

Freedom from Violence

Tools for Working with Trauma, Mental Health and Substance Use



BC Association of Specialized
Victim Assistance and
Counselling Programs

FEEDBACK FORM

After reviewing the resource tool kit, please take a moment to complete the following questions and fax your responses (no cover page necessary) to 604-633-2507. Your feedback is needed in order to guide us regarding possible further editions of the kit and to relay to our funders.

- 1.** Your awareness of the intersection of trauma, mental health and substance use increased after reviewing this kit. (circle the appropriate number)

①
Strongly
Disagree

②
Disagree

③
Neutral

④
Agree

⑤
Strongly
Agree

- 2.** Information in the kit have increased your effectiveness when working with multiple issue clients.

①
Strongly
Disagree

②
Disagree

③
Neutral

④
Agree

⑤
Strongly
Agree

- 3.** Your knowledge of safety planning with women has increased after reviewing the kit.

①
Strongly
Disagree

②
Disagree

③
Neutral

④
Agree

⑤
Strongly
Agree

- 4.** Information in the kit is easily accessible.

①
Strongly
Disagree

②
Disagree

③
Neutral

④
Agree

⑤
Strongly
Agree

Other feedback: _____

Thank you for your time

Return by fax to 604-633-2507 (no cover page necessary)

Freedom From Violence

Tools For Working With Trauma, Mental Health And Substance Use

Resource Tool Kit

November 2007

Written by:

Tessa Parkes, Cathy Welch, Kashmir Besla, Sarah Leavitt, Maggie Ziegler, Angela MacDougall,
Susan Armstrong, Belinda LaCombe, Mireille LeClaire, Nancy Taylor, Jill Cory

Edited by:

Susan Armstrong



**BC Association of Specialized Victim
Assistance & Counselling Programs**

With funding from:

Vancouver Foundation and BC Ministry of Community Services



**VANCOUVER
FOUNDATION**



Ministry of
Community Services

Cover art: How Far is Away by Sheila Norgate 2001

Acknowledgements

This resource tool kit was produced by the BC Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs (BCASVACP). The BCASVACP gratefully acknowledges funding from the Vancouver Foundation and BC Ministry of Community Services to produce this tool kit. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of writers from across the province who together created a body of knowledge that will guide us in our work for years to come.

The development of the tool kit was also guided by the expertise of a diverse advisory committee who helped shaped the overall formation of the kit and dedicated hours to reviewing each section and providing input. Numerous other frontline service providers also provided critical consultation in the development of specific sections, and contributed hours of reviewing content and providing feedback. Various programs across the country provided materials, which have been included with permission in the kit.

Overall coordination of the kit was done by Susan Armstrong and editorial work was completed by Susan Armstrong, Tracy Porteous and Sarah Leavitt, all from the BCASVACP. Desktop publishing was done by Oaxaca Studio. Cover art, *How Far is Away*, was donated by Sheila Norgate.

And finally, we wish to acknowledge the contributions of four survivors (along with their service providers) who chose to share their stories of gaining freedom from violence in the hopes of inspiring all of us in this vital work.

Writers:

Tessa Parkes, BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Gabriola Island

Cathy Welch, Cowichan Women Against Violence Society, Duncan

Kashmir Besla, Children's Foundation, Surrey

Sarah Leavitt, BCASVACP, Vancouver

Maggie Ziegler, Saltspring Island

Angela MacDougall, Battered Women's Support Services, Vancouver

Belinda LaCombe, Northern Society for Domestic Peace, Houston

Susan Armstrong, BCASVACP, Vancouver

Mireille LeClaire, Fir Square Combined Care Unit, Vancouver

Nancy Taylor, Robson Valley Home Support Society, McBride

Jill Cory, Woman Abuse Response Program, BC Women's Hospital, Vancouver

Consultants:

Nancy Poole, BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Vancouver
Maggie Matilpi, Namgis Treatment Centre, Alert Bay
Catherine White Holman, Three Bridges Community Health Centre, Vancouver
Louise Godard, Provincial Woman Abuse Response Program, BC Women's Hospital, Vancouver
Lori McHattie, Cythera Transition House Society, Maple Ridge
Allison Forget, Ksan House Society, Terrace
Ravi Teja, Deltassist Community Services Society, Delta
Teresa McCausland, Bella Coola Community Support Society, Bella Coola
Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre, Victoria
Women Against Violence Against Women Rape Crisis Centre, Vancouver

Advisory Committee:

Bally Bassi, Prince George and District Elizabeth Fry Society
Stephanie Capyk, Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre
Jill Cory, Provincial Woman Abuse Response Program, BC Women's Hospital, Vancouver
Louise Godard, Provincial Woman Abuse Response Program, BC Women's Hospital, Vancouver
Sally Gose, Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre
Brenda Hawkes, The Vivian, Vancouver
Laurie Hearty, Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, Vancouver
Linda Jennings, Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre
Jasmine Lothien, Creston and District Community Resource Centre
Marina Morrow, Institute for Critical Studies in Gender and Health, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby
Nancy Poole, BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, Vancouver
Nancy Taylor, Robson Valley Home Support Society, McBride
Cathy Welch, Cowichan Women Against Violence Society, Duncan

Reviewers:

All members of advisory committee

Gail Edinger, Community Coordination for Women's Safety, BCASVACP
Harjit Kaur, BCASVACP
Jan Lutke, Canada Northwest FASD Research Network
Michelle Novakowski, Community Coordination for Women's Safety, BCASVACP
Sarah Payne, Fir Square Combined Care Unit
Tracy Porteous, BCASVACP
Deborah Rutman, Research Initiative for Social Change Unit, School of Social Work, University of Victoria
Amy Salmon, BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health
Cristine Urquhart, Provincial Training Consultant, BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health
Kathleen Whipp
Maggie Ziegler
Bella Coola Community Support Society
Vancouver and Lower Mainland Multicultural Family Support Services

Organizations that provided permission for replication of material:

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
Canadian Mental Health Association, Vancouver Branch
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Sidran Institute
South Fraser Women's Services Society
Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre
Watari

Table of Contents

SECTION ONE:

Framework and Values Guiding Interventions

Use of Language and Diverse Voices in the Tool Kit	1
Survivor's and Service Provider's Stories	4
Trauma, Mental Health and Substance Use Within an Anti-Oppression Perspective	6
1.3.1 Societal Beliefs about Women with Mental Health and Substance Use Issues	7
1.3.2 Mothering and Mental Health	9
1.3.3 Substance Use Issues	10
1.3.4 Substance Use, Pregnancy and Mothering	12
1.3.5 Concurrent Disorders: The Double Whammy	14
1.3.6 Interconnecting Oppressions	15
1.3.7 Why Anti-Violence Workers Must Address Substance Use And Mental Health Issues	16
1.3.8 Tips For Working with an Anti-Oppression Approach	18
1.3.9 An Important Note About Questions	23
1.3.10 References, Resources and Further Reading	25
Broadening the Lens and Moving Towards Empowerment	30
1.4.1 Trauma, Mental Health and Substance Use: Responding to the Connections	30
1.4.2 Supporting a Woman on Her Empowerment Journey	32
1.4.3 Questions to Ask to Broaden the Lens	33
1.4.4 Responding to Women: Sharing Power and Responsibility	35
1.4.5 References, Resources and Further Reading	38
Moving Towards Safety: Using A Harm Reduction Framework	40
1.5.1 Introduction: What Is Harm Reduction?	40
1.5.2 Substance Use as a Continuum: Using a Harm Reduction Framework	41
1.5.3 The Stages Of Change Model	43
1.5.4 Working Towards Safety	45
1.5.5 Practical Suggestions For Harm Reduction	46
1.5.6 References, Resources and Further Reading	49

Taking Care of Ourselves: The Impact of Working within Systems	52
1.6.1 The Social/Cultural/Political Context	52
1.6.2 Our Response to the Context of Our Work	52
1.6.3 How Systemic Vicarious Trauma Affects My Work	53
1.6.4 What I Can Do to Take Care of Myself	53
1.6.5 How My Workplace/Agency Can Address Systemic Vicarious Traumatization	53
1.6.6 References, Resources and Further Reading	54
SECTION TWO: Resources for Working With Mental Health and Substance Use Problems	55
2.1 Survivor’s and Service Provider’s Stories	55
2.2 Definitions of Main Mental Health Diagnoses and Types of Involvement with Substances	58
2.2.1 Introduction: Guidance on Using this Section	58
Definitions and Diagnoses	
2.2.2 Depression	59
2.2.3 Postpartum Depression	61
2.2.4 Seasonal Affective Disorder	62
2.2.5 Anxiety Disorders	62
2.2.6 Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	64
2.2.7 Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	65
2.2.8 Dissociative Disorders	67
2.2.9 Bipolar Disorder	72
2.2.10 Schizophrenia	74
2.2.11 Psychosis	75
2.2.12 Eating Disorders	76
2.2.13 Personality Disorders	78
Types of Involvement with Substances	
2.2.14 Substance Use Disorders	79
2.2.15 Alcohol Abuse	79
2.2.16 Alcohol Addiction	79
2.2.17 Drug Use/Misuse/Abuse/Dependency	80
2.2.18 Concurrent Disorders or Dual Diagnosis	81
2.2.19 References, Resources and Further Reading	81
2.3 Medications, Side Effects and Functions/Effects of Licit and Illicit Drugs	84
2.3.1 Medication For Mental Health Problems	84
2.3.2 Medication Table	85
2.3.3 Women And Benzodiazepines	86
2.3.4 Women And Anti-Depressant Medications	86
2.3.5 Psychotropic Drugs And Posttraumatic Stress	86
2.3.6 Functions of Licit and Illicit Substances	88
2.3.7 Medications Most Likely to Be Sold on the Streets	94
2.3.8 References, Resources and Further Reading	95

