

*SAFE in Collingwood*  
*Sex Work Awareness For Everyone*

Working together to create a community that is healthy and safe for everyone

kitchen table  
discussion guide

Released: January 2011

Much thanks and appreciation to all the SAFE Kitchen Table Working Group members for their guidance and input in creating this Guide.

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SAFE Kitchen Table Discussions are supported by the SAFE in Collingwood Steering Committee and Kitchen Table Working Group. This guide was developed to support the following priority goals identified by the SAFE Steering Committee for the first year of its demonstration project:

1. Reduce the health and safety concerns related to sex work experienced by residents, visitors, and businesses
2. Improve the health and safety of sex workers
3. Improve healthy lifestyle decision-making of children and youth and their parents
4. Reduce sexual exploitation of youth

This Discussion Guide provides facilitation tips and a practical framework for hosting a SAFE kitchen table discussion on local perspectives around sex work issues in the Collingwood neighborhood.

### What is a kitchen table discussion?

A kitchen table discussion takes place when a small collection of people gets together to talk, listen and share ideas on subjects of mutual interest. The environment should be comfortable and have a feeling of informality. Because they are in an informal setting, participants are more willing to discuss issues and dialogue is maximized.

Kitchen table discussion aims to encourage people to continue discussing an issue until all members have had a chance to be heard, and provides an opportunity for sharing opinions as well as information and alternatives/suggestions for neighborhood issues and proposals.

Kitchen table discussion builds a sense of community, provides a venue for sharing and may generate feedback and suggestions on neighborhood issues

#### **SAFE Kitchen Table Discussion GOALS**

1. To increase participation by diverse stakeholders in dialogue about sex work.
2. To decrease fear about sex work and sex workers for business, residents and service providers.
3. To increase contact between marginalized people and mainstream populations.
4. To improve neighborhood mediation.

### STRENGTHS in the Kitchen Table Discussion style of engagement:

- Maximizes dialogue, genuine listening, and respect for different perspectives
- Builds social networks and engagement
- Maximizes the likelihood of respectful debate and decreases the likelihood of conflict because it is small and held in a neutral environment
- If an issue is contentious it provides an early opportunity to identify potential conflicts



## In this Guide, you will find.....

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### Appendices:

- A: Participant Contact List
- B: Participant Demographics
- C: Facilitator's Summary
- D: My Reflections, Thoughts, Ideas

### Materials you will need:

- Refreshments - *you are encouraged to provide beverages/snacks. The budget per kitchen table discussion is \$20. Save all receipts for reimbursement.*
- Timekeeping device - *watch or cell phone*
- List of names of registered participants
- Discussion Guidelines – *see Appendix*
- Paper - *one 11 ½ x 17" paper per participant*
- Colored markers or pencil crayons, extra pens
- SAFE pamphlets
- Participant Handouts – *see Appendix*



## GETTING STARTED

As a discussion host, you don't need to be an expert. Anybody can host a kitchen table discussion. All you need to do is bring together a group of people who are willing to share their thoughts and ideas. The setting can be informal – a kitchen, living room, lunchroom or coffee shop.

What you do need is compassion and a willingness to discuss ideas aimed at developing solutions that work for everybody.

1. **Review this Discussion Guide.** Familiarize yourself with the facilitator's role and goals for a kitchen table discussion. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the SAFE Coordinator.
2. **Choose a time and location.** A place that is comfortable where there will be minimum interruptions is ideal.
3. **Develop an invitation list.** You may want to hold a discussion for a target group (e.g. community service workers, women, men, business owners, etc.). At the same time, you may choose to invite a group that reflects a diversity of experiences. Keep in mind that you are not attempting to reach consensus, but are aiming to support people to share their ideas and experiences.
4. **Bring all the materials you will need.** See text box on page 2 for detailed list.
5. **Remember to return completed participant and facilitator handouts, as well as any expense receipts.** Forms can be returned to Collingwood Neighborhood House, the Collingwood Community Policing Centre or the Collingwood Business Improvement Association Office.

### Facilitating a Respectful Discussion

A kitchen table discussion works best when people feel free to speak without being judged. As host, you can affirm that there are no "right" or "wrong" things to say and that everyone's ideas are valid, important, and that different perspectives contribute to the richness of the conversation.

- **Listen to others.** Role model good listening skills to help others do the same.
- **Remember that everyone's contribution is valuable.**
- **Don't argue.** Instead, ask questions to clarify ideas and try to thoroughly understand all the perspectives being presented. Avoid defending "positions", and concentrate instead on ensuring everyone hears and understands differing ideas without judgment.
- **Be conscious of who is participating.** Use rounds, a speaker's list, or invite those who have not spoken to participate.

