
NFF-MIOB 2014-2019 Evaluation Update

An update to the evaluation of the [Neighbours, Friends & Families](#) “[Make It Our Business](#)” Program for the Centre for Research & Education on Violence against Women & Children



Neighbours, Friends & Families

The Update

This report provides an update on recent activities of the Make It Our Business project which builds on the initial evaluation covering the period from 2011 to 2014. The original report provided a comprehensive history of the development of the Make It Our Business program along with a detailed description of the approach the project took. It then went on to document project activities, reach and impact before making a set of recommendations for future development of the project.

This report includes a summary of the findings and recommendations from the original evaluation and then reports on recent developments. MIOB has developed over time through an iterative process that incorporates feedback and learning through real-world testing. We start by looking at how that developmental process has continued through 2018.

We then look at initial reach and impact and provide updated information on the project's total impact to date.

Next, we look at the recommendations made in the original evaluation and the project's response to those recommendations.

Finally, the update includes information from a series of qualitative interviews with project participants to glean a deeper understanding of the impact of the project as well as to identify new recommendations for continued development.

Development and the Current Model

This history of Neighbours, Friends and Families and Make It Our Business is one of adaptive development. Over the years, the approach has been refined through real-world testing and effective use of feedback. This process has continued through the current reporting period. NFF and MIOB recognize the complex challenge of addressing violence against women and the many determinants at individual, community and social levels of the ecological system.

CREVAWC has developed effective materials that use a theoretically grounded ecological approach to provide potential by-standers with the tools and confidence they need to positively intervene in potentially abusive situations. The training experience moves people from an abstract issue to real and immediate engagement.

Managing resource challenges, the program has evolved from a community-based diffusion model to a workplace-based diffusion model through aligning with the Occupational Health and Safety Act language and obligations. MIOB is designed to fit into an organization's internal responsibility system, tapping into structures and relationships already in place to assure workplace safety.

Strong roots in the community have infused the project with an understanding of the need for partnerships, collaboration, and adaptation to local needs. Flexibility has helped the MIOB program reach a broad range of workplaces, including large, bureaucratic organizations like the OPS and Canada Post, for-profit manufacturing companies, beauty salons, and First Nations communities in Northern Ontario.

As of 2014, the workplace program had developed a toolkit of effective materials including training sessions, manuals for facilitators and participants, brochures, engaging videos, brochures, and websites.

This process has continued through 2018. We continue to develop new tools and training to support employers and workers. The Power and Control Wheel has been adapted by CREVAWC for workplaces and approved for use by the Duluth group. Training has expanded to include content on preliminary risk assessment and safety planning with tools that can be accessed on the website. We are developing a social enterprise model and a certification process to scale and sustain the work.

Reach & Impact

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Follow-up on Recommendations

This initial evaluation provided a set of recommendations for future development of the project. Each recommendation is listed below with a report of the relevant activities of the project.

- Engage strategic private sector partners with organizations who act as defacto public meeting spaces like Tim Horton's or who send employees into homes such as Rogers or Bell and unions to advance workplace programs.

MIOB began work on this recommendation almost immediately following the release of the initial evaluation. CREVAWC partnered with the Canadian Labour Congress to conduct a Pan-Canadian survey on impact of domestic violence on the work place which led to the publication of "Can Work Be Safe, When Home Isn't?" The survey was inspired by the MIOB project and provided important contextual information to support MIOB outreach with larger organizations and employers.

The project also continued work with many of their partners from the initial evaluation period including Mount Sinai Hospital and Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital and expanded to work with the RCMP and the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence in British Columbia and to develop a customized facilitator training for union representatives through the Canadian Labour Congress.

- Build capacity within the VAW sector to deliver MIOB.

In addition to ongoing training sessions, the MIOB project also conducts regular community of practice teleconferences, providing an opportunity for presenters to connect with each other, provide feedback on materials, and confer with each other on the most effective approaches to reaching out and presenting the MIOB information.

The project has recognized a need to develop a support structure for presenters. A federally funded project is allowing CREVAWC to develop a social enterprise model that will include certification of MIOB trainers in local communities. Future work includes developing a certification program to train and certify domestic violence specialists on risk assessment and safety planning.

- Develop a comprehensive communication plan including social media and marketing.

In 2014, MIOB developed and implemented a comprehensive media plan starting with an examination of the social media practices of key organizational partners and case studies to better understand successes and challenges. It identified preferred communication channels, measurable communication objectives, key messages and target audiences.

The plan has been implemented with regular reporting on activity and reach. Activity includes regular, timely blogs that combine responses to current news stories or are tied into notable events (such as Father's Day or National Aboriginal Day). Posts include personal stories of those who have experienced violence through the Share Your Story section of the website, along with crucial information about domestic violence. It also includes regular posts to Twitter and Facebook.