2.4 The Representation Agreement Act, Ulysses Agreements and Advance Directives	97
2.4.1 Summary of the Representation Agreement Act	97
2.4.2 Ulysses Agreements, Advance Planning, Advance Directives And Crisis Plans	99
2.4.3 Practical Implications in STV Counselling and Advocacy Work	100
2.4.4 References, Resources and Further Reading	102
2.5 Treatment Issues with Mental Health and Substance Use Problems	103
2.5.1 Interventions For Mental Health Problems	103
2.5.2 Common Treatments For Mental Health Problems	104
2.5.3 Treatment Options For Mental Health Problems	105
2.5.4 Advocating for a Woman's Access to Mental Health Services	106
2.5.5 Interventions For Substance Use Problems	108
2.5.6 Treatment Options For Substance Use Problems	109
2.5.7 Making A Referral	112
2.5.8 How Mental Health and Addictions Services Are Organized in BC	114
2.5.9 References, Resources and Further Reading	115
2.6 Survivor's Story	118
SECTION THREE:	
Tools and Interventions	
3.1 The Importance of Safe Conversations: Identifying Risk and Resources	121
3.1.1 Introduction	121
3.1.2 Assessing Women for Substance Use and Mental Health Problems: The Debates	122
3.1.3 Creating Safety In Our Conversations About Substance Use	123
3.1.4 Following Up: Ongoing Support Work with Women with Substance Use Concerns	128
3.1.5 Why Talk About Mental Health Problems?	130
3.1.6 Asking About Mental Health Problems	131
3.1.7 Self-Harm and Suicide: The Differences and the Inter-Relationship	132
3.1.8 Self-Harm	133
3.1.9 Suicide: The Warning Signs	136
3.1.10 References, Resources and Further Reading	138
3.2 Safety Planning with Survivors of Violence	142
3.2.1 Introduction	142
3.2.2 What Is Safety Assessment And Safety Planning?	142
3.2.3 Utilizing Safety Planning Tools	143
3.2.4 Gathering the Information: Focusing on Abuser Factors and Safety Support Factors	144
3.2.5 Extra Considerations for Safety Planning	148
3.2.6 References, Resources and Further Reading	149
3.3 Safety Planning with Women With Mental Health Issues	151
3.3.1 Introduction	151
3.3.2 Connecting The Experience of Living with Violence and Mental Health Problems	151
3.3.3 Managing Overwhelming Feelings: How Abused Women Cope	152
3.3.4 Identifying and Responding to Warning Signs, Cues and Triggers	153
3.3.5 Creating Safety And Containment	154

3.3.6	Safety Planning When Mental Health Issues Are Present	156
3.3.7	Safety Planning and Possible Impact of Medications	158
3.3.8	The Mental Health Act And Nearest Relative	158
3.3.9	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	159
3.3.10	Self-Harming Behaviour	159
3.3.11	Suicide	160
3.3.12	Depression And Blankness	160
3.3.13	Psychosis: Commentary and Approaches to Help Women	160
3.3.14	Safety Planning with Women Who Are Highly Dissociative	163
3.3.15	Wider Supports That Can Promote Women's Safety	165
3.3.16	References, Resources and Further Reading	166
3.4	Safety Planning with Women Using Substances	168
3.4.1	Substance Use and Safety: Making More Connections	168
3.4.2	Risks to Safety	169
3.4.3	Conversations Aimed at Reducing Risk and Increasing Safety	170
3.4.4	Strategies to Use to Increase Safety: The Value of Harm Reduction	171
3.4.5	Additions to Safety Plans	174
3.4.6	Knowing When to Act Quickly: Managing Withdrawal and Overdoses	175
3.4.7	References, Resources and Further Reading	178
SECTION FOUR:		
Specialized Knowledge		
4.1	Survivor's and Service Provider's Stories	181
4.2	Working Effectively with Immigrant and Refugee Women on Safety	183
4.2.1	Immigrant and Refugee Women and Mental Health	183
4.2.2	Mental Health Case Study	184
4.2.3	Ways for Workers to Engage with Immigrant and Refugee Women Who Experience Mental Health Issues	185
4.2.4	Barriers To Addressing Substance Use	188
4.2.5	References, Resources and Further Reading	188
4.3	Safety and Support for Women in Rural/Remote Communities	189
4.3.1	Barriers to Safety for Women in Rural/Remote Communities	189
4.3.2	Ideas For Rural Safety Planning	191
4.3.3	References, Resources and Further Reading	191
4.4	Working on Safety With Aboriginal Women on Reserve	192
4.4.1	Barriers to Safety	192
4.4.2	Suggestions for Providing Support and Safety Planning	194
4.4.3	References, Resources and Further Reading	196
4.5	The Importance of Identity in Working With Métis Women	197
4.5.1	Introduction	197
4.5.2	Identity and Women	197
4.5.3	References, Resources and Further Reading	198

