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## **Courage to Act Webinar: Anti-Colonial Approaches to Addressing GBV with Indigenous Communities**

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Anoodth Naushan: Hello everyone and a warm welcome to the 7<sup>th</sup> webinar in our series. My name is Anoodth Naushan, Project Manager of Courage to Act. Courage to Act is a two-year national initiative to address and prevent gender-based violence in post-secondary campuses in Canada. It builds on the key recommendations within Possibility Seeds' vital report, *Courage to Act: Developing a National Framework to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence at Post-Secondary Institutions*. Our project is the first national collaborative of its kind to bring together experts and advocates from across Canada to end gender-based violence on campus. A key feature of our project is our free professional webinar series where we invite leading experts to discuss key concepts and share promising practices on ending gender-based violence on campus.

Supported by CACUSS, these webinars are also a recognized learning opportunity. Attendance at ten or more live webinars will count towards an online certificate. Our project is made possible through generous support and funding from the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), Federal Government of Canada. And we begin today's webinar by acknowledging that this work is taking place on and across the traditional territories of many Indigenous nations. We recognize that gender-based violence is one form of violence caused by colonization to marginalize and dispossess Indigenous peoples from their lands and waters. Our project strives to honour this truth, as we work towards decolonizing this work and actualizing justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls across the country.

I want to pause now and invite everyone to take a deep breath. This work can be challenging, and this topic is hard. Many of us may have our own experience of survivorship, and of supporting those we love and care about who have experienced gender-based violence. A gentle reminder here is to be attentive to our wellbeing as we engage these difficult conversations. And, before I introduce our speaker today, a brief note on the format. Courtney will speak for 40 minutes, and I invite you to enter questions and comments into the question and answer box, and I will monitor this, and together we will pose these questions to Courtney at the end of the presentation. This will happen in the last 15 minutes.

At the end of the webinar, you will find a link to the evaluation form. We'd be grateful if you take a few moments to share your feedback, as it helps us improve. This is anonymous. Following the webinar, I will also email you a copy of the evaluation form and a link to the recording so that you can review the webinar and share it with your networks. And now, I'd like to introduce our speaker today. Courtney Skye is a researcher, policy development consultant and Cayuga language student. She is a Research Fellow with the Yellowhead Institute, a First Nations-led governance think tank at the Faculty of Arts at Ryerson University. She has led policy development for the public sector at local, provincial, and national levels, with a specific focus on youth development and ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, queer, Trans, gender-diverse, and Two-Spirit people.

Her work focuses on the promotion of the political mobilization of Indigenous women, queer, Trans, gender-diverse, Two-Spirit people and youth to create transformational change in communities. Her work focuses on re-imagining traditional approaches to policy development in order to meet the diverse needs of Indigenous communities. Her past projects include creating a framework for youth development, a strategy co-developed with Indigenous partners to transform the governance, design, and delivery of child and family services, and the strategy to end violence against Indigenous women. Courtney is passionate about making sure communities are heard in policy development and strives to end all forms of colonial violence experienced by Indigenous peoples by entrenching deep commitment to rights and jurisdiction. It's my pleasure now to turn it over to Courtney.

Courtney Skye:

My gosh, thank you so much for having me. I am so excited to be here with you today to talk about gender-based violence and the National Inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Thank you Anoodth for that beautiful introduction and I'm just going to go over what we're going to be talking about today. So, I'm going to be starting with talking about the roots of colonial violence and then blending that in with the findings and studies of the National Inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and anti-colonial practices that are both from my experience in policy development and addressing violence and with the findings and best advice developed by the National Inquiry. I want to start by acknowledging and honouring the Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, Trans, and non-binary people who have walked onto the spirit world and their relations

who are still here today who fight for justice, honour and dignity in their memory.

I'd like to start specifically talking about violence and the disproportionate level of violence that Indigenous women experience. We'll be talking about the National Inquiry and their work, but one of the most prevalent things or one of the most pressing things for me in their final report is the fact that they were unable to identify a total number of Indigenous women and girls who had been either murdered or have gone missing. And, even today, we still do not know how many Indigenous women and girls have been missing or murdered, and - but we do know that Indigenous women experience disproportionate levels of violence. The National Inquiry discussed this, and we know the lack of data collection, the lack of accurate identification, the lack of accurate identification of Trans people, specifically, or gender diverse people, and the proper classification of a person's Indigenous identity means that we still don't know.