Much of the success of the communications strategy is documented in the overall numbers of people reached by NFF and MIOB, but it can also be measured by the award of the Avon Global Communications Award for Most Innovative Campaign. Similarly, the project was recognized by Convergent Nonprofit Solutions as having one of the Top 10 #EndDV tweets in 2018. It can also be measured in the number of featured articles about MIOB in local, provincial, trade, and national media outlets. MIOB has been featured in over a dozen outlets including the Globe & Mail, CBC, and Global News.

- Enhance online resources that support broad-scale engagement, especially for large organizations with asynchronous access needs.

MIOB recognized that large organizations committed to implementing MIOB sometimes need alternatives to in-person training. To support these employers, CREVAWC developed an online version of the basic education presentation. CREVAWC is currently building a new online platform and developing new training materials to expand the online options.

- Identify measurable short and medium term outcomes and the indicators that outcomes have been achieved.

The MIOB project has developed a comprehensive list of short and mid-term outcomes and indicators as part of the development of a comprehensive communications strategy as well as through their work with the Ontario Women's Directorate. The measures include communication activities (blog posts, tweets, articles, etc.), outreach activities (workshops, e-learning resources, etc.), reach goals (number of people attending training, website visits, organizations reached, etc.), and impact (percentage of people reporting increased awareness of warning signs and percentage of people reporting increased ability to respond effectively) and included performance targets.

In every case, the project exceeded original targets. For example, the project produced 134 webinars and web conferences - 11 times more than the original target of 12, reaching 11,791 people (393% of the original target of 3,000). Combined website visits represent 641% of targets. The project reached 354% of its goal to reach 100 organizations and 54 times more people were reached through media promotions than the original target – 13.5 million over the original goal of 250,000. Similarly impressive results were found in surveys of participant impact.

- Work at the provincial level to initiate an Ontario Alliance to End Domestic Violence.

CREVAWC was heavily involved in developing a provincial response to domestic violence. In 2017, Ontario's Roundtable on Violence Against Women published its Draft Gender-Based Violence Action Plan with significant input from the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children. Following this, the Government of Ontario announced "It's Never Okay: Ontario's Gender-based Violence Strategy."

Qualitative Interviews

A series of qualitative interviews were conducted with participants and partners of the MIOB project. The interviews asked a series of open-ended questions in three areas: motivation for participations, impact and ideas for future directions. Respondents were selected to represent a range of participants, including those representing large organizations, community coordinators and individual participants. Interviews lasted 30 minutes on average and a qualitative analysis was conducted to identify themes and patterns.

Motivation for Participation

Two broad motivations were identified in the interviews. Nearly all respondents reported a general desire to help the community address the issue of domestic violence and recognized that workplaces provided a unique opportunity to provide education and support. One person explained that **“one way people access information is through the people they know already - minister, co-worker, boss - so we saw this as a way of bringing more safety to women by getting the information out there into the community [through the workplace].”**

Another respondent explained that **“as an HR professional I had a responsibility to assist staff who may be experiencing domestic violence and to develop safety plans for them... This training makes people very aware of how domestic violence can enter the workplace and provides a great level of understanding among staff.”**

About half of the respondents mentioned a long-term relationship with NFF and their positive experiences with earlier work created a desire to find ways to **continue and expand on that relationship. As one respondent said: “We’ve had a long relationship with NFF program going back 15 years or more... So we were wanting to build on the training that we were doing and MIOB became a natural evolution of NFF. It was a no-brainer.”** Another person explained that **“we’ve always been a partner with the NFF, so MIOB was a natural extension... We felt like it’s a very reputable program. I really wanted to be able to bring it back to our community and definitely target that new audience base [workplaces] as key as well.”**

Impact

Respondents were asked about the impact they've seen as a result of the MIOB training in the workplace. Specifically, they were asked about changes in policies and/or changes in the perceived level of support for survivors of domestic violence.

Respondents working in large organizations reported the most positive impact. When asked if they saw an impact, one person reported: **“Totally. We have a management team that has the education and the awareness and the senior leadership of the organization has invested in training. It's gives them the confidence to respond. They either know what to do or know who to reach out to to support that employee. It makes a tremendous difference.”**

Another person reported on the long-term impact of MIOB: **“because of the training, [in the beginning] as you increase awareness more people come forward and after the training, we had a lot of people coming forward for help and we were happy to help. We had the resources we needed to respond. Now, I don't hear as much because the supervisors are capable of handling the situations at their level.”**

Several people commented that the biggest impact was in levels of support for survivors and the level of comfort talking about a difficult subject. In the words of one person, **“we've had some really good conversations around what happens when staff are experiencing domestic violence. MIOB has some great language that makes it possible for us to explore the topic.”** Another person explained **“there always has been support, but in part, survivors are more willing to come forward because they see the training that's going on and they feel safe coming forward.”** Another respondents said **“we talk about it in our corporate orientation to all of our new employees and they hear from the very start that we care about it and we will support them. It encourages people reporting it.”**

People also talked about the value of being able to identify warning signs. As one person said. **“I think people who partake in the training are able to identify what they couldn't identify before. They didn't understand what they were seeing. They knew that something wasn't good but couldn't articulate what was going on. After the training people were able to identify the risks and the next steps to take.”**

Future Directions

The interviews concluded by asking people how the materials or project could be improved and what sorts of organizations would most benefit from MIOB training.

