

# FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT



**ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS AS ALLIES IN  
PREVENTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**

**THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED HUMANE EDUCATION**



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**ENGAGING MEN AND BOYS AS ALLIES IN PREVENTING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAMMING**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High rates of gender-based violence (GBV) persist across Canada. This issue demands a multi-sectoral response rooted in collaboration, innovation and impact. With this spirit in mind, Humane Canada launched a 30-month initiative to bring the Animal Welfare and Gender-Based Violence sectors together to engage in knowledge sharing and cross-sectoral collaboration to address the 'violence link'.

An outcome-based evaluation was conducted between September 2024-December 2025. Humane Canada project staff, steering committee members, and humane educators provided crucial insights into the key strengths and areas of growth for the national project. **Humane Canada led crucial thought leadership** by developing a national survey to assess promising practices, and a literature review with a robust analysis of gender transformative approaches and patriarchal masculinities. The Promising Practices Online Learning Centre features over **30 new prevention-resources** which represent invaluable learning and programmatic guidance for both sectors.





A final post-assessment survey was completed in November 2025 and found significant changes in knowledge and capacity levels. **All five knowledge-based thematic areas for assessment showed positive increases, with the most significant increases within the areas of gender transformative approaches and male ally-ship.** The areas of healthy masculinities, gender-based violence root causes and the violence link all saw moderate increases in knowledge levels. **Enhanced collaboration was also achieved**, as evidenced by the large Steering Committee which guided the project, and insights from the Humane Educator Group interviews. **A total of 1,021 children and youth were engaged** in humane education programming which addressed the violence link across the country. Programming took place in community settings, schools and on-site at animal welfare organizations and shelters. Digital campaigns were also implemented showing strong engagement.





**Community partners indicated greater capacity to engage men and boys as a result of participating in the project.** While the project benefited from strong project management and coaching, some partners expressed the need for specific curriculum and activities to implement in their communities. **All partners surveyed shared their belief that humane education should 'somewhat' or 'strongly' prevent gender-based violence,** which will undoubtedly pave the way for future programming and innovation. **An unanticipated outcome was increased openness** from animal welfare organizations to embed GBV prevention into humane education.





Overall, **the Promising Practices Project provided a unique and deeply meaningful opportunity** for animal welfare organizations specifically to expand the influence and scope of their programming to address the “violence link”. There exists tremendous opportunity for ongoing capacity-building, and deepening partnerships with the GBV sector to innovate and scale-up the engagement of men and boys to prevent gender-based violence.





# INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Humane Canada launched an innovative program **Engaging Men and Boys as Allies in Preventing Gender-Based Violence Through Community-Based Humane Education Programming**. Also known as The Promising Practices Project, this work builds on Humane Canada’s ACT initiative and significant partnerships with animal welfare organizations across Canada. The project is also strongly rooted in Humane Canada’s philosophy of “One health one welfare” that “recognizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health and environmental health.” The overall purpose of the project was to deepen cross-sectoral partnerships between the GBV and the animal welfare sectors to embed gender transformative approaches, ultimately to engage men and boys as allies to prevent gender-based violence.



Research has found that exposure to animals in structured educational settings can increase empathy, prosocial behaviour, and emotional regulation<sup>1</sup>. This area is a natural fit for broader explorations for human relationships and, in particular, the prevention of gender-based violence. In addition, humane education is often delivered with very young children starting in kindergarten and can advance primary prevention initiatives by instilling empathy and compassion from a very young age.

While there is widespread consensus on the need to engage men and boys to prevent GBV, there is a strong need to address harmful gender norms and expectations within humane education. Surveys suggest that those who intentionally abuse animals are predominantly men under 30<sup>2</sup>. One study by the Massachusetts SPCA examined 268 prosecutions for physical animal cruelty between 1975 and 1996. Of the cases, 259 involved men and nine involved women – a ratio of 29 to one<sup>3</sup>. In addition, a peer-reviewed study of 307 men arrested for domestic violence found that 41% had perpetrated at least one act of animal abuse in adulthood<sup>4</sup>. Unpacking and replacing outdated notions of masculinity (i.e., exerting power, control and harm over animals and humans) is crucial for upstream prevention of gender-based violence and animal abuse.

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1 Jalongo, M. R. (2014). Teaching Compassion: Humane Education in Early Childhood. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 42, 457–463

2 [Humane World for Animals \(2025\)](#).