And so, this work by Stats Can is as close as we get. Annually, Stats Canada releases a homicide report, which analyses report data from the previous year. The 2019 report has not been released, so the latest data that we have available is from 2008. Back in 2014, Stats Canada did a retrospective study on female identified victims of homicide and determined their Aboriginal status going back to 1980. This chart shows female identified victims of homicide in Canada from 1980 through 2018. The top teal line is the number of non-Indigenous victims of homicide and the pink lower line indicates the number of Indigenous victims of homicide. Over the past 40 years, we've seen that non-Indigenous women are not being made safe in Canada.

Year over year, we, overall, see fewer homicides, while the number of Indigenous victims remains constant and, in fact, 2018 was the second deadliest year in this record for Indigenous women since 1980. Indigenous women represent an increased proportion of victims of homicide and, to me, this graph illustrates that the ways in which we've intervened in violent crimes has not worked for Indigenous women because it fails to address the root causes of violence that Indigenous women experience. So, why do Indigenous women experience violence differently? So, throughout the presentation, we're going to explore some of these three concepts that are specifically about the Canadian context in which we're in. Firstly, that Canada is a settler colonial state and that we actively engage in settler colonialism, that systemic violence maintains settler colonial social structures, and that these social structures are also shaped by Indigenous resistance.

So, settler colonialism seeks to replace the original inhabitants of land with a settler population, where an Indigenous population is no longer the dominant people of a territory. The purpose of this is to displace the original people in order to control land, water and resources. System violence is the harm that people suffer from the social structures and the institutions that sustain and reproduce it. And I also want to further emphasize that while settler colonialism and systemic violence have taken many different forms here in Canada, that our contemporary society today is equally shaped by Indigenous peoples and their resistance to these forces.

So, how is settler colonialism maintained? The purpose: it's maintained through a normative family structure. Indigenous peoples as nations are culturally distinct. They have their own family structures, economies, and gender structures. Settler colonial structures in our society shape our society in a way that perpetuates land ownership that displaces Indigenous peoples. So, our modern family structures, sexualities, genders, and economies maintain power in a way that dictates what's normative. And for us here, that means the nuclear family.

The nuclear family structures gender, attraction and family in order to perpetuate wealth and private ownership. What is seen as normal or ideal is not what is normative for Indigenous peoples who may organize themselves in many different ways, through clan systems or other extended familial structures. So, what has this meant? It means that there's obviously a clash that happens between different cultures, and that while there are many different Indigenous cultures, they experience different types of oppression that are unique, based to them, based on their land, their history of displacement, and how easily their cultures may be adapted or be able to maintain in secret or distinct from our mainstream culture.

We see a lot of expressions of how settler colonialism impacts Indigenous people today. Traditional governance systems are undermined, there's an exploitation of resources that happens, and it also harms Indigenous belief systems that may include different perspectives on things like relation to animals, relation to land, and flora and fauna, and it also causes harm to our non-human relations. Indigenous communities have an inability to exercise their self-determination and they are dispossessed from their territories, and they experience poverty and an historical exclusion from the economy or the ability to accumulate wealth or pass down intergenerational wealth.

It also impacts our family structures, disproportionate family violence, disproportionate rates of child apprehension through the residential school system, the Sixties Scoop and the Millennial Scoop. It also forms and structures racism, sexism, and ableism and perpetuates mental health stigma that the privileged in our communities are people who are able bodied, who have neuro-typical identities, that are best able to perpetuate this transfer of land and control and dominance over Indigenous people. It also structures sexuality. And when sexuality is structured in a certain way, we see othering of different genders, of different ways that people love each other, homophobia, transphobia, a hierarchical or heteropatriarchal society that participates in sexism, and also perpetuates stigma towards the sex workers.

So, what has this meant for Indigenous people? Indigenous peoples adapt and react to this in different ways, and it's taken many different forms over many different years. While these forces are being exerted on Indigenous peoples, Indigenous peoples are resisting. They're adopting or adapting and maintaining their distinctiveness. And for Indigenous peoples, our futures and our communities are evolving and progressing as rapidly as everyone else's. We are adopting new technologies and developing strategies to sustain our culture and identity. But, it has taken on many different forms.

Some Indigenous people adopt a colonial mindset. They internalize this oppression. Communities restructure or adapt. So, they determine how to adapt or maintain their cultural practices to ensure their survival. And, in history, this has taken many different forms. On the west coast and when potlatches were band, a lot of Indigenous ceremonies were conducted underground by societies or knowledge keepers that worked very diligently to maintain languages, songs, and ceremonies for their people. And in that sense, Indigenous peoples have maintained their ways of being. So, they maintained culture and cultural practices that are distinct from the mainstream.