To ensure that everyone listens and speaks respectfully, you can also ask your group to agree to the Discussion Guidelines outlined on page 5.



## FORMAT for your SAFE Kitchen Table Discussion

In order to ensure consistency and best practices for facilitating a successful SAFE kitchen table discussion, the SAFE Steering Committee recommends that facilitators follow a standard format. As a kitchen table host, please use the following framework and content to guide your discussion. For those that may prefer to simply read out the information, some content is written as a narrative.

Each discussion should take about 1 ½ - 2 hours. To help with timekeeping, suggested time limits for each part of the discussion are included.

### A. Welcome and Backgrounder (5 minutes)

Thank you for coming today and participating in this SAFE in Collingwood Kitchen Table Discussion. I'd like to start by giving you some background about SAFE and how it got started in Collingwood to provide some context for the discussion we're about to have.

The **History** of SAFE began with the citywide "Living in Community" initiative, which began in 2004 to respond to community concerns about the impacts of sex work and sexual exploitation in Vancouver. Businesses, sex workers, local residents, community organizations, police and government worked together for three years to reach agreement on an innovative approach to addressing these concerns. The approach was tested through an extensive public engagement process with World Café dialogues, focus groups and online surveys to solicit feedback and ideas from a wide diversity of stakeholders throughout the City. This culminated in a public meeting attended by over 200 people where a final report with recommendations and a toolkit for how to deal with sex work issues were presented.

Recognizing the need to move these recommendations and toolkits forward into concrete action, Living in Community secured funding through the Vancouver Agreement in 2009 to support a local demonstration project in one Vancouver neighborhood.

Collingwood was chosen as the successful site and a community action team was formed with broad representation from local organizations, businesses, residents, schools, sex workers, sex worker organizations and government. This team named the project "**SAFE in Collingwood**" which stands for **Sex work Awareness For Everyone**, with the goal of creating a community that is safer for all community members in relation to the issues of sex work and sexual exploitation.

### B. Overview of the Kitchen Table Discussion (2 minutes)

To support the goals of SAFE, we are hosting local Kitchen Table Discussions like the one we are having today. **We are here today to:**

1. Ensure everyone has the opportunity to talk and share his or her concerns and ideas.
2. Listen to others from our community and learn about their experiences.
3. Build a stronger community by working together through conversation.
4. Generate solutions.

**We are NOT here today to** challenge or change people's belief systems. We will each have different feelings about sex work. We respect the right of everyone to have his or her own beliefs and opinions.

### **C. Introductions (10 minutes)**

What is your name and tell us a little about yourself. Do you live or work in the community? How long have you been in Collingwood? What is one thing you love about this community?

### **D. Discussion Guidelines (5 minutes)**

Before we start it is important to review and agree on some guidelines for our discussion.

- We will listen to others. We will not interrupt when a person is speaking.
- There are no right or wrong ideas
- Everyone's contribution is valuable
- We won't argue. Instead of arguing we will ask questions to clarify ideas and thought.
- We will give everyone an opportunity to speak
- We respect confidentiality. Anything that is said here, stays here.

Does everyone agree? Is there anything missing you would like to add? Let's get started.

### **E. Reflection Activity: My Neighborhood/Our Neighborhood (20-25 minutes)**

Hand out a piece of blank paper to each participant and put a bunch of markers in the centre of the table. Ask the group to draw a picture of their neighborhood, whatever that means to them. Give them 5-8 minutes to complete their drawing. When the time has passed ask each person to move to the seat to his or her right. Now ask them to add to their neighbor's drawing whatever things, places, activities they see are missing. Give them 2 minutes only to add to the next drawing and continue in this way until everyone has added to all drawings at the table and they have returned to their original seat.

As the facilitator of this activity, your role is to guide the group to reflect on their experience of this exercise and share any insights that came up. After the activity is done you might pose the following reflection questions and/or write them up on a piece of paper for people to refer to.

- How did your drawing of your neighborhood change? What does it look like now?
- How did that feel?
- Did anything surprise you?

### **F. Discussion (1 hour)**

As the facilitator, your role is to guide the group through these discussion questions so that everyone has a chance to share their thoughts and ideas. It is sometimes helpful to word questions differently for different groups in order to evoke richer discussion, so alternative wordings and prompts are provided. People may have a lot to say and share, but try to summarize main discussion points and move the group to Question 4 and 5 after 45 minutes to ensure there is time to discuss specific actions.

## Guiding Questions:

1. How have you been impacted by sex work?  
*Alternative wording and prompts:*
  - Be specific. Go deeper.
  - In what ways have you learned about sex work or encountered sex workers in your life? How did these experiences make you feel?
  - What did you learn from that experience?
  
