FINAL ACTIVITIES AND EVALUATION REPORT

Intergenerational Communication, Issues for Couples, and Sexuality Education in Immigrant and Refugee Communities in Winnipeg 2009/10

Project Funded By Manitoba Labour and Immigration

Sexuality Education Resource Centre, Manitoba
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SECTION 1: PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal:

The goal of the project is to engage immigrant and refugee families in Winnipeg, with an emphasis on newcomer families, in a process of dialogue and education on a range of topics related to intergenerational communication (IGC) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH). The project’s ultimate goal is to build capacity within, and support the successful integration of newcomer families and communities.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of the project are:

Outcome Objectives

- To raise participants’ awareness and knowledge of IGC and Issues for Couples by:
  - Encouraging them to clarify their feelings and ideas these topics (e.g. cultural values (own and Canadian) and change, parenting, sexuality, dating, shifting gender roles and power dynamics in families)
  - Helping them identify factors impacting on IGC breakdown and stress among couples (e.g. migration stress, culture clash, “new” influences of peers, media, school, role/power shifts in families, etc.)
  - Having staff serve as “cultural brokers” to help interpret and explain Canadian norms and values
- To provide participants with information and skills that will enable them to:
  - Effectively communicate with their children in a new culture, and be able to address developmental changes in their children’s lives
  - Address the challenges of changing gender roles and the resultant stress in the family/conflict between spouses
- To raise participants’ knowledge of sexual and reproductive health rights and responsibilities
- To increase participants’ awareness and knowledge of Canadian society and laws, and of community resources
- To enable participants to serve as (informal) resources within their families or communities
- To provide community resource people skills for delivery of information on IGC and Issues for Couples, within their own communities/in their community work
- To provide newcomer youth with information and skills that will assist them in the process of adaptation, “juggling cultures,” dealing with sexuality issues, and that will help them better understand and communicate with parents
- To increase Winnipeg service providers analysis and knowledge of IGC/Issues for Couples that they can in turn incorporate into their own practice
- To assess the specific IGC related needs of single newcomer parents (exploratory assessment).

Process Objectives:

- To create a safe, non-threatening, dynamic environment, where participants feel free to engage in an open discussion and debate, exploring deeply held values and beliefs as well as new thoughts and ideas, without feeling judged or labeled
• To support processes that are participant-driven and culturally responsive, so that participants feel the service provided is accessible and that their community, culture, gender and values are respected
• To engage ethno-cultural community partners in organizing groups, where capacity/interest exists, and develop tailored, culturally specific models of delivery

SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF MAIN TOPICS

In this project, each group has a set of topics tailored to the participant group – parents, youth, couples. The following paragraphs describe the core topics discussed in the sessions. In implementation, there is a great deal of flexibility to address arising questions of participants. Topics are presented in such a manner that is accessible to participants and tailored to their language level, their length of stay in Canada, their gender, and so on. Facilitators also strive to provide opportunities for discussion and dialogue around topic areas, so that a two-way flow of (cultural) information and knowledge is encouraged.

Parents: Adaptation and (models of) change; cultural values and context (including how parents/adults learn values and learn about sexuality); challenges of raising children in a new culture; parenting styles; culture clash; concept of finding the balance between the two cultures/finding the positive in both cultures; Canadian laws (including parental rights and responsibilities); communication and listening skills; children and media (internet, TV); sexual development/puberty education in school (what children are learning in school).

Issues for Couples: Issues that couples face when they come to a new country; adaptation process and its effect on the relationship; gender roles and sexuality; changes of gender roles coming to a new country; marriage expectations (home country and Canada); ways to build strong relationships; model of change; communication and listening skills; areas of conflict for couples; expressing anger and how to resolve conflict appropriately; problem solving skills; forgiveness; respect and power balance in relationship; characteristics of “healthy” relationships; sexual relationships and sexual laws in Canada; concept of finding balance between own and Canadian culture.

Youth: Adaptation and acculturation (e.g. change processes, culture shock, isolation, racism, role reversal, stressed parents, poverty); self-esteem (impacts of culture, media); violence prevention (e.g. violence in dating relationships, peer-peer violence), sexuality (youth sexuality and meanings, beliefs and values associated with sexuality across cultures; dating and communication with partners; myths and facts related to sexuality and Canadian context, sexual development including anatomy, physiology, birth control, STI/HIV prevention); communication and listening skills (with parents, peers, in a new culture) understanding/empathizing with parents; conflict resolution skills; managing stress/maintaining mental health; future plans and goals, role model panel (of older immigrant youth).
**Community Resource People Group** - Skills for Workshop Delivery: Facilitation skills (e.g. building trust, supporting balanced participation, effectively conveying content, etc.), workshop preparation/organization, exercises, delivery tips, recruitment tips, boundaries (especially working in own communities), confidentiality.

**SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

In this section, the main activities that were originally proposed for this project are listed. As with any project development process, in actual implementation, various factors are presented and need to be addressed in order to maximize effectiveness of programming or to meet logistical constraints. Therefore, some activities have varied slightly from those proposed.¹

Ninety-nine percent of project activities have been carried out. The one exception is two remaining sessions with the Community Based Resource people. As explained in monthly reports, the Community Resource People’s group was spread out over several months, based on participants’ schedules. We were unable to meet all deliverables for this group within this project year because of a few reasons. First, because this group was not pre-scheduled as such, it was time consuming to contact everyone, get their schedules and preferences and set the date. Second, SERC staff resources were stretched this year in trying to meet a fairly ambitious project plan, and this impacted on the time available to the Facilitator to coordinate the sessions. Third, the process of coordination and communication with the Strengthening Families program was a bit challenging because of the timing of their staff vacations/our staff vacations, and the added time need to co-coordinate two sets of activities (theirs and ours). At the time of writing the report, two more sessions will be held by the end of May. This will ensure that all project deliverables are met. See Section 6: Community Based Resources Group for more information.

The Service Providers Groups were pushed back a little to November and December, based on Facilitators’ availability, and the format was changed to a more service-provider friendly format of two one-day workshops, rather than a series of half day workshops.

Originally, the Eritrean groups were to be divided into 1) those very new to the country and 2) those who were slightly longer-term newcomers. However, at the request of the community organizer, the previous year’s model of holding a group for past participants (a Phase 2 group focusing more on sexual and reproductive health information) and

¹ Variations from planned activities were enabled through various means – through planning processes and sometimes by re-allocating small amounts overhead funds, as per our original agreement with the funder. In a meeting with LIM’s Director, SERC was assured that small reallocations to support programming would be acceptable. The nature of this type of community-based work means that while we have target numbers in recruiting, we may be ‘over’ in one group and ‘under’ in another, or that one group may have specific needs (as expressed by the community) that if addressed, would enhance programming. Therefore, this flexibility was discussed and approved by the funder upon approval of the project. One re-allocation from overhead costs to personnel (for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Eritrean interpreter) was submitted and approved in advance by the funder.
another for new participants was adopted. As described in Section 6: Eritrean Parents Groups, many changes were made within the scope of the project (e.g. hiring a team of interpreters rather than an individual; having a group of 10 and 20 participants rather than 15 and 15).

Finally, because of the desire to secure additional funding to extend the Single Mothers research component, SERC waited until we received confirmation of funding from the Winnipeg Foundation, which would impact on the overall delivery of this component of the project. Therefore, the focus groups were held in March and April.

Summary of Proposed Main Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 09</td>
<td>Sudanese Group: Issues for Couples</td>
<td>4 weeks, 14 people, Interpreted - Dinka/Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April – May 09</td>
<td>Community Resource People Group - Skills for Workshop Delivery: IGC &amp; Issues for Couples</td>
<td>5 weeks, 5 participants, Multicultural (in English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – July 09</td>
<td>Those from French-Speaking Countries Group: IGC</td>
<td>10 weeks, 15 participants, Multicultural (interpreted - Swahili, French, other)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – June 09</td>
<td>Issues for Couples Multicultural Group</td>
<td>5 weeks, 15 participants, in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept – Oct 09</td>
<td>Service Providers Group: IGC &amp; Issues for Couples</td>
<td>5 weeks, 15 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept – Dec 09</td>
<td>Eritrean Groups: IGC</td>
<td>2 simultaneous groups (e.g. newcomers versus longer-term), 30 participants, 12 weeks (10 SERC led, 2 community led), Interpreted – Tigrinya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan – March 10</td>
<td>Youth Group: IGC</td>
<td>8 weeks, 10 participants, Multicultural (in English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb – March 10</td>
<td>IGC Multicultural Group</td>
<td>8 weeks, 15 participants, in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan – March 10</td>
<td>Sudanese Group: IGC</td>
<td>10 weeks, 15 participants, Interpreted – Dinka/Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Pilipino Express Event</td>
<td>1-time event, 50 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan &amp; March 10</td>
<td>Exploratory Needs Assessment re Single Parents</td>
<td>2 focus groups with 8 single parents each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Translation of Handouts</td>
<td>(up to) 8 handouts to be translated into Tigrinya, French, Swahili and focus group tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Denotes focus groups held in March and April*
This year, SERC has piloted some new means of gathering statistics about participants. As with any pilot, some processes were more successful than others. See Section 6 for more detailed information about each group’s participants.

Overall, 173 parents, couples and youth were served. This is 93% of our target number overall. In addition 26 service providers were reached, close to 90% of our target number.

Approximately 70% of participants were refugees and 30% were immigrants.

Facing some limitations in terms of compiling data, we can describe the length of stay of participants by examining the average length of stay per group. For example, in the Sudanese Couples group, participants had an average length of stay of 6.5 years. Using these numbers a rough estimate can be arrived at for length of stay overall.

Project participants were in Canada (on average) between 0 – 6.5 years. Approximately 50% were here between 0 – 4 years (on average), and approximately 50% were here between 5 and 6.5 years (on average). The range of course was wider, from between 2 weeks to 20 years. However many groups had large numbers of those with a shorter length of stay. For example the Eritrean parents group (14 months on average length of stay) and the Youth Group (the majority had been here under 2 years).

A description of the countries of origin of participants is as follows:
SECTION 5: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Questions

In conducting the evaluation these were the overarching questions we were seeking to answer:

1. Did the project do what we originally envisioned it would do?
2. What did we learn about what worked and what didn’t work?
3. What difference did it make?
4. What could be done differently?
5. What are the major learnings from addressing intergenerational issues through workshops and community events with ethno-specific communities?

Evaluation Outcomes

The following is a list of the specific outcomes assessed in the evaluation process:

Participants will:
- Be positively impacted by their learning experience
• Feel their values, culture and experiences were validated in both the content and process of the sessions (i.e. cultural responsiveness)
• Feel safe to participate and share their feelings and ideas
• Have an increased understanding of IGC, Issues for Couples, and sexuality issues
• Learn new or enhance existing strategies to address these issues
• Have new knowledge of resources in the community and of the Canadian context, including Canadian laws
• Report using their new skills and/or communicating new knowledge within their families and their communities, regarding IGC or Issues for Couples
• Be given a set of resources on the issues of sexuality and IGC/Issues for Couples

Ethno-cultural partners will:
• Feel their values, culture and experiences were validated in the development, content and process of the sessions (i.e. cultural responsiveness)
• Report that their work in community is enhanced by their partnership with SERC

Community Resource People and Service Providers will:
• Become familiar with IGC/Issues for Couples issues/information and acquire the knowledge on how to address such issues within their communities/in their work.

SERC will:
• Develop new or enhance existing partnerships with ethno-cultural communities
• Be more effective and have increased capacity to deliver IGC, Issues for Couples and sexuality education in immigrant/refugee communities

Through the single mothers' needs assessment, SERC will:
• Develop an understanding about the issues newcomer single mothers face while raising children in a new culture.
• Prioritize specific areas of education and advocacy about newcomer single mothers’ needs, with a particular focus on sexuality related issues; and,
• Determine the best ways to deliver community-based and appropriate education for this specific sector of the newcomer community.

Evaluation Strategies and Tools

In order to obtain the different types of information needed to address the evaluation questions and outcomes, different data collection techniques were used. A variety of data sources and approaches were identified to comply with the different research strategies proposed.

Focus groups:
Group interviews were conducted at the end of each series of sessions. They were held during the latter half of the last session and generally lasted for one hour. In many cases, interpretation was required. (See Appendices for focus group questions)

Individual or pair/small group interviews: Interviews were conducted to explore the views and experiences of people involved in different capacities in the project. With respect to the Eritrean sessions, we expanded the scope of the evaluation as the work with this community involved an expanded community-based model. We interviewed a community leader/organizer, and three additional community support people (community mentor, interpreter, and food preparation).
End-of-Session Evaluations:
An end-of-session evaluation (i.e. at the end of a 3 hr session) was used with the youth and at the Filipino event. The evaluation forms were anonymous, and replies were tabulated and compiled into a spreadsheet for analysis by the evaluator. (See Appendices for a sample Evaluation Form)

Documentation review: An extensive documentation review was conducted as part of the evaluation. This included the original proposal, Facilitators’ weekly logs (used to reflect on the outcomes of delivery of sessions, reactions of participants, new cultural knowledge, etc.), internal and external correspondence, and notes from meetings (internal and with community partners).

In spite of the comprehensive approach to this evaluation, we faced some limitations. First, focus groups with relatively large numbers of participants and through interpretation limit the depth of comments and extent of participation. Second, one of the focus groups was a gender-mixed group where men prevailed as respondents. Third, in conducting the Eritrean Groups evaluation, in spite of many phone calls, there was a very low response rate to participate in the evaluation on the part of outreach-recruiter, community mentors and interpreters leading to a limited understanding of the experiences of these stakeholders and the overall impact of the community-based model used with this community.

All information gathered through any of these methods was treated in the greatest confidentiality. To assure confidentiality no names will be used in the report and only the evaluator will have access to data gathered during the evaluation. All information will be stored in a secure place.
SECTION 6: ACTIVITIES & EVALUATION FINDINGS

Sudanese Issues for Couples (April – May 2009)

The sessions on Issues for Couples with the Sudanese community (four weeks) were held at the Sudanese Cultural Centre on Saturdays from 12 – 3:00 PM beginning on April 2 and ending May 4, 2009. A total of 16 community members participated with almost equal numbers of men and women (slightly more women). Participants had been in Canada ranging from 1- 13 years with an average length of stay of 6.5 years. Parents had an average of 4.4 children (ranging from 1 – 6 per family) and children’s ages ranged between 1 to 28 years old with an age average of 8 years.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Motivation to Participate

To learn to have a good relationship with the couples.

Although the training was educational in nature, not therapeutic, many participants were motivated to attend because of their need for change and improvement in their own relationships. Other reasons for people to participate were about being able to look at issues faced by couples within the new social context. Participants were interested in learning about how others (in particular from a Canadian/mainstream perspective) deal with such conflicts and issues. Finally, people also mentioned that it was important to engage with others in the community in discussing and learning about many topics related to issues faced by couples.

Outcomes: Learnings and Use of the Knowledge

It was life changing.

One of the skills I learned …was anger management (…) I have a problem with anger. The first step, I got to put the pride and dignity down – after that, we can communicate…that’s what I learned.

Participants identified a number of topics as having enhanced their knowledge. Some of these topics were: effective communication (including listening skills) conflict resolution, anger management, and respecting others’ views.