This impacts people in a lot of different ways. It impacts them in their work, it impacts them in their ability to live in certain places because they want to maintain connections to their home territories. It also means that in our society that it is normatively structured around Christian practices, that if your religious practices exist outside of that, then you're doing things like taking time off without pay, or you are using your vacation time in order to maintain your culture. And, Indigenous people also undermine and resist colonial structures. So, they may participate in different colonial structures, you know, try to change things from inside,

participate in things like policy development or engage in direct action and direct resistance to different forms of colonialism. And so, we see this in the resistance to pipelines or land development over disputed territories, and our communities engage in all of these things at different times and in different ways.

So, I just wanted to also touch base and remind and have everyone take a little bit of a deep breath, and if you have water with you, sip water, to connect to the space that you're in. Take a deep breath. Our next slides are going to talk specifically about the national inquiry and their work. So, the National Inquiry formally started in 2016 and it was a commitment made by the federal Liberal government during the 2015 election. The final report was released in June 2019. And, while the federal government has been slow - the federal government has definitely been slow to show leadership on this implementation, but it's important to remember that the work of the National Inquiry is not solely directed towards any level of government, and that every one of us is responsible for acting on this work.

There are over 2,300 people that participated within the Inquiry's process, over 1,400 family members and survivors, there are 15 community hearings, over 800 artistic expressions were shared with the Inquiry, and they held nine knowledge keeper, expert and intuitional hearings that heard from 83 experts, knowledge keepers and officials. I participated in the Inquiry process, as well, in both the public community hearings in Thunder Bay, Québec City, and Toronto, and pre-Inquiry meetings in Winnipeg. So, I've had a lot of experience and understanding of the Inquiry, and also, my work exists informed by the lived experience and experience of working with family members and survivors of violence.

So, what did the Inquiry produce? The Inquiry produced a number of documents, and I'm going to provide an overview of them for your all. If you haven't started reading these materials, that's OK. You don't have to start at page one of the final report. Start at the place that seems most relevant to your work and work through the materials. If you have read the final report, that's great. Please continue to refer to it and use it as a resource. It is one of the most substantive pieces of policy work that's been done on ending violence that we have in Canada. So, for the Inquiry, they first produced a research plan that talks about respectful research practices working with vulnerable Indigenous communities. They also developed a distinct Paths of Inquiry. So, all the different ways and strategies that they were going to seek information.



The National Inquiry was quite different from other initiatives in the sense that they used things like artistic expression and knowledge keepers and not specifically only a legal path or an adversarial structure, similar to the traditional court model, to hear from experts. They really tried to be more adaptive to Indigenous community practices. There's a lexicon of terminology. So, they break down a lot of the terms and phrases that are used within Indigenous policy to make things more accessible. That is a resource that people may find very useful to have in their offices to help them discern why some terms are used over others, and why other terms are preferred. They also developed a legal path, again, building on some of their previous work, that talked about rules of respectful practices for the Inquiry. They also conducted a consolidated literature review.

So, they reviewed all of the previous documents that have been developed by the federal government, by Indigenous organizations, by provincial governments, and research that has been done around missing and murdered Indigenous women. They created a master list of report recommendations organized by theme and colour coded to jurisdiction. This, to me, is one of the most interesting pieces of work that they created because I think, at a certain point, a lot of people feel fatigued that they're repeating themselves and this really gave an example of how often communities have been repeating themselves and saying the same things over and over again. And you can see exactly who has called for a number of different initiatives and over time. So, the recommendations for a National Inquiry, recommendations for a national action plan, and other important initiatives are all within this master list.

They produced "Our Women and Girls are Sacred: An Interim Report," and "Their Voices Will Guide Us: A Student and Youth Engagement Guide." This also helps talk - to assist students or people working with students to become engaged and familiar with talking about ending violence. And also, what's happened with the genocide of Indigenous women and girls. They produced reclaiming "Power and Place: The Final Report," which has an executive summary of the materials. It also has two volumes to the final report: 1A and 1B, and also, the Calls for Justice. So, those are four separate documents. They also developed supplementary reports: one on genocide and another specifically on Québec. So, the supplementary report on genocide goes into great detail around their findings and the legal definition and application of genocide, and why it's appropriate to be used in this instance. And they also conducted a forensic document review project.