4.6 Sex Workers	199
4.6.1 Introduction	199
4.6.2 General Information on Sex Work	199
4.6.3 Safety Planning Guidelines	202
4.6.4 References, Resources and Further Reading	203
4.7 Working With Women With FASD: An Emphasis on Safety Planning	204
4.7.1 What is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder?	204
4.7.2 Challenges That a Woman with FASD May Have to Deal With	205
4.7.3 Guidance on Supporting a Woman with FASD	206
4.7.4 Strategies to Use When Working with Women with FASD	208
4.7.5 Safety Planning with Women with FASD	208
4.7.6 References, Resources and Further Reading	211
4.8 Challenging Our Assumptions: Working with Women's Anger and Use of Violence	214
4.8.1 Thinking About Anger	214
4.8.2 Differentiating Among Anger, Hostility And Aggression	215
4.8.3 Women, Anger And Aggression	215
4.8.4 Mental Health, Anger And Violence	216
4.8.5 Women And Violent Crime	218
4.8.6 Trauma and Its Relationship with Anger and Violence	219
4.8.7 Relationship Between Substance Use/Withdrawal And Anger	221
4.8.8 Women's Use Of Violence	222
4.8.9 Women's Use of Violence in Intimate Relationships:	222
4.8.10 Women's Use Of Violence Towards Children	224
4.8.11 Strategies for Working with Women's Anger and Violence	225
4.8.12 References, Resources and Further Reading	238
 This section includes three handouts.	
4.9 Empowering Strategies When Children are at Risk	240
4.9.1 Addressing Child Protection Issues With Women	240
4.9.2 Relevant Definitions Within Child Protection	242
4.9.3 Fears Surrounding MCFD Involvement	243
4.9.4 Collaboration as a Means of Supporting a Woman's Rights	243
 SECTION FIVE:	
History and Contribution of the Sectors	
5.1 Historical Perspectives on Violence Against Women in BC	245
5.1.1 Introduction	245
5.1.2 Some Key Dates In The History of Anti-Violence Work in BC	246
5.2 History and Contribution of the Mental Health and Addiction Sectors	250
5.2.1 Mental Health Services: History And Philosophical Developments	250
5.2.2 A Gendered Critique of Mainstream Mental Health Policy and Service Provision	252
5.2.3 Main Contribution of the Mental Health Sector	253
5.2.4 Current Configurations Of Mental Health Service Delivery	254
5.2.5 Substance Use/Addiction Services: Major Changes in Key Ideas and Ownership	255

5.2.6	Approaches To Treatment	256
5.2.7	A Gendered Critique of Mainstream Substance Use/Addictions Policy and Service Provision	257
5.2.8	Main Contribution of the Substance Use/Addictions Sector	258
5.2.9	Current Configurations of Substance Use/Addictions Service Delivery	258
5.2.10	References, Resources and Further Reading	259

SECTION SIX:

Appendices

6.1	Cycles of Dependence	263
6.2	Do You Know... Methadone	265
6.3	Handout for Service Providers: "Making Connections: Women's Experiences of Violence, Mental Health and Substance Use Problems"	269
6.4	Intake Form	275
6.5	Self-Report Checklist of Warning Signs: Do you have an alcohol or drug problem?	279
6.6	Risk and Importance Summary	281
6.7	Mental Health and Substance Use Safety Assessment Form	285
6.8	A Simple Assessment for Self-Harm Behaviour	289
6.9	Critical Incident Report—Suicidal Intention	291
6.10	Ways to Try to Prevent a Suicide Attempt	293
6.11	Safety Planning for a Survivor of Violence	295
6.12	Increasing Control Over Your Feelings	299
6.13	The Differences Between Dissociation and Self-Awareness	301
6.14	Relapse Prevention	303
6.15	Key Points about Red and Green Flags	305
6.16	Create a Safety Plan Against Relapsing	307
6.17	Safe Coping Skills	309
6.18	Coping With Triggers	313
6.19	Using Grounding	315
6.20	Safety Plan for Women With Mental Health Concerns	317
6.21	Power and Control Wheel for Women's Substance Abuse	319
6.22	What Inspires My Healing?	321
6.23	How Substance Use Prevents Healing from PTSD	323
6.24	Safety Plan for a Woman Using Substances	325
6.25	References, Resources and Further Reading	327