

**REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILD AND TEEN-AGE SEXUAL
ABUSE
IN FOURTEEN INDIAN FIRST NATIONS**

**A PROPOSAL FOR A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE LAIDLAW FOUNDATION**

**Written on behalf of Ojibway Tribal Family Services
by**

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Executive Summary

1.INTRODUCTION

This is a proposal for a two year demonstration community education project to reduce the risk of child and sexual abuse on fourteen reserves in the vicinity of Kenora and Dryden. The project would be administered by Ojibway Tribal Family Services, a Native child and family services agency.

This initiative would provide on-going training and follow-up community consultation to OTFS and Band staff in relation to local prevention initiatives in positive sexuality and sexual abuse prevention.

The project would be documented and evaluated by an evaluation consultant and would be available as a model for other Native communities across Canada.

2.THE PROBLEM AND NEEDS

Two types of problems will be confronted by the proposed project...

.the existence of many adults who were sexually abused as children or as teenagers; these victims have severe emotional and behavioral problems which limit their ability to live normal lives

.incidents of child and teen-age sexual abuse currently appearing in OTFS staff caseloads

A conservative estimate of 152 cases are reported in the case loads of OTFS Senior Family Workers. These cases represent a range of approximately 50-90% of the total case loads of the 8 Senior Family Workers.

As well, Dr.Ed Connors, the Clinical Psychologist who heads OTFS' Sacred Circle Program reports that **nearly 100% of clients in suicide counselling have some sexual abuse in their background!**

These problems are symptomatic of a deep-seated breakdown of community standards concerning appropriate sexuality, and the weakening of traditional community controls against abuse.

Another dimension of the problem concerns the needs of OTFS staff. As members of the communities which they serve, staff are affected by the taboos, fears and anxiety associated with sexuality and sexual abuse. As well, a number of OTFS staff have personal involvements with sexual abuse. These facts make it difficult to support families and children in sexuality matters.

This discussion points to the following needs.

.The needs of the victims' families (including the perpetrator, non-perpetrating adults, and other family members) to change from high risk sexual abuse and exploitation, to acceptable sexual and interpersonal functioning.

.The needs of OTFS communities to develop appropriate guidelines for living, which will promote positive sexuality and respect for the needs of others as sexual persons.

.The needs of OTFS communities to re-establish clear standards for appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior, standards which reflect Native values and which are legally acceptable.

.The need for children and adolescents to receive clear teachings, based on Native values, concerning sexuality and appropriate sexual behavior.

.The needs of OTFS communities to develop caring, concerned and appropriate responses to unacceptable sexual behavior.

.The needs for OTFS staff to acquire the kind of knowledge which will help them confront their own sexuality, and contribute to comfortable family support work.

3. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Three sets of activities will comprise this program: (a) healing (b) community education and (c) staff training and support. **Laidlaw Foundation** funds are requested for (b) and (c) only. The healing program will not be described in this summary.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This program component will provide training, resources, advise, and support for establishing an environment of healthy sexuality. This is a primary prevention initiative which aims to create the conditions for healthy rather than dysfunctional living.

The objectives are:

.To assist local communities to (i) identify needs (ii) plan and (iii) implement community-based educational programs which promote healthy and appropriate sexuality

.To assist local communities to identify specific needs concerning the roles of families in promoting positive sexuality, and to assist in the planning of family life, parenting and sex education programs

.To facilitate the development of a community-based system of response against sexually inappropriate and abusive behavior, a system based on the principles of care, forgiveness and family unity

.To train and provide on-going consultation to OTFS and other Band staff concerning sexuality, sexual abuse, and appropriate community responses to sexual abuse.

These objectives will be pursued through...

... training during four intensive 3-day workshops, throughout 1991 and 1992, bringing together OTFS service staff, supervisors, outside experts in sexuality and abuse, and resource materials

... follow-up technical support and coaching to OTFS staff responsible for supporting community initiatives.

... resource development to assist local community initiatives

... formative evaluation to (i) gather project development information for the purpose of assisting local initiatives and

improving upon the over-all support system for these initiatives (ii) document the impact of the project in terms of describing specific local initiatives, and (iii) refine the over-all project process

4.THE STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF THE PROGRAM

The proposed sexual abuse demonstration project will involve hiring, for a two year period, a community development or community education specialist. This person, preferably a Native person with experience in the communities in question, will work with a team of sexual abuse experts to provide staff training and follow-up consulting to local OTFS and other Band staff.

Staff training will be provided in a series of four central workshops over a two year period. Between workshops the Community Development Officer will be available as a resource person for planning, implementing and evaluating local community initiatives. This consultation will involve sexual abuse experts from Kenora and Dryden, and will serve to build links to other resources.

The Community Development Officer will report to the OTFS Executive Director, and will make regular monthly reports to the Board of Directors.

The proposed program will have strong working relationships with medical facilities, the legal system, and other service agencies. It will also draw upon traditional Native teachings.

To provide strong advise and support, it is proposed that an Advisory Group be comprised of a medical Doctor, a child welfare Lawyer, one male and one female Elder, Dr.Ed Connors (Sacred Circle), representatives from OTFS Senior Family Workers, the Coordinator of Services, and a non-Native sexual abuse specialist.

5.Budget

A two-year budget of \$362,904.51 is being requested for this project, covering the salaries of the Community Development Officer, part-time secretarial assistance, consultation, resource development, workshop expenses, and evaluation.

6.Continuation of Project Funding

Following the demonstration project, consideration will be given to seeking core funds for the continuation of the Community Development Officer. Assuming that positive benefits can be demonstrated, the request would go to OTFS' funding source, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada. INAC will be notified of this possibility when the new 5-year contract is negotiated at the end of this fiscal year.