In addition, participants commented on how some of this new knowledge has translated into practice. Among the most important changes in people’s behaviours were practical actions that would help them in controlling their anger and quick negative reactions within their immediate relations (e.g., partners and children). Specific communication skills were among the top changes for participants. One of the participants mentioned having learned to “sit down and talk with your children.” For another participant it was important to learn how to say “sorry”: “I never say sorry to my husband! (laughter) I am always blaming him for everything in my home! – this is the only thing I’ve learned!”
The sessions were also a good reminder of some common practices that make people feel appreciated and connected to each other.

Participants used the information and knowledge in their own life, and also passed information along to others. Friends and co-workers appeared to have indirectly benefited from the sessions. One participant indicated:

> These pieces of paper are very helpful. I think so...and they will be useful after we've finished and they will be useful for those people who don't attend this program. They will be useful to teach those other people who don't know how the relationship goes on and how the anger can be controlled.

A nurse [at work], she's the problem of everything, she's like this (rolling of eyes, gesturing of hands) (laughter) so when I came to work, everybody was afraid of her, everybody hides, they feel threatened...but I said that I won't give in to her. I used this page – gave her a copy of it. And she came the next day with two cups of coffee, the whole atmosphere changed. She was unbelievable.

Relevant Information Within a Culturally Responsive Approach

> It was non-judgmental, very good, not pointing fingers.

Participants felt that the training was able to create a non-judgmental and “inclusive” atmosphere. Quickly people started to feel comfortable with each other, the facilitators and the topics. People felt free to speak about their opinions and experiences without feeling judged by the facilitators and the other participants: “People said what they needed to say.” Most importantly, people acknowledged the fact that this was even more relevant when talking about sexuality related issues:

> I think everything was comfortable. Sometimes, when you’re talking about the sexual things...I think some people were not comfortable, but it encouraged everybody to know.

Participants felt their culture was respected throughout the discussions. This was believed to be so in spite of the fact that within their cultural bounds people would not speak openly about most of the topics addressed during the sessions.

> In my opinion, I think our culture was respected through the session. The session encouraged us to talk about a lot of things. In our culture, we don’t talk about things so frankly. I'm not saying it’s against our culture, but it’s good that we have the chance.

Areas for Improvement and Suggestions

Participants had a number of suggestions to consider for future education sessions. These suggestions fell under two categories: procedures and content, and teaching approaches.

Participants felt that couples (i.e., both partners) should attend the sessions. One participant indicated that her husband did not believe the information she would bring
home, making the learning less effective in some cases. However, realistically, this may not be possible due to conflicting schedules. Overall, participants felt that most members of the community should have the chance to participate in these sessions. They felt that their participation would greatly benefit themselves and the community. Many of them volunteered to promote any upcoming sessions with friends and other community members.

As per the topics, it was mentioned that when dealing with sexual health, there should be a focus on STIs in general, including HIV (rather than a HIV focus).

In relation to the teaching approaches, some of the participants would prefer to have some of the information presented in PowerPoint.\(^3\)

Participants also believed that single parents and youth should be provided education sessions that address relationships, sexuality and sexual health.

**Multicultural Issues for Couples (May-June 2009)**

The sessions on Issues for Couples with a multicultural group (five weeks) were held at SERC on Thursdays from 6 – 9:00 PM beginning on May 14 and ending June 11, 2009. A total of eleven community members participated consistently. About half of the group were men, half women. They had been in Canada between 1 and 20 years (4.2 years average). The participants’ ages ranged from 30 to 50 years. Participants had between 2 and 8 children, most with large families. Children ranged from 2 to 29 years of age (average of 15.5 years). Most participants were married (2 single parents). Participants came from a range of countries: Afghanistan, Argentina, Burundi, Rwanda, Guatemala and Congo. Facilitators’ observations included the fact that 3 were community pastors, 80% seemed to be well-educated, a number were of rural background, two were actively involved in community work, and two (a couple) were grandparents in a parenting role.

**EVALUATION FINDINGS**

**Motivation to Participate**

[I came] to learn about couple issues; there is a lot of divorce and broken families in my friends from Africa; I can help other people in my community.

For most participants the main reason to attend this workshop was related to their concerns about separation and divorce in the community. They wanted to learn about issues couples face in the different communities. It was important for them to find ways to solve these negative situations. They indicated that they needed to understand the social and cultural context that may influence changes in the family (e.g., freedom for men and women), including conflict.

\(^3\) It is worth noting that most of the participants in this group were highly educated.
Outcomes: Learnings and Use of the Knowledge

These topics are the root/cornerstone of the family. If immigrants miss these sessions the families will break down.

People are facing many difficulties when they just arrive. This [training] is some medication for people when they just arrive. If you do it later – it’s like getting a doctor after someone died.

We have gained many things here. These sessions give us good wisdom. We have been very interested about what we have been taught – sexuality, how we can behave at home to children; couples – good relationship in the family, how to make quiet the conflict at home; been taught how to teach other community members about these things…

Thank you for your vision – this session is different; they touch our personality and everyday life. How can we find out how to cope if there is no organization to help us? Helpful to know about the law in Canada – and how to share responsibilities at home.

When we asked participants to identify specific topics they have learned over the course of the workshops, participants spoke of knowledge and skills. They learned about Canadian law, and cultural differences between their home culture and Canada and how such differences result in family conflicts. It appeared that participants had discussed key issues such as the role of women and men in the new society and overall, the position of women in Canada (e.g., mother’s rights such as their entitlement to receive the child tax benefit).

Among the skills learned, participants talked about learning about effective communication. Among the specific skills, they mentioned: listening skills and how to share feelings and thoughts with their partners and other family members.

Participants acknowledged the need to put in practice some of the skills and make use of the information learned during the training. Some had already made use of the information, while others felt to be in the process of change. One of them said: "It doesn’t happen in one day or two days, but we are committed." Some have shared the information with other families.

Participants appreciated the written materials. They envisioned these materials becoming useful as reference information in the future. They mentioned having shared with friends and family (e.g., “I posted the Anger Rules in my home.”). One of the participants would have preferred to have materials in first language (i.e., French) to facilitate usage.

Some participants mentioned having used the information with their partners, and others, who have already gone through separation, expected to “teach some people in my community.”
Overall, all participants “enjoyed” their participation and found it “useful”. They found the sessions to be “different” than others. For instance, one participant stated that he wouldn’t “miss a single day” in spite of coming in tired from a working day.

**Relevant Information Within a Culturally Responsive Approach**

Participants indicated feeling **comfortable** learning about sexuality issues. Participants attributed this to a number of factors: the fact that participants were of same age, everyone was interested on the topics, the ability to address issues across different cultures, the perception that cultures were **respected**, the ability to fully share their cultural beliefs and opinions, and access to opportunity to speak freely (e.g., “We are here in Canada. We are living beyond our culture at home. It is not uncomfortable anymore. Back home we couldn’t talk – we are changing.”). They felt that the facilitators were “friendly” and accessible.

Yet some participants **struggled with the style of information delivery**. The workshops were designed to bring up the issues and have participants respond and discuss them. One participant said: “When you give us suggestion, you give us questions mark. It is up to us to decide. We just talk general – you don’t give us suggestion.” While another one indicated that he/she expected the facilitators to “give people some direction to follow.” Participants with experience in more structured approaches to education may find SERC’s educational approach foreign. Besides the cultural differences in education approaches, it appears that participants were seeking more definite answers to some of their specific issues. However, the underlying principle of SERC’s approach is to give people a full range of information and options that allow them to make decisions for themselves.

**Areas for Improvement and Suggestions**

*It feels like we are just beginning; we are going deeper and now it is over.*

Participants made a number of suggestions. They indicated that towards the end of the training they were just feeling comfortable enough to get into deeper discussions and understanding of the issues. They agreed on the limited time designated to the sessions, some indicated the need to **expand the number of sessions**. They also wondered about allowing **more people** (i.e., increase number of participants) to attend the session.

Participants have spoken about the training to others. They indicated having many **people interested** in attending future training. Many of these potential participants are newcomers with limited English proficiency; therefore, **interpretation** would be an issue that would required attention. A request was made again to **translate** more handouts.

Participants indicated some topics that they would like to see discussed. **Issues that bring about conflict in the couple and family**, including financial issues and providing practical advice on how to budget and handle home finances. Some participants would like to learn some specific **communication skills** and have the opportunity to practice in the course. One participant said: [we need to] deepen the listening - listening helps to deepen the sexual relationship; we need time to practice skills like listening.”
Participants were interested in receiving training to facilitate information and education in the community (i.e., “train the trainer”). This was believed to help those with limited English as community facilitator would impart the education in first language. One participant explained: “when people are trained, that can help you people – speak in simple language. When using interpreters – some things are complicated – can’t pass through the word exactly. If they have training they will know the word.”

As with other groups, we also heard the need to address issues with youth. Participants believed that young people were also going through “hardships”; they were “stressed” and experiencing “depression”. They were particularly concerned about out-of-school younger youth (i.e., under 18).

**Follow-up Evaluation with Past Participants from Issues for Couples Groups**

The sessions for couples are relatively new. They were recently developed as soon as SERC was made aware of the needs for specific sessions to address the needs of couples in communities (i.e. the high rate of marital breakdown). We followed regular evaluation procedures with these groups. However, as this is a new component of the program and the curriculum is still undergoing changes; we decided to conduct a follow-up evaluation with past participants of the groups. This was meant to provide information on the mid or longer-term impact of the education sessions, and further assess some areas of education that may need to be addressed.

We conducted one focus group with seven participants (3 couples and a single person). Six participants were from Rwanda and one from Sudan. They had been participants in two different workshop series.

**Impact of the Knowledge**

*If people were to learn about all these topics they would be able to live peacefully here in Canada.*

Participants commented on a number of issues that were of relevance to them. In all the participants spoke about three main topics or themes:

**Couple’s Communication**

Participants emphasized having acquired a broader understanding of the importance of communication among partners. They referred to communication that is respectful and the building block to good relationships. This was the means to “working together to support each other”. One of the couples referred to one specific topic discussed in the sessions; that is, “appreciation”. These participants stated that it was important to keep in mind everyone’s contribution to the family to strengthen their relationship.

**Families Integrating to Canada**

Participants referred to specific relevant information such as Canadian law, in particular around family violence and divorce. This helped them clarify common problems faced by people in their communities. They felt that “immigrants don’t know about these issues here.” Participants were very open and forthcoming about reflecting upon cultural and
community approaches that can develop into family problems within the immigrant context. As result of the sessions, they were able to reflect upon the changing roles and responsibilities in the family resulting from their adaptation into the new society. One participant said: “Back home in our countries the roles are very much specified. Now, in Canada that can create problems. Then, we see more divorce or even common law situations.” They were as far as to acknowledge that changes in gender roles were more difficult for men than women. They spoke at length on the numerous situations of divorce and separation they observe in their communities. All believed that all immigrants needed to become aware of these issues as they observed divorce to be “the effect of people being ignorant on these topics. If they are clear on that, if they know and are clear on the causes of conflicts, that will reduce misunderstanding in the couple.” This was emphasized in relation to the lack of community resources to dealing with conflicts in the couple or family. It was said that “people need to know how to resolve conflicts, these situations. Back home we could go to the family, people would help. Here, that doesn’t exist, we are alone.” Learning about specific conflict resolution skills was important to them. They found that they way the system operates in Canada was not conducive to reconciliation. They believed that some of the services available and the law itself encouraged people to separate.

The participants believed that the workshop was much needed: “The majority of people need this information. They need to attend the workshop. This workshop is to reduce family violence, reduce divorce, reduce tension of violence in our communities. I see that.”

Talking about Sexuality
Sexuality is a key issue for couples and families. Participants found that this was a fundamental issue to address with newcomers. They agreed that sexuality is an issue with newcomers as “Immigrants don’t have the habit of talking about this, according to their culture, openly talking about this. In the new culture sometimes people, men, just go to the other side. People here talk about sexuality, they see things, they hear things, the attitude changes, there is more freedom.” The openness or availability of information and easy access to sexual experiences could bring about a number of difficult situations to couples and families.

In addition, basic knowledge about sexuality is limited. Some participants were grateful to have expanded their understanding of the meaning of sexuality (beyond intercourse). They believed that newcomers needed to have access to all the information imparted in the sessions, in particular about sexuality as this is not a topic discussed or taught. This was believed to help couples and their relationship with their children (as parenting is another issue faced by couples).

Use of the New Knowledge

Even before asking about how the participants had used the new information, each one of them volunteered things that happened in their lives as result of attending the sessions. First of all, they saw themselves as “facilitators” of the information in their communities. One of the participants explained: “We are becoming the facilitators. We think of doing the same and pass the information to others. We are now able to tell others.” They have done so with newcomers attending their church, families they know and their own families (e.g., couples communication and communication with their own children), community members and even teachers at EAL classes. For instance, one of
the participants brought some of the written materials to his EAL class and the teacher made copies for all the students.

**Teaching Approaches**

Participants appreciated the different approaches used to learn about the various topics. They mentioned a number of methods that helped them learn such as videos to better illustrate some points of discussion; group discussions to “come to a common understanding”; and participatory activities to “see how effective communication works”. They also appreciated the series of handouts, a tool that appears to be in constant use at home and passed along to other community members.

They felt that the topics were presented in a “good manner.” Facilitators were clear and made the topics easy to understand. They believed that the facilitators were experienced and reliable. One important characteristic of the facilitators that was appreciated was their strengths in ensuring that everyone participated in the discussions. As one of the participants expressed: “They motivated us to discuss, helped us say what was at the bottom of our hearts.”

Participants felt that they were respected and that the discussions were managed in a way that no person or culture was singled out. One of the participants believed that other programs or agencies should learn how to approach sensitive topics in a similar manner as the facilitators in these sessions did. He provided the example of a specific agency that was believed not to be culturally safe or responsive to the community.

**Suggestions and Improvement**

In terms of the sessions, participants felt that all the topics and approaches were relevant and appropriate. They didn’t have any suggestions in these areas. Their only main concern was about making sure that this information was widely available.

Most of the participants in the focus group felt that they were ready to share the information with other community members using a more formal approach. They would like to obtain training to facilitate this type of sessions, and obtain support to ensure this is done properly. This was believed to be important as they felt the reach of the sessions was very limited (i.e., relatively small number of participants attending each session). They also felt ready to organize successfully sessions in their own communities (i.e., ethno-specific groups). They would be able to recruit participants and secure a location that was appropriate for the community. However, they were also clear about the fact that to be successful some other supports were necessary such as snacks and babysitting. Funds for babysitting was discussed and was believed that money was a concern for newcomers. This was great incentive to participating.

Another area of interest was to ensure that youth were able to access sexuality related information. They were interested in referring youth to our programs. They also believed that it would be of benefit to SERC to have programs with youth. This way we can gather the views from both sides and use such information to strengthen our work.

> If they have sessions for themselves, it will be very helpful. Youth are growing up, they need the information. It is difficult for them to speak in presence of their parents.
They need to speak freely. If you do that, then you [SERC] can compare what youth have to say with what parents have to say. You can help parents from what you learn from the youth.


Attendance of the 14 parents registered for this group has been very consistent, with a few more mothers than fathers attending. Approximately 60% were mothers, 40% fathers. Participants had 1-8 children with an average of 3.5 children per family. Childrens’ ages ranged between 1 and 29 years with an average of 11.8 years. Participants had been in Canada between 1 – 6 years (average 1.7 years). Participants come from a range of French-speaking African countries such as Burundi, Rwanda, Congo and Ivory Coast.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Motivation to Participate

Participants to this family communication session expected to find relevant information on dealing with raising children in Canada, sexuality and sexual health (e.g., “protect ourselves from STIs”). Some participants mentioned some specific aspects such as relevance of communication and how to breach differences between generations (“to handle conflict, direct children, balance between culture.”)