2. Sex work is something many of us don't normally talk about. These Kitchen Table discussions are meant to engage discussion and understanding about issues related to the sex trade. What information do you need to better understand the dynamics and issues related to sex work?  
*Alternative wording and prompts:*
  - In what ways do you see the presence of sex workers impacts the neighborhood?
  - Do you need more information about any of these issues?
  
3. Do you have concerns related to sex work? What would ease these concerns?  
*Alternative wording and prompts:*
  - Do you have concerns related to the health and safety of the neighborhood?
  - Do you have concerns about the health and safety of sex workers?
  
4. What can we do as a community to support greater health and safety?  
*Alternative wording and prompts:*
  - When you think about your safety concerns regarding sex work, what do you think would increase health and safety for everyone in the community?
  - Which agencies or services do you think are best positioned to support community solutions?
  
5. What can you do as an individual to support greater health and safety? On a piece of paper write down one action you are going to take.  
*Give participants 3-4 minutes to generate ideas. Have participants read aloud the actions they are going to take.*

## G. Summing up (5 minutes)

Sum up main themes and discussion points that came up for the group. What were the most important issues that could be shared with the broader community? Any last comments?

### **Please remember to collect completed handouts for each participant!**

1. Distribute SAFE brochure and participant handouts. Ensure participants fill them out before they leave:
  - a. Participant Handout 1: Reflections, Thoughts & Ideas
  - b. Participant Handout 2: Participant Contact List (one per group)
  - c. Participant Handout 3: Participant Demographics
  
2. Complete the Facilitators Handout. Attach any expense receipts and return everything to SAFE in Collingwood c/o Andrea Little, SAFE Coordinator, by dropping it off to one of the following local agencies:
  - a. Collingwood Neighborhood House
  - b. Collingwood Community Policing Centre
  - c. Collingwood Business Improvement Association Office





## **NEXT STEPS**

Remember to thank all the participants for their time and interest in the SAFE Kitchen Table Discussions. Their volunteer contribution and openness to discussing this issue for the benefit of their community is to be appreciated! Let them know that the SAFE Steering Committee will compile all the ideas generated in the kitchen table discussions, and host a community forum in Spring of 2011 to present a summary of these ideas back to the community and plan future actions.

In addition to hosting a series of kitchen table discussions, SAFE is also creating a suite of information brochures for businesses, residents, parents, youth and sex workers. We are currently working on developing an interactive website that will provide ongoing information and updates on SAFE activities including the kitchen table discussions. If anyone is interested in learning more about opportunities to support the work of SAFE and get involved, we'd love to hear from them.

**Thank you for supporting SAFE in Collingwood!**



**SAFE in Collingwood**  
**Kitchen Table Discussion**

**Participants Contact List**

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>NAME</b> | <b>My preferred way to receive info (email or phone)</b> | <b>Email Address or Phone number</b> |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1.          |  |                                      |
| 2.          |  |                                      |
| 3.          |  |                                      |
| 4.          |  |                                      |
| 5.          |  |                                      |
| 6.          |  |                                      |
| 7.          |  |                                      |
| 8.          |  |                                      |
| 9.          |  |                                      |
| 10.         |  |                                      |



**SAFE in Collingwood  
Kitchen Table Discussion**

**Participant Demographics**

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* no names required. All information provided will be kept anonymous.*

My relationship to the Collingwood neighborhood is:  
(Check all the apply)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| I live in the community                          |  |
| I own a business in the community                |  |
| I work in a small business in the community      |  |
| I work in the non-profit sector in the community |  |
| I am a sex worker in the community               |  |
| I have children in the community                 |  |
| My children go to school in the community        |  |
| I am a senior/retired in the community           |  |
| I shop in the community                          |  |
| Other: _____                                     |  |

**SAFE *in Collingwood***  
**Kitchen Table Discussion**

**Facilitator's Summary**

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Describe the diversity within your group.**
- 2. Did everyone seem to feel comfortable participating? Please explain.**
- 3. What was learned? What insights or themes emerged from the discussion?**
- 4. Were there any contentious issues? What were they? What happened?**
- 5. Were there any issues that came up that the group needed more information to resolve or address?**
- 6. Do you have any other comments? (feel free to use the back of this sheet)**



**SAFE in Collingwood**  
**Kitchen Table Discussion**

My Reflections, Thoughts & Ideas

**1. Impacts of sex work on me are...**

**2. I would like to know...**

**3. I would feel safer if...**

**4. I am going to...**

**5. I think the community should...**