edge research that will help inform practice and learning in the field of sexual and relationship health
* Opportunity to receive support in applications for additional funding applications once the program has been successfully implemented throughout the duration of the collaboration
* Financial support up to $5,000 which may cover, for example, implementation materials, supporting documents, travel costs, etc.

**Application Process**

There are two steps to the application process:

 1. Submitting a completed Application Form (see fillable form below)

 2. Phone interview (short-listed agencies will be contacted and invited to be interviewed)

Applications Forms are due by 11:59PM Wednesday, December 4th, 2019. Applications can be submitted by emailing the completed RFP Application Form to youthRSE@cpha.ca. Please note that email attachments cannot be larger than 10Mb total and technical support will not be available after 4:00PM.

Applications received after 11:59PM Eastern Standard Time will not be reviewed.

**Application Form**

**Applicant information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organization name | Organization name |
| Organization website | Organization website |
| Contact for this project | First name Last name |
| Contact person’s email and phone number | Email addressPhone number |
| Location | City, Province |

**Partner Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School name | School name |
| School address | Street addressCity, Province, Postal code |
| Contact for this project | First name Last name |
| Contact person’s email and phone number | Email addressPhone number |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Community partner Name | Community partner name |
| Community partner address | Street addressCity, Province, Postal code |
| Contact for this project | First name Last name |
| Contact person’s email and phone number | Email addressPhone number |

**Application requirements**

1. We require two letters of support for this application; one must be a letter from the community organization where you will be implementing in the community setting, and one must be from the principal or superintendent of the school where you will be implementing the classroom settings.

* (Attach letters of support in your application).

2. Applicants should have a demonstrated commitment to: trauma-and violence-informed approaches, health equity, sexual and reproductive rights, cultural safety, evidence-based decision making, and harm reduction.

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| Describe how your organization has demonstrated commitment to the values listed above: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Describe how this particular relationship and sexual health education program aligns with your agency’s mission: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

3. Applicants should have a demonstrated capacity to engage youth throughout the project; as such, we are looking at applicants who have a demonstrated understanding of promising practices in youth engagement.

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| Describe what experiences or expertise your agency has in offering education or training programs that are youth-centered |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| Do you have someone at your agency that would facilitate the RSE program or would you hire someone new for the position?  |
| Please select |

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| If you already have a staff person who would facilitate and participate in this collaboration opportunity, please tell us about their experience and qualification and/or attach a copy of their CV. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| If you would hire someone new for the position please explain what experiences and qualifications you would be looking for in a facilitator: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

4. We are looking for applicants who are committed to delivering and evaluating the curriculum over a minimum of two years (preference will be given to organizations who are committed to implementation and evaluation past the proposed end of this project).

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| Please describe ability to commit to program delivery and evaluation of the curriculum throughout this collaboration: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

* Are you interested in continuing implementing this program after the funding period is finished?

Yes [ ]  No[ ]

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| If yes, please indicate if you have interest in receiving support from CPHA/C4S to apply for additional funding and/or explain how the program can be sustainable within your organization without the CPHA/C4S’s funding: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Other applicant questions**

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| Please provide an overview of your agency’s experience with research and evaluation, sexual health, promising practices for youth education, and program facilitation |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| If your agency or the schools or organizations you have partnered/worked with serve Indigenous populations please explain how your organization has committed to the Truth and Reconciliation report for Indigenous people: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

* Does your organization have any issues/concerns with the travel requirement involved?

Yes [ ]  No[ ]

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| --- |
| If yes, please explain: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

* Does your organization currently deliver a comprehensive sexual health education, dating violence prevention, consent education, or other similar programming?
Yes[ ]  No[ ]
* If yes, are you committed to delivering the RSE program for the collaboration in question?
Yes[ ]  No[ ]

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| Do you believe adaptations will be necessary for your local context and are you willing to work with CPHA and the C4S to adapt the RSE as needed?  |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

* Will your organization commit to participation in:

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| The program’s intervention research activities (e.g. interviews, evaluations surveys)?  |
| Yes[ ]  No[ ]  |
| Knowledge mobilization efforts (e.g. sharing lessons learned with other organizations)? |
| Yes[ ]  No [ ]  |

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| Do you have any additional comments or information to share? |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

Thank you for your application.

A phone interview will be conducted with the short-listed agencies in January 2020.