Outcomes: Learnings and Use of the Knowledge

It is important to learn all these things because children become very proud in Canada. They view parents as less intelligent because of the language. They are already integrated. As a parent, where do I stand in this society?

To succeed in this country, you need to learn how to behave and raise children. We learned the difference between discipline versus punishment.

We learned how to give advice and direction to our children and when we share with our children what we are learning, they got very excited.

Participants indicated that they learned more than initially expected. Among the main areas of changes in learning and understanding, participants identified: new insights regarding parenting styles, newfound awareness on areas of conflict and conflict resolution between partners and with children (e.g., “we learned to be patient with each other), awareness on the media and how to educate children on the messages media impart, and knowledge on sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition, one of the participants said he increased his knowledge of English through the topics and discussions.
Participants spoke on the specific areas of knowledge that they have been able to apply within their families. Among the specific skills they mentioned were: listening skills, patience, conflict resolution. They also raised issue with their children such as dating and STIs.

During the prior to last session the facilitators offered an opportunity for participants to ask anonymous questions. A “Question Box” activity was implemented. One of the questions suggested that one of the participants, at least, felt the need to learn more about communication skills (i.e., “how to talk to my child about HIV with no feeling uncomfortable”).

Relevant information within a Culturally Responsive Approach

Participants felt their culture was respected. They attributed this to the ability of the facilitators to carry out the group and answer questions void of judgment. Another factor that helped in the process was the fact that all participants were immigrants. This allowed them to find commonalities across cultures and the experiences of being a newcomer. Even language differences were surmounted to engage in meaningful participation. One participant said: “Everything was perfect. We are very happy because we felt included even though we didn’t know the language.”

One example of the level of comfort sharing cultural differences was marked by a question on a cultural belief that explains why babies are born with disabilities (i.e., Fumbi). Facilitators discussed the different explanations behind illness and disabilities.

The Question Box exercise was used to help elicit questions that people felt uncomfortable asking in a large group. Sample questions were as follows:

- Can you tell us about the animal in the belly – who eats the baby in a woman’s belly. In our country we call this animal “fumbi.” Sometimes the baby is born without fingers, or ears, or toes. Often one takes traditional medicines. Please explain to us.
- Is there medicine for a man who is born ‘powerless’?

Areas for Improvement and Suggestions

Participants suggested a number of topics for future consideration within the objectives of the sessions. One of the suggestions was to have videotapes or DVDs available for borrowing to watch with their children. One participant believed that this would facilitate the conversation with her children.

Another suggestion was to have a session only with the children, to share and reinforce the information and approaches that parents would now be using in their lives. We asked if they would like a parent-child session, but participants were unanimous in wanting

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4 The facilitators offer pen and paper to the participants, leave time for participants to write anonymous questions, and direct them to submit the questions in a box. Then, the Facilitators read and discussed the questions in preparation for the following session.

5 Fumbi is a spirit derived from a shamanistic religion from the Congo region called “Palo Mayombe”. “Tata Fumbi” is the spirit that regulates disease, plague and medicine.

6 It is not uncommon to hear suggestions that fall outside SERC’s mandate. For instance, during the evaluation session we heard one participant suggesting the need on information on workplace culture.
something with just SERC facilitators and their children. They felt that the information, coming from a 3rd party, would have more effect. However, they also felt that the session would help open the communication with their children. They suggested that the children/youth session should include information about STIs, cultural adaptation, the media, and issues around communication with parents.

The series of questions posed by participants the week prior to finalizing the session indicates the need to deepen some of that education. Among the general topics were STI prevention and HIV/AIDS, and sexual orientation with the multicultural context, including Canadian cultural and legal framework.

On a different note, an additional suggestion was to have handouts translated into French. We also heard from some participants that there should be some sort of follow-up session for this group of participants.

**Eritrean Parents Groups (September – December 2009)**

**EVALUATION REPORT (EXPANDED SCOPE)**

**Brief Background to Project**

SERC has also enhanced its community-based work by working more closely with community partners in certain circumstances. Starting in June of 2007, the Labour and Immigration project officer (at the time) brought SERC together with the Eritrean Community in Winnipeg. In discussions, common ground was established, and a consultation group and a first set of educational sessions were held in the 2007-8 fiscal year. This, then has been the third year of collaboration with this particular community association to hold groups for parents. Over these years, SERC has endeavoured to meet community requests for capacity building, resulting in an increasingly complex, multi-faceted project.

We conducted two education sessions involving members of the Eritrean community. These sessions were organized in collaboration with the Eritrean Community in Winnipeg. At the time of proposal-writing, the location had not yet been confirmed. At the time of implementation, at the request of the community, both groups were held at the new Eritrean Centre situated in the downtown area. This was the third such set of groups organized with the association.

In the original proposal submitted, the two sessions were to be aimed at different groups within the community, the very “new” newcomers and a second group for those who are not as new, yet needing project supports and information. This second group, SERC proposed to be held without an interpreter. At the time the proposal was finalized and planning begun, the community association did not have this understanding of the “types” of groups, and a decision was made to alter the nature of the groups, to be more in keeping with the previous year’s model and to accommodate community input. Therefore, one group was a follow-up group with past participants, and the second was
with all new participants. SERC approached the funder to reallocate sufficient funds to pay for a second interpreter.

The original target number for the overall groups was 30; the community association negotiated a slight increase in these numbers, in order to accommodate the demand from the community. The subject of recruitment and how we as a team could improve on last year’s work – i.e. convey the message that the group is a ‘registered’ versus drop-in group, that consistency and timeliness are important, that we were reaching parents who were dealing with intergenerational issues – was an important part of many planning meetings. The community association put in many hours in discussing and problem-solving these issues, in an attempt to improve recruiting outcomes.

**Women’s Group: Phase 2**

The first group was a “phase 2” group for past participants who have requested more information about intergenerational communication and about sexuality-related issues and information. Due to the nature of the group (all women), the sessions mostly dealt with sexual and reproductive health issues. Originally, fifteen participants registered for the sessions, although a number were not able to attend the first session because of a community event. Then, two moved to the afternoon session and two others dropped out of the sessions (one, due to work related commitments). An average of 10 women consistently attended the sessions. A trained interpreter, also a woman, provided interpretation.

Participants had been in Canada between 8 months and 18 years with the average length of stay, 3.5 years and a grouping of participants who had been in Canada between 1-2 years. Participants had between 1-5 children. Ages of children ranged between 24 months and 23 years, with an average of 13.36. Most of their children were pre-teens and teenagers. The Facilitator observed that there were about 3-4 single parents in the group of 10.

**Increased Awareness of Issues**

As in past groups, the women responded well to topics that opened with a question to them about their own cultural practices. Many were keen to share different types of traditional cures and remedies. Some were discussed in the context of implications for health, e.g. bloodletting, with a mind to harm reduction around blood borne infections.

The women were quite forthcoming about sexuality, with stories of pain, excessive bleeding, and extreme pain/difficulties in sexual penetration upon marriage and so on. The facilitator was respectful of the women’s culture and the basis of this tradition, but introduced some information related to common health impacts (e.g. recurrent UTIs). In some cases, women did not know some of the health issues could be linked to female genital cutting (FGC).

Participants also discussed the health care system in their home country, and gave examples of how health care was easily accessible in villages, for example. In terms of Canada, the biggest barrier to health care access is the language barrier – interpreters are still not readily available for the women in this group. This remains a consistent
finding across groups and projects at SERC. Participants also talked about racism and discrimination faced when accessing health care.

The topic of HIV generated many questions and comments. Again, participants shared their knowledge based on campaigns back home/during migration (e.g. TV, billboard ads, etc.). They stated that HIV testing was mandatory before marriage. In contrast, we find that newcomers often feel Canada is a ‘safe’ country, because there is little public education about HIV/AIDS. Interestingly, when women learned that, the risk of passing on HIV from a pregnant woman to her infant (without treatment) was 25% (without breastfeeding); the women felt this was a low risk.

Around condom use, women discussed the complexities of negotiating condom use in marriage. It was not done – so they problem-solved ways in which the topic could be brought up.

During the evaluation session, participants reflected upon the most important learnings. They appreciated the overall content of the sessions. Information on Canadian culture, women’s health, communicating with children, and on the health care system were among the most relevant topics. Some of the women appreciated having learned about how to approach a doctor. One of them illustrated this point as follows: “I learned what kind of wordings to use to communicate at the doctors. I learned what my rights are as a patient. Next, I learned how I use the information the doctor gave me.” Another participant believed that she would not have been able to have this information through any other programs or sources.

**Impact in Practices**

Women also responded in ways that demonstrated that they were grasping and building on information shared throughout the sessions. For example, at one session a woman referred to the Facilitator’s emphasis on the need to take care of themselves, clearly advocating this message with the other participants. Many indicated that as newcomers the information was useful. One of the participants illustrated this point by saying: “It was good and we intend to use it on a practical purpose, not just as a student. We want to interpret those things into action.”

Beyond their own use and benefit, they saw the possibility of sharing this information for the benefit of other newcomer women in their community. One of women said: “We can share, so they can benefit”.

**Teaching Approaches**

The session kept a balance between information presented by the facilitator and information and views brought about by the women. It appeared that such approach led to a high level of engagement and participation. Evidence from the facilitator logs illustrate some of the information shared by participants indicating high level of comfort sharing personal subjects (e.g., “dry vaginas”, sexual consent in marriage, menstruation, personal health problems such as severe breast infections, breast cancer, FGC, etc.). The Facilitator noticed that women were very keen to share information from their own cultural backgrounds, and this has been a constant in how SERC structures these
sessions. Information flows two-way and we learn a great deal about culture and values that impact on sexuality and women’s health.

Participants in the evaluation agreed they felt comfortable during the sessions. One of the main factors that appeared to have contributed to this level of comfort was attributed to the fact that there were no men in attendance. In addition, during the sessions, it was noticed that women would stop participating when other community members were using adjacent spaces to the meeting room. One woman was observed to make ‘hushing’ gestures, when a man was around. This was observed to disrupt the flow of the discussion.

Integral to the teaching was the utilization of a capable interpreter. Most of the participants agreed that the interpretation was “excellent”. Some of the women commented on the interpreter’s appropriate use of language.

Overheads/handouts were adapted for use with groups that have low literacy both in English and possibly in their own language. Some expressed a strong interest for handouts that correspond to all the information shared. Some of the women indicated they have used the written information outside the sessions.

**Practical Aspects**

The participants found the time and day suitable to their schedules. They believed that the main reason for not attending all sessions would be due to their children’s commitments (e.g., school or recreational programming they need to attend).

They appreciated receiving support to attend the sessions by being able to have someone to look after their children while in the class.

Participants found the location accessible and appropriate. However, as already indicated, at times, other community members accessed the site while the group was being run. This was not in keeping with the need for privacy to discuss, e.g., sexual and reproductive health issues. Nor is this in keeping with SERC’s project objective to maintain a safe, confidential environment for participants. Although this was addressed by the community organization, some interruptions continued to occur throughout the life of the project. As the sessions were held in a space open to the entrance and the kitchen of the organization, we believe the space not to be conducive for groups with highly sensitive topics.

**Suggestions**

Participants identified a number of topics they wanted to be exposed to or explored in more detail. One of the most salient topics was in regards to intergeneration communication. One of the participants expressed this as follows: “As a new immigrant, we came to this country – our children are adjusting quickly, but we are sometimes back in our own culture...I’d like to broaden my knowledge of how to better communicate with my kids in this new culture.”

Participants were also quick to comment on the teaching approaches they appreciated. They liked a balance between presentation and discussion-based learning. One of the
participants believed that this way they “can remember it longer”. This participant was further to indicate that more room for dialogue would have been helpful with retention of the information. They also indicated that use of video was acceptable if it were to be combined with some form of interaction among participants.

As observed with all other work with immigrant communities, participants advocated having a longer program or one that runs on a continuous basis. In this case, it appears that the women were also indicating that for newcomer and isolated women, there is a need to have programs that address their needs as women (i.e., focus on sexual and reproductive health).

We also inquired about the possibility of and interest in attending multicultural groups. They all agreed with the idea if language barriers were to be addressed (e.g., consideration of interpretation).

Parents Group

The second group was much larger, with all new participants from the community focused on the intergenerational communication issues. Outreach efforts by the Eritrean association exceeded expectations and there were close to 45 people registered (indicating a great interest in the sessions), with about 25 attending consistently. About 37 percent (N=16) attended over 75 percent of the sessions. Forty percent attended half or less than half of the sessions. At the request of the community to add a capacity-building component, a team of interpreters worked with this group and interpreter-trainees were offered a small honorarium as well.

The group was gender balanced. Participants had been in Canada between 2 weeks and 4 years (with an average length of stay of 14 months). Parents had 1-7 children (average 2.3 per family), and children’s ages ranged between 2 and 28 years (average age of child, 12 years).

Increased Knowledge

Some of the participants believed this was an important session as most of them were very new to the country. The topics that resonated with the participants the most related to the main topic of the workshop, that is communication with children about sexuality. Some of the examples participants mentioned were: “what our kids learn in school”, “how it looks like according to their age, what our kids learn in school and how it’s sitting together with our culture”.

One of the participants mentioned gaining a better understanding of sexuality: “we learned about sexuality. Initially we thought that sexuality only involved sex, but we learned more about it.” Other topics were: culture in Canada, STIs, legal issues, rights and obligations. Much interest was placed on Canadian laws, as they relate to rights (e.g. gay and lesbian rights) or sexual consent, for example.

Parents were very interested in child protection laws/definition of child abuse. In discussing child discipline, distinctions were made between discipline and abuse, and problem solving was encouraged about other ways to discipline children (e.g. coming up with consequences, versus corporal punishment).
The topics of HIV/STI prevention as well as birth control were addressed. Here, the Facilitator asked the group if this was a topic they were interested in and specifically asked if they were comfortable having a condom demonstration. There was some discussion among participants, but participants came to agreement that this was important to learn – to teach their children, protect their children and/or know what their children are learning about in school. The information on HIV/STI prevention and birth control was well received, although few women participants commented; a number of men were quite vocal.

Use or Intent to use Knowledge

A few participants commented on the intent to use the information. It also appeared that the information shared during the sessions spilled into the community. One of the participants commented: “The community was very happy with the information. It was very interactive, people talked after the sessions, helped them in their daily life, how the system works, the laws, the sessions were always full. Very positive. You could see the changes at the beginning and the end. People became very comfortable and learned lots.”

Teaching Approach and Session Format

The main approach used in this set of workshops was presentation and discussions through interpretation. This approach was deemed necessary, as the group was large with a high number of participants attending on a drop-in basis. In addition, the space was not appropriate for the utilization of small group discussions and other participatory techniques.

The parent’s sessions were designed for about 15 participants attending all or most of the sessions. Consecutive attendance is required to ensure flow of information from more broad and easily understood to more specific and sensitive topics that need more discussion and analysis. Evaluation throughout the years has supported the value of this design.

Although a core group of participants attended these sessions, others doing so on a drop-in basis proved disruptive to the flow of the sessions. In such cases, the Facilitator had to readdress topics already presented for the benefit of those with irregular attendance.

We have also proven that the education sessions work well with mixed-gender groups. However, in this case, with a large group with no strong cohesion (due to the drop-in effect); the level of participation was more uneven with men taking the lead in participation. In addition, there were limitations to the design of the sessions that could have facilitated an increase in women’s participation. The limited physical space was not conducive to conducting small group discussions where women would feel more comfortable sharing.