This is a very interesting project, because what they did was analyse police practices and emergency practices, and the people who respond to cases of missing and murdered women. They looked at over 600,000 pages of investigation to identify systemic issues and develop findings based on that review. If you're interested in learning about some of the very specific systemic issues, this is where I would recommend starting, is in the forensic document review project, because they do a very good job at dispelling a lot of the myths, too, but also identifying where myths around missing and murdered women come from. Like, for instance, there's an often-cited statistic that Indigenous men are responsible for 70% of the homicides or missing cases of Indigenous women. And, through their research, they found that the only time - and the first time that was cited was in speaking notes or on an offhand comment and not actually based in any type of study. And they also developed a truth sharing podcast.

So, there are a number of overarching findings that the Inquiry produced. There's a significant, persistent and deliberate pattern of system racism and gendered human rights and Indigenous human rights abuses. They are perpetuated historically and they are maintained today by Canada, with their design to displace Indigenous peoples from their land, social structures, and governance, to eradicate their existence as nations, communities, families and individuals. It's the cause of the disappearance, murders, and violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. And it is genocide. This colonialism, discrimination, and genocide explains the high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. An absolute paradigm shift is required to dismantle colonialism within Canadian society and from all levels of government and public institutions. Ideologies and instruments of colonialism, racism and misogyny, past and present, must be rejected.

They also found that Canada has signed and ratified many international rights declarations and treaties that would affect Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA peoples' rights, rights to protection and security and safety, but Canada has failed to meaningfully implement the provisions of these legal instruments. This includes instruments of the UN: The Committee on the Eradication of Discrimination Against Women, The Committee on the Eradication of Racial Discrimination, and the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Further, Canada has enacted domestic laws, including, but not limited to, section 35 of the Constitution, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Human Rights Legislation, to ensure legal protection of



human rights and Indigenous Rights. And all governments have an obligation to uphold those instruments.

Canada has failed to protect these rights and to acknowledge and remedy the human rights violations and abuses that have consistently been perpetuated against Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. There is no accessible and reliable mechanism within the Canadian state of Indigenous women, girls and 2sLGBTQQIA people to seek recourse or remedy for these violations when their domestic and international human rights and Indigenous rights have been violated. The Canadian legal system fails to hold the state and state actors accountable for their failure to meet domestic and international human rights and Indigenous rights obligations.

The Canadian state has displaced Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people from their traditional roles in governance and leadership and continues to violate their political rights. This has been done through concerted efforts to destroy and replace Indigenous governance systems with colonial and patriarchal governance models, such as the Indian Act, and through the imposition of laws of general application throughout Canada. Indigenous governments or bands as established under the Indian Act or through local municipal governments do not have the full trust of Indigenous women and girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. Indigenous bands and councils and community leadership who have authority through colonial laws are generally not seen as representative of all of the interests of Indigenous people.

And finally, that they recognize self-determination and self-governance as fundamental Indigenous human rights and as a best practice. Indigenous self-determination and self-governance in all areas of Indigenous society are required to properly serve and protect Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This is particularly true in the delivery of services. Efforts by Indigenous people to be self-determining, they face significant barriers. Many Indigenous women's advocacy organizations and grassroots organizations engage in essential work to support survivors of violence and families of missing women or people who have lost loved ones. They are working towards restoring safety, but they are underfunded and under supported by our current funding formulas and systems. Temporary and deficit-based approaches do not increase the capacity for self-determination or self-governance, and they fail to adequately provide protection and safety, as well as substantive equality.

Short-term, project-based funding models in service areas are not sustainable, and they represent a violation of international rights to

self-governance and a failure to provide funding on needs-based approaches; equitably, substantively, and stably. The Inquiry also discusses how these systems are maintained. And, the Inquiry and survivors often talk about pathways and choices that many survivors speak about specific instances where a choice was made that impacted whether or not they were able to find safety or if they were further harmed. And these were summarized as pathways that maintained colonial violence. This includes historical multi-generational and intergenerational trauma. The maintenance of a status quo and an institutional lack of will, ongoing social and economic marginalization, and ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

So, the inquiry developed principles for change, and that these are focusing on substantive equality and human rights. And I'm going to go into a little bit more detail in each of these, that a decolonizing approach aims to resist and undo the forces of colonialism to re-establish Indigenous nationhood. It's ultimately a process where the view at the end is Indigenous nationhood, and it's rooted in Indigenous values, philosophies and knowledge systems. It's a way of doing things differently that challenge the colonial influence we live under by making space for marginalized Indigenous perspectives.

