

Speers Society

INTRODUCES

Choices

for **P**ositive Youth
Relationships

SPEERS SOCIETY

Registered Charitable # 88107 4215 RR001

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

The Speers Society is committed to the prevention of youth relationship abuse through education and youth support.

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

When youth are given the tools they need – awareness, skills and support – they will make safe and healthy relationship choices.

OUR VISION:

Youth throughout Canada will have the opportunity to participate in the Choices program

Monica



- Murdered in 1991 by ex-boyfriend
- Mother shares story to educate others about abusive relationships

Need

Youth face highest risk of being victims

**1 in 4 young men and women are victims of bullying.
1 in 3 report being a bully.** Centre for Addictions and Mental Health, 2001

**54% of girls and 16% of boys have experienced
sexual abuse in a dating relationship.** Poitras and Lavoie 1995

**46% of youth are concerned about the violence at
their school** Centre for Addiction and Mental Health 2001

12% felt unsafe at school. Speers Society 2001

Abuse

Abuse is not restricted to intimate relationships,
but may be identified in a friendship, acquaintance, family, or
workplace relationship.

Abuse is not gender-specific

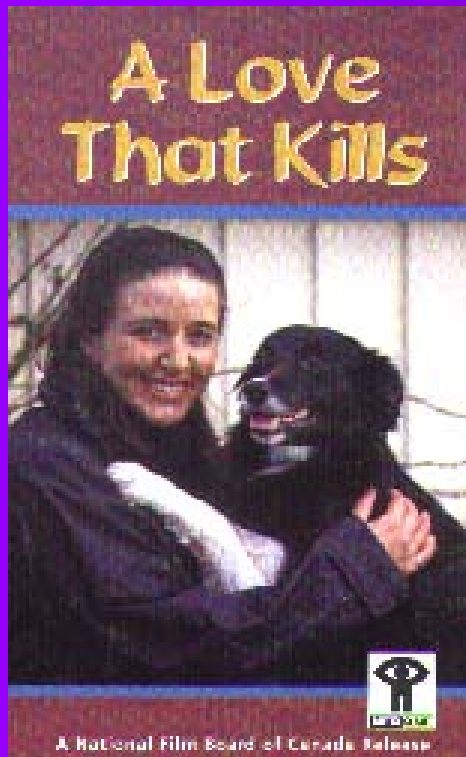
Young men and young women can be victims or perpetrators

Common elements of mis-use of power and control

intimidation, isolation, put-downs, and fear.

Cost of Abuse

- Physical and emotional pain
- Low self worth
- Dysfunctional relationships
- Forfeited opportunities
- Decreased productivity
- Financial burden
- Lives lost



A LOVE THAT KILLS

- Warning signs of abuse
- National Film Board top seller
- Catalyst for discussion and action
- Disclosures

Sustainability

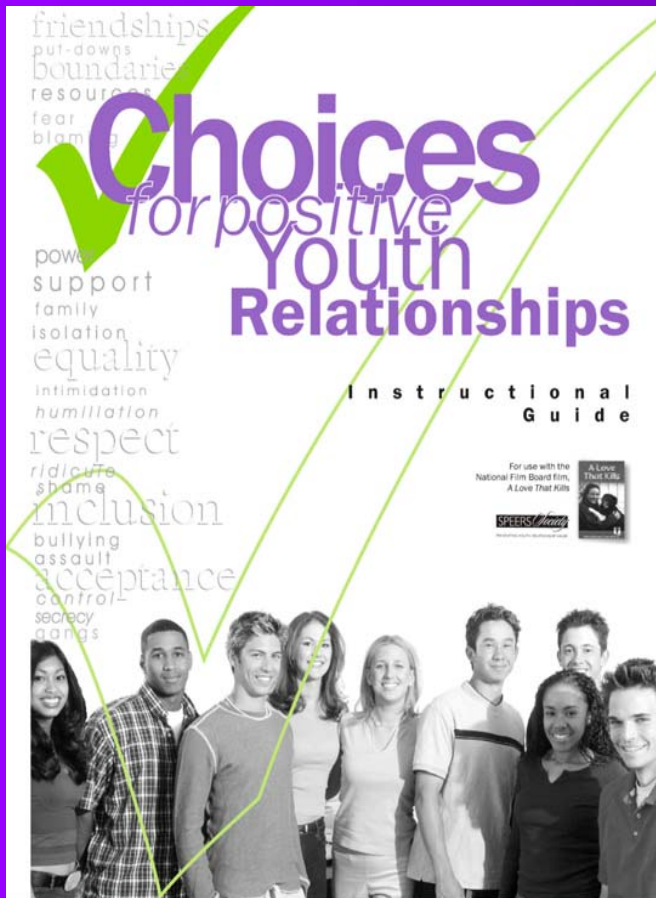
Although film is powerful in the moment, if positive behaviour is to be sustained, youth need:

- **Opportunity to talk** with peers and informed adults in safe environment
- **Time to learn and practise** healthy skills and strategies
- **Follow-up support and resources**