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**Appendix "A" Ojibway Tribal Family Services:
A Summary Description of the Organization**

1.INTRODUCTION

This is a proposal for a two year demonstration community education/development project to reduce the risk of child and sexual abuse on fourteen reserves in the vicinity of Kenora and Dryden. The project would be administered by Ojibway Tribal Family Services, a Native child and family services agency. Briefly, this initiative would provide on-going training and follow-up community consultation to OTFS and Band staff in relation to local prevention initiatives in positive sexuality and sexual abuse prevention.

The project would be documented and evaluated by an evaluation consultant and would be available as a model for other Native communities across Canada.

The public revelations of child sexual abuse and sexual violence have in recent years produced shocked reactions across the nation. These horrors have been equally experienced within Native communities, as indicated in recent reports.

The fears associated with stories and statistics on sexual abuse have been gradually replaced by anger and a desire for change. Communities across Canada have a strong desire to help sexual abuse victims, and to create community environments which are more conducive to healthy sexuality and safety. This document proposes a comprehensive program of healing and prevention, one which will gradually introduce change in 14 high risk reserve communities in the Kenora/Dryden area.

Ojibway Tribal Family Services (OTFS) is a Native child and family services agency offering prevention-oriented family services to the aforementioned reserves. The problems of sexual abuse in OTFS communities and the identification of steps towards solutions were identified by community representatives and senior OTFS service staff. These processes took place over the course of three important events, beginning in January, 1988.

The first event, a **sexual abuse workshop** brought together the staff of Ojibway Tribal Family Services in a dialogue with community volunteers, Elders, and professionals in the sexual abuse field. That dialogue stimulated processes of mutual awareness of sexual abuse, and an uneasy analysis of contributing factors throughout the fourteen member communities. The substance of that conference, including a number of short term actions, and the beginnings of a new attitude, are summarized in a paper entitled "Breaking the Silence" (Maidman, F., 1988)

The second event was a **family violence conference** which drew Native and non-Native service professionals from communities in and around Kenora and Dryden. This event, held in 1989, was extremely well attended, and helped build professional networks among interested parties.

Both of these conferences set the stage for the third and most recent event, a series of **planning sessions** among O.T.F.S. Senior Family Workers and the Co-ordinator of Services. These sessions identified the need for a **comprehensive sexual abuse program**, one which will complement OTFS' other core services in family support, alcohol prevention, and suicide prevention.

The realization of the need for such a program emerged from detailed discussions and analyses of sexual abuse problems from OTFS community members. This document outlines the details.

2.THE PROBLEM AND NEEDS

Two types of problems will be confronted by the proposed OTFS sexual abuse demonstration project...

.the existence of many adults who were sexually abused as children or as teenagers; these victims have severe emotional and behavioral problems which limit their ability to live normal lives

.incidents of child and teen-age sexual abuse currently appearing in OTFS staff caseloads

These problems are symptomatic of a deep-seated breakdown of community standards concerning appropriate sexuality, and the weakening of traditional community controls against abuse.

The following discussion of the sexual abuse problem in OTFS communities will review staff caseload statistics, the impact of sexual abuse, and the local community context.

The scope of the private problem: caseload statistics

An attempt to document the actual scope of sexual abuse on OTFS reserves is very difficult. The same problem of documentation has hampered other needs assessments across North America. The nature of the problem, the associated shame and fear, and the difficulties of talking openly about such matters -all of these circumstances are even more inhibiting in small communities of friends, acquaintances, or relatives.

For the above reasons, no large scale studies have uncovered the actual extent of sexual abuse on OTFS reserves. The estimates of the problem are based on the numbers of clients reporting sexual abuse to OTFS family support staff and the OTFS Clinical Psychologist.

Two kinds of problems have increasingly appeared in family support staff caseloads. Adults receiving help for other problems, such as alcohol abuse or family difficulties, are reporting their previous victimization as children or as teen-agers. As well, an increasing number of current cases of child sexual abuse within the family are coming to the attention of OTFS staff.

At the present time, **a conservative estimate of 152 cases are reported in the case loads of OTFS Senior Family Workers. These cases represent a range of approximately 50-90% of the total case loads of the 8 Senior Family Workers.**

Other clinical statistics from the OTFS Sacred Circle Program paint an even gloomier picture. The Sacred Circle Program is a suicide prevention program which provides both community outreach work and clinical healing for

suicidal children and teen-agers. Dr. Ed Connors, the Clinical Psychologist who heads the program, reports that **nearly 100% of clients in suicide counselling have some sexual abuse in their background!** The episodes of sexual abuse tend to occur in the contexts of partying and the extended family, and within the immediate nuclear family.

Dr. Connors and all Senior Family Support Workers agree that these statistics represent the virtual tip of the ice-berg, and that many people are hurting without knowing the reason why. As the OTFS community becomes known as a safe place to share these matters, many more clients are expected.

These numbers are the first indication that a problem exists and that something needs to be done. Although these numbers are indicative of the private pain of sexual abuse, there is also a public side to this problem.

The public face of sexual abuse: breaking the silence

The open disclosure of sexual victimization and the horror expressed by OTFS community members reflects a profound change in the community's attitudes towards this silent insidious problem. Elders, service leaders, and victims have stated publicly in the 1988 conference that abusive patterns of sexual behavior must come to an end. Although still apprehensive, most spokespersons urge a new climate of healthy sexuality and firm action against sexual abuse.

Consequences of sexual abuse

At the level of family and community life, sexual abuse is generally viewed as a misuse of trust and power, therefore reflecting a breakdown in human relationships and social order.

The problem is even more complicated when one considers the emotional consequences for victims, consequences which seriously affect the quality of their lives, including their abilities to parent and establish intimacy. These consequences of sexual abuse have been broadly researched in other settings and have been clinically verified by the OTFS service staff and other community members.

A detailed discussion of these consequences is beyond the scope of this proposal. The following list summarizes the personal consequences for victims, as these were discussed during the OTFS sexual abuse conference of 1988, and during recent planning meetings among Senior Family Workers. Asterisks indicate consequences which were particularly highlighted for victims in OTFS communities.

The victims of sexual abuse show the following behaviors and emotional symptoms...