In spite of these limitations, the Facilitator found that discussion and participation was reasonable. As per the participants, they mostly agreed with the format. They also indicated that they became comfortable with the topics as the weeks progressed. They
understood that the nature of the topics would put them in an uncomfortable situation; however, as one of the participants said: “... but we are learning in Canada, and we can apply the rules here in Canada and there are some things that make us uncomfortable (...)” One of the participants was grateful that the Facilitator asked for permission from the group to present certain topics (e.g., condom demonstration). During the evaluation, we noticed that most of the respondents were male. This brought about an internal discussion with SERC staff around additional limitations of drawing female participants into the discussions (in education sessions and evaluation) when all the limitations already mentioned are present.

It appeared that participants were very receptive to the handouts. A few of them foresaw the use of them in the future. They also agreed that those translated into Tigrinya would be of most use.

**Practical Aspects**

The unusual characteristic of this group (i.e., many people attending on a drop-in basis) led us to inquire about the reasons behind this. It appeared that participants might have faced a number of personal issues preventing them from attending such as shift work or illness. The respondents were quick to indicate that it was not because the sessions were not relevant to them. They believe that the day, time and location were suitable. Most people lived downtown and walked or took the bus to attend the sessions (e.g., one of the participants walked a long distance due to an inconvenient bus schedule during the weekend).

Much support was received for core components of the program (e.g. interpretation, food, babysitting, location, etc.). However, beyond all this support offered, participants were most appreciative of being able to attend and learn new information.

Food was a component key to engaging the community. Some participants would come directly from work or school with clear need for good nourishment. However, providing culturally appropriate food took much time to purchase and prepare. The budget was also limited.

**Suggestions**

Participants were clear about the continuous need for interpretation, as many would not otherwise attend the sessions. On the other hand, some participants were interested in learning English through the sessions as well.

Additional recommendations, many beyond the scope of SERC’s work, included continuous programming (e.g. year round), increased number of sessions, programs that address EAL and employment (e.g., skills-based programming). One of the respondents also suggested incorporating parent-youth sessions or even looking at the possibility of creating a youth video.

**Community-Based Approach**

SERC was receptive to the strong community input advocating for community capacity-building. SERC worked closely with the Eritrean Community in Winnipeg to find ways to
maximize opportunities for community members provided by this project. SERC's typical model for working in community is to hire an outreach-recruiter, and an interpreter from the community, both of whom have the appropriate community knowledge and connections, and skills associated with each respective task. The model used with the Eritrean sessions, further incorporated a series of paid positions to assist with retention of and supports to participants, and opportunity for skills-building around interpretation and culturally-based nutrition. A number of community members designated as “community mentors” were contracted to assist with the retention of participants by supporting car-pooling and by providing other supports and information to participants and feedback to facilitators. We also hired a team of interpreters who each took turns interpreting and helping each other with difficult words, phrases or concepts. At the community association’ suggestion, their function was also to support the facilitator and participants in areas where added ‘bridging’ may be needed. Furthermore, the association identified two “interpreter-trainees” who attended the classes and observed the interpretation process in order to develop skills for interpretation. A member of the community was also hired to provide food for each session.

The community association offered to take leadership in identifying the appropriate people for each task, after meeting with SERC’s Special Projects Coordinator to clarify roles and responsibilities, and qualifications (focusing on key skill and knowledge areas to complete the task).

As this model was more resource intensive than other education sessions provided to other communities (throughout the years and in the 2009-2010 period), SERC felt it was important to evaluate the impact of the infusion of added resources, including funds and human resources (overall coordination), in the community or at least among participants.

**Community Mentors**

Five people were contracted to assist with the liaison of the project with community members and participants. The tasks assigned to the Community Mentors were to:

- work closely with Eritrean Community organizers to identify workshop participants who may need extra assistance in attending the sessions due to social, economic, logistical or other barriers;
- help maximize timely attendance of participants;
- provide information, encouragement and supports to these participants to help them attend sessions (e.g., find the correct bus to take, problem-solve around childcare, make reminder phone calls prior to sessions, support car-pooling);
- maintain good communication with participants to ensure that they are satisfied with the sessions, and report any concerns or problems with Eritrean community organizers and SERC facilitators.

We were only able to contact one community mentor (also a member of the board) to speak about his experiences with the project. He mentioned that he was briefed about the project by the community leader. His role as a mentor was mainly to provide information to the community and help with the clean up of the space after the sessions. He believed he had learned more about the topics and its importance in the community. No specific enhanced skills related to the position could be identified (e.g., outreach).
The main community leader believed that the mentors would have better performed had they participated in the sessions prior to taking on the role. It appears that changes to their proposed tasks occurred, as people were more suitable to some tasks than others. No communication to SERC on these changes was noted during the life of the sessions. According to this leader, much time was invested in orienting the Mentors.

In the previous year, the community association had suggested that bus fare be redirected to community members that supported car-pooling. In this year’s project, the discussion focused on the need to use the funds to provide enhanced supports, thus the idea of Mentors. Bus fare was again redirected, with the support of the community association, who expressed the need for the mentors’ model, rather than offering bus fare. This, it was felt, would help ensure more consistent attendance, and provide supports to those most marginalized. Within a fixed budget, it was a choice that had to be made between the two options.

At the time of the evaluation focus group, most participants in both groups indicated having used the bus system, in particular a large number of participants coming from the suburbs (e.g., the Maples, St. Vital). Other participants chose to walk, as bus schedules were not as frequent on weekends. A few came by car. The community leader was mentioned to have supported car-pooling with one of the participants. There were limitations to understanding in what ways the other Mentors supported car-pooling and/or participation. There are also many limitations to understand if transportation was an issue for those attending the afternoon session on a drop-in basis (many people attending in a drop-in basis did not attend the evaluation session).

**Community Outreach-Recruiter**

The main activity of this position was to identify community members and recruit them for the sessions. The outreach abilities of the community led to knowledge of a strong interest in these sessions in the community, as a large number of participants indicated interest in joining the sessions (i.e., parent’s group).

As discussed previously, we came to an agreement that the sessions would be ‘registered’ and not a drop-in. A drop-in model would have to be structured very differently and our experience has been that it is very ineffective and we have lower satisfaction from participants. However, despite the association and SERC clarifying this numerous times with the community, participants continued to join. We addressed this challenge by allowing for a slightly greater registration and by reiterating that the sessions were full.

SERC was not clear as to the process of recruiting. Initially, it was stated that members of the association would, through their contacts in community, be informally recruiting participants. The role of the Outreach-Recruiter would be to meet one-on-one with participants, ensure they were well informed as to the goals of the sessions, and clarify important information (time, location, babysitting support if attend the full session, etc.). Near the end of the project, it was clarified that in fact recruiting was accomplished to some extent as a team, but that it would be fair if funds were allocated to one member who played a key role.

During the evaluation session, we asked participants how they heard about the project, most heard about it through their connection with the association. Other than the main
leaders’ name, no other names were identified in this regard. The community leader, however, stated that recruiting was in fact largely a team effort on the part of the association. In many cases, it was clear that many participants were members of the association and would participate in many activities offered by the association. With the limitations listed, it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of recruiting, although the ‘end results’ point to some successes (e.g. 10 regular participants in the women’s group) but some continuing challenges (e.g. the high rate of turnover, drop-in style of participation in the ‘new’ group).

**Interpreters**

In order to meet the needs of newcomers with little or no English, interpretation to the sessions was required. In planning with the association, SERC strongly reinforced the need for trained interpreters, preferable ones with past experience of the project. The association supported this in organizing for the interpreter for the women’s group. For the women’s group, we continued to contract with a trained and knowledgeable interpreter on women’s health issues. It was paramount that we engaged a female interpreter as the group was women’s only. This approach was commended by the participants with many making strong remarks about the high level of interpretation provided.

At the request of the association, for the parent’s group, a number of interpreters were hired. Each member of the team took turns interpreting. The association also requested the project supported two “interpreter-trainees” that were attending the classes and observing the interpretation process in order to develop skills for interpretation. Although SERC planned to offer a 3-hour workshop for the pool of interpreters and trainees, on health interpretation, due to a mix-up in communication on the part of SERC, SERC was not able to hold the session on the planned date. The community association was able to contact members to cancel, and there was thought of holding the session later. However, given that this was significantly into 12-week sessions, SERC felt it was too late to hold such a session (for it to be useful). Note: the health interpretation session was meant to happen before the groups began; however, we were not able to coordinate the session at the time, as the team of interpreters was not confirmed until a week or more into the sessions.

During the evaluation, it was clear that the participants were highly satisfied with the work of the interpreters. In order to assess the extent to which members of the team had enhanced their interpretation skills, we tried to reach them. After a number of attempts, we were able to speak to one participant only. We found out that this person already had experience interpreting in general. He believed that close communication with the Facilitator helped him to do a better job. His ongoing attendance at the group also assisted in doing the job (as he could relate to information that was presented in previous sessions that may have not been interpreted by him). We asked about his level of comfort and community reactions around sexuality related topics addressed in the sessions. He found that there were no negative reactions, adding, “When you talk about sexual things in our community it can be difficult, but I was okay.” According to his experience, he believed that the model of having more than one interpreter would only work if people attend the sessions. The whole team needs to attend at the same time to gain support and be able to troubleshoot with other members of the team. This is important as many words do not translate directly, and people need to understand the issue and concepts. He also recommended having an orientation session for interpreters only.
Enhanced Programming

At the request of the community leader, we incorporated two special sessions led by the community. The agreement was that the sessions had to enhance the project objectives by addressing cultural values and beliefs as they pertain to the project and objectives, enhance. It was agreed that the subjects discussed in these special sessions would correspond or “bridge” to the specific content provided in the sessions before and after. The parameters and expectations of these sessions were extensively discussed in planning and were seen by SERC as a means of attending to cultural competence and enhancing the project’s impacts.

Actual planning of the sessions was the purview of the community association, with the expectation of communication to SERC of plans in a timely manner. The first session involved an intergenerational approach. Youth and parents were brought together, a video made by the youth on intergenerational issues was shared (from another project) and an excellent discussion followed. Parents were very impressed by the feelings, expressions and insights shared by the youth. Parents received a strong message from youth that they mainly wanted to be ‘listened to.’ SERC worked closely with the community to ensure that continuity was provided among sessions; the community did a great deal of work to organize the special session.

The community leader organized the second special session. The session was described as a series of presentations that would focus on issues related to intergenerational communication and resources for parents. There were two main presentations from members from the community. One was from a social worker who listed a number of community agencies and the services they provide, and another person who shared her story of her work-related disability. Another person was introduced to the participants – she works at an immigrant employment agency. The community organizer also addressed the group. Observations of the Facilitator and one other participant who attended was that while the presentations may have been of some interest to the community, the fit with project objectives was not entirely clear. A community participant was of the opinion that the session actually disrupted the flow of the sessions. This person also mentioned that some of the information provided about services to newcomers required updating. This person also found a lack of connection between and across presenters as they might relate to the program. The session was believed to be important to the community, but it was suggested they be done outside the parent’s sessions or at least at the end of the program.

On the other hand, the community leader indicated that the panel was able to bring about a cultural perspective to enhance some of the issues presented in the SERC-led sessions. He felt that people became more aware of needed information on available resources that the Eritrean association decided to start holding monthly sessions in the community to ongoing newcomers to the Winnipeg.

Resources

As already indicated, the program with the Eritrean community required that SERC request additional funds (in comparison to similar work carried out with other communities). Moreover, funds were re-allocated (with funder’s permission) to cover the
additional interpreter, with a small amount re-allocated to cover some food cost overruns. Finally, funds were re-profiled in order to address the requests of the community for capacity-building (e.g. hiring a team of interpreters versus one per group, or the team of community mentors versus the transportation budget line).

While Labour and Immigration provided the financial resources, and SERC made an in-kind contribution (mostly in the form of salaries), the community provided the bulk of the in-kind resources, through donations and volunteer effort. For example, they enhanced the provision of food by encouraging members to have “potlucks” and provided supplies to stretch the food budget. The centre was provided in-kind because at the time of proposal-writing it was not in existence and therefore was not budgeted for. Community association members put in many hours setting up, cleaning up and monitoring the site. The use of equipment was provided in-kind as well. The project coordination required extensive time in meetings at SERC and then in the community. In addition, the community organized the special sessions, and recruited staff to the project. The community association provided a 3-part DVD set focusing on Eritrean family issues (drama), free to all participants (this was calculated at a total value of $1850). These are some examples of the in-kind donations made by the Eritrean Community in Winnipeg and members.

Much additional staff and volunteer time was devoted to plan and implement the program. SERC staff estimate that they spent close to two to three times the amount of time that would normally be spent on a similar community project. There were 17 community members involved in parts of the implementation from outreach, recruitment, food preparation, interpretation, community support, guest speakers and coordination. All but one received payment (for outreach-recruitment, food preparation, community mentors, and interpreters) or honoraria (i.e. interpreter-trainees and guest speakers). According to the community leader, the process of identifying mentors was time consuming. Then, once the sessions started people were not able to sustain their full commitment to attend on a regular basis. In addition, a site coordinator was always needed to attend to small practical details. As per SERC, the complexities of the model due to the need to closely monitor the progress of the work (e.g., addressing ethical concerns, or clarifying and addressing changes to processes arising at the community level through meetings, conversations and emails, addressing logistics such as the timely signing of contracts, and so on) led to hundreds of additional staff time hours. This also meant many in-kind hours on the part of the community leader and the association.

Communication Processes and Accountability

We have collaborated with the Eritrean Community in Winnipeg for a number of years. The work with the community had expanded; but has, also grown in complexity. Many challenges faced in the past had been surmounted; but, others had developed over the last year. SERC sees the added benefits of supporting individual and community capacity-building in the community. However, we also experienced ongoing challenges in co-organizing the sessions. Our learning is that at times, while our and the community’s intent are the same – to enrich and support the community – the means and methods sometimes differ. SERC has an organizational culture and follows certain procedures – and of course, a community organization has its own culture and procedures too. In these circumstances, we fall back on basic principles such as supporting good communication and transparency.
Over the year, a number of meetings have been held with SERC management and with the Eritrean community leader. The number of challenges encountered throughout the unfolding of the sessions was discussed face-to-face with this leader, to ensure that the organization was well informed of SERC’s concerns and perceptions. The leader spent a great deal of time explaining the perspective of the community. While SERC and the leader did not necessarily see eye-to-eye in many of the areas, it was a necessary and positive step, in that all the issues were “on the table” and being discussed openly.