When asked about possible improvements, every respondent commented on the excellent quality of the materials and the presentations:

“I think the training is fantastic and very professionally presented and very real. I can’t imagine what could be changed.”

“The person who came to do the training was just amazing. I can’t think of anything that would make it better.”

“I thought that all the information was excellent and we really appreciated the handouts we got. They were relevant and concise.”

A few respondents commented on the need for tailoring the materials to specific industries or communities. One person explained that they **“did a staff needs assessment beforehand to determine where the gaps were and how we could best tailor the training to staff needs so the facilitators. So the materials were absolutely on target.”**

The only consistently mentioned areas for improvement were 1) a desire to be able to go deeper with training, either by having more time for the presentation or by offering follow-up training and 2) finding ways of convincing more people to provide the training. One person explained that **“the problem is that I don’t have the training necessary to do the risk assessment part properly. So, I’m looking for support at that higher level.”** Another person said **“I think we need to find a way to impress upon people the importance of taking the training.”**

When asked what sorts of organizations would benefit from the training, the most common responses were things like **“any place that hires people”** or **“any organization really.”** One respondent identified **“workplaces where people are at higher risk or where the preponderance of employees are women or where its high stress - like health care - I would love to see this at all hospitals across the province.”** Another pointed to **“any organizations who works with families.”** One person noted that **“I’m not sure how much it’s advertised or promoted outside the not for profit world. That’s where they need to focus their efforts. I don’t know how much for profits are aware of or have access to the training.”**

On the whole, the qualitative interviews confirmed the high quality of the materials and the value of the approach. There are many examples of the process working as designed, integrating well into the existing organizational structure, increasing awareness and educating co-workers on the warning signs of abuse while providing simple, effective ways to respond. From the interviews, the primary challenge facing the project appears to be one of marketing – finding more effective ways to reach more organizations.

Future Directions

The most recent update to the ongoing evaluation of the Make It Our Business evaluation provides no surprises. In the first report, we documented an example of an emerging social innovation project that developed through an iterative cycle of program experimentation, reflection, and improvement. This process has continued, and the stability and effectiveness of the approach is evident in the continued success of MIOB.

The project continues to demonstrate impressive reach and impact, far surpassing the targets it has set for itself for both outreach activities and subjective assessments from participants. It has responded to all of the recommendations from the previous evaluation, growing partnerships, refining its communications strategy, and extended its impact provincially through the Ontario Gender-Based Violence Strategy.

Respondents to the qualitative interviews expressed high praise for the program materials, approach and for the quality of the presenters. Recommendations for improvements from respondents and the evaluators focus almost exclusively on developing more effective marketing strategies to bring MIOB to a growing audience. In the words of one of our respondents, MIOB is recommended for any organization that hires people.

Appendix A – Supporting Documents

Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children (2012) *2012 Summary Report: Make It Our Business Addressing Domestic Violence in Ontario Workplaces*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children (2013) *2013 NFF Evaluation Report*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

Cunningham, C., Damen, T., Gupta, S., Hassanein, N., Remtullah, A., & Sivkov, D. (2011) *Ivey Consulting Project Report*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

Durey, R. (2011). *Working Together Against Violence: Respect, responsibility and equality*. Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Women's Health Victoria.

Flanigan, A. (2008). *At Grass Level: Implementing the campaign*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

Pajot, M. (2009). *Evaluation of Neighbours Friends and Families*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

Powell, A. (2011). *Review of Bystander Approaches in Support of Preventing Violence Against Women: Preventing violence against women by increasing participation in respectful relationships*. Carlton, Victoria, Australia: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth).

The O'Halloran Group. (2011). *Neighbours, Friends and Families Evaluation Summary*. London, Ontario: CREVAWC - University of Western Ontario.

About the Author

Ben Kadel, PhD.

Ben brings over two decades of social science and organizational development experience and a unique mix of skills to every project he evaluates. Equally at home with hard data or hot emotions, Ben has developed an approach that understands the power of iterative, developmental processes to create truly effective and innovative social change.

He has worked with literally hundreds and clients and projects ranging from urban planning to workplace engagement; from small grassroots non-profits to large multi-national corporations. He spends the time with each project to fully understand the heart of the challenge and the complex dynamics that shape it. Then he designs an evaluation process that maximizes the potential for deep learning and effective improvements.

At the core of every evaluation process is a simple aim-act-reflect cycle that allows project partners to continually clarify expectations, capture experience, and learn from the juxtaposition of the two. A specialist in the emotional dynamics of social change, he understands that this process is not simply intellectual, but involves venturing into the 'discomfort zone' – the only place where real learning and change can happen.

Ben has a B.A from Pennsylvania State University and a M.S. and PhD in Sociology and Social Psychology from the University of Wisconsin—Madison.