.high risk for later abuse of their own children*

.depression

.alcohol abuse*

.guilt*

.repressed anger and hostility, manifesting in violence and sometimes leading to murder*

.problems in intimate relationships with the opposite sex (including marital difficulties), resulting from an inability to trust, or an obsession with sex*

.difficulties in normal sexual relationships*

.suicide*

.self abuse (including drug use, alcohol abuse, self-mutilation, running away, prostitution,)*

.low self-esteem, resulting from a sense of being different and inferior to others, and the feeling that "everybody knows"; negative body image, and the "damaged goods syndrome".

.poor social skills

.pseudomaturity, particularly in child victims who have assumed inappropriate adult roles within the family

.failure to complete developmental tasks such as achieving adolescent independence

.fear of subsequent sexual abuse or reprisals from the perpetrator, sometimes manifest in sleep disturbance and nightmares among child victims

As well, studies in other Native communities suggest that a variety of physical and psychological symptoms, including suicide, psychosis, and epilepsy, can be attributed to family incest. Of particular note is that Native sexual abuse victims sometimes suffer ostracism within their own communities, and often leave the reserve. Finally, clinical observations and research indicate that sexual abuse disclosure within Native families and communities often leads to violence.

Although no research is available, clinical observations on some reserve communities suggest that well-known and trusted individuals are the perpetrators of sexual abuse. Such devastating misuse of authority and trust likely increases the emotional trauma for those who are sexually victimized within their own families and communities. This trauma is increased when the event cannot be shared with others, as a result of a cloak of secrecy, denial or taboo which pervades the entire community. The well-known clinical impact of these processes within the family may be even more serious when the community at large is involved.

These clinically-documented victim experiences and problems will constitute a focal point for proposed OTFS services. However, before describing such services, the perceived causes and community conditions require discussion.

The context of risk for sexual abuse: towards an understanding

Appropriate program solutions to such serious problems as sexual abuse require a clarification of assumptions concerning why they occur and why they persist. This is particularly relevant as background to the development of prevention programs. Such clarification also helps to raise pertinent issues for program implementation planning.

The OTFS conference and planning discussions which preceded this proposal, were highlighted by a thorough, and far-reaching collective analysis of the previous and current community conditions sustaining the problem. Participants in the discussion were OTFS service staff, community volunteers and Elders. This section summarizes that discussion, and identifies the presumed dynamics between conditions and sexual abuse.

The factors deemed important in understanding sexual abuse are both historical and current. No one factor stands alone in explaining why sexual abuse now occurs in OTFS communities. Indeed, most form an endless web of interrelated

conditions which, together, place these communities in a "high risk" category.

Traditional Native customary beliefs and practices once formed strong impediments against sexual abuse. All cultures had strong sanctions against incest, including inappropriate sexual relations with family members and the entire clan. This observation has been communicated clearly by OTFS community members, and has been substantiated by research.

To quote one source:

" From all accounts of life on the old reserve, it appears that violations of this taboo (prohibiting sexual relations with close kin or persons of the same blood) were rare."

Extensive discussions among OTFS community members and senior service staff, point to a gradual erosion of the community ideals, moral behavior standards and social controls. Such erosion is traced ultimately to the broader conditions of government policy, socio-economic conditions, alcohol abuse and other societal influences. **A lack of information on sexuality, for example, hampers appropriate parenting and teaching of appropriate sex role behavior to children.**

To summarize, sexual abuse in OTFS communities is believed to be associated with...

the breakdown of the Native traditional values and practices related to sexuality, contributing to the loss of community standards

a loss of community standards concerning appropriate sexual behavior, in which the do's and don'ts of sexual behavior are confused or missing, and in which the natural community controls against unacceptable behavior are weak or non-existent.

previous experiences in residential schools and foster homes in which some people were sexually abused, and all people were denied a sexual identity role modelling experience with natural parents

the mass media which conveys an ideal of sexual attractiveness, often in conjunction with alcohol consumption

poverty in which multiple families are living together in crowded conditions, and in which children or teenagers are lured into sexual activities for money or gifts

alcohol abuse which lessens the inhibitions against sexually inappropriate behavior, or which is used as an excuse after the fact; alcohol and expected sexual activity is seen to go hand-in-hand during partying and gang rape

blended family situations in crowded circumstances which provide sexual abuse opportunities between step-fathers and teen-aged daughters, and generally give mixed messages to young children concerning appropriate sexual behavior

family and other male-female structures in which men in positions of power are able to exercise dominance over women and children who are treated as objects

sexual behavior among young children in which extremely young powerless children are coerced into sexual acts, thus contributing to early learning of sexual abuse as a norm

barriers against open discussions of positive sexuality or sexual abuse , thus limiting a healthy exchange of sexual

information, as well as an initiation of concern and action against sexual abuse

inadequate or insufficient information about sexuality, resulting in poor parental teaching and inappropriate sex role learning within the peer group

urbanization of Natives, in which people become involved in off-community events such as hockey tournaments, in which alcohol and relaxed controls sometimes lead to sexually inappropriate behavior

The above observations point to a clear need for community education efforts within OTFS communities.

Staff support and the use of specialists: another dimension of the problem

The existence, consequences and community context of sexual abuse comprise the essential elements of the problem. Before addressing specific needs, one more element should be introduced, namely the availability and appropriateness of local resources.

Specialized skills, personal resources and a special structural location are needed to counter the problem of sexual abuse in OTFS communities. Although OTFS is the most prominent and visible Native helping agency in the area, the current staff possess neither the clinical expertise nor the community development expertise to tackle the problem.

Further, as members of OTFS communities, staff are affected by the same community dynamics and attitudes discussed above. The taboos, fears and anxiety associated with sexuality and sexual abuse, make it very difficult to provide family support in relation to this problem. As well, a number of OTFS staff have direct or indirect personal involvements with incidents of sexual abuse.

One alternative is for OTFS to utilize non-Native sexual abuse specialists from Kenora or Dryden. This is difficult for two reasons. First, there are limited resources in this area. Senior Family Workers are unaware of such resources, a perception confirmed by reference to the Kenora-Patricia Community Services Directory.