Some of the key challenges included:

- Considerations around transparency and accountability as they related to the community partner, decisions made, processes, intent and outcomes
  - One clear example is around the allocation of transportation funds to hire community mentors who would in turn support car-pooling (SERC’s understanding) so that all participants, e.g. those who were single mothers, those who lived at a distance, could receive a ride. It appeared, however, that most took the bus.
  - Another example was a divergence from what SERC had observed as the usual practice of the association sharing community announcements prior to the start of the session. Before one session, the group was addressed in first language about an issue – the belief that SERC needed to change its practice in another project that involved this community. This is a challenge to SERC on two fronts: a) SERC has the trust of participants, our commitment to them is to provide community based education and resources and does not include this form of ‘lobbying’ or persuasion and b) this talk resulted in great personal impact on the staff of that project (from the same community) one of SERC’s staff team.
  - Differences in approach when working in community: the way a community organization may work in community to lead and guide community, may not be compatible with the way an agency serves a community, with an emphasis on supporting informed choice and on maintaining confidentiality. An example of such situation related to the initial decision of the community association to have ‘outside’ people, from a video project, attended the group to observe and learn from the participants as they viewed a youth video and interacted with youth (2nd special session). SERC staff had concerns about a) maintaining the trust and confidentiality of participants and b) the ethics of having people not from the community attend and build their cultural competence from parent-child dialogue. A meeting with the association and SERC management was held, the video reviewed and an agreement made to address confidentiality and have the ‘outside’ people sign a PHIA pledge, and to limit their involvement in the session. While this did happen, and a very fruitful session ensued, it was discovered that the session was videotaped. SERC was then assured that the video shots would not reveal any discussion, just short clips to be used to promote community activities. SERC raised the issue that we always use written informed consent to videotape. The association stated there was a disclaimer posted at the centre (people should inform them if they wanted to opt out). Given that this had already occurred, SERC management stated that this would suffice at present. SERC then learned that videotaping occurred at the second special session, as participants entered the room and greeted the SERC facilitator. This issue also relates to the first item.
• Site-related and coordination-related issues that from the Facilitators' perspectives have compromised the sense of confidentiality, privacy and 'safety' for/among participants that is needed for these types of sessions (and this is consistent with our practices/procedures)

• The increasing amounts of staff time involved (disproportionate) due to challenges with communication, organization at a community-level, decisions made that create additional workload and stress for the staff team

• A project involving so many positions with SERC as the ultimately responsible partner (as contracts were with SERC) presented coordinating challenges with regard to proper communication processes and support to the people involved throughout the sessions and in all aspects of their work. The community leader provided much of this support resulting in the need for additional time on his part.

Lessons Learned

• The program continues to have an impact among participants of the sessions. Participants clearly learned new information, found a safe space to share personal issues (in particular among the steady, smaller group of women), grew comfortable around sexuality related issues, and created rapport with the Facilitators. This appears to be similar to our experiences with other community groups involved in similar education.

• The original successful model of having smaller and closed groups continues to hold true. We found that larger groups that are not able to build strong connections among participants and between participants and Facilitators do not fully benefit from the education. The outcomes tend to be weaker.

• Community-based approaches are appropriate and relevant. However, they also tend to be resource intensive. In this instance, we were not able to assess fully the value added of the model in terms of community capacity building. For instance, the transferring of funds from bus fare to personnel was not justified in this evaluation.

• SERC’s current capacity within the limitations of the Intergenerational Communication project (i.e., planned objectives and resources) certainly limits, if not impedes, the development of full-fleshed community development models.

Recommendations

• Ensure that groups continue to adhere to the model already proven successful (e.g., ideal number of participants, registered and retain participants, encourage participation through discussion and participatory exercises, use of competent/well oriented interpreters). There is a clear benefit to continuing providing education to the Eritrean community.

• Community development processes and outcomes need to be carefully assessed within the constraints of the project to prevent excessive drainage of resources. This is all the more important when the use of additional funds or changes in decisions on how funds are used does not clearly result in enhanced programming.
- Strengthen processes for accountability and transparency between partners. This could initially be fulfilled through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ongoing monitoring, as open communication may not be deemed sufficient. Such a MOU should lay out the principles the program operates under (including ethical behaviour such as consideration of power dynamics between partners and most importantly with members of the community, of confidentiality and of the considerations that should be made before affecting a partner’s work and reputation (i.e., that of its staff) in the community).

- Include participation in the evaluation process as part of all contracts. This would assist in assessing the outcomes of the positions in the community and individuals.

- Try as much as possible to assess the cost-effectiveness of the model in advance to prevent engaging in a too resource intensive and complex experience resulting in use of excessive resources and stressful situations.

In conclusion, while the ideals behind the current model are compatible with SERC’s mandate and project objectives, the actual model and the way it has been conceptualized and operationalized has resulted in a number of challenges. The sheer complexity of the model has lead to a heavy burden on the part of both community and SERC. While community leadership feels able to continue with this level of in-kind commitment, SERC is not able to sustain such a resource-intensive project, especially in light of the evaluation’s inability to establish clearly enhanced benefits to community and the project. Key differences in the way a community organization may work, and the way SERC is mandated to fulfill its mission, have lead to numerous conflicts and stresses for staff and community organizers. Thus, it is recommended that, while newcomers from the Eritrean community should still benefit from education, the overall model be revised to more closely reflect a model that is sustainable in terms of resources, manageable in terms of complexity, and compatible with both community and SERC’s goals and objectives.

**Multicultural Parents Group (October-December 2009)**

The sessions with a multicultural group of parents (8 weeks) were held at SERC on Thursdays from 6 – 9:00 PM beginning on October 20 and ending December 8, 2009. Fifteen community members registered for the session. This was a very diverse group with participants from Afghanistan, China, Guatemala, Mexico, Burundi, Argentina, Somalia, India, Sudan and Taiwan. There was a high level of attendance to the sessions with 15 participants registered. Participants attended between 5 to 8 sessions. Participants attended an average of 7.3 sessions each. Over half of the participants attended the 8 sessions. One third attended 87.5% of the sessions (i.e., 7 sessions). The rest, 2 participants, attended 5 and 6 sessions respectively. The group was 80% women, 20 % men. They had been in Canada between 7 months and 4 years (20.7 months average). Participants had between 1 and 7 children, with an average of about 3 children per family. Children ranged from 2 to 28 years of age (average of over 12 years). Most participants’ children were in their teens.
EVALUATION FINDINGS

Motivation to Participate

As newcomers, we need to know the information – we need to absorb more information because it’s different for us... So I come because of the school [i.e. ad] and then I stayed because I never thought of these things I learn here.

I think it’s very important as a newcomer immigration because our children are the future of this country.

Participants indicated that they were interested in attending the session because of the topics advertised. They believed that the program would be useful for immigrants. Participants shared a number of experiences involving their children growing up in Canada; they stated that because of the program, they were able to better understand and analyze those situations. They also decided to attend to learn about cultural life in Canada, the law and health issues such as STIs. They were interested in learning what their children were exposed to about sexuality education in the school system. They learned about the program through a “small pamphlet” found in school.

Outcomes: Learnings and Use of the Knowledge

For most participants there was much new information. This was particularly so for those coming from societies where talking about sexuality is a complete taboo. For others, while some of the information was not completely new, the understanding of such information in the context of the parent-child relationship with a group of parents was new and relevant.

Participants learned about Canadian culture in general, and understanding the impact of Canadian culture and society. Participants were able to understand the complexities of integrating into a new culture as a family (e.g., impact on couples leading to divorce, issues for youth as they may lured into gang activity). A couple shared their experience as parents when their child shared with them a situation where a young girl approached the boy to have sex, something surprising to the boy and to his parents. The participants were interested in understanding what to expect in terms of sexuality and sexual behaviour within this new culture and how to approach the issue with their children. Participants also indicated learning about sexual health information taught in school, different cultures, and even about parenting styles. They also learned how to talk about the many topics (including HIV) with their partners and children. They also found that the information around discipline in the new sociocultural context was useful. Some of the participants had been able to modify their behaviours to become more effective parents. They had also come to reflect and understand how to deal with cultural differences and make the best of both cultures.

Some of the participants intended to borrow some of the videos they were exposed to in class to share with their children. One of the participants took note of the title of one of the main books used in class (i.e., Barbara Coloroso).
The program provided some added benefits such as being able to practice English, expanding their social networks (i.e., making friends), and sharing information in general. Participants appreciated the access to written information for themselves, their children and other community members. They requested information on how to access to this written material (i.e., website).

**Relevant information within a Culturally Responsive Approach**

Participants felt their culture was respected. They were very comfortable during the session. They appreciated to have an opportunity to have different opinions on the different topics. This allowed them to become more aware of cultural differences and open their minds. One important factor that made this possible was having a facilitator that could relate to the participants’ immigrant experience and as an immigrant mother.

**Areas for Improvement and Suggestions**

Participants suggested that the sessions be advertised more widely and visibly. Many have found the information through “small pamphlets”, and when talked to other community members or schoolmates about the project, many said others would have also benefitted.

They also indicated a need for more information. One of the participants was surprised to see that eight weeks were not enough. He said: “At first, I thought 8 weeks was too much – now it’s not enough. My classmates, they want to come. At first, I saw 8 weeks – now I need more!” Another participant felt that three-hour sessions were not enough. He recommended full-days.

When asked what other topics they would suggest, one participant spoke at length about the need for more in-depth discussion about the social and emotional lives of their teenagers, about what happens at school, what kinds of influences they face and so on. Others indicated their agreement. Some participants commented on needing more information about issues their children face such as bullying, and peer pressure to take drugs and alcohol, for example. Many in this (English-speaking) group were also very interested in accessing SERC’s and other agencies’ written resources. They also added a few topics that fall outside SERC’s mandate such as financial support for youth to access university and college.

A quick analysis of the information provided by the participants led us to suggest that participants would also benefit from access to a resource list that includes some of the texts/models referred to, websites, DVDs, etc. and information on where to access these resources. As many parents were referred to information available in SERC’s website, there should be clear information on how to access handouts on SERC’s website and clear information on how to access SERC’s resource centre for books/videos. The facilitators should also consider – time permitting – to conduct a short tour of SERC at the end the last session, particularly if the group is interested in accessing resources.

In addition, it was clear that many were very motivated to seek further information. Many of these participants would be excellent in an advisory capacity or as participants on information update rounds or information sessions with parents. Continuing education for past participants should be assessed as part of future evaluation (e.g., format, likelihood of attendance to sporadic sessions, etc.).
Sudanese Parents Group (January- March 2010)

*It’s a good program, we learn a lot. We just sit at home and don't know anything. About sexuality… we’re left in the dark.*

For this parents group, 15 participants from the Sudanese community were registered. One man attended the first session only and for the remaining groups, all participants were women. Data is incomplete for this group at the time of reporting, but from Facilitators’ observations, most participants had been in Canada 5-6 years. The range of children was approximately 1-6 children per family; most had pre-teens or teenaged children.

**EVALUATION FINDINGS**

**Motivation to Attend**

All participants had attended the sessions because they learned about the program from the community recruiter. There was a consistent interest to attend, as the topics of the sessions were believed to help families, and above all the connection between parents and children. All participants indicated that once they began to participate in the sessions they continue to attend because the information was interesting and would help them “to raise kids”.

**Learning Outcomes**

*Adopt a new culture is important 'cause kids will follow ways of Canadians. To open our eyes earlier to how to raise and talk to children, they’ll be more open to you rather than push you away.*

The majority of the responses given by participants, regarding the main issues and information they had learned over the ten weeks, linked directly to the main outcome of the sessions. The participants largely agreed that they had increased their knowledge and level of awareness of communication related issues with their children around sexuality and growing up in Canada. Some of the participants felt more competent to answer questions or address issues with their children. It was apparent that they were concerned about a number of issues their children face from sexuality to drug use, gang participation and criminal involvement. One of the participants felt that children tend to know more about sex than their parents. This becomes a significant disparity when trying to raise children in a new country. These sessions would assist in bridging the knowledge gap around sexuality related issues.

Participants felt that they were more ready to talk about sexuality related issues with children, and be more open to “two-way communication” with them.

Some of the participants also shared other examples on topics that have added important information to them. For instance, information on birth control appeared important as many haven’t had any information on the topic nor have practiced any form of birth control before coming to Canada. A couple of participants shared that the only
information some received on birth control was from the Public Health Nurse who visited after they gave birth.

**Education within a Culturally Responsive Approach**

*We don’t discuss this in our culture, it’s good to talk about it here.*

We asked about the level of comfort participants had while in the workshops and the reasons behind their answers. Our objective is to know if we are able to establish the rapport necessary to deal with a sensitive topic such as sexuality and more importantly if we can do it in a cross-cultural context. In this case, most participants appeared to be very comfortable in the sessions. They attributed this strongly to fact that this was a women-only group. Gender specific, and particularly, women-only groups tend to facilitate greater comfort and depth of sharing of experiences and information. It appeared that the group provided a safe environment for women to get to know each other and develop relationships beyond the group.

It also appeared that the format of the sessions, mostly discussion-based, was a facilitator in the development of comfort levels and openness among the participants. One of the participants highlighted the role of the Facilitators in serving as role models and being encouraging “Facilitators make it more encouraging to say what you had to say inside.” It was also clearly stated that because these issues are not openly talked about within their cultural context, these sessions presented an optimum opportunity to learn and discuss in a safe environment. They also mentioned feeling that their culture and beliefs were respected in the sessions. They were also comfortable with the interpretation provided as they were confident in the interpreter and felt free to speak openly on the topics of the sessions with her.

We were also interested in the receptivity to written materials. Participants felt that the handout were useful. They appreciated having the English and Arabic versions of the handouts available.

**Suggestions for Improvement**

This year the sessions were facilitated by two consecutive facilitators. One facilitator carried out the first part of the sessions and the rest of the sessions were conducted by another facilitator. This decision was mostly guided by staff resources available at the time the session was to be held. This was the main point of discussion around the improvements that are needed for the workshop. Most participants felt that this procedure disrupted the level of connection established at the beginning of the course with the initial facilitator. As one of the participants explained: I like to get along with someone and then connection is lost when a new person comes along.”

Other item brought up was the fact that women can talk more openly in women-only groups. It was their preference to sustain this model. They also believed that it was important to have men-only programs. The participants suggested that the topics for men should include: gender roles and relationships (i.e., “how to treat a woman”), and services available for men.

The topics of the sessions were well received and relevant to the group; however, additional concerns on issues faced as parents pointed to a stronger need to deal with
parenting related issues. For instance, one woman expressed concern that children are not listening to her as a parent and are only listening to what teachers are telling them at school. She was concerned about losing authority as a parent. She expressed a need to learn how to deal with this divide and tension.

Practical Aspects of the Sessions

Sessions on Saturday were suitable to participants as it was the central location (i.e., Sudanese Cultural Centre). The snacks and refreshments were well received. Women particularly appreciated having fruit available. As per access to funds for babysitting, this appears to be important to participants. A few participants commented on the fact that the current level of support is limited as they were paying more for babysitting. However, they were able to pay extra to be able to attend the sessions as this was among the few times they hired babysitters.

Service Providers Workshop (Nov. 19th & Dec. 8th)

“Exploring a Culturally Competent Approach to Understanding Sexuality and Family Relationships Focusing on Newcomer Parents and Couples”

A total of 26 participants attended one of the two full-day sessions designed for service providers. 24 responded the pre-training questionnaire. Of these, 8 participants belonged to the settlement sector, 8 to community organizations, 3 to other sectors, 2 to the government sector, and one to community health and education respectively. One of the respondents of the pre-training questionnaire did not indicate occupation neither their employment sector.

People with a wide range of occupations within these sectors attended the training. Among the most common occupations were settlement workers, family education workers, social workers, and counselors. Among the agencies represented were Portage Learning Centre, Rainbow Resource Centre, U of M MSW student, Nor-West CHC, New Directions/Project Oasis, Immigrant Resource Learning Centre/Portage La Prairie, Family Centre, Family Services (EIA), Altered Minds Inc./ Entry Program, Pluri-Elles, Alicia Rae Career Centre, Inc., Multicultural Family Centre, Supported Living, Healthy Start for Mom and Me, WRHA, a Neighbourhood Immigrant Settlement Worker, and the Family Centre. A number of participants were educators, students, and nurses.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Pre and Post Training Questionnaire Results

This chart represents the average rating given in pre and post tests by participants, in order to measure changes in awareness and knowledge after the training. Twenty four participants responded to the pre-training questionnaire and seventeen responded to the post training questionnaire. Of these responses, 17 forms were able to be matched using a code.