3 Arluke, A., & Luke, C. (1997). Physical Cruelty Toward Animals in Massachusetts, 1975–1996. *Society & Animals*, 5(3), 195–204

4 Febres, J., Brasfield, H., Shorey, R. C., Elmquist, J., Ninnemann, A., Schonbrun, Y. C., Temple, J. R., Recupero, P. R., & Stuart, G. L. (2014). Adulthood Animal Abuse Among Men Arrested for Domestic Violence. *Violence Against Women*, 20(9), 1059–1077.





# PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Promising Practices Project represented a unique opportunity to engage both the GBV sector and animal welfare to meet the below objectives.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To identify and scale existing humane education practices that show promise in engaging young men and boys as allies in ending gender-based violence;

To develop and adapt humane education programming through a gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) and gender transformative lens;

To conduct a rigorous outcome-based evaluation to demonstrate impact with partners across Canada

To inform the project, Humane Canada undertook a national survey to obtain insights regarding promising practices in GBV, male engagement and humane education. Survey results were integral to the formation of the Promising Practices Framework. Humane Canada built a robust steering committee, consisting of 24 organizations across Canada and held 8 virtual steering committee meetings.



The Humane Canada Project Team employed a highly collaborative and iterative process to project implementation and co-creating the Promising Practices Framework. The Framework represents an important project planning tool for the animal welfare sector to embed gender transformative approaches and engage men and boys. A Humane Educator Group was created, consisting of 13 animal welfare organizations across Canada. Three focus groups were conducted between October 2024-November 2024 to support this group to deepen collaboration and knowledge sharing for how to address the “violence link” in partners’ respective communities. Also, within this time period a pre-assessment was conducted with the Humane Educator Group to gauge current awareness and understanding of key areas including; root causes of GBV, healthy masculinities, male allyship, and gender transformative approaches. A pre-assessment summary report was shared with Humane Canada documenting key areas of growth and development for the group, including recommendations to support community implementation.

Humane Canada provided flexible and strength-based coaching with the Humane Educator Group between October 2024-November 2025 to implement their GBA+ humane education adapted program. Immense diversity of programming approaches, models and promising practices emerged and will be highlighted in the evaluation report. Given this diversity of applications and approaches, community adaptations will be featured in the following areas; Workshops with Children/Youth; Community-based; Digital/Campaigns; and Internal engagement.

Throughout the project, the Humane Canada Project Team carried out extensive knowledge sharing activities at events and conferences across Canada. In addition, a major milestone of the project included the creation of the Online Learning Centre which aims to inspire and build capacity of the animal welfare sector to broaden their scope and influence with men and boys to prevent GBV.





# EVALUATION SCOPE

A summative evaluation was conducted between September 2024-January 2026 to assess key outcomes associated with the project. The evaluation was rooted in a highly collaborative approach with the Humane Canada Project Team, and contributors to the evaluation. Clarity of objectives were communicated to participants and strong buy-in was achieved regarding evaluation activities.

The purpose of the outcome-based evaluation is to investigate and illuminate the extent to which Humane Canada was effective in meeting its project objectives and outcomes. The below outcomes will be explored in the evaluation report.



## KEY OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT

- › Greater multi-sectoral collaboration between violence against women (VAW), GBV prevention organizations, humane educators, and animal shelters, resulting in unique GBA+ humane education community-based programming.



- › Increase in community-based GBA+ humane education programs available across Canada.
- › Increased number of GBA+ humane education prevention resources created.
- › Increased knowledge regarding root causes of GBV, and its impacts on survivors.



**KEY OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT CONT'D**

- › Increased knowledge regarding healthy masculinities.
- › Increase in knowledge regarding the positive roles men and boys can play as allies for GBV prevention.
- › Increased knowledge regarding links between gender-based violence and animal cruelty.
- › Increased capacity, confidence and skills of humane educators to apply GBA+, gender-transformative approaches to their work.
- › Increased recognition regarding the importance of humane education in preventing gender-based violence, and building male ally-ship.

**Unanticipated outcome included (emerged from post-assessment survey):**

- › Increased openness from the animal welfare sector to promote healthy relationships as part of their humane education programming.





# METHODOLOGY

A mixed methodology was used for the program evaluation to gain both qualitative insights and quantitative data to assess program outcomes. A relationship-centered approach was utilized throughout the interview process, with questions shared in advance with participants and high-level notes shared after the discussion for validation. Thematic coding with frequency counts was used to illustrate patterns and relative importance of themes. Embedded in the key stakeholder interviews was probing partners to reflect on the project's most significant change which is explored further in the report.