A second difficulty in using non-Native professionals for sexual abuse work is that the prevailing mistrust of non-Native professionals, the aforementioned community dynamics combined with the lack of clinical expertise with Native clients, makes success highly unlikely. All indications are that sexual abuse programming requires Native staff working from a base of trust and expertise.

This does not rule out a strong advisory and working relationship with the non-Native professionals involved in sexual abuse cases.

Clearly strong networks must be created!

What are the needs?

The above discussion of the sexual abuse problems, consequences, community contexts and resources, points to the following needs.

.The needs of sexual abuse victims to receive appropriate responses for alleviating their pain, restoring their psychological functioning, and generally supporting their return to healthy relationships within the community.



- .The needs of the victims' families (including the perpetrator, non-perpetrating adults, and other family members) to change from high risk sexual abuse and exploitation, to acceptable sexual and interpersonal functioning.
- .The needs of OTFS communities to develop appropriate guidelines for living, which will promote positive sexuality and respect for the needs of others as sexual persons.
- .The needs of OTFS communities to re-establish clear standards for appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior, standards which reflect Native values and which are legally acceptable.
- .The need for children and adolescents in OTFS communities to receive clear teachings, based on Native values, concerning sexuality and appropriate sexual behavior.
- .The needs of OTFS communities to develop caring, concerned and appropriate responses to unacceptable sexual behavior.

3.TOWARDS A SOLUTION: A COMPREHENSIVE CLINICAL AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

It is proposed that the above needs require an innovative specialized sexual abuse program within OTFS. This program would complement and integrate with existing family support, alcohol prevention and suicide prevention services. As well, a close working and advisory relationship would be established with OTFS and non-OTFS professionals.

The proposed unit would be a team of specialists providing...

.healing services for sexual abuse victims, perpetrators and other family members

.community education and community development services,
services promoting healthy sexuality within the community, and instituting responsive actions against inappropriate sexual behavior

.on-going training and support for OTFS and other band service staff, to strengthen their support and helping roles in relation to sexual abuse or other sex-related problems

The proposal to the Laidlaw foundation is for funding to cover a two year pilot project of community development and staff training activities. Funds for the healing component of the project will be sought elsewhere.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In a series of planning meetings, the OTFS Coordinator of Services and Senior Family Workers identified several program objectives. These objectives are directed towards the **ultimate goals** of creating...

.Communities in which healthy sexual attitudes and behavior are learned and reinforced

.Communities in which caring and supportive responses are extended to victims of sexual abuse

.Communities in which firm and caring responses are taken against sexually abusive actions

These ideals will be realized through the achievement of **program objectives** which aim ...

(i)To reduce the occurrence of sexual abuse in OTFS communities

(ii)To provide healing and support to the victims of sexual abuse and their families

(iii) To raise community awareness concerning positive sexuality, and the nature and dangers of sexual abuse

(iv) To make OTFS staff, band service staff, and local community volunteers aware of various ways of controlling sexual abuse in the community

(v)To promote and assist the development of sexual abuse prevention initiatives in the 14 communities

(vi)To strengthen OTFS and other service staff's ability to provide support to sexual abuse victims and their families, through intensive training and support at the community level

(vii) To explore traditional Native attitudes towards sexuality and sexual abuse, and the traditional response to sexual abuse

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

As indicated above, three sets of activities will comprise this program: (a) healing (b) community education and (b) staff training and support. Each of these will now be described.

(a)The Healing Program

The healing program will be targeted to three groups: (a) the child and adult victims of sexual abuse (b) the perpetrators of sexual abuse, and the (c) non-perpetrating family members.

The healing objectives with sexual abuse victims will be:

.To provide a safe emotional relationship for the expression of anger, hostility, depression, or confusion related to the abuse

.To clarify the responsibility for the abuse, and relieve the victim's burden of guilt and other negative feelings towards herself/himself

- .To help restore the victim's own sense of identity, normalcy, and self-worth, while supporting her/his participation in self esteem-building community activities
- .To assure that the victim lives in a safe environment, and that the victim trusts that environment
- .To help restore the victim's trust in other people, whether these are family, other adults in authority, or community peers
- .To contribute to the victim's confidence and abilities to engage in normal relationships with the opposite sex
- .To assure that the victim receives specialized help for such self-destructive activities as suicidal thoughts, alcohol or drug abuse, running away, etc.

The specific clinical objectives for individual victims will, of course, vary with the age and circumstances of the abuse. Young children who are victimized by incest, for example, have different needs than teen-age victims of "date rape" or gang sex.

Healing the families of sexual abuse victims

The proposed OTFS sexual abuse program will also direct it's healing activities towards the families of the victims. The specific nature of healing and support will depend on whether or not the abuse was perpetrated by family members or outside the family.

In cases of sexual abuse within the family, healing and supportive efforts will be based on three fundamental OTFS principles, namely that (i) no persons are born as sexual abusers; normal behavior can be restored (ii) the family unit must be kept intact rather than torn apart, and (iii) the strength and support of an active extended family is essential in restoring well-being and stability.

With these principles in mind, the **healing objectives for the families of sexual abuse victims are...**

- .To create acceptance of the fact of sexual abuse within the family, and to end the abuse.
- .To help the family overcome the crisis associated with the disclosure of sexual abuse.
- .To help the immediate family, household and extended family to accept responsibility for assuring that the sexual abuse of any family members does not occur.
- .To support the immediate and extended family's efforts to create a safe environment for children by changing any conditions which may have contributed to sexual abuse. Such conditions may include: abuse of alcohol, crowded living conditions, unsupervised children, the breakdown of normal sexual relationships, isolation from the community, etc.