Participants were asked to rate the following nine questions using the following scale:
1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; 4 = strongly agree; 0 = n/a or not sure.

The following chart represents the responses from the 17 matched pre and post questionnaires. Participants who rated a question “0” were not included in the averages for that question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am knowledgeable about all components of sexuality</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I know what cultural competence means</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am aware of good strategies for cultural competence in my work</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can communicate well with people whose age, gender, culture and language is different than mine</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel comfortable in my ability to work with immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel it is important to understand the cultural practices and beliefs of my immigrant and refugee clients</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am aware of my own personal beliefs and values around sexuality</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I can work effectively with clients whose beliefs and values about sexuality are different from mine</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am very aware of the issues immigrant and refugee clients faces as parents.</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I am very aware of the issues immigrant and refugee clients face in their intimate relationships (couples/with partners).</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results show that participants showed an increase in knowledge in all areas after the training. Numbers highlighted in yellow show the greatest areas of change.

The greatest change was in participants’ knowledge of the meaning of cultural competence, followed by their level of awareness of good strategies for cultural competence in their work. The third and fourth greatest changes were around an increase in their awareness of the issues immigrant and refugee clients face in their intimate relationships, and an increased level of comfort in their ability to work with immigrants and refugees.

The number highlighted in green represents the area with the least change. The area with the least change was the participants’ feeling that it was important to understand the cultural practices and beliefs of their clients. However, this is because many of them gave this question a high rating at the beginning of the training. By the end of the training, all but two participants said that they “strongly agreed” with this statement. The other two agreed.

It is worth noting that about 70% of the participants indicated agreement with the statement that tried to measure their level of awareness of their personal beliefs and values around sexuality prior to the education session. The rest strongly agreed on this.
This area, as with the rest of the measures, still showed a small increase, indicating that participants did increase their level of awareness and comfort in these areas.

**General Aspects of the Workshop**

Participants were also asked to rate a number of aspects related to the workshop on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General agenda and contents</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General process</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General facilitation</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary items</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants rated the workshop very positively on all aspects. The highest rates were given to secondary items such as the location, refreshments, etc.) followed by general facilitation. Although high, the lowest score related to the “agenda and content” of the training. We could attribute this to the wide range of experiences of participants as well as the different fields they represented. This finding warrants further assessment of participants’ interests and expectations prior to attending the session.

About 60 percent of the participants provided additional written comments. Most of them thanked the facilitators for the information and education approach. Some indicated the information being useful to apply to their jobs, including the resource materials. A few participants would have appreciated some resources to enhance their skill based (e.g., toolbox, list of resources, how to use the resources with newcomers). One participant expected the session to include more emphasis on sexuality and how to approach such topic with newcomers.

According to the facilitators, the first session triggered a lot of participation. However, a few of the participants were interested in sharing specific aspects of certain cultures or their experiences working with immigrant clients. In some occasions this appeared to be off topic and difficult to handle, limiting the time needed to cover all proposed topics.

However, the most important issues that Facilitators commented upon were around the need to adapt the workshop to meet the needs of different groups of people:

- those wanting a greater emphasis on building a comfort level in talking about sexuality with clients (or in own personal lives) but who may not have had much or any experience working with immigrants/refugees
- those who had a fair level of comfort/fluency related to sexuality related issues, and who wanted a focus on cultural competence, i.e. working with immigrants and refugees

While the workshop was not designed to address these issues (i.e., cultural competence and level of comfort with sexuality issues), changes were made to the second session to somewhat address them. This resulted in a better structured second session. This situation led facilitators to reflect upon the need to ensure the objectives of the session are clearly stated and communicated to each potential participants as well as a clear statement on the expected participation base or target audience.
Recommendations

- Develop a clear set of requirements with regards to what we are expecting participants to have prior attending the session, e.g., indicate level of knowledge or understanding of cultural competence and level of comfort with sexuality related issues, and

- Conduct a rapid assessment with registrants a few weeks prior to the training to assess expectations and knowledge or understanding on main areas of the workshops.

- Develop two different workshops or Levels, one addressing cultural competency while working on sexuality related issues and addressing level of comfort while talking about sexuality with clients; and a second workshop focusing on best practices when addressing intergenerational communication issues and issues for couples with clients from diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds.

Youth Group (January- March 2010)

The sessions with a multicultural group of youth (8 weeks) were held at SERC on Fridays from 6 – 9:00 PM beginning on January 23 and ending March 5, 2010. Ten youth from Burundi, Congo, Guatemala and Korea registered for the sessions. There were 7 young females and 3 young males ranging from 14 to 20 years of age initially registered. Seven youth attended on an ongoing basis. Ages of youth were evenly spread out. All participants attended school on a full-time (80%) or part-time (20%) basis. Two of the youth were working. Most participants heard about the group through their parents. An initial assessment with youth indicated that by attending the session they would learn English, have a good (fun) time, make friends, enhance their abilities to talk to their parents, learn about Canadian culture, know where to get jobs, have information for their future and health issues. Most had been in Canada under 2 years. We have six records of the ages of participants: 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 20. Schools attended included Fort Richmond Collegiate, the King’s School, St. John’s High School, Gordon Bell, Elmwood and Daniel McIntyre.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Motivation to Participate

I can discuss my feeling and experiences. I’m here and I can tell my secrets.

I wanted to know all this...you can know what to do when in trouble...I can know what to do in future.

Unlike other groups whereby participants are invited by a recruiter or staff, or through posters in key locations where people congregate and word of mouth in the community, the main recruitment strategy for this group was through their youth’s parents. We had heard over the years, parents’ interest in SERC taking the lead with education sessions.
for youth, indications that they would refer youth to the group, and that they would refer their own children to the group. Based on such demand, staff contacted a list of parents to reach out to their children. At the time of the evaluation, six participants had been referred to the group by their parents. Another participant was recruited by another youth participant.

Interested in fully understanding this unique outreach and recruitment strategy, we asked participants about their perspectives on coming to a group to talk about sexuality while their parents were the ones asking them to attend. It appeared that youth felt a bit unsure or "weird" about this situation. However, most of them decided to continue attending the group. They did so because they found out that in the group they were able to discuss their feelings and learn useful information. A number of participants had gave up some other activities to be able to attend the group (e.g., sports, other organized youth groups, parties).

**Overall Satisfaction**

We used a participatory exercise whereby youth wrote on a sticky a word or phrase to describe what they liked the best about the group, and post it on a chart.

These are the results using a program that shows in larger fonts the words that came up more frequently. The following is “Wordcloud” that was made with verbatim quotes from their ‘stickies:’

**Smile**
**Discuss**
**Express my feelings**
**Fun**
**The fun that we got here**
**How easy is to express myself easily here**
**Culture**
**Conversation**
**The information they gave us is really helpful**
**Learn how to solve problems or conflicts**
**Group**
**Friends**
**Understand**
**Food**
**Language**
**Food is good**

Summarizing the main concepts and inputting them into the Wordcloud program resulted in this diagram:
Changes Knowledge and Use of the Information

I always fight with them but now I’m learning how to deal with fights/problems with parents.

In order to ensure participants were able to remember and address as many areas of knowledge shared in the sessions, we showed a full list of topics to the group during the evaluation session.

Although it seemed that most topics were well received, some of them resonated more than others. Among the most important topics to participants were decision-making processes, mental health, self-esteem, conflict resolution and birth control. Participants reflected upon most of these topics by relating them to their personal experiences as immigrant youth. For instance, one of the participants felt that including mental health issues was important to her as she explained: “I was so lonely, I always worried about depressions but [the facilitator] explained that most people feel this way...I got a lot of encouragement from her.”

Decision-making was relevant to youth. This topic helped them understand how to make decisions under different circumstances. Another participant mentioned that the topic of self-esteem helped her think about her own culture and values in a positive manner. Other participants stated they had learned to deal with people, and had applied this knowledge in some school situations and with parents. One of them explained to us: “...sometimes I learn how to deal with people like that at school who are dealing with [conflicts and mental health issues]. You know how to approach them and how to deal with it, how to speak to people.”

As youth were mostly referred by their parents to the training, we assumed that a heightened awareness of youth participation would impact also on their relationship. We asked youth to tell us what happened with their parents as result of coming to the sessions. One of the participants indicated that her parents were quite relieved to know that she was receiving this information. As she put it: “they said, ‘Thanks God someone
else can tell you this stuff’ [i.e., sexuality]!” Another participant commented that the quality of her relationship with her parents had changed as result of the course with fewer tensions with her parents. A few others talked about sharing some of the information from the workshops with parents. One participant referred to the difficulties encountered trying to communicate with her parents as result of a specific activity given in the session. Youth were voluntarily asked to “interview” their parents about their experiences as parents settling in Canada. This youth found the exercise difficult as she talked with her parents in their own language, but found it challenging to transfer this into English for the group.

Another clear outcome of the sessions was the interest to continue learning about these issues. All participants also indicated without hesitation that they will refer other youth to a similar program.

**Teaching Approaches**

In order to understand better youth reception of teaching approaches utilized throughout the sessions, we asked them to rate the main methods used by referring to a number of concrete examples used to address certain topics. Once scores were provided, youth were invited to comment on their ratings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Average Scores</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Games, activities quizzes</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>It appeared that youth rated this approach quite low to indicate they wanted more of these types of fun, participatory activities. There was agreement in the group that they would prefer to “move around” more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming and discussion about sexuality</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>The evaluator noticed a polarity among participants. Some were clearly ‘into’ role playing and others were clearly not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role playing</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>The use of the “Question Box” presumes that participants are able to feel comfortable writing in English. We believe that some lower scores for this activity may be attributed to this factor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of information</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>At times, Facilitators used approaches that were more similar to a lecture style, to impart important health information, for example. When asked, youth rated this approach quite high because they felt the information being covered was extremely important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Box</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discussions</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Homework” interviewing parents about what makes them happy, stressed…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A few participants elaborated on this exercise. Some believed that it was a difficult activity to accomplish because it forced them to have a type of conversation with their parents that would not usually occur. Data from the facilitators indicate that some participants found this exercise useful. It opened up the communication between parents and children. It is likely that for the youth who rated this exercise low, it may be a reflection on the low levels of comfort about talking to parents about personal topics when there was no precedent in this regard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants appeared to have rated this approach as low as they referred to a video on HIV, that was presented at the end of a session with no time to de-brief. A few commented, in the evaluation session, that they did want more videos.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Creating a Safe Space**

We asked participants to share their experiences in attending the group in terms of how they felt in the group, their abilities to share with other youth and across cultures, and in sharing a space in a gender-mixed group.

All youth indicated that they felt safe in speaking and sharing their thoughts in the group. They didn’t feel judged. They appreciated having been able to share information and this experience with youth from many cultural backgrounds.

With regards to the composition of the group, gender-mixed groups were “good” according to the participants. Yet, one participant suggested that we ask youth if they prefer a “co-ed” group prior to the session. This was followed by an analysis of the advantages of gender-segregated groups. Some of the participants felt that separate groups will help youth to “feel more comfortable”. One boy gave an example of how guys will talk about things that they would not normally talk about in front of girls. However, they also believed that “…guys and girls learning something about each other and talking together is also good.”

The youth felt that the language used was easy to understand. They believed the facilitators made sure that everyone understood the information and were very intuitive and helpful when someone was not able to understand.

An option to have parents attend part of one session was received negatively by the group.

**Practical Aspects**

The location was accessible and comfortable. The time of the day and length of the sessions were also acceptable to participants. Youth believed that it was important to have access to bus tickets to be able to attend. The food offered during the sessions
was always sufficient and appropriate to the youth. Youth were offered a small honorarium for participation at the end of the series of sessions. The youth believed that this was not a key factor in attending.

**Suggestions for Improvement**

As already described in a previous section, participants would enjoy activities that increase their participation and engagement. They also supported the use of videos or DVDs. Use of alternate approaches would also assist to bridge disparities in literacy levels. It appeared that English fluency was an issue for some youth.

They also mentioned that having a youth as part of the team of educators would enhance youth response to the group. One participant said: *it would be better to have a youth (someone who’s been through it) because you’re confident with him, it would be very cool.* A male youth also mentioned having a male youth in such position. This was also observed by a presenter at the youth panel.

An analysis of the information gathered with regards to the recruitment (through parents), and the facilitators’ experiences suggest that recruitment should be opened to mostly focus on reaching out to youth directly or through third party allies such as service providers, youth workers, etc.

**Filipino Event (Parents and Youth) (March 2010)**

The “Meet Ate Anna Event” co-organized with the Pilipino Express and with active involvement from community organizers and ANAK (Aksyon Ng Ating Kabataan - *Filipino Youth* in Action), has become an annual event in the Filipino community. The event was planned as a 2-3 hour session, with dinner provided and used a fun, entertaining format to explore intergenerational issues with parents and youth.

As in past years, we aimed to attract 50 participants, mainly parents from the Filipino community. Youth who are a part of ANAK performed at the event and attended/participated as well.

We had 41 participants in attendance of whom about 30 had pre-registered. Of the additional 11 participants, 9 were from the ANAK group, and the rest attended without pre-registration.

ANAK members read out and dramatized monologues, given from the point of view of a Filipino daughter, son, mother and father. These dramatizations served as an excellent jumping-off point for discussion and exploration of themes

This year’s event was held on Thursday March 18	extsuperscript{th}, from 6:30 – 9:30 at CB’s Restaurant, 84 Isabel Street.

See Appendices for an article in the Pilipino Express about the event.
EVALUATION FINDINGS

In the past, the success of the event has been driven by the strong commitment and vision of the Filipino community. The Pilipino Express, key community organizers and the youth group ANAK again contributed many volunteer hours to support organizing and outreach for this year’s event.

Evaluations were distributed to all participants. Evaluations were turned in at the end of the night. Twenty-five complete evaluation forms were returned at the event. This represents about a 61% response rate.

Participants’ responses on the end-of-session evaluations indicated that they were familiar with SERC’s Ate Anna column in the Pilipino Express. Eighty-eight percent of the participants (n=22) had read the column. Of these, participants said they “always” (6), “sometimes” (10) or “often” (6) read the column. The participants who have never read the column indicated that now that they are aware of the column they will start reading it.

Respondents found many aspects of the event enjoyable and useful. Forty-four percent found the monologue, the presentation and the opportunity to learn about these topics with others in the community as their favorite parts.

Participants responded that they gained valuable information at the event. Seventeen (17) respondents found the information “very useful”. An additional 24% found it “useful” and the rest (2) found it of little use.

Almost all respondents said their level of understanding about communication between parents and children had increased. Of these (n=24), sixteen or 64 percent said they learned “a lot”, seven or 28 percent learned “enough” and 1 learned “a little”. Most respondents (n=10) expressed the intent to use the information they had learned with their families, including:

- Communication (17)
  - Listening (6)
  - Two way communication, mutual sharing, open communication (12)
  - Keep open communication regardless of the problem (1)
  - Good communication about sexuality (2)
- Human sexuality
- Parenting styles
- Children development – keep in mind brain development during adolescence re judgment.
- Family need to adapt to new social environment (3)

Ideas for Next Steps

In planning this year’s event, SERC has internally been discussing the possible evolution of this model in the Filipino community. Initially, the idea arose from our existing connection with the Filipino Express - the Ate Anna column. Realizing that this is a huge community in Winnipeg that SERC has not had great success in accessing in our, for example, multicultural groups, we “jumped” at the opportunity, a few years ago, to

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7 In order to ensure a high rate of response we asked participants to return the complete questionnaire as a condition to collect their bus tickets.
partner with the Filipino Express and ANAK to hold a special event that would help us raise awareness, share information and ultimately build a stronger foundation (relationship, trust) for future work in this community. SERC, therefore, has asked in the evaluation about participants’ perspectives on our more typical model of education, one that has demonstrated impacts on parents, families and communities.

