**Invitation for Applications**

**Background**

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). Using this framework, sexual health promotion involves building knowledge and capacity for participation in healthy relationships free of violence.

Youth dating violence includes harmful and violent behaviours that can be emotional, psychological, physical, and/or sexualized in nature. Despite the challenges in capturing exact numbers, it is well understood that youth dating violence exists in Canada. According to the Canadian Public Health Association’s online survey data (*n* = 1,202), one third (33%) of participants aged 16-19 reported ever experiencing emotional, physical, or sexual abuse in a romantic and/or sexual relationships (CPHA, 2019).

In recent research led by the Canadian Public Health Association, youth (ages 12-19) participating in focus groups reported that access to comprehensive sexual health education is valuable for helping them make informed decisions about relationships and in reducing potential negative outcomes (Laverty, Noble, Pucci, & MacLean, 2021). Youth in the study also reported wanting to learn more about the social and emotional aspects of sex and relationships. Overall, focus group participants voiced that they wanted access to more education and ongoing learning opportunities, demonstrating a sense of curiosity and a desire to receive balanced information about sexual health and relationships.

**Project Overview**

As part of a national project funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) and the Centre for Sexuality (C4S) have adapted the C4S’s comprehensive relationship and sexual health education (RSE) program and are currently evaluating its impact as an intervention for youth dating violence. This project aims to help youth develop and practice the skills needed to make healthy decisions with regards to their sexuality and relationships.

**As part of this project,** **CPHA and C4S are collaborating with organizations from across Canada to support the delivery and evaluation of the RSE program in school and/or community-based settings in their respective communities.** We are currently collaborating with six organizations across the country and are seeking an additional four to five collaborators to implement and evaluate the RSE program throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

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

The RSE program relates to three core and interconnected domains: 1. sexual and reproductive health promotion and education; 2. healthy and respectful relationship education; and 3. violence prevention and consent skills promotion. Through participation in the RSE program, youth will be provided with an opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy and informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health, and to participate in healthy relationships. The RSE program supports informed, responsible decision making by increasing and facilitating knowledge acquisition, personal insight, motivation, and by 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 related to healthy bodies, healthy relationships, and healthy sexuality.

The RSE program may be delivered to youth in school and/or community-based settings via online or in-person delivery.

The RSE school program is designed for youth enrolled in school in grades 7-12. There are four distinct programs geared towards students in grade 7, 8, 9 and one for students in grades 10 and up; the content in each program is unique to ensure it is timely and developmentally appropriate for students in different grade levels. Each program uses a scaffolded approach to ensure learning builds upon the previous years’ content. The RSE school programs are delivered over a minimum of four 60-90 minute sessions.

The RSE community program is designed for youth that are 29 years and younger participating in community-based programming. The RSE program can be delivered in various community settings, such as drop-in programs, treatment facilities, specialized school settings, and hospitals. As described above, there are four distinct RSE programs, geared towards youth of different ages, knowledge and experiences. The RSE community program includes four-six hours of content delivered over two-five sessions.

**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 seeking to collaborate with four to five organizations or agencies. **With support from CPHA and C4S, selected applicants will be responsible for delivering a minimum of two RSE programs during the 2022-2023 school year (note that each program is a minimum of 4-6 hours in length, delivered over multiple sessions) to youth in school and/or community-based settings in their respective regions.** In addition, the selected collaborators will join our community of practice comprised of other organizations similarly implementing the RSE program; participate in training related to sexual health, healthy relationships and program facilitation; and support the evaluation of the RSE program as a dating violence prevention strategy by administering youth surveys and participating in facilitator surveys.

Financial support will be provided to selected applicants to cover costs associated with participation in this project (up to $5,000 during the 2022-2023 school year).

**Applicant Eligibility**

We are seeking applications from organizations and agencies across Canada who are interested in implementing the RSE program in their respective communities. Eligible agencies include non-profit organizations, organizations and institutions supported by provincial and territorial governments (e.g. regional health authorities, public health units), and other community-based agencies. We will be selecting 2-4 successful applicants to collaborate with us throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

We are accepting applications in English and French. The training provided to collaborating organizations will be in English only, though collaborating organizations will be able to access the RSE program materials and the evaluation materials in English or French.

