



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

- OPPORTUNITY:** Program/Impact Evaluation of Sexual Health/Development Program for Youth
- TYPE OF CONTRACT:** The contract is an all-inclusive fixed fee of \$10,000 including all taxes, expenses, fees, disbursements and materials. Chebucto Connections shall not consider any additional costs.
- INTENT TO APPLY DATE:** **Email by Wed, July 26, 2017 at 23H59 (11:59 PM)** stating your intention to apply to [bonnie@chebuctoconnections.ca](mailto:bonnie@chebuctoconnections.ca) subject line: **EVALUATION CONTRACT**. An outline of the curriculum will be provided to all proponents at this time.
- QUESTIONS BY:** All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted via email by **Sun, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 23H59 (11:59 PM)** to [bonnie@chebuctoconnections.ca](mailto:bonnie@chebuctoconnections.ca). No communication with applicants will occur after this time. All questions will be answered at one time and emailed to all proponents by **Fri, August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 17H00 (5:00 PM)**.
- RFP CLOSING DATE:** **Sun, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 23H59 (11:59 PM)**. **Mail or drop off one printed copy** of the proposal and all attachments to:  
Executive Director, 531 Herring Cove Rd. Halifax, NS B3R 1X3  
All proposals shall remain firm and cannot be withdrawn for a period of 90 days after receipt of proposals.
- The submitted proposal and any agreed upon changes by Chebucto Connections and the successful contractor will become an appendix to the contract.
- CONTRACT PERIOD/LOCATION:** Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 in Spryfield, Nova Scotia

### **BACKGROUND**

**Chebucto Connections** works with community partners to attract resources that help address priorities and increase opportunities for local communities. We aim to build capacity and advance the quality of life for residents throughout the Eastern Chebucto Peninsula.  
[WWW.CHEBUCTOCONNECTONS.CA](http://WWW.CHEBUCTOCONNECTONS.CA)

Through *Nova Scotia Department of Community Services* **Breaking the Silence: A Coordinated Response to Sexual Violence in Nova Scotia: Prevention Innovation Grant**, Chebucto Connections will contract an external evaluator to carry out a program and impact evaluation to meaningfully inform content, delivery method, age-effectiveness and impact of the **Healthy Development 6, 7 and 8** and **Healthy Living 9** program.

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

The 2017-2018 school year will be the second year for *Healthy Development 6, 7 and 8* and the fifth year for *Healthy Living 9* program delivery in the JL Family of Schools in Spryfield.

Chebucto Connections believes that the program has been transformative for young people who have participated in the program by way of increasing their general knowledge and awareness about sexual health and health and, importantly, furthering their self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-esteem, camaraderie with their classmates/class-cohort and help-seeking behaviours around sexual health and various mental/physical health issues in their lives.

The purpose of this evaluation is to test this belief and:

1. **Assess program** content/delivery/implementation-method to inform future program development/content/delivery-method and to gain evidence on the program that can be presented to school boards, education departments, partner agencies and the public.
2. **Assess the impact of participation** in the program for each grade/age group to help Chebucto Connections determine the most effective age(s)/grade(s) to deliver the content to. Measure increased youth access of health services within the community, (including youth health centres, 211, teachers, other youth workers and so forth.)

We also hope to understand whether all Grades (6,7,8 and 9) should have the program, or whether one or two years (or any combination of 6, 7 8 and 9 i.e. Grad 7 foundational introduction and Grade 9 in-depth etc.) would meet their needs.

This will be done by:

1. Collecting, reviewing and gathering data.
2. Organizing the data into forms from which information/knowledge can be extracted.
3. Interpreting, testing and analyzing the data based information.
4. Identifying and articulating evidence, based on the testing and analysis.
5. Providing clear information on the validity, reliability and accuracy of the evidence.
6. Providing empirical evidence through testimonials and/or case studies and/or other methods agreed upon by the contractor and Chebucto Connections.

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## BRIEF OUTLINE OF PROGRAM TO BE EVALUATED

The curriculum for **Healthy Development 6, 7 and 8** and **Healthy Living 9** was developed in partnership with leaders in Halifax's sexual health field and Chebucto Connections staff. During the program, students from local schools participate in a series of discussions and activities about healthy sexuality, relationships and development. The program takes place during regular Healthy Living class, and is facilitated by Chebucto Connections' Facilitators and by health teachers in small group circle discussions.

The larger class is broken into two groups; one taking a feminine perspective and one taking a masculine perspective. Students self-select which group they would like to work in, and are able to move between the groups based on their personal comfort and needs.

The curriculum is focused on helping students take ownership of their sexual health and develop healthy relationships. The twelve week (Grades 6, 7 and 8) and 18-week (Grade 9) program evolves from discussing expectations of gender and how their understanding these expectations affect their health, to sex, sexual development, pornography and the importance of sexual consent. Discussions are age-adapted and carried out in the spirit of meeting students where they are, in order to best meet the needs of the group.