The ideas for next steps were gathered from participants’ responses to questions in the end-of-session evaluation. Of the twenty-five (25) respondents, 11 said they were interested in attending a series of sessions on the topic. An additional 12 participants indicated that they would consider attending a series of weekly sessions. They were interested in information on the following topics:

- Parenting and family relationships (7) – respect, communication
- Intimate relationships/heterosexual relationships (4)
- Sexuality and sex education (3) – sex education for parents and children
- Employment (2)
- Gender roles, Puberty, Same sex relationships, Adapting to life in Canada, Racism, Addictions, Anger management (each one mentioned once)

Participants (n=12) suggested the following topics for future “Ate Anna” articles in the Pilipino Express:

- Dealing and adapting to Canadian culture
- Relationships
- Reproductive health – birth control
- Same sex relationships
- Couples issues
- Human sexuality
- Parent and children communication about sexuality
- Dating
- Addictions
- Employment
- Parenting and family relationship

Assessment with Single Mothers: Preliminary Findings (February-March 2010)

The idea for a community assessment on the experiences of single mothers raising teenage children in Canada resulted from comments made in previous years’ evaluations by participants who stated that there needed to be programs that addressed the specific needs of single parents. Also, SERC Facilitators had observed a significant proportion of single parents in some communities and realized there was a gap in knowledge about their educational needs.

The original plan was to conduct two focus groups with single mothers to use findings for program improvement. However, after hearing similar requests from single fathers, we decided to expand the project. We applied and successfully received funding from the
Winnipeg Foundation to conduct 8 additional focus groups with single parents, individual interviews with parents, consultations with service providers and a literature review. We also completed a full ethics protocol, which was approved by the University of Manitoba. Currently, we have hired a project coordinator and a research assistant and are following the advice of a Project Advisory Group that we have established. This project is underway and the final report is scheduled to be completed by November 2010.

As part of this project, we conducted two focus groups with mothers with a total of 15 participants. The findings from these focus groups will be included in the analysis of the larger project.

**Preliminary findings from anonymous questionnaires for two preliminary groups**

Here we present the information collected from the two focus groups conducted as part of this project.

Fourteen participants (93.3%) responded to an written anonymous questionnaire. They were all **women**. Sixty-four (64%) of the women had arrived single to Canada, and the rest had become single in the country. All but one indicated they were not currently in an intimate relationship.

Their **ages** ranged from 26 to 51 years of age, with 60% under the age of 37. The rest were between the age of 42 to 51. The average age was 36.7 years. Half of the participants were originally from Sudan. Over an additional third (i.e., 35.7%) were from Eritrea. The rest (N=2) were from Afghanistan and Argentina. The **length of stay** in Canada ranged from 1 to 10 years with an average of 4.1 years. Sixty six percent (66%) had been in the country under five years.

Their level of formal **education** ranged from grade 2 to grade 11. Only one participant had a college education. The average level of education was **grade 6**. About half of the participants had less than a grade 7 education.

All but one declared having children. They had between 1 to 5 children, with half of the participants rearing between **4 to 5 children**. Eighty-six percent had teenage children (in most cases more than one teenager).

Half of the women worked on a part-time basis, working an average of 14 hours a week for those declaring the number of hours (N=6), one declared working “part time” hours ranging from 4 to 20 hours/week. Four participants were in the janitorial business (“cleaning”), one in retail, one in daycare and one did not say.

**Ability to manage to support family**

We asked participants to tell us if they felt were able to manage to support their families and only 3 reported affirmatively to the question. The rest, 28.5% were not sure and 50% felt they felt not able to support their families.
Access to community resources to support family

Finally, we asked if they believed they had access to adequate resource in their communities to support their families. Fifty percent believed they did not have access to adequate community resources; about 43% did have access. Only one was not sure.

Focus Groups Highlights

This section only addresses the main issues raised during the focus groups and facilitators' observations.

Methodology: Sampling Issues

The groups were diverse with women with only younger children to those with older children (late teens). Although this provided an idea on women's lives, their needs were quite different with regards to sexuality education. For instance, mothers with younger kids were not worried (yet) about what is to come, and women with older children (those getting to their late teens) were more concerned about being lonely, not having an intimate relationship.

Again, the experiences were different for those separated/divorced in Canada, than those coming to Canada as single mothers. This finding related mostly to availability and access to family and community supports. It appears that communities were more supportive of women arriving as single rather than of women separating or divorcing in Canada. This also points out to the need to ensure to keep these two groups separate in upcoming focus groups.

Due to apparent low level of literacy, the consent forms need to be filled out prior to the session. These will need to be read and explained to participants in a face-to-face meeting. Proper documentation of this process needs to be conducted to argue for oral consent in future projects involving immigrants and refugees. However, we will also follow up with the Research Ethics Board to argue for oral consent within this project. We will continue to assist participants in the completion of written questionnaires at the beginning of the session. Interpreters and project staff will assist in this matter. Future participants will need to be reminded of the importance to arrive on time to the session. While maintaining certain tolerance, we should let people know that they won't be allowed to join the group if they arrive 30 minutes or more into the group. All participants need to register. If participants say that they can invite friends, we will follow with these specific contacts.

Preliminary Findings

Addressing Sexuality with Children

Women who had teenagers provided desired insights into the issues they face raising teenagers. It was clear to us that we needed to ensure that we recruit participants in this situation. Women were concerned about how to address sexuality related issues with boys, mostly. They didn't know much about the issues boys encounter, including developmentally and were not ready to talk to them. They referred to gender dynamics in treating these topics (i.e., “how do I talk to my boy?”). In some cases, it was indicated
that in a specific culture parents don’t address these issues directly with their children. There are specific relatives (e.g., paternal uncle, maternal aunt) who would relate the information to the youngest generation. For immigrants from this group, they feel complete lack of readiness to talk with their own children about sexuality (regardless of civic/marital status). Other clear concerns mothers have were with regard to their lack of knowledge of their children’s daily life, including what they learn in school, how life in school is. They also felt pressured by demands from their children to acquire material goods (“stuff” such as clothing, electronics).

**Perception of their Status as Single Mothers**

Overall, women felt that single mothers were highly stigmatized in the community, more so for those who were divorced or separated. They explained to be issues with other (married) women who would perceive single mothers as “loose” or as trying to seduce or “get” their husbands. There were also issues with men, as men may not want their wives to associate with single mothers to prevent them from “getting ideas” that would affect their marriage.

This reality left many women and their families isolated from their own communities. Yet, many of these single moms appeared to be in contact with each other.

**Relationship with the System**

One of the main concerns women had was in relation to the “welfare” system. Most of them were receiving government income assistance. They felt they were not able to gain full or meaningful employment due to the many demands of being a mother, dealing with childcare and school schedules. For those whose children were growing up, they felt harassed by EIA workers. These workers would insist that their children were old enough to find employment to support the family. This directive was perceived as “Canada pushing children to abandon their families”. Conversely, they feared that once their children gained employment they would leave home, something unacceptable in cultures where that is something you do when you get married.

**Next Steps**

Data collection for the rest of the focus groups and interviews will be conducted between April and June 2010. The data will be analyzed over the summer months and a report will be produced for presentation at a community meeting early in the Fall. Throughout this process we will engage the Project Advisory Committee at least two more times. The report will be made widely available.
Community Resource People Training (June 2009- MAY 2010*)

SERC planned five education sessions with a small group of community members interested in gaining more knowledge on intergenerational communication issues around sexuality. This group of community members had participated in SERC’s past education sessions and was interested in assisting their own community by acquiring more information and skills to deliver information.

Over the past year, we conducted three education sessions, one in conjunction with the Strengthening Families program at Mount Carmel Clinic (i.e., the participants were invited to join a training session on HIV/STIs provided to the group of Community-Based Researchers). The other two sessions were delivered at SERC, the first session focused on adolescent development. The second session focused on an rapid assessment of the needs of the participants and an ensuing discussion and analysis of the key issues related to how to best deliver information about intergenerational communication and couples issues in their communities.

Four to five people attended each session. Three were men, two women.

As stated previously, there were several issues that impacted on our ability to hold all five sessions within this project year (i.e. complexities of coordinating with another program, lack of continuity and need to re-establish contact with participants to organize each session, vacation schedules across ours/Strengthening Families program).

*SERC will ensure that deliverables are met in the next two months. The Facilitator will be proposing two or three topics, drawn from earlier sessions’ discussions, as a focus for these final workshops.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

The group Facilitator and project team have identified challenges in coordinating this component of the project. First, to set the dates of the sessions, the Facilitator asked participants what they would prefer. Their idea was to have regular but perhaps monthly sessions over the course of several months. As they were well–connected to SERC, it was felt that this lack of continuity may not affect the sessions. Also, they were all active in their communities and at the time it made sense to have a regular educational workshop so they could bring their questions and issues to the sessions, as they arose in their interactions in community.

However, ultimately, the lack of continuity impacted on the momentum of the workshops and the effectiveness of this stream of the project. While participants clarified in their feedback to SERC that the sessions were valuable and they received needed information, this was not meeting the whole of their needs – more was needed.
SERC however, over the span of this year, has come to the realization that to properly resource a peer-training model, we would need a much greater investment in terms of staff time and planning in order to develop a model that works. Also, we have noted that the Strengthening Families program at Mount Carmel Clinic already has a well-resourced model for supporting peer educators and it seemed to make the most sense to liaise with this program rather than further develop this component of the project.

Feedback from one participant was that she appreciated greatly being connected with the Strengthening Families program and she intends to follow up when there is another intake of Community Based Educators.

Participants have, however, continued to draw upon SERC for support in their community-based work. They shared the following list of topics for which support and information is needed:

- HIV prevention (i.e., “people don’t see much about AIDS in Canada”)
- Youth-focused information looking at cultural change and adaptation among youth
- Cultural adaptation – assist people to find balance between own cultural values and Canadian society’s
- Sexuality is a TABOO – the kids are learning from their friends; the kids open up to the parents .... This is a difficulty because the kids see that the society says ‘yes’ but the church says ‘no’.
- The kids don’t know where to turn – everyone is confused because they’re no longer in Nigeria where sexuality is hidden
- Important to meet the children’s needs; parents & community leaders need to take responsibility
- We can educate our kids – but many things influence them and have an impact on them. How can we tell the government to take action on the media.

Furthermore they made many suggestions around how they would be accessing community and disseminating information learned in the sessions. They discussed working with various organizations they were connected with (e.g. faith-based, ethno-cultural), partnering with ethno-cultural educational initiatives currently existing, supporting recruiting to SERC’s groups, etc.

They continued to strongly recommend a train-the-trainer model for this component of the project: “Train the trainer – you have invited people who are responsible – can get the people .... Like a discipleship. We don’t want to keep (to ourselves) the material we have received.” Some stated that the community will not accept the SERC facilitators on their own (i.e. out in a community setting), but would respond better if a community member was there to co-facilitate the discussion – someone who knew how their community liked to receive information. They described a fairly labour-intensive model of mentoring and support, needed to provide them with adequate, ongoing and consistent supports for delivery of this sensitive material. This recommendation is consistent with feedback from other parents and couples groups across the project, and in past years.

The need for peer-based training is not only driven by the need for culturally sensitive, accessible community-based education, but also by the fact communities are reporting
that the existing agency resources are not sufficient to meet the integration and support needs of the rapidly growing newcomer populations to Manitoba.

Participants also identified the many challenges to peer-based education. They cited: lack of funding (without bus tickets or food, people are not as motivated to attend), lack of information on where to get facilitators (to co-facilitate/assist them in their work), lack of availability of these facilitators (their time is limited to provide community support), and so on.

**Recommendations**

SERC should explore a "middle-ground" to address the expressed needs of these dedicated community organizers and leaders. SERC should examine a model of strengthening our formal and informal ties and communication with the Strengthening Families program and their CBEs. Through our ongoing Community Education program (not project specific), SERC can assess the needs for supports and identify what our part (within our resources) will be in addressing this important need expressed by communities.

**Translations**

Twenty handouts used in our Parents and Couples groups were translated. A thorough process of translation (sometimes involving typesetting) and focus group testing, followed by revisions, was completed. Currently, SERC is posting the translated handouts for download on our website at [www.serc.mb.ca](http://www.serc.mb.ca). We realize that our website is not that easy to access and to that end we are considering developing a resource for our participants to aid them in accessing the documents.

**EVALUATION FINDINGS**

In each focus group we asked participants if they used the handouts. The handouts tended to be well-received by all groups. SERC continuously adapts and revises handouts to suit the audiences we work with. For example, many handouts have been re-written in Plain Language and many now use simple diagrams and fewer words, to illustrate points or highlight information.

The strongest positive response was by those groups with a higher level of education (e.g. Sudanese, Multicultural Parents). Many participants across groups gave concrete examples of using the handouts in their homes (e.g. putting up a handout as a poster to remind everyone of how to communicate effectively, or about appreciation), in the workplace and in the community.

Recommendations included increasing the numbers of translated resources (some have been translated but not all), providing them for people electronically, and continuing to use them in all sessions.
SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall the objectives of the project were met. Participants demonstrated an increase in knowledge and awareness of the topics addressed by the project. Participants also demonstrated an intention to use information learned. Many gave clear examples of how they have already applied some of this new knowledge in their lives. They have also transferred some of the information to family and community members, co-workers and others.

Clearly the core topics of sexuality-related issues were very important to participants and well-received, despite the taboo nature of the subject. It was evident that there were few (if any) arenas in Winnipeg where parents, youth and couples could get good information on and discuss openly deeply personal subjects such as how to prevent STIs, the changes that happen during puberty, or partnership and intimacy in relationships. Furthermore, the overarching topics of intergenerational communication, couples communication, anger management, conflict resolution, to name a few, were all strongly supported as essential for participants in their process of acculturation and adaptation.

Facilitators observed that SERC’s ability to be flexible and discussion-based was a strength in that it allowed Facilitators to act as “cultural brokers” and provide essential secondary settlement information for participants about Canadian systems, laws, culture and values.

Numerous “spin-off” benefits were noted by participants or observed by Facilitators. A number of participants appreciated the opportunity to practice their English and learn more English vocabulary and concepts. At the end of many groups, Facilitators observed participants exchanging contact information and group photos were a given at the end of each session. Although they were not asked to serve as resources in their communities – many participants stated that they were serving as just that – informing people about e.g. laws in Canada, or information that may help them deal with conflict with a child. We saw a number of our past participants become much more strongly connected to other resources, in part, because of their contact with SERC.

Many participants highlighted the crucial role that SERC is playing in providing much needed information that will help alleviate conflict and preserve family cohesion through the multitude of stresses they endure as they undergo adaptation and integration into Canadian society.

Because evaluation and monitoring have been ongoing throughout the year, recommendations have been generated and fed into planning for the upcoming year.

Key recommendations include:

1. Continue to provide educational groups for parents, youth and couples, and workshops for service providers, that use approaches and integrate information that will 1) enhance the adaptation and integration of participants and 2) include core components related to intergenerational/couples communication and sexuality.
2. Continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of the project by addressing specific evaluation feedback from participants and staff that relate to core content, pedagogy, processes and logistics.