Persons who are sexually victimized in non-family situations such as gangs, parties or isolated incidents also need the support and acceptance of their families. Both immediate and extended families must be helped by OTFS staff to provide an emotionally safe environment which avoids blaming the victim. As well, these families must assist in the process of emotional healing while providing an easy atmosphere for discussing sexuality and the feelings associated with sexual trauma. In short, the families of sexual abuse victims must be supported in their efforts to

respond to the crisis of sexual abuse, thus preventing subsequent problems.

Healing the Perpetrator

The healing efforts of the proposed program will also be directed to the perpetrators of sexual abuse. Unlike other programs, OTFS's approach will be remedial rather than punishing. The aim will be to return the perpetrator to a normal role within the family and the community. Only when all efforts to help the perpetrator fail will legalistic, non-community-based steps be taken.

With this in mind, **healing objectives for the perpetrator of sexual abuse will be...**

- .To help perpetrators acknowledge their inappropriate behavior, and put an end to any further sexual abuses.
- .To make perpetrators aware that sexual abuse breaks the Native traditional customs of mutual respect, care and responsibility towards children and adults
- .To support perpetrators' efforts to change any personal problems which may have contributed to the sexual abuse. Such problems may include alcohol abuse, stress, or the inability to establish normal sexual relationships.
- .To help perpetrators resist peer activities which promote or lead to sexually inappropriate activities.

Funding for the healing component of the program will be sought from other sources, likely the Family Violence initiative, Health and Welfare Canada.

(b)COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This is the component of the program for which Laidlaw Foundation funds are requested.

The focus

Earlier, it was noted that many OTFS communities need to clarify their standards for appropriate sexual behavior, and to develop caring but firm responses against sexual abuse. People in their daily lives need to know that sexual behavior with children, or with non-consenting adults, is unacceptable. In those communities returning to the traditional ways, people need to know that sexual behavior with fellow clan members is also not accepted.

Young people need to be exposed to a healthy sex role learning process, whether in the family, schools, or in the peer group. Such learning must be consistent, and based on sound values and behavioral codes.

People living in caring communities also need to know that those who commit acts of sexual abuse will receive strong community disapproval, but that all efforts will be made to help abusers receive help to live normal lives within the community.

These needs refer to the natural and informal community processes for creating and maintaining ideals for healthy and appropriate behavior, while assuring that inappropriate behavior will not go unnoticed.

A second program component of the proposed OTFS sexual abuse initiative, therefore, is to provide resources, advise, and support for establishing an environment of healthy sexuality. This is a primary prevention initiative which aims to create the conditions for healthy rather than dysfunctional living.

The objectives of the community development component of the proposed program are as follows:

.To assist local communities to (i) identify needs (ii) plan and (iii) implement community-based educational programs which promote healthy and appropriate sexuality

.To assist local communities to identify specific needs concerning the roles of families in promoting positive sexuality, and to assist in the planning of family life, parenting and sex education programs

.To facilitate the development of a community-based system of response against sexually inappropriate and abusive behavior, a system based on the principles of care, forgiveness and family unity

.To train and provide on-going consultation to OTFS and other Band staff concerning sexuality, sexual abuse, and appropriate community responses to sexual abuse.

The community development approach

Recent writings on prevention strongly recommend the use of community development methods for combatting sexual abuse. In community development, special emphasis is given to the processes of...

- .mobilizing community interest groups into a project team
- . raising general awareness and concern about sexual abuse
- . facilitating a local needs assessment
- .mounting a local community initiative
- .undertaking close monitoring and evaluation throughout the project.

These community development principles are compatible with OTFS general service delivery principles. The respect for community self-sufficiency and the utilization of local resources with central support has been a fundamental

principle throughout the life of OTFS. These principles will continue to be used in this sexual abuse initiative.

Community education

The proposed OTFS community education program will concentrate on developing values and attitudes for positive sexuality. As well, the program will prepare young children and adolescents to recognize and avoid high risk situations. The program will concentrate on reaching the main sources for learning sexual behavior and attitudes, namely the family and the community peer group. As well, the program will target the main community sources of support for these groups, particularly the Band social service, health, and education counsellors.

Like other OTFS services the new initiative will use local Elders in special teaching roles. For example, Elders can teach young people the traditional values of sexuality and appropriate behavior, and help them adapt these values to their own moral codes. Such teachings can be particularly powerful when directed to the natural peer group where so many sexual encounters and street learning occurs. Natural peer cultures have rarely been directly targetted in community education efforts.

Community control

The community development initiative will also mobilize community members to develop local community arrangements for **responding** to sexually inappropriate behavior. Such a system will involve persons such as family support workers, alcohol counsellors, the police, social and educational counsellors, and teachers, all of whom are in the best positions to become aware of sexual abuse and take appropriate action.

The creation of mechanisms for responding to sexual abuse will require the development of band or cross-band policies, as well as specific procedures. It will require training in provincial law concerning sexual abuse, and the creation of specific practices and procedures for responding appropriately to incidents of sexual abuse.

As well as involving those in "official" community positions, the response system will require the support of regular members of each First Nation community. Peers, friends, relatives, neighbours are in potentially good positions to advise, influence, and even strongly prevent abusive behavior. Through community education initiatives, such persons will learn the importance of looking after each others well-being, and of taking strong action if the need arises.

OTFS will act as a central source of advice, training and support for the development of culturally appropriate educational programs at the community level. As well, it will take a leadership role in facilitating the development of appropriate policies and procedures for responding to sexual abuse.

The expectation is that communities will eventually develop the capacities to undertake their own initiatives, with OTFS acting as a resource centre and a coordinator of learning with other reserve communities. Close coordination with the OTFS "Sacred Circle" program will identify the most appropriate education methods, based on that program's work in suicide prevention.

It is anticipated that local community leaders, particularly moral leaders such as Elders perhaps working with young leaders, will take a strong leadership role in local initiatives. Appropriate community educational methods for reaching members of the community will be selected locally on the basis of previous workable initiatives (eg. community T.V., Pow Wows, and the like).

Training and Support for Band Service Personnel

Finally, the community development and education component of the program will provide direct training and support to all Band service providers. Service providers include OTFS staff, alcohol workers, community health workers, social counsellors, educational counsellors, teachers, and others.