The National Inquiry's decolonizing approach also acknowledges the rightful power and place of Indigenous women and girls. And, this is very valuable to me, and in my experience, decolonizing is often co-opted as another way to maintain white supremacy in different institutions. And this is where I would advocate for an anti-colonial approach as opposed to a process of de-colonialization that delays or incrementalizes Indigenous self-determination. And this is a nuance that would become very useful to consider as you're developing local strategies to action on the Inquiry, because, so often, there are delays that are made to realizing Indigenous self-determination. And when systems continue to repeat that oppression, it's not liberating and it further delays the realization of rights for Indigenous women and girls.

So, really challenge efforts around decolonization, and challenge whether or not they are privileging white supremacy and settler colonialism over the inherent rights of Indigenous people. They also talk about recognizing distinctions. And distinctions are very important because there are obviously many different Indigenous people that have different experiences with - in relation to the state. So, oftentimes, you'll hear words like, "Aboriginal," which is a legal definition within Canadian law that includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people as being distinct, which often is developed within the programs and services. But, it's important to remember

that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people are not always distinct from one another, and that Indigenous people may be mixed. First Nations and Métis, which is quite a comment, or First Nations and Inuit, or Inuit and Métis.

And because of this distinction maintained by the federal government, they often have to choose which identity or which side of their identity they are going to be seen in their - seen fully by the state, as opposed to humanized and recognizing the fact that they have multiple different connections across those distinctions. There's also a difference geographically or regionally. So, of course, northwest, south, and east, but proximity to urban centres is also important, proximity to oceans, different bodies of water or natural resources, the location of traditional territories and homelands and different municipal, provincial, and territorial boundaries. So, for me as a Haudenosaunee person, I think this is a great example of how our homelands extend beyond colonial boundaries. That even for me as a Mohawk person, our territories extend through Ontario, Québec, and New York States, as a people displaced from our homelands in the Mohawk Valley in Upstate New York.

And so, we are displaced from where our homelands are within the boundaries of our traditional territory or our extended hunting territory, but also, people choose to move and live outside their territories, as well. So, there are Haudenosaunee people that live all over the world. And so, that proximity and relation to our homeland changes. There's also a different residency consideration. There's on-reserve or off-reserve boundaries, which are relevant for First Nations people only, that Métis or Inuit people may live in communities or settlements. There's also a difference between remote and northern communities within the near and far north, and a rural/urban divide.

This also is where the Inquiry called for the necessary gendered lens and a framework that ensures the impacts of women and girls and 2SLGBTQQIA individuals is taken into account. And this also includes understanding the differences and diversity amongst those people and understanding their distinct needs within communities as individuals - sorry, the needs of individuals within communities may not necessarily be the same. It also talked about the importance of taking a trauma informed approach and to understand that while trauma informed care is critically important, that Indigenous people don't all have the same experience with things like residential schools or child welfare apprehension, and that various across communities. And also, the importance of cultural safety, especially for post-secondary institutions.

Different programs in different institutions may draw people to live or move outside of their traditional territory. And as your organizations or as your groups work to get to know or, you know, enhance your relationships with local people within your traditional - whose traditional territory you're in, recognizing that Indigenous students that attend your school may not connect to those because they come from different distinct cultures. I've included some elements here from the Inquiry to talk about some core values that are specific - or interesting from a service perspective. So, not just from an educational perspective, but core values around - and principles for safety that oftentimes Indigenous people will view wellness as wholeness, that there's an importance for coordinated services, an importance and emphasis on cultural safety, the importance of education and the continuity of care.

And that there's - valuing the lived and frontline experiences taken into account. So, within data collection and research, making sure that the community's interests and needs are included within data collection frameworks, that research is done in a way that is ethical and empowering for individuals and communities, that there's equitable representation, and that there's strength and accountability. And this is something that's very interesting for me, because I think it's also - that oftentimes when we talk about people, we talk about - sometimes data or information that is compelling but is oftentimes some of the most difficult or traumatizing experiences for people.