3. Use models of delivery which have been established as successful and achievable.
   a. While newcomers from the Eritrean community should still benefit from education, the overall approach should be revised to more closely reflect a model that is sustainable in terms of resources, manageable in terms of complexity, and compatible with both community and the project’s goals and objectives.
   b. The evolution of the Filipino Event should be examined in close collaboration with community partners, to look at potential models that might further enhance impact on participants.

4. Continue to liaise with and support those agencies and individuals who are providing peer-based education and support to communities, within the resources available to SERC.

5. Continue to explore the specific issues of single newcomer parents as they relate to intergenerational communication and sexuality related issues

6. Support partnerships that work towards meeting current gaps as illuminated by the project: secondary settlement support informational needs (e.g. how Canadian systems work, how to access resources, Canadian laws - 911, child protection, domestic violence, separation/divorce, rights’ frameworks)

7. Continue to translate and make accessible handouts from groups

8. Hold more youth groups to address the strong recommendations of parent participants that services are required for youth.
Appendices

Focus group questions parents, couples, youth (samples)

Filipino Event: Sample Monologue “Mother”

Filipino Event Evaluation Form

Article from Pilipino Express re: Ate Anna Event

Service Provider Training Pre and Post Questionnaire
Evaluation Questions: Focus Group for Sudanese Parents (as an example)

1. How did you learn about the group? (e.g., recruiter, poster, past participants)

2. What are the reasons you decided to come to this group?

3. Once you realized what the group was about, why did you decide to stay?

4. What are some things you learned in the workshops?
   • What were the most useful/interesting topics? (e.g., culture/cultural adaptation, parenting in Canada/Canadian laws, cultural values/model of change, parenting styles, sexuality, talking with children about sexuality, puberty, talking with children about changes in puberty, communication skills, birth control, STIs)
   • Something that stands out?
   • A new skill?

5. Can you tell me about something you learned in the workshops that you have used, or would like to use in your life?
   • Something that will help you in the future?
   • Please give an example

6. Were the handouts useful? Did you use them or do the “exercises” in some of the handouts? Were there any that were very useful?

7. How comfortable were you in the workshops? why or why not?
   • Did any of the topics upset or embarrass you?
   • Were you comfortable learning and talking to the other participants?

6. Did you feel your culture and beliefs were respected and valued?
7. What would you suggest to make the workshops better in the future?
   • Topics
   • Different ways of delivering/different models? (probe: this year we had two sequential facilitators – one did the first few sessions, the other continued, how did you feel about that? If we were to have one main facilitator coming to each session how should we do that?)
   • Date? Time?
   • Food?
   • Do you feel you were able to understand well through interpretation? Anything you’d like to say about interpretation? Is there anything that you could suggest to help the interpreters out/help SERC in coordinating interpretation?
   • You received support for babysitting. Would you be able to attend if no or less funds were to be available?
   • Location? Was the location convenient to you? Would you attend a session if it were in other central/downtown location? (easily accessible by bus). Do you feel the room is suitable to this type of sessions and activities?

8. Is there anything else you’d like to say?
Evaluation Questions: Focus Group for Issues for Couples

1. What got you to the group / what are the reasons you decided to come to this group? Once you realized what the group was about, why did you decide to stay?

2. What are some things you learned in the workshops?
   • What were the most useful/interesting topics?
   • Something that stands out?
   • A new skill?

3. Can you tell me about something you learned in the workshops that you have used, or would like to use in your life?
   • Something that will help you in the future?
   • (add: Please give an example)

4. Were the handouts useful? Did you use them or do the “exercises” in some of the handouts? Were there any that were very useful?

5. How comfortable were you in the workshops? why or why not?
   • Did any of the topics upset or embarrass you?
   • Were you comfortable learning and talking to the other participants?

6. Did you feel your culture and beliefs were respected and valued?

7. What would you suggest to make the workshops better in the future?
   • Topics
   • (add: different ways of delivering/different models)
   • Date? Time? Location? Food? Interpretation?

8. Is there anything else you’d like to say?
Evaluation Questions: Focus Group Youth Group

Before Evaluation:

- “Name that Youth Group”
- Write a word or two to describe the think you liked most about the group (on white board)

Intergenerational Communication Project 09-10– Youth Sessions
Focus Group Questions (revised)

- INTRODUCTION – self and Notetaker (roles)

  ➢ We’re doing this evaluation to help us improve the youth group and the whole project (we also work with parents and couples)
  ➢ Everything you say will be kept confidential. This means that no names will be used, no information that would identify you will be used
  ➢ We will put the information in reports to the funder and on our website
  ➢ You can choose to not answer any questions at any time
  ➢ PLEASE be honest and up-front – we really need to know how to make the group better for other youth
  ➢ Before we start, when I say “facilitator’ I mean X, X and the guest speakers
  ➢ Warning: we have very little time – may seem a bit rushed, but we all want to get to the cake part!

1. How did you find out about this youth group?

2. Why did you want to take part in the group?
   ➢ If it was through your parents, how did you feel when they told you to come?
   ➢ Once you realized what the group was about, why did you decide to stay?
   ➢ Was there anything you had to give up to come to this group?

3. We’re interested in what your parents think about the group…
   ➢ What do your parents say to you when you come back home from the sessions?
   ➢ What do you say to them about the sessions, about the stuff you learned?

4. If there is time – review stickies (wordcloud)…
   ➢ I see you have listed many things in terms of what you liked most about coming to the group….such as…..anything to add?

   OR
   ➢ What have you liked most about the group or about coming here?
5. Around the room, you can see a list of topics you talked about in each session.
   - What are some of the things that you, personally, learned in the sessions?
   - **IF TIME:** I’d like you each to take a set of dots and place them in the red circles beside the sessions. You have 8 dots each – you can place one on each or put 2 or 3 on the **most useful** topics.
     a. What were the **most** useful/interesting topics?  Or I can see that….
     b. Something that stands out?
     c. A new skill? A new way of communicating with your parents/other youth?
     d. What about the sessions with guest speakers?
        [refer to list of guest speakers & topics]

6. The facilitators used many different ways of teaching.
   - I’ll go over a list and ask you to **rate** each in terms of how much you **liked** this way of teaching. Rate them on a scale of 1 – 10 where 10 is the most liked, and explain why:
     a. Games/Activities/Quizzes
        i. like what kind of animal are your family members (in conflict resolution)
        ii. or drawing your past/my present
        iii. or world map puzzle –where did you come from?
        iv. or true/false quiz on youth violence (in no means no)
     b. Brainstorming and discussion (where the facilitator gets you to give all your ideas about “what is sexuality” and writes them all down – and then you have a discussion)
     c. Role Playing (like when you did a role play in the conflict resolution workshop – acting out a type of conflict and replacing each other to try and work it out)
     d. Presentation of information by facilitator (when the facilitator talked to you)
     e. Question box (was there a box that you could write down questions and get answers?)
     f. Case studies (when you are given a little story about a person and a situation, and then you have to discuss it)
     g. Small group discussions
     h. “homework” like interviewing your parents
        i. Videos
        j. Other?

7. Did you feel “safe” in speaking and sharing your thoughts?
   - If not, what could have been done to have a more open, safe space?
   - Did you feel judged?
8. How did you feel about learning and sharing information with a group of youth from other countries/different cultures?
   • Would have been better to have this with just youth from your own cultural background?

9. How did you feel about learning and sharing information with a mixed group of males and females?
   • Would have been there any advantages to having just youth from your own gender in the group?
   • Disadvantages?

10. How have you used the information from these sessions in your everyday life?
   • Any stories you’d like to share?
   • Have you talked to others about this group- if yes, how did they react?
   • Has it helped you in your daily life – if yes, how?

11. Have the sessions made you want to continue your learning?

12. Have you, or would you ask any of your peers/friends to attend a similar group in the future?
   • If not, why?

13. How can we improve:
   • Is there anything that is missing from the sessions that might make it better for the participants?
   • Other topics we should cover?
   • Name one thing we should improve or change

14. Was the language used by the facilitators or the guest presenters easy to understand?
   • Did they need to explain some ideas to you more?

15. Is this location good for you –here at SERC - in this room?

16. Were the session times and days good for you?
   • What about the length of the sessions?

17. When you thought about coming to the group, how important was it that you would be paid an honorarium at the end of the sessions?

18. What are your thoughts on these things we provide for the group?
   a. Food (Quality and quantity?)
   b. Bus tickets (How helpful and were they needed?)
   c. Room (Set up of tables? Space?)
19. Anything else to add? [give out card?]
Filipino Event: Sample Monologue “Mother”

We are the Moreno Family. We came to Canada 2 years ago. I came with my husband and two children - one son and one daughter. My daughter is older; she is now 16 years old. My son is 15 years old.

In the Philippines my husband was an engineer and I was a high school teacher. We had a good life there. We usually took holidays once a year with the whole family. But we decided to come to Canada because we want better opportunities for our children. We want them to have better lives and a better future. It is all for our children.

Canada is different from the Philippines. Everything is so expensive here – groceries, clothing and shoes for the children, music lessons and sports for our children. There are so many bills to pay - car loan, mortgage, insurances, hydro, gas, and water bills. Everything is money, money, money.....

My husband and I started working almost right away after coming to Canada. We weren’t able to work in our professions but we needed to find some kind of work. We work very hard to “make ends meet.” Sometimes I work long hours or pick up more shifts so I get a bigger pay cheque at the end of the month.

I wish my tatay and nanay were here. I miss them. I miss them very much. If they were here, they could help me a lot.... They could cook and look after the children. Now, I have to do everything - cooking, cleaning, laundry, and other household chores, you name it. Every day, after work, I come home quickly. The first thing I do is to put on an apron and start cooking for my children and my husband….. I don’t even have time to go to the “washroom” - I am not kidding!

Sometimes, my daughter helps me clean up the dishes and vacuum the house. My son…. he has so many friends - he is either on the computer, or going out with his friends. He is an outgoing kid and very sociable. As for my husband … he likes watching TV. After dinner, he leaves the table, sits on his favourite couch and starts flipping channels till he finds something he likes. He spends the whole night just sitting in front of that big screen TV! That TV is the toy he bought for himself on Boxing Day. But sometimes, he is so tired that he dozes off in front of the TV.

I wish my husband would help me out sometimes - even a little bit. Even just taking the garbage out. Oh well, what do you expect?? He is a Filipino man…..they are brought up that way. But … now…we are in Canada - not the Philippines. I wish my husband would share some of the housework so I don’t have to do everything.

I am so exhausted by the end of the day! I am ready to jump into the bed and sleep. I don’t even have energy to look at my children’s homework. But, thank goodness both of them do very well in school. I am happy about that. We always tell them that to have a good future and succeed in Canada , they need to have a good education. They need to do well and excel in school. That’s our expectation of them.

Do I have worries about my children growing up here in Canada? Of course I have worries - especially for my daughter. Canada seems like a dangerous place for girls to grow up. There are many teenagers getting pregnant here. Sometimes, I see teenage
girls carrying their babies around or young girls walking around pregnant. They are just too young to become parents! It would be our worst nightmare if our daughter got pregnant…. it would destroy her future. I don’t even want to think about this idea!! That’s why we are very strict with her. We want to protect her. I pray every night that my daughter will be a good girl - finish high school on the honour roll, and then go to university.

Like it or not, Canada is our new adopted home. We are planning to get tatay and nanay here next year. I work hard for the family and for the children - and it’s all worth it. Last year, on Mother’s Day, the children gave me a Mother’s Day card. I was almost in tears when I read the card. It said, “Mom, thanks for everything you do for us – thanks for cooking our favourite food; thanks for taking us to recitals and music lessons; thanks for taking care of us when we are sick; and thanks for buying us the expensive stuff, like ipods and wii. Mom, you are the HEARTBEAT of the home. You are a Super Mom.”

Issues:
- Immigration stresses – working hard, lack of support from the extended family; lack of support from the husband in sharing household chores etc.
- Hopes and dreams for the children
- More worries about raising a girl than a boy – more strict with daughter.
- Worry about teenaged pregnancies – only for girl; boys don’t get pregnant. Don’t talk about it.
- Feel happy because she was acknowledged by her son and daughter for things she did for them
Filipino Event Evaluation Form

AN EVENING WITH ATE ANNA - EVALUATION

Your comments are important to SERC and will help to make our information sessions better. Please fill out this form and hand it in when you collect your bus tickets.

1. What was your **favorite** part of this event? (please check ✓ a box)
   - Monologue
   - SERC presentation
   - Comfortable location
   - Learning with other people
   - Other: (please write below)

2. How **useful** was the information to you? (please circle below)

   1 - Not at all  ☺☺ ☺☺ ☺☺
   2 - A little
   3 - Useful
   4 - Very

3. What one thing did you learn from today’s information that you can use with your family? (please write below)

4. Are you **interested** in coming to more information sessions to learn more about these issues? (please circle below)

   1 - Not at all  ☺☺ ☺☺ ☺☺
   2 - A little
   3 - Interested
   4 - Very

5. If we have more information sessions like this one, **what topics** should we talk about? (please write below)

6. Do you feel you **understand more** about communication between parents and children? (please circle below)

   1 - Not at all  ☺☺ ☺☺ ☺☺
   2 - A little
   3 - Enough
   4 - A lot

7. Would you attend a series of session – e.g., five weekly sessions? (circle one)
   - No
   - Maybe
   - Yes

8. Do you read Ate Anna’s column in the Pilipino Express?

   1 - Never  ☺☺ ☺☺ ☺☺
   2 - Sometimes
   3 - Often
   4 - Always
9. Do you have suggestions for future **topics for Ate Anna’s column**? (please write below)
Service Provider Training
Pre-Training Questionnaire

Give yourself a code by using the first three letters of your middle name and the first three letters of your birth month (ex. EriFeb). Please enter the code in this space:
______________

The following information is confidential and anonymous. We do not cross-reference any information from this questionnaire with any other records we have about you.

1. What is your occupation? ______________________________________________________

2. In which settings do you primarily work, study, or volunteer?:
   - □ Settlement
   - □ Community Health Centre
   - □ Community organization
   - □ Government
   - □ Education System
   - □ Other

Please respond to the following by circling ONE response per question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not sure/N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am knowledgeable about the full meaning of sexuality.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I know what cultural competence means.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am aware of good strategies for cultural competence in my work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I can communicate well with people whose age, gender, culture and language is different from mine.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I feel comfortable in my ability to work with immigrants and refugees.</td>
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<td>6. I feel it is important to understand the cultural practices and beliefs of my immigrant and refugee clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I am aware of my own personal beliefs and values around sexuality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I can work effectively with clients whose beliefs and values about sexuality are different from mine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I am very aware of the issues immigrant and refugee clients face as parents.</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I am very aware of the issues immigrant and refugee clients face in their intimate relationships (couples/with partners).</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Thank you!!
Service Provider Training
Post-Training Questionnaire

Give yourself a code by using the first three letters of your middle name and the first three letters of your birth month (ex. EriFeb). Please enter the code in this space: ______________

Please respond to the following by circling ONE response per question:

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<td>How would you rate the following aspects of the workshop?</td>
<td>Please circle one</td>
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<td>10. General agenda and contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. General process (timing, etc.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. General facilitation</td>
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<td>12. Secondary items (e.g. premises, refreshments, etc.)</td>
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Additional comments are welcome!

________________________________________________________________________________________

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Thank you!!