**Collaboration Requirements**

1. Selected applicants will be required to participate in a multi-day training alongside other collaborating organizations prior to any implementation of the RSE program; the training sessions will be held on the following dates: Tuesday September 13th, Tuesday September 20th, and Tuesday, September 27th. These will be 2-3 hour training sessions that will take place over Zoom between the hours of 11AM and 2PM EST. The main training component will be delivered over Zoom on Tuesday, October 18th to Thursday, October 20th between the hours of 11AM and 5PM EST. Please ensure that your facilitators are available on those dates.
2. **We will require that the selected organizations are** **willing and able to maintain the fidelity of the RSE curriculum**. Organizations that are currently delivering comprehensive sexual health education or dating violence prevention programs are welcome to apply; however, the current collaboration opportunity is specific to delivery and evaluation of the RSE program. 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 (e.g., cultural or community-specific adaptations).
3. Selected applicants must commit to delivering two RSE programs at least once (note that each program is a minimum of 4-6 hours of facilitation) during the 2022-2023 school year to youth in school and/or community-based settings.
4. Selected RSE facilitators must demonstrate willingness and capacity to participate in intervention research activities (e.g. interviews, pre- and post-delivery 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 for applicants who have a demonstrated understanding of promising practices in youth engagement.
3. We require 1-2 letters of support for this application from the settings (i.e., school and/or community-based settings) where you intend to deliver the program. For example, if you intend to deliver the program within a school setting, we require a letter of support from the principal or superintendent. If you intend to deliver within a community-based setting, we will require a letter of support from the proposed partner organization. If, as part of your application, you intend to deliver the RSE program in both a school and a community setting, we ask that you please submit a letter of support from both prospective partners. Refer to Appendix A for a template letter of support that you can send to your prospective school and/or community partners.

Please note that we will be looking to implement in settings across Canada, so location may be taken into account if we have multiple applications from the same province/territory 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 Organizations**

This unique opportunity will provide the training and support to collaborating organizations to successfully implement the RSE program 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 organizations and agencies in our community of practice:

* Be an initial site for the wide scale dissemination of the evidence-based RSE program
* Increased 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 throughout the implementation of the RSE program
* Participate and contribute to ongoing cutting-edge research that will help inform practice and learning in the field of youth sexual and relationship health
* Opportunity to receive support in developing applications for additional funding once the program has been successfully implemented as part of this collaboration
* Financial support up to $5,000 for the school year. Funds may cover, for example, implementation materials, staff time dedicated to training and RSE program delivery/evaluation, supporting documents, travel costs, etc.

**Application Process**

There are four things to include when you submit your application:

 1. Include your completed application form

 2. Include your letter(s) of support from the school or community program who will be receiving the program

 3. Include a copy of the CV of the person who would be delivering the RSE program.

 4. Upload a video to YouTube (approximately three minutes) of the facilitator talking about something that they’re passionate about (doesn’t matter what it’s about), and provide a link in the body of the email.

Applications Forms will be reviewed on a rolling basis until July 20th 2022. 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. We will be contacting and interviewing applicants on an ongoing basis.

Applications received after July 20th 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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name (Partner school and/or community organization) | School/Community organization name |
| Address | Street addressCity, Province, Postal code |
| Contact for this project | First name Last name |
| Contact person’s email and phone number | Email addressPhone number |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name (Partner school and/or community organization) | Community partner name (if applicable) |
| 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 1-2 letters of support for this application; they can be from the community organization where you will be implementing the RSE program, and/or from the principal or superintendent of the school where you will be implementing the program. Please use the standardized template letter provided (Appendix A).

* (Attached letters of support in your application).

2a. Applying organizations should have a commitment to sexual and reproductive rights (e.g., LGBTQ2S+ inclusion, promotion of sexual health and well-being, positive youth development, informed sexual decision-making and agency, etc.)

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| Describe how your organizational mandate and actions fit with the values listed above: |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

2b. Some of the skills and approaches were are looking for in delivery partners include: trauma-and violence-informed approaches, health equity, cultural safety, evidence-based decision making, and harm reduction.

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| --- |
| If applicable, please describe which of the approaches are part of your organizational mandate (please elaborate): |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

3. As noted, the project and collaboration is focused on the implementation and evaluation of the Centre for Sexuality’s RSE Program.

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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. |

1. Does your agency have previous experience with facilitating programs related to. . .

...youth sexual health?
Yes[ ]  No[ ]

...healthy youth relationships?
Yes [ ]  No[ ]

|  |
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| 1. Please provide an overview of your organization’s capacity to commit to this program:
 |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

1. If additional funding becomes available, are you interested in continuing to implement this program?

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Please explain how your organization has committed to the Truth and Reconciliation report for Indigenous people:
 |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

Yes [ ]  No[ ]

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| --- |
| 1. 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. |

1. If selected as a partner for this project, will your organization commit to:

|  |
| --- |
| Participation in a multi-day training session and other relevant training/knowledge sharing opportunities throughout project collaboration?Yes[ ]  No[ ]  |
| Maintaining the fidelity of the existing RSE program, and working with CPHA/C4S if community-specific or cultural adaptations are needed?Yes[ ]  No[ ]  |
| Delivering a minimum of two RSE programs (note that each program is a minimum of four 60 to 90 minute sessions) to youth in school and/or community settings?Yes[ ]  No[ ]  |
| Participation in the program’s intervention research/evaluation activities (e.g. interviews, evaluations surveys)?  |
| Yes[ ]  No[ ]  |
| Participation in knowledge mobilization efforts (e.g. sharing lessons learned with other organizations)? |
| Yes[ ]  No [ ]  |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Do you have any additional comments or information to share?
 |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

Please attach the CV of the person who would be facilitating the RSE program and a link to their YouTube video, as well as the letter(s) of support for the program delivery.

Thank you for your application! We will be in touch soon!