

# KNOWLEDGE HUB BULLETIN

## Art Activities in Trauma- and Violence-Informed Work

Many projects funded through the Public Health Agency of Canada’s investment, “Supporting the Health of Victims of Domestic Violence through Community Programs” are using art activities in their research interventions.



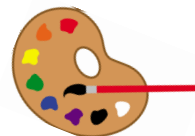
The Knowledge Hub hosted a Zoom meeting on December 4, 2018 for interested community of practice members to discuss how they are using art activities in their research interventions and what benefits they have seen so far from using art as a medium to promote health and well-being.

Findings of a preliminary literature scan conducted by the Knowledge Hub team revealed that the terms “arts-based interventions” and “art therapy” are often used interchangeably although there are differences between the two.

### Comparing arts-based interventions and art therapy:

#### Arts-Based Interventions

- ⇒ Facilitated by anyone (e.g. peer mentor)
- ⇒ Focuses on the process of creating
- ⇒ Process of creating is for pleasure, reflection, creative expression
- ⇒ Fosters health and well-being (e.g. communication, solidarity, relationship building, empowerment)



#### Art Therapy

- ⇒ Delivered by trained Art Therapists
- ⇒ Focuses on the therapeutic relationship between therapist and client
- ⇒ Use of art making and therapist input to address specific therapeutic goals (e.g. healing, self-regulation, anxiety reduction, improved executive functioning, integration within the whole self)



The projects that participated in the discussion agreed that their projects are utilizing arts-based interventions as opposed to art therapy.



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### Mark Your Calendars: Spring Knowledge Exchange!



The Knowledge Hub will host the next Knowledge Exchange for the trauma-and violence-informed health promotion community of practice members June 18-19, 2019 at Western University in London, ON. More details will be shared with CoP members via email.

### Check out our latest video featuring the interRAI project!



This project is implementing and evaluating the interRAI Child and Youth Mental Health Instrument (ChYMH) which is an innovative assessment to intervention tool that assesses the mental health needs of children between the ages of 4 to 18.

The Knowledge Hub is working with the trauma-and violence-informed health promotion projects funded under this investment to help promote their research interventions in an engaging way to the public. Stay tuned for more videos which will be released in March 2019!



Art-based interventions in trauma- and violence-informed settings will be guided by principles, such as SAMSHA’s six key principles of a trauma-informed approach and/or Vega’s principles of trauma- and violence-informed care.

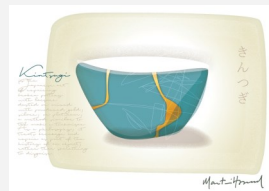


<a href="#"><u>SAMSHA's Six Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Vega Principles of Trauma- and Violence-Informed Care</u></a>
Safety	Understand trauma, violence and its impacts on people’s lives and behavior
Trustworthiness and Transparency	Create emotionally and physically safe environments for all clients and providers
Peer Support	Foster opportunities for choice, collaboration and connection
Collaboration and Mutuality	Use a strengths-based and capacity-building approach to support clients
Empowerment, Voice, and Choice	
Cultural, Historical and Gender Issues	

Building Internal Resilience through Horses project is delivering an intervention that combines equine-assisted learning with workshops on expressive arts and psychoeducation to build resilience and life skills in young women between the ages of 13 and 18 years who are survivors of child maltreatment. Their activities are designed to support the development of healthy self-esteem, emotional awareness, coping skills, and personal resilience. Jennifer Garland shared that the project ends its 10-week group with an activity called “Kintsugi”. In this activity, the young female participants break a piece of pottery and glue it back together with gold glue. They share how this activity reflects both their experience in general and their experience in the program. The activity symbolizes the beauty of imperfection. As a result of this activity, the young women engage in a rich discussion that strengthens their relationships among each other.



### About Kintsugi



*“There is something rather magical about the Japanese art form of Kintsugi and how it transforms something broken, or in the traditional sense imperfect, and makes it more beautiful and into a work of art of its own. Instead of hiding away the repairs so that the user or viewer cannot see them, Kintsugi celebrates them and makes them into the focal point. Kintsugi means quite literally “golden joinery” or “to patch with gold.” In fact, Kintsugi is a practice that suggests that repair can make things better than they were when brand new” (D’Souza, 2018). [Read more.](#)*

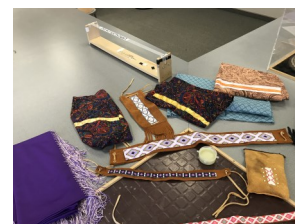


***So, what is the value of using art activities in trauma- and violence-informed work?***

### Finding Safety

Art making can help restore a sense of safety and wellbeing. Additionally, creative experiences can help bring some relief associated with stress.

Nato’ we ho win (the art of self-healing) is designing, delivering and evaluating an innovative Indigenous cultural arts program that addresses the mental and physical health needs of Indigenous women who have experienced intimate partner violence. Barb Frazer from the Nato’ we ho win project shared that creating a safe learning space for participants is of extreme importance to the project. Group sessions begin with smudging and an opening prayer to help create a sense of safety for participants. Following the smudge, the participants engage in a talking circle where they safely share their experiences. Every expressive art activity that Nato’ we ho win offers is centered around promoting self-care and wellbeing.



The Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) project is engaging survivors of FGM/C, community leaders and service providers to enhance supports for survivors and reduce the risk of FGM/C. The project provides the opportunity for FGM/C survivors to share their stories and give voice to their experience through digital storytelling. Entisar Yusuf from the FGM/C project shared that the digital story making provided the participants with a sense of relief as it was the first opportunity for them to talk about their experience. They were able to creatively and openly talk about their feelings for the first time through this activity.

### Visual Voice

Arts help give voice to a person's experience when words are insufficient. Jennifer Garland from Building Internal Resilience Through Horses project shared that the theme of the final night at the Mane Intent farm is Standing Tall. Participants are invited to feel proud of their achievement in completing the program. The theme for the warm-up mandala that night is 'celebrating success.' Participants are invited to draw a self-portrait in their mandala of what they are taking away from their time together with the horses and what feeling proud looks like to them. With permission, we are sharing a mandala created by a recent participant who noted that she felt like she was "dancing on top of the world." The picture that she drew was able to convey how she felt at the end of the program and helped give voice to her experience and feelings.

### Empowering Resilience

Engaging in the arts supports people with lived experiences of trauma/violence/abuse make choices, problem solve, make meaning, and safely learn to navigate stressors. The Nato' we ho win project uses art and culture to empower women survivors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The combination of art and culture provide a sense of pride for the women involved in the project. It's powerful for them to see their ancestral art creations in front of them and work towards replicating those art forms. Some of the women who created cultural beaded belts danced for the first time because of that sense of pride. Art in this project is used to empower resilience through counter-story telling and cultural restoration. One activity involves making lotion. Local plants are used to symbolize interconnectivity with the land. The lotion that the participants make carries that meaning and is transferred to their home. Loved ones are invited to use it in moments of crisis.



## Member Profile


**Meet Hannah Lee!**

*I am Hannah Lee, the Manager of Membership Services at the BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH). I started my work with the Society in 2009. My role has evolved over the years. Currently, my principal work is to support and advocate for BCSTH members across the province.*

*I also coordinate the Building Supports Project and the Reaching Out with Yoga project. As an immigrant woman and a dedicated yoga practitioner, these two projects are particularly close to my heart.*

*Prior to BCSTH, my life revolved around Fine Arts and fashion. These experiences lead me to another fun role at BCSTH, designing various visual communication for projects and campaigns.*

*I am passionate about social justice and ending violence against women. I am inspired by the people around me; their kindness, compassion and resilience empowers me to do the work and stay passionate.*





## Featured Resources

[Ingen, C. V. \(2016\). Getting lost as a way of knowing: The art of boxing within Shape Your Life. \*Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health\*, 8\(5\), 472-486. doi:10.1080/2159676x.2016.1211170](#)

This article unfolds in and through a series of paintings completed and exhibited as part of Shape Your Life, a free, recreational boxing programme for female and trans survivors of violence in Toronto. The paintings were completed by participants on used pieces of canvas from the boxing ring floor. In these paintings, participants illustrate the significant role that boxing and art can play in making difficult pasts comprehensible, if only in part.



[Lys, C. L., Logie, C. H., & Okumu, M. \(2018\). Pilot testing Fostering Open eXpression among Youth \(FOXY\), an arts-based HIV/STI prevention approach for adolescent women in the Northwest Territories, Canada. \*International Journal of STD & AIDS\*, 29\(10\), 980-986. doi:10.1177/0956462418770873](#)

Fostering Open eXpression among Youth (FOXY) is an arts-based HIV prevention program developed by Northern Canadians to address sexual health, HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), sexuality, and healthy relationships among Northern and Indigenous youth in Canada. This study examines pre- and post- intervention knowledge of STIs, increased safer sex self-efficacy, and increased resilience among FOXY participants.

[Lys, C. \(2018\). Exploring coping strategies and mental health support systems among female youth in the Northwest Territories using body mapping. \*International Journal of Circumpolar Health\*, 77\(1\), 1466604. doi:10.1080/22423982.2018.1466604](#)

In this study, the arts-based qualitative method of body mapping was used to collect data during in-depth semi-structured interviews. Forty-one participants (aged 13–17 years) attended FOXY body mapping workshops in six NWT communities in 2013 then completed interviews regarding the content of their body maps. The results can be used to develop culturally relevant, strengths-based, trauma-informed interventions that improve coping and resiliency among Northern youth.

## Register Now: Knowledge Hub & Learning Network Upcoming Webinar

**Recognizing and Responding to the Commonly Misunderstood Reactions to Sexual Assault: Exploring a New Online Curriculum**  
**Date & Time:** January 29, 2019 | 1:00 to 2:15 PM EST  
**Presented by:** Robin Mason, PhD and Stephanie Lanthier, MEd, PhD Candidate, Women's College Research Institute

This webinar will explore a new evidence-informed, competency-based online curriculum on recognizing and responding to the 'commonly misunderstood' reactions to sexual assault. [Learn more.](#)

### Knowledge Hub & Learning Network Latest Webinar Recordings

[Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Theory \(ICRT\): a New Tool for Improving Health Outcomes for FNMI \(First Nations, Metis and Inuit\) peoples](#)

Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose, Associate Professor, Educational Psychology & Counselling, University of Regina

[Understanding immigrant women's experiences and responses to intimate partner violence: looking beyond the 'cultural' framing](#)

Vathsala Illesinghe, MD, PhD Policy Studies student, Ryerson University and Fazia Mohammed, Community Programs Manager, Interval House

## Knowledge Hub Team

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