To best respond to community needs and diversity of programming approaches and models, the scope of the evaluation shifted slightly to capture more knowledge and capacity changes with educators and trainers, as opposed to impacts with children and youth. Given the sheer number of partners, having a standard GBA+ adapted humane education curriculum as part of the project could have elicited stronger buy-in and clarity regarding use of a single post-workshop survey. Having this standardized curriculum and evaluation survey would reduce variability in program content, increase statistical power and comparative analysis across sites. If similar outcomes emerge from partners, confidence in the curriculum's effectiveness grows.



Humane educators which implemented their unique GBA+ adapted humane education programs did capture and share the total number of children and youth engaged in adapted humane education programming across the country, as well as total hours of program delivery. To best reflect community adaptations, a thematic analysis was utilized to group aligned program approaches, with several featured in each approach.



To garner buy-in with humane educators regarding the program evaluation, a presentation on the evaluation approach and tools for assessment was given as part of the focus group with humane educators on January 9, 2025. A brief assessment of the 2-day focus group was also conducted with a group discussion, with key findings shared in the report.

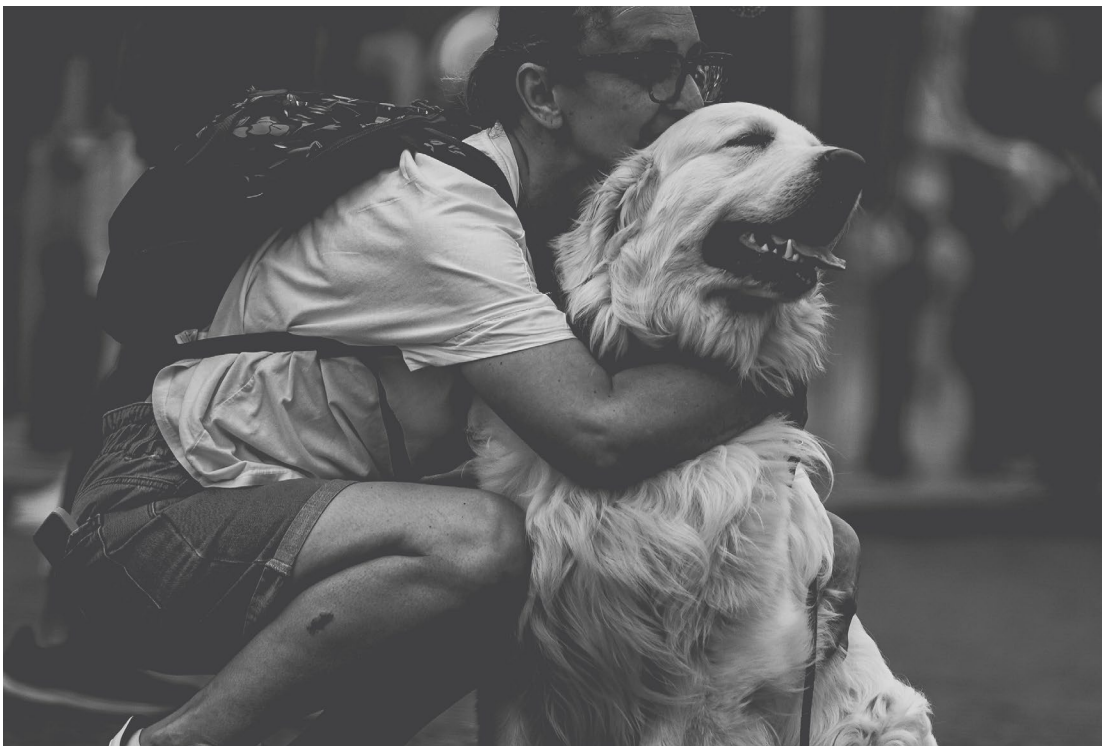
## METHODOLOGY PRE-ASSESSMENT SURVEY

### OVERVIEW

Pre-assessment survey was launched in November 2024. The survey identified baseline attitudes, knowledge and capacity levels of humane educators in engaging men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. A Pre-Assessment Report was drafted in January 2025.

### PARTICIPATION WITHIN HUMANE EDUCATOR GROUP

14



**METHODOLOGY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SURVEYS**

**OVERVIEW**

Surveys were carried out with the steering committee regarding their experience participating in committee meetings and practical changes participants will implement.

**RESPONSES**

**31**

**METHODOLOGY POST-ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

**OVERVIEW**

A post-assessment survey was launched in November 2025. The survey identified potential changes from baseline attitudes, knowledge and capacity levels (compared to pre-assessment). The survey also captured reach metrics and program adaptations from partners.