Program goals are aligned with **Nova Scotia's Sexualized Violence Strategy**. They include:

- To create a better understanding of healthy relationship and norms for youth.
- To increase engagement of men and boys in sexual violence prevention work.
- To help youth develop a clearer understanding of what consent is and why it is important.
- To help youth think critically about hyper-sexualization of women and girls in the media.
- To strengthen youth engagement and leadership in sexual violence prevention.
- To increase positive non-violent perceptions of masculinity for participating youth.

In the 2017-18 school year, a Chebucto Connections staff (or staff team) will facilitate discussions, working alongside the health teacher and third party evaluator (selected via this RFP).

Program Target population is students within the JL Ilsley Family of Schools in select Grades 6, 7, 8 and 9. The project includes the Pathways to Education curriculum developed for Grade 9 Healthy Living and an age-adapted version of the curriculum for Grades 6, 7 and 8. Social Determinants of Health inform the work of Chebucto Connections and can be referred to as relevant throughout this work. The program addresses inequalities in gender as well as increasing non-violent positive perceptions of masculinity. In particular it seeks increase critical thinking around the hyper-sexualization of women and girls, and to reduce the occurrence of sexualized violence in our community. Students are provided with space to engage in frank and open conversations about issues related to their health, increasing their capacity to evaluate and improve their personal health practices and coping skills.

An example of **Grade 6** curriculum topics include:

1. Trust and Community Standards –Building trust in the group and a safe environment.
2. Expectations of Gender – How they affect student health and inform behaviour
3. Body Image – Developing a positive body image and self-concept
4. Popularity, Group Mentality and Bullying – What factors influence popularity and how can we create more supportive schools?
5. Friendships and Relationships – Building and maintaining healthy friendships and understanding intimate relationships.
6. Puberty and Sexual Development – Understanding our bodies
7. Sex and Healthy Sexuality – Understanding sex and developing a healthy sexuality
8. Bodies in the Media & Online Safety – Recognizing sexual content and how to be safe online
9. Consent – Understanding what it is and the importance of sexual consent.
10. Alcohol and Marijuana – How do they affect health and how do they affect consent?
11. Help Seeking Behaviours – What are they and why do they matter?
12. Closing Ceremony – Celebrating learning and how to carry knowledge into their lives, family, school, community.

**Grade 9** topics can vary depending on how facilitators assess the needs of the group. A list of topics over 18 weeks can include:

1. Gender expectations – an activity with the entire class group discussing gendered expectations that students identify
2. Impaired driving and explaining the groups – preparing students for discussion groups; one focusing more on masculine expectations and one focusing more on feminine expectations
3. Community Standards – building group norms that will help the class discuss topics together
4. Substance Use – discussing alcohol and drug use on a continuum and discussing factors students predict would affect their substance use
5. Safety – discussing ways to make environments more safe for students and their peers
6. Help-Seeking Behaviour – identifying barriers to asking for help and discussing ways to increase the likelihood of students seeking help
7. Healthy Relationships- what is a healthy relationship and what factors contribute to them
8. Healthy Sexuality – understanding sex and developing a healthy sexuality

9. Gender and Sexuality – building common understanding and increasing comfort with terminology
  10. Gender and Sexuality – building empathy
  11. Popularity – what makes someone popular and what can affect social standing
  12. Sexual Consent – identifying and discussing gendered expectations of sexual consent
  13. Sexual Consent – understanding the law and discussing social norms of sexual consent
  14. Sexual Consent and Pornography – discussing themes in pornography and how they might contribute to students' understanding of consent
  15. Body Image
  16. Dealing with Stress
  17. Protective Factors – identifying students' strengths and abilities to deal with future pressures
  18. Closing Ceremony – acknowledging the group's growth from the first week
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## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

This RFP seeks evaluation services that integrate Chebucto Connections knowledge, documentation, program curriculum and past data with a deeper evaluation of the program and its impact on participants. The successful candidate(s)/firm is expected to evaluate the following elements:

### **IMPACT Evaluation:**

**Assess the impact of participation** in the program for each grade/age group to help Chebucto Connections determine the most effective age(s)/grade(s) to deliver the content to and which aspects impact behaviour the most. Measure increased youth access of health services within the community, (including youth health centres, 211, teachers, other youth workers and so forth.) We also hope to understand whether all Grades (6,7,8 and 9) should have the program or whether one or two years (any combination of 6, 7 8 and 9 i.e. Grade 7 f introduction and Grade 9 in-depth etc.) would meet their needs. Evaluator to make recommendations based on their experiences during the evaluation period.

The aim of the program is to improve the health of children and youth in Spryfield, particularly around areas of sexual health, consent, alcohol and drugs, and mental health. It is our hope that providing students with this forum to discuss issues relating to their health translates into behaviour shifts around consent, sexual violence, alcohol and drug consumption; while increasing awareness about mental health and increasing incidents of help-seeking behaviour from youth. Impact Evaluation will include the above mentioned and:

- Reach (number of youth reached in sessions); participant demographics; dosage (mean and median of program services received by youth and percent of youth receiving at least 75% of program)
- Program impact on student behaviour.
- Program impact on student awareness/knowledge.
- Key successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the program by grade level.
  - How did participants receive the program?
  - What is participant satisfaction?
  - What are themes and learnings from participant reception/satisfaction to the program?
- Level of participation and engagement of students and other community partners involved (including teachers).
- Impact (by grade level):
  - Outline the impact on the program participants.
  - Assess and compare/contrast the impact of the program on each grade/age group to help Chebucto Connections determine the most effective age to deliver the content to.
- Evaluator summary and details around impact and evidence pointing to impact.