Choices

for Positive Youth Relationships



Instructional Guide

- **Linked to curriculum**
- **6 step-by-step lessons**
- **Before You Begin**
- **Background notes**
- **Assessment tools**
- **Alternative activities**
- **Resources**

Program Goals

Youth will be given the opportunity to :

- **Develop skills for positive relationships**
- **Identify warning signs of abuse**
- **Access support to sustain safe choices**

Development Team

- **Youth Focus Groups**
Hundreds of youth contributed their knowledge and experience
- **Educators**
Classroom expertise
- **Advisory Committee**
Multi-disciplinary expertise and commitment to youth
- **Pilot Project – 14 schools in 4 provinces**
Reflect diversity in geography, culture and socio-economics
- **Evaluation**
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Evaluation

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

- **88.9% felt that the program had helped them to recognize the warning signs**
- **Increased ability to choose safe, non-violent behaviour**
- **Increased ability to help a friend in an abusive relationship**
- **Increased willingness to intervene and report abuse**
- **Increased desire to seek information**
- **Increased familiarity with community support services**

Lesson Content

1. Name the Abuse

Introductory lesson to identify and categorize abuse

2. Warning Signs

Film Presentation and identification of risk factors

3. Positive Relationships

Boundaries, Responsibilities

4. Understanding the Choices

Contributing factors to abusive relationships

5. Responsible Choices

Scenarios to determine safe and responsible action

6. Help a Friend

Effective support for a victim or abuser

Key Messages

1. **Recognizing violence is the first step to ending it**
2. **Asking for help is a sign of courage**
3. **Setting personal boundaries protects us from abuse**
4. **Behaviour is a choice**
5. **You are responsible for your own behaviour**
6. **Listen but do not criticize your friend**

Community Collaboration

Police, Victim services, Counsellors, Psychologists, Health professionals, Clergy, Crisis agencies, Parents

- **Family violence is everybody's business**
- **Responsibility to nurture, support and mentor our youth**
- **Sends message to youth that caring and supportive community is available**
- **Provides assistance to educators – information and support**

Implementation

- **Integrated school-wide approach**
- **Subject-based curriculum**

Linked to established Department of Education expectations in every province

BC	Career and Personal Planning (CAPP)
AB	Career and Life Management (CALM)
SK	Life Transitions
MB	Health and Phys. Education, Personal and Social Management
ON	Physical and Health Education, Guidance, Family Studies
QC	Formation personnelle et sociale
NB	Family Living
NS	Career and Life Management (CALM), Guidance
PEI	Family Life Education
NF	Human Dynamics, Health Lifestyles

Benefits

- **Youth learn safe and effective relationship skills that they can transport into adult relationships, challenging workplace situations, and parenting.**
- **Positive and safe school environment**
- **Educators receive concise curriculum-based resource and support**
- **Community collaborative for common goal**

Success

“In my opinion, there is no other single initiative which addresses the topic of positive youth relationships more effectively.”

Ray Hughes, Violence Prevention Co-ordinator, Thames Valley District School Board

- **Recommended by 8 Ministries of Education**
- **Province wide implementation in NF, BC**
- **Program use in every province**
- **Respected and endorsed nationally**

Endorsements

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Ontario Provincial Police

Office of the Coroner of Ontario

YWCA Canada

Kids Help Phone

Ontario Psychological Association

British Columbia Psychological Association

Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System

Ontario Public Health Association

Ontario Social Workers Association

Operation Springboard

Community Policing Advisory Council of Ontario

Program Costs

Resource only \$75

Full Implementation

- **Resource plus in-service and follow-up support**
- **Enhance facilitator comfort level and readiness**
- **Shared problem-solving**
- **Promising practices**
- **Continued program use**

Training Options

- 2 hour “Before You Begin” In-service

Facilitated by School Board

Facilitator Comfort

Community Resources

Disclosures

- Training Workshop \$1000 per day

Facilitated by Speers Society

Before You Begin

Participation in lesson activities

Financial Contributors

- **National Crime Prevention Centre, Justice Canada**
 - **The Psychology Foundation of Canada**
 - **Ontario Trillium Foundation**
 - **Ontario Women's Directorate**
 - **B.C Ministry of Women's Equality**
 - **BC Min. of Public Safety and SG/Victim Services**
 - **National Film Board of Canada**
 - **The Leafs Fund**
 - **Toronto Blue Jays, Jays Care Foundation**
 - **Edith Landau Foundation**
 - **Thomas Foundation**
 - **Buschlen Mowat Foundation**
 - **Vancouver Foundation**
 - **Fleming Foundation**
 - **Medtronic Canada**
 - **Halton Healthy Community Fund**
 - **The Calgary Foundation**
 - **Ont. Ministry of Northern Development and Mines**
 - **Dept. of Justice Canada, Family Violence Initiative**
 - **Individual Donors**

Websites

- www.speerssociety.org
- www.alovethatkills.com

General information about the Speers Society and assistance to those who are delivering the program