**PARTICIPATION WITHIN HUMANE EDUCATOR GROUP**

**9**



## METHODOLOGY DOCUMENT REVIEW

### OVERVIEW

Project reports were consistently reviewed from Humane Canada, as well as all major deliverables including the Promising Practices Framework and Online Learning Centre.



## METHODOLOGY KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### OVERVIEW

Interviews took place virtually between April-June 2025, with a final interview conducted in November 2025. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed.

**INTERVIEWS WITH ANIMAL WELFARE & GBV ORGANIZATIONS 12**



**METHODOLOGY    KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW WITH HUMANE CANADA PROJECT STAFF**

**OVERVIEW**

The group interview took place in October 2025 with the Manager and Coordinator, Research and Policy of the Promising Practices Project. The group interview was transcribed and analyzed.

**GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH HUMANE CANADA PROJECT STAFF    1**

**METHODOLOGY    PROGRAM REFLECTION & IMPACT TOOL**

**OVERVIEW**

Created for the Humane Educator Group to capture reach metrics, description of activities, lessons learned and challenges.

**ENTRIES DETAILING PROGRAM RESULTS & LESSONS LEARNED    20**





# KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES & OUTPUTS

## NATIONAL SURVEY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

At the start of the project, a national survey was distributed to assess promising practices in GBV prevention, and engaging men and boys. Results supported the development of the Promising Practices Framework and offered broader strategic guidance for the project's implementation. In addition, Humane Canada produced a Promising Practices Literature Review which shared a robust analysis of the power and potential of humane education to prevent GBV, and unpacked patriarchal masculinities and key components of gender transformative approaches. This literature review in turn could provide crucial guidance and knowledge for humane educators in the implementation of their programs.





## STEERING COMMITTEE AND HUMANE EDUCATOR GROUP

Humane Canada garnered significant interest in the project, facilitating 27 discovery meetings, resulting in 24 organizations confirming interest. Strong cross-sectoral collaboration was achieved with the inclusion of 11 GBV organizations, 10 animal welfare agencies, and participation from post-secondary, community and First Nations organizations.

Brief surveys were conducted after the committee meetings with partners sharing significantly positive experiences. The average rating of overall experience (1-10 being extremely positive) across the committee meetings was 9/10 demonstrating strong facilitation and planning from Humane Canada.

Drawing from the steering committee, and new prospecting of organizations, Humane Canada facilitated 17 discovery meetings to build the Humane Educator Group. 13 organizations confirmed interest, including; Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Burlington Humane Society, Cochrane & Area Humane Society, Georgian Triangle Humane Society, Nova Scotia SPCA, PAW (People for Animal Wellbeing), Toronto Humane Society, Winnipeg Humane Society, Ivy League Dogs, Calgary Humane Society, Consent Kitties, and the Montreal SPCA. This Group was instrumental in the project's implementation and was the focus for capacity-building to address the violence link in local communities across Canada. Four Breakout Group sessions were held with the Group to support brainstorming and planning.





## TWO-DAY FOCUS GROUP TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTATION

To support community implementation, a two-day focus group was planned in January 2025. Participants shared their appreciation for the smaller group discussions, and opportunity to engage in brainstorming and idea sharing regarding program implementation. Some participants shared their recommendations for the framework and curriculum guide to have been finalized to give more direction and guidance for community implementation. Similarly, some participants shared having more concrete program guidelines and overall direction from Humane Canada would be beneficial. Some shared this was remedied after connecting with the Humane Canada team.

Some practitioners, however, appreciated the more iterative and open process in brainstorming with others regarding implementation ideas. When asked how they will apply key learnings from the focus groups, key themes emerged including **program development and adaptation, implementation and outreach strategies, gender norms and community insights, youth engagement and prevention, knowledge building and research integration**. Five practitioners completed a brief survey after the two-day workshop, giving their experience in the focus groups an **average rating of 8/10 (10 being extremely positive)**.





A

# The Promising Practices Framework

3  
2  
1



1 TRANSFORMING PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY MASCULINITIES

MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

EMPOWERMENT

GENDER & GENDER EQUALITY

STEREOTYPES

CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

INTERSECTIONALITY

GENDER IDENTITIES & INTERSECTIONS WITH GBV

ANTROPOMORPHISM OF ANIMALS

PATRIARCHY

SYSTEMS, IMPACTS, AND BARRIERS

DECONSTRUCTING & CHALLENGING PATRIARCHY

SOCIAL IDENTITIES