### **PROGRAM Evaluation:**

**Assess the program** content/delivery/implementation-method in order to inform future program development/content/delivery-method and to gain evidence on the program that can be presented to school boards, education departments, partner agencies and the public.

- Assess the extent to which the program content is effective.
- Assess the extent to which the program delivery method (facilitated group discussion-circle format for 12 to 18 weeks) is effective.
- Outcomes (by grade level):
  - The extent to which intended outcomes were achieved.
  - Identify unanticipated outcomes.
- What were the facilitators' experiences implementing the program?
- Fidelity adherence, monitoring and quality by facilitators/teachers/community partners.
- Were necessary adaptations to content or delivery method made and why? Did adaptations produce any themes or learnings that should inform content change?
  - What are themes and learnings from participant reception/satisfaction to the delivery method?
- Evaluator recommendations for the program implementation/development/content/delivery-method decisions for the future.

A competitive proposal will:

- Provide a succinct proposal that responds to the points included in this RFP.
- Demonstrate how the evaluator will measure the impact on student behaviour, awareness, and understanding. Outline how data may be collected.
- Outline how they will determine if there are any themes or trends in student, facilitator, teacher, staff or school experiences.
- \*Based on past data (by Chebucto Connections staff) and new data (by the evaluator) Detail how benefits of the program will be mined for through participants, their families, school and community.
- Outline an effective data collection concept.
- Demonstrate how the finding might assist Chebucto Connections in communicating the benefits and evidence for the program and help them determine how to best define and measure impact in future programming.

\*Chebucto Connections will provide the contracted evaluator with existing program data and support the contractor in determining data to be collected during the contract.

As the contractor will be considered a third party, the contractor will complete any applications from HRSB, waivers to participants etc. to collect data/do research within the school. While Chebucto Connections staff will support the contractor in ensuring participants' compliance with the evaluator and help to facilitate access to materials, a representative response rate will be an expected deliverable. The evaluator is expected to deploy persistent and effective methods in order to get a representative sample.

### **DELIVERABLES**

- Monthly summary of activities and monthly in-person progress meetings (once per month) with Chebucto Connections.
- Comprehensive program evaluation report and participant impact report accompanied by a formal presentation of findings.
- A separate and professional executive summary of the evaluation for dissemination to boards of directors and for external communications.
- Electronic copies of all reports, protocols, instruments, interview schedules, on-line questionnaires, coding guides, data dictionaries, databases or electronic information systems developed for this evaluation, as well as any analysis outputs.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Demonstrated experience in developing, selecting and applying principals of program and impact evaluation while maintaining respect for program participant experience.
- Excellent at establishing positive and facilitative partnerships.
- Experience integrating quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods into assessment.
- The capacity to work with multiple data collection methods and sources within the specified time frame.
- Able to demonstrate capacity to produce reports and documents that capture relevant data, themes and impact in a manner that is accessible (for Chebucto Connections staff, school administration, the funding community and the public).
- An excellent communicator both verbally and in writing.
- Relevant University degree (Masters/PhD an asset)
- Experience in local community-based research and/or program evaluation projects.
- Experience in youth, sexual health or health a significant asset.
- Able to commit to the full-term of the project.

## **SUBMISSION**

All proposals must include:

- The experience and variety of services provided by you/your firm.
- Resume(s), key areas of expertise of you/your firm and any additional staff and/or subcontractors that would be involved in this work.
- At least three references, including both past and present clients.
- Other information not specifically requested in this RFP that should be considered in the assessment of the proposal may be included at the end of the proposal as an appendix.

## **EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

The following criteria are expected to be among those used in the selection process. They are presented as a guide for the applicant in understanding Chebucto Connections' requirements and expectations for this project and are not necessarily all-inclusive or presented in order of importance.

- Clarity of proposal and ability for proposal to address all aspects of RFP.
- Proposed Project Approach. Emphasis will be on grasp of the problems involved, soundness of approach, effective use of time and the quality of the overall proposal.
- Experience, expertise, and capabilities of the evaluation firm/individual.
- In-person meeting and presentation.
- Expenditure summary: how the fixed-price will be allocated for this proposal.
- Evidence of past work, professionalism, ethics and suitability for the audience, community and nature of the topics.

Chebucto Connections reserves the right to reject or terminate any proposal in whole or in part for misrepresentation, or if the applicant/firm is in default or misleads Chebucto Connections in spending allocation, or if the candidate/firm limits or modifies any of the terms and conditions and/or specifications of the contract.

Furthermore, Chebucto Connections reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to amend or modify any provision of this RFP, or to withdraw this RFP at any time prior to contract award. Chebucto Connections shall not be bound by or liable under this RFP and/or any response thereto until a final written contract has been executed by Chebucto Connections and the successful applicant/firm incorporating the terms and conditions of the award.