And I think it's important that we are - when we engage survivors, or family members, into research, or into our program design, that we ask them not only about their experiences but the context that matters. And especially in the work that I do from a policy perspective, it's always important for me to challenge myself to say - and think about how the people that I'm speaking about, how they feel represented in the work, and that they find the overall process of feeling my work as being something that is empowering for them. So, these are some strategies for mobilizing the findings from the National Inquiry. And this is based on my experience as a policy analyst and also as a worker or as a consultant that's been working with a number of different organizations around the Inquiry, is that you definitely need to support local Indigenous peoples. So, know the local community and ground your work in a way that is accountable to that territory and people within that territory.

There are Indigenous peoples all across the country who definitely have - you know, every post-secondary institution is within an Indigenous peoples' traditional territory, that you are recording and measuring your progress so that you definitely take a specific

effort to report on your progress in a way that is transparent and accountable. There are over 230 recommendations - or sorry, calls for justice, that have been made by the National Inquiry. And, there are well over 20 that are relevant to post-secondary institutions, whether or not it's from an educational perspective or from a service delivery perspective that would be useful. So, we unfortunately don't have time to go over all of them today, but Possibility Seeds and I have worked at developing an Excel document that has, what I feel are, the most relevant calls for justice, and that will be available for participants.

That you're promoting self-determination. So, working within a colonial framework, which is inherently universities, colleges, or other post-secondary institutions, that the importance of self-voice and safety is always important. So, to remember that PSIs are, more often than not, colonial structures in themselves, and that inherently Indigenous self-determination exists outside and beyond the walls of the post-secondary institutions. And, importantly, that your commitment is made to long-term work. There's a balance that needs to happen between urgency versus taking the time to develop meaningful relationships and strong programs, but the delays or the time that it takes to do this kind of work, which may fall over years, should not happen because of delays or fear of acting. This work takes a long time because it's long-lasting and enduring work, not because of, you know, our difficulties in organizing ourselves or establishing committees or doing research and studies.

I want to leave you with two resources, which may be relevant for people here today, or to take back with you. There's ongoing support for families, Indigenous families, and survivors. So, Talk for Healing is a culturally grounded, fully confidential helpline for Indigenous women, available in 14 languages, including Indigenous languages of Mohawk, Cree, Inuktitut, and Oji-Cree, and that's available. It's based in Ontario, but they definitely service anyone who calls them. And also, the Family Information Liaison Unit. So, this is available in every province and territory to help families access available information about their missing and murdered loved ones from multiple different government sources. Oftentimes, family members and survivors talk about how difficult it is to coordinate across police jurisdictions, across coroners offices or child welfare agencies, and the Family Information Liaison Units are often placed within provincial ministries or territorial ministries to help families navigate and find information about their missing or murdered loved ones.

So, we're only a few minutes over time, which I'm quite proud of. There's a lot of information. And we'll have our Q&A now, and

these are my social medias, as well. Please feel free to connect with me via these.

Anoodth Naushan: Great, thanks so much Courtney for sharing with us and for your tremendous work, as well. So, if attendees would like to share questions in the comments, you can do so by typing these into the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen. OK. So, I think we have a couple already. So, Courtney, the first question is, if PSIs have had difficult relationships with the local Indigenous community or communities, or don't have a relationship with them, how might they build trust and a good relationship?

Courtney Skye: I think that the best way to do that is to work with, first, Indigenous staff and faculty that may be at your institution, to rely on them and their expertise and their experience. They are definitely not the only resource, and I think that emphasis should be placed around connecting to, you know, Indigenous services, Indigenous controlled services, or Indigenous design and delivery services that might be within urban communities, or based on-reserve, which may be more comfortable for Indigenous students. But, definitely, they'll be able to provide you advice, and no doubt they also experience or hear about what some of the historical difficulties have been working with institutions, and they might be able to provide advice on how to overcome those barriers.

Anoodth Naushan: Great, thank you Courtney. Another attendee was wondering what you meant by the "Millennial Scoop," as well as "cultural safety."

Courtney Skye: Yeah, so, there are different points in time, I guess, of where child welfare policy or family policy has impacted Indigenous people in different ways. So, a lot of the advocacy that's happening now within the child welfare sector looks retrospectively at the impacts and the multigenerational impacts of things like residential school and the Sixties Scoop, but if you compare that to child welfare stats of today, there are actually more Indigenous children today that are in the care of child welfare agencies than there were at the height of residential school. And so, this is often coined or termed as the "Millennial Scoop," because there are still kids today that are being removed from their families, losing access to their culture and their extended clan networks or their extended family networks, and so, that's another term that has been used to talk about the fact that there's still ongoing disruption with the child welfare system that's impacting Indigenous families.