Training and follow-up consultation to service providers concerning matters of sexuality and sexual abuse will better prepare them to act as role models, teachers, helpers, or agents of community morality. First and foremost, they must become **comfortable with their own sexuality**. Secondly, they must develop the **skills and knowledge to easily address matters of sexuality** with their clients. The correct language and manner for talking to little children about sex is a case in point. As well, they must know the **symptoms of sexual abuse**, in order to activate the appropriate community response. Finally, they must **know their own responsibility and roles in the larger community response system**, should sexual abuse occur.

The training component will involve four intensive 3-day workshops, throughout 1991 and 1992, bringing together OTFS service staff, supervisors, outside experts in sexuality and abuse, and resource materials. These workshops will occur strategically at different stages in the development and implementation of local promotion initiatives. (See below)

The project will also provide follow-up technical support and coaching to OTFS staff responsible for supporting community initiatives.

(a) Training Workshops

The format and methodology of the workshops will be designed to optimize learning by Native adults while building working relationships between organizations and between Native communities. As well, the workshops are designed to produce draft resource materials to aid the development of local community initiatives in positive sexuality and sexual abuse prevention.

Workshop #1

Six specific workshop methods will be used as follows:

(a) Panel discussion

A panel of experts, specializing in sexuality and community education will be asked to make presentations on three topics: (i) sexuality and sexual abuse (ii) community education, development and the promotion of healthy sexuality, and (iii) guidelines for building working relationships between O.T.F.S., local communities and their organization.

(b) Resource booths

Scattered throughout the workshop location will be a number of resource booths or desks. On display will be promotional materials for healthy sexuality and sexual abuse avoidance, such as posters, brochures, pamphlets, videos, books and articles.

(c) Lecturettes

Short lectures on the promotion of healthy sexuality and its potential preventative role in relation to sexual abuse. The anticipated total impact of these lectures will be to provide the participants with an introductory overview of promotion methods for potential application in their own communities.

(d) Planning group exercises

The above lecturettes will be followed by planning group exercises, in a process of learning through application. Following each lecturette, fourteen small work groups (one from each reserve) will be formed to begin preliminary discussion of its potential application in their home community.

Each planning group will consist of small natural work groups of OTFS staff working on each reserve. For example, the Eagle Lake planning group will consist of Eagle Lake's Family Support Workers, Alcohol Worker, and the Senior Family Worker.

The purpose of these work groups is to learn a prevention approach by discussing and developing a mock plan for a project directed to the promotion of healthy sexuality or sexual abuse prevention.

(e) Resource development and sharing

One of the important purposes of this workshop is to distribute promotional and prevention materials for use on all reserves. Instructions will be given concerning the use of resources in planning local initiatives. Some resources will be brought to the workshop by representatives from local organizations or programs.

In addition, draft resources will be developed by the participants themselves throughout the workshop. The draft plans from the work groups described above will be handed in for compilation into a resource booklet entitled "Community Initiatives for the Promotion of Healthy Sexuality and Sexual Abuse Prevention". These booklets will be circulated to all participants after the workshop as a resource for planning in the local community.

This method of developing resources during training has been successfully implemented in other O.T.F.S. workshops. For samples of these resources, see either The Ojibway Tribal Family Services Family Support Guide or Native Family Support Training Resources, (Frank Maidman, Aug. 1989).

(f) Video presentations

During the two evenings of the workshop, video showings will occur. Efforts will be made to locate video resources for Native audiences, but failing this there are many well-known video materials available (eg. "Feeling Yes, Feeling No", "Child Sexual Abuse: What your Children Should Know", "Strong Kids, Safe Kids: A Family Guide").

To maximize the utility of these showings, the format of both evenings will be such that the use of video to promote community learning is demonstrated.

Workshop #2

The purpose of the second workshop will be to share, and receive feed-back on, the planned community initiatives.

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Planning for each initiative will have taken place between the two workshops. Each of the groups from the 14 reserves will describe their project for the entire group. The workshop will be structured to facilitate feed-back from local experts in sexuality and sexual abuse. The anticipated outcomes of this workshop will be two-fold: (i) shared advice for fine-tuning local initiatives, and (ii) further networking across communities, and with local specialists.

Workshop #3

The third workshop will take place during the implementation of community initiatives, early in the second year. The general purposes are to share progress and receive feed-back on problems experienced during local implementation. The difficulties and recommended solutions will form part of the evaluation data. Again, staff from all 14 communities will be present, as well as specialists.

Workshop #4

The final workshop will be a "wrap-up" event in which success stories and growing pains will be shared. Although many local initiatives will be on-going, this will be an opportunity for collective reflection on the entire process. The workshop will be highly evaluative. The key question will be " How could the project be conducted so as to provide better support to the development and implementation of local initiatives in sexuality and sexual abuse?"

(b) On-going Consultation

An essential part of the community action process is that OTFS staff and volunteers access to consultation over the life of the process. The Community Development Officer, Senior Family Workers, and the OTFS Service and Training Co-ordinators will provide the community level consultation to each project. This is consistent with the existing OTFS supervisory and internal consulting process.

Local consultation will (i) help solve any problems in conducting projects (ii) provide follow-up community-based training, and (iii) identify resource needs. As well, local consultation will facilitate the on-going cross-community learning as projects are carried out.

Another level of consultation will come from experts in human sexuality and sexual abuse, those who were involved in the above workshops. This consultation will be provided directly to the Community Development Officer and OTFS supervisors, and will respond to the needs for specific content requests from the communities.

The over-all consulting process will be monitored by Dr. Frank Maidman who will concentrate on facilitating this consultation, building relationships with outside experts, and on supporting the local consultation by OTFS supervisors. Skills and knowledge for local consultation will be transferred to the OTFS staff. This will be an important "learning product" for the organization.

