



A New Approach to Preventing Workplace Harassment and Advancing Gender Equity

Presenters: Kim Assailly, Nadine Wagner & Lana Wells
Contributors: Elizabeth Dozois and Melissa Innes

Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment Conference
Calgary, Alberta
May 5, 2026

Opportunity for a New Partnership

- Required legislative training (increased responsibilities as an employer)
- Members bringing forward concerns and complaints
- Public discourse on the CPS workplace
- Challenges with traditional training
- Senior Leadership support for innovation



Framing Matters



Comprehensive Approach

- Executive Leadership Development
- Reviewed policies, processes and practices from recruitment to promotion to preventing sexual and gender harassment
- **Art of the Nudge Approach - Developmental sessions within operational work areas, booster sessions, and coaching (District Engagement)**
- Sexual Harassment Training for all leadership ranks
- Police Act Reform Co-Submission



District Engagement & Development

Content Areas

- Giving and receiving feedback
- Conflict management
- Reducing gossip
- Addressing bullying & harassment
- Addressing double-standards & discrimination
- Accountability
- Maintaining resiliency

Skills

- Self-regulation
- Communication
- Active listening
- Recognizing & managing bias
- Perspective-taking
- Managing assumptions
- Intervening to address problematic behaviours
- Taking responsibility



Examples of Signalling Safety & Belonging - Sergeants

- Listen to their members - truly listen and ask clarifying questions (notice tone, power, body language)
- Model humility - admit when you don't know and ask for help
- Do unexpected “boots-level” tasks (dishes, clean-up, unload cars)
- Normalize mental health support - debrief after calls and ask how people are actually doing
- Shut down gossip culture - hold confidentiality
- Treat mistakes as learning - “*Call in*” (vs *Calling out*)



District Engagement & Development

High Engagement

“In my 24 years with CPS, I have never seen a program implemented where there was such acceptance from the patrol group, and I truly believe it had a lot to do with your delivery and approach in the sessions.”

-- Staff Sergeant



District Engagement & Development

Results – Post Intervention

- **90%** reported increased understanding of the importance of psychological safety and belonging in the workplace
- **88%** reported increased ability to recognize and mitigate own biases
- **90%** reported more aware of workplace dynamics related to inclusion
- **92%** reported increased ability to self-regulate
- **86%** reported increased confidence and skill to model prosocial behaviours
- **89%** reported increased confidence and skills to disrupt problematic behaviours



District Engagement & Development

Results – 6 month follow up

- **69%** were modelling prosocial behaviours in the workplace
- **52%** were disrupting problematic behaviours
- **71%** reported improved psychological safety and belonging in the workplace

“There has been a change in [our district] that is just about palpable. Not only did our folks value the training, they actually use the tools.”

-- Inspector



Sexual Harassment Training

- Small cohorts (15-20) and make mandatory in-person learning
- Brought prevalence and impact data to life in compelling ways that created a sense of urgency and engagement
- Highlight healthy team dynamics as prevention practices and provide constructive interventions should concerns arise
- Use relatable scenarios, concrete tools, and focused messaging that equip leaders to guide productive dialogue for change
- Helping them to navigate the 'grey areas' when the line is always moving.



Key Takeaways & Considerations for Culture Change Initiatives

- Prioritize a co-development approach with any external partnerships delivering training or engagement
- Be realistic about the time and staffing investment for culture change
- Treat safety and belonging as operational strengths linked to wellbeing, retention, and performance
- Develop and empower leaders
- Recognize small, consistent behaviour changes, shift culture



Where we're headed

- Developing phased/ tiered versions of the approach.
- Developing training for professionals.
- Testing the approach in other sectors.
- Building a repository of resources.
- Making the approach sustainable.
- Building the field.

To learn more, visit:
[https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/
our-work/workplace-culture/](https://preventdomesticviolence.ca/our-work/workplace-culture/)



Director Kim Assailly kassailly@calgarypolice.ca
Superintendent Nadine Wagner nwagner@calgarypolice.ca