Cultural safety is the idea that Indigenous people or any people, really, are able to access their culture in a way that is safe. In a way that is not going to dismiss or other their cultural experience. And that the way that we deliver or talk about things doesn't



inadvertently exclude or make something invisible. So, this often happens for indigenous people or especially for Indigenous people that are not “visibly Indigenous,” and I use that in, like, air quotes that you can’t see. But, often times, people who are not overtly or immediately recognizable as being Indigenous, that they experience different kinds of racism or stigmas because they are not recognized as being a part of a culture. And they have difficulty accessing their - they may have difficulty accessing their culture based on their appearance. That’s one example.

Anoodth Naushan: Great, thank you Courtney. And then, the next question is, if you could further explain the concept of anti-colonial approaches over decolonization, is this approach, then, applicable across the board? So, workplaces, PSIs, policy research.

Courtney Skye: This is a really interesting conversation, and I think that I definitely engage in the idea of anti-colonialism just because of the ongoing barriers that efforts to decolonize have taken. Oftentimes, decolonialization becomes tokenized. If there’s not a deep commitment to doing really transformational decolonial work, then, sometimes, different institutions will do things like paint a mural and say that’s decolonizing, and now Indigenous people are safe, while still maintaining many other different forms of oppression. And so, this is where I think that introducing something like talking about anti-colonialism is very important because I feel like it’s more direct and more gets at - it’s a sharper and more direct way to talk about colonialism and what’s being done to actually combat and address what’s happening with colonialism, as opposed to potentially making it more palatable or adopting colonial practices in a way that become more oppressive.

I think that it’s worthwhile to really engage with Indigenous scholars that are doing very strong decolonial work, that there’s a lot of merit to their work and research, and they maintain that sharpness, as well. But, I think that when it comes to our practices, there’s a difference between different institutions - like, let’s use as an example child welfare - there’s a difference between a child welfare agency that has a non-Indigenous board based outside of an Indigenous community with non-Indigenous workers, primarily, hiring one Indigenous employee, to then work under the same policies and structures that apprehend children and has the same outcomes as in communities.

Versus, you know, the transformation that’s happening around Indigenous child welfare law where Indigenous communities are able to establish their own agencies, establish their own boards and oversight mechanisms, and deliver services in a way where Indigenous families are kept together as opposed to

non-Indigenous families raising Indigenous kids. You know, those are who very different approaches that would say - you know, value the fact that there's an Indigenous worker delivering services as opposed to looking at the overall or overarching system that maintains power in different ways.

Anoodth Naushan: Great, thank you. And our next question is actually focused on the complaints processes at PSIs. So, the question is, most post-secondaries have policies and procedures focused on a response to gender-based violence and/or sexual violence. Do you have any recommendations, Courtney, for resources or thoughts about how we could advocate for PSIs to adapt these policies and procedures to support Indigenous communities, specifically in regards to the complaints process?

Courtney Skye: I think that this is something that impacts many different organizations. And I think that there are different Indigenous organizations, you know, I think specifically about my community, it's - this is not available across the country, this is one example - but, for my community at Six Nations, they have a restorative justice program that does transformational restorative justice processes. So, they have Indigenous workers that do this kind of work, and there may be cases where they have certain circumstances where they would be able to facilitate that for Indigenous people who are interested in pursuing that restorative justice process.

If post-secondary institutions build relationships with those Indigenous services, that may be an option for them to then connect to the development of Indigenous people delivering a service that students may be able to access in community, as opposed to universities duplicating or co-opting Indigenous justice practices and then delivering them without supporting the capacity of communities to develop those services themselves. So, that's a real strong emphasis that I would make is to look at what your local communities have and if there are ways in which their ideas around justice or safety can be realized through the work of PSIs, then to pursue those as opposed to trying to have services only within house.

Or if there's, you know, the development that happens to doing that over time, that there is an understanding and a vision of Indigenous governance that is being worked towards as opposed to a short-term vision of delivering services. Because, ultimately, we undertake this work to make Indigenous women safer, that we have a vision of communities having self-determination, and that that is the end goal. Our end goal is not, like, service delivery, essentially. Our goal is a paradigm shift, that transformation of our

society that inherently values the lives of Indigenous women and Indigenous peoples.

Anoodth Naushan: Thank you, Courtney. And the next question from Lisa is, what strategies would you suggest that could be used to empower Indigenous women with lived experiences of violence when evaluating a program to best support them?

Courtney Skye: That is a really great question. I think that Indigenous women are definitely - should be invited and accommodated and valued for their expertise, that if organizations are involved in any type of program review, that they respect the lived experience and integrity that Indigenous women with lived experience bring to their process, that they fully realize that any type of input from Indigenous women that transforms or changes the way things are done, ultimately make programs and services more effective. I think oftentimes, different people or different - survivors are viewed as being combative or difficult to work with, when really, what they're doing is challenging all of our services to be better and, ultimately, more effective.

You'll end up reaching more people, you'll end up having a greater impact, and that is - has so much value that the people who are doing that work should be respected in that way. But, also, recognized for their contribution, that's [unintelligible 00:56:30] work, and that, you know, their time is respected so that it's, you know, their time is valued and accommodated, and that they're remunerated properly for that expertise. So, I think that's really important, to remember that there should be payment and consideration. Especially if you're bringing in people from a community who may have to take time off their work to do that work and recognizing the emotional labour that this takes for survivors. So, providing them, you know, pre-care or after-care is also very important.

And that's where something like Talk for Healing would be useful. Talk for Healing, they also do debriefs for workers of Talk for Healing counsellors. And, they're there to talk with people who have difficulties in a lot of different ways. They may be useful. We've used them in different events, as well, where attendees might not feel comfortable reaching out to supports that are available, but they'll feel comfortable using that service because they can text or chat, as well, with Indigenous counsellors.

Anoodth Naushan: Great. And, our next question is, where might we begin if we're new to the conversation on Indigenous rights and jurisdiction over school services?

Courtney Skye: I think that the National Inquiry is a very good start. Their work has not only the kind of academic or systemic and historical research, they also highlight a number of different case studies and a number of different communities that are doing the work already, and the ways in which they're being expressed. Also, if you're interested in learning more about, like, land and jurisdiction over land, the Yellowhead Institute Red Paper last year, called Land Back, also has many different examples of the work that Indigenous communities have done over many generations to exercise their jurisdiction and their autonomy over land and resources. And then, of course, if you're engaged in social media, definitely follow Indigenous people. Follow Indigenous people from different communities to hear the different perspectives that exist amongst Indigenous people. That's really important, as well.

Anoodth Naushan: Perfect, thanks Courtney. I think we have time for one last question. And, so, this circles back to our earlier conversation on restorative justice and practices, and the question is, thoughts on development of Indigenous informed alternative dispute resolution. So, for instance, healing circles restorative practices as opposed to the traditional mainstream system at PSIs.

Courtney Skye: Yeah, I really support them. I think that they are really important. Different Indigenous communities come at this in different ways. They've definitely looked at different types of restorative models. It's different based in different communities, that communities have different ideas about what expressions of jurisdiction look like, and they have different perspectives on how healing is done and how healing is maintained in communities. And it's really important to think about the different approaches that can be made by communities when they do that work. My community has started to do this a little bit, thinking about justice and jurisdiction. And it's been really important to think about knowing and learning that history, and then having Indigenous people develop those programs and services or whatever they end up being and bringing life to that historical knowledge.

Because, one of the things that colonialism has done that impacts Indigenous people, as well, is that by having a, you know, mainstream curriculum taught in communities that doesn't tell Indigenous histories, like, a lot of Indigenous students have that same experience where they never learned Indigenous history either, we're denied knowledge of our self and our own histories. And so, Indigenous communities doing the work of re-defining and revitalizing their cultural practices, that also has transformational and intergenerational positive impacts for communities. So, it is very difficult work, and there's, you know, there are definitely examples to look for that you can see to say where other



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communities have done that work. But, that Indigenous peoples having control over that kind of work is - it's a human right, it's an inherent human right. And, there's no kind of pre-condition that Indigenous peoples have to meet in order to exercise their inherent rights over decision-making in governance.

Anoodth Naushan: Great, thank you Courtney. That takes us to the end of the Q&A, and we had a really wonderful discussion today. So, thank you so much for sharing your time and expertise with us. We've learned a lot, and the recording will be available on our website in a few days. And I also want to thank our participants for joining us and sharing with us today. We appreciate and take inspiration from your commitment to addressing and preventing gender-based violence on your campus. And we feel very lucky to be able to work alongside each and every one of you. So, thank you again, and a kind reminder to please complete the evaluation forms and we will see you at the next webinar on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Thank you everyone. Bye.