(c) Evaluation

The purpose of project evaluation will be three-fold: (i) To gather project development information for the purpose of assisting local initiatives and improving upon the over-all support system for these initiatives. (ii) To document the impact of the project in terms of describing specific local initiatives, and (iii) To refine the over-all project process in terms of assumptions, training, resource development, linkages to experts, and consultation.

In particular, evaluation efforts will describe the Native cultural or situational factors impacting the over-all process and the success of community initiatives.

In technical terms, the evaluation design would be "formative" or developmental in nature. No attempt would be made to study the impact on the communities' patterns of sexuality or sexual abuse. It is strongly recommended that evaluation resources at this stage be used in aid of development.

4.THE STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF THE PROGRAM

The proposed sexual abuse demonstration project will involve hiring, for a two year period, a community development or community education specialist. This person, preferably a Native person with experience in the communities in question, will work with a team of sexual abuse experts to provide staff training and follow-up consulting to local OTFS and other Band staff.

Staff training will be provided in a series of four central workshops over a two year period. They will be trained in topics associated with positive sexuality and sexual abuse prevention. As well, they will be instructed in principles of prevention, and be exposed to samples of community-based prevention. Specifically, they will be instructed to initiate positive sexuality and/or sexual abuse prevention initiatives in their own communities, working with volunteers, community leaders and other Band staff.

Between workshops the Community Development Officer will be available as a resource person for planning, implementing and evaluating local community initiatives. This consultation will involve sexual abuse experts from Kenora and Dryden, and will serve to build links to other resources. Consultation in local initiatives will take place within the reserve communities, and will target local project teams. The progress of local initiatives will be documented on an on-going basis.

Reporting arrangements.

The Community Development Officer will report to the OTFS Executive Director, and will make regular monthly reports to the Board of Directors. Because of the extreme sensitivity of this initiative, extra precautions will be observed in monitoring the project.

An Integrated Service Approach

Because of the nature of the problem, the proposed program will have strong working relationships with medical facilities, the legal system, and other service agencies such as the Lake of the Woods Hospital (eg. The Native Healing Program, The Mental Health Program, medical Doctors), the Kenora Family Resource Centre, and others.

As well as liaising with the medical establishment, the program will draw upon traditional Native teachings concerning sexuality. Like other OTFS activities, Elders will be the principle resource people for these teachings.

Finally, the program aims to become fully integrated with other OTFS programs and those in the communities, including the NNADAP alcohol program, community health representatives, the family support program, and the suicide prevention program.

Sexual Abuse Advisory Group

The proposed sexual abuse program faces three important challenges: (i) the challenge of working in an **interdisciplinary professional environment** (ii) the challenge of blending **traditional Native healing** and that of **non-Native practice**, and (iii) the challenge of offering **integrated services** to combat highly sensitive problems. To provide support in meeting these challenges, an interdisciplinary Advisory Group will be established.

To provide strong advise and support, it is proposed that the special Advisory Group be comprised of a medical Doctor, a child welfare Lawyer, one male and one female Elder, Dr.Ed Connors (Sacred Circle), representatives from OTFS Senior Family Workers, the Coordinator of Services, and a non-Native sexual abuse specialist (if available).

The Advisory Group will provide **specialized program development advise and case consultation** from the various professional and traditional perspectives on sexual abuse. Of particular importance is the maintenance of appropriate working relationships between the new program and other related agencies and OTFS programs. Difficult cases will be reviewed by this group, for the purpose of finding the appropriate balance between Native healing approaches, medical, and legal requirements.

Finally, the Advisory Group will be a vehicle for advising on any particularly difficult **challenges or problems associated with early program implementation**. Towards the end of the first year, the Group assisted by the evaluation consultant will take an active role in **assessing** the early progress and development of the Program.

5.BUDGET (two years)

(Note: The following estimates are based on the equivalent salary scales for the projected 1991 fiscal year, and the costs of previous OTFS workshops at the Ojibway Paradise Lodge Training Centre)

Staff

(i)Community Development Officer

.full-time @ \$39,432\$78,864

(ii)Typist/clerk

.1/2 time @ \$17,971\$35,942

Benefits (@ 8.5%)

Total:\$124,564.51

Professional: Fees

(i)workshops: planning, workshop delivery, resource development, workshop report :(4 workshops)

- 10 days per workshop @ \$350/day\$14,000

(ii)follow-up consulting to OTFS Community Development Officer and other Senior staff

- 24 days (8 consulting sessions of three days each) @ \$350/day\$8,400

(iii) evaluation: 2 field trips to each reserve, analysis, information-sharing to supervisors, writing.

- 80 days @ \$350\$28,000

Total fees:\$50,000

Professional: Expenses

(i)travel: 20 flights/ground from Toronto @ \$700 \$14,000

(ii) accomodation and meals (74 days @ \$100)\$7,400

Workshop Expenses

(a)Workshop participants travel

.48 staff from 14 reserves @ \$135\$25,920.00
return car mileage, per workshop.
(4 workshops)

(c)Rental, accomodations and meals

.Ojibway Paradise Lodge for 3 days,
2 nights, meals; for 55 people (staff,
management, consultant) @ \$77, per workshop.
(4 workshops)\$50,820

(d)Conference room

.12 days @ \$150 \$1,800

Material Resources

.video tapes, video technician, purchase of written materials, video rental, etc. \$5,000

Contingency (10%)\$33,000

Total: \$362,904.51

APPENDIX "A"

OJIBWAY TRIBAL FAMILY SERVICES

A Summary Description of the Organization

Introduction

Ojibway Tribal Family Services is a Native family and children's service organization, serving the following fourteen Treaty 3 First Nations in the Kenora - Dryden area: Eagle Lake, Rat Portage, Washagamis Bay, Waubaskang, Wabagoon, Grassy Narrows, Whitefish Bay, Northwest Angle 33, Northwest Angle 37, Whitedog, Shoal Lake 39, Shoal Lake 40, Lac Seul, and Dalles.

O.T.F.S. began as a community-based response to the needs of people in the areas of family life and childcare. Also, the organization began as a reaction to what were perceived as unwarranted intrusions by provincial child welfare authorities. O.T.F.S.' general mission is to strengthen the quality of family and community life so that children have an opportunity for physical and mental growth in a supportive environment. As well, through early preventative intervention, O.T.F.S. aims to reduce the risk of family break-up, whether through marital separation or intervention by child welfare authorities.

OTFS receives its core funding from Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

Service Goals

Ojibway Tribal Family Services' goal is to provide support services to families and children who are members of their respective communities by:

- (i) Strengthening families rather than removing children from their families during times of crisis.
- (ii) Identifying children in care of other agencies, institutions and authorities and facilitating the return of these children to their families in their respective communities.
- (iii) Initiating community education and support programs to prevent the removal of children from their families and home communities
- (iv) Providing outreach services to band members of the fourteen reserves.

O.T.F.S. pursues these objectives with specific services, a service philosophy and an organizational structure known as the "O.T.F.S. Family Support Model".

Values and Principles

A number of important values and principles provide direction to the structures and activities in the family support model. Perhaps the strongest value is the ideal of self-government or self-determination. Ojibway Tribal Family Services, as a service system, is an example of self-government in the service sector.

Family Support: Description of Services

Family support, according to O.T.F.S.' model, is a prevention service. Prevention can be divided into three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

primary prevention aims to help communities and families avoid high risk, child placement or harmful behavior by increasing family resources and coping capacity and by reducing stress on the family.

secondary prevention aims to uncover cases of child maltreatment and family dysfunctioning in order to provide the social supports, direct assistance and treatment required to end the dysfunction and prevent a long-term break-down in the family.

tertiary treatment aims at temporarily separating the child from the troubled parents for the child's safety, and providing support and resources to strengthen the family for eventual return of the child.

To fulfill its prevention goals, the O.T.F.S. family support model specifies eight service activities:

- .community education
- .repatriation
- .extra-parental care
- .special needs support
- .family counselling
- .short-term care
- .repatriation
- .advocacy

Principles of the Family Support Model

O.T.F.S.' family support model does more than identify specific services for achieving its ends. Early planning and training identified specific principles for providing and supporting families. These are as follows:

1. All services should mobilize or energize the community in the support of families and the care of children; the communities' informal "natural" sources of support should be used.
2. Service decisions and practices should utilize the customary care traditions of family support and child-rearing, particularly the important roles of the extended family.
3. Services should be compatible with, and supported by Ojibway cultural traditions and local community practices; services should not be artificially imposed upon existing communities; in other words, family support should be an integral part of community life.
4. Related to this, elders are identified as important human resources for family support, both at higher levels of guidance (eg. Council of Elders) and in specific support roles.
5. Family support services should be integrated with other band services in a community-based resource network.
6. Training and development is an important on-going requirement of family support in two ways...
...keeping all human resources knowledgeable and skilled in all facets of family support work, and
...doing the necessary community development work to keep each community aware of,
cooperative and supportive of O.T.F.S.

OTFS ORGANIZATION

Family Support Committees: Local Direction, Support and Planning

OTFS' organizational model is characterized by a decentralized approach to (a) service delivery (b) staff monitoring (c) support to Family Support Workers and (d) family support planning. The heart of this decentralized approach is the local Family Support Committee, a group of community volunteers who work regularly with the Senior Family Worker and Family Support Workers.

Each Chief and Band Council delegates authority over child and family service matters to the Family Support Committee, which could be composed of human service personnel, Elders, a Council representative, and interested Band members.

The official functions of Family Support Committees are as follows:

- development and promotion of cultural programs and training in traditional family life and child-rearing
- development of local prevention programs, including recreational and activity programs, special needs self-help groups
- direct service work, such as formal and informal counselling
- contributing to individual and family assessments
- advocacy
- helping families acquire local community support (eg. in-home support), special services (eg. educational counselling) and special funding
- dispute resolution (eg. disagreements over custody)
- repatriation

Essentially, Family Support Committees are expected to "act on behalf of whole communities" to assure the well-being of parents and children. Local O.T.F.S. staff do the "leg work" in specific tasks associated with the Committees' program and specific family support decisions.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The management system within any service organization is its main source of over-all direction, control of service activities and resources, coordination of the organization's various parts, and an appropriate organizational culture.

The main units of the O.T.F.S. management system are: the Board of Directors; the management team: Executive Director, Coordinator of Services, Training Coordinator, Coordinator of Finances, the Executive Secretary; and the eight Senior Family Workers.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is an important source of direction and control in the OTFS management system. Each Board member is appointed by the Chief and band Council to represent reserve interests in the operation of OTFS. At the same time, the Board must strive to balance individual community needs with the needs of OTFS as a whole. Potentially, the OTFS Board of Directors is an arena for developing policies, negotiating decisions and solving problems, so that this balance is achieved.

The high priority functions of the OTFS Board of Directors are summarized in various OTFS documents as follows:

- to establish policy guidelines with regard to personnel, allocation of resources, programs and services

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- to ensure that OTFS is accountable to the people it services through financial and program monitoring
 - to recruit all Regional (i.e. central) staff positions and Senior Family Support Workers, and to participate, with management, in personnel administration
 - to contribute to liaison between OTFS and its important environments, and share in public relations

The Board fulfills its duties through regular monthly meetings, the operation of an Executive Committee, and the activities of Board Sub-Committees (Financial, Programs, Policy and Planning, and Personnel).

The Management Team

OTFS' management team consists of the Executive Director, Coordinator of Services, Financial Coordinator, Training Coordinator and the Executive Secretary. The team meets regularly for up-dating, and for sharing future plans.

These meetings also present opportunities for highlighting positive progress and identifying problems. Members of the team also have several discussions outside of the regularly scheduled meetings.

Management Information System

The management information system within OTFS consists of the following components:

- .a computerized service information system
- .local community service records
- .monthly reports to the Board of Directors from all members of the management team
- .annual staff reviews
- .organizational reviews
- .court reports from OTFS lawyer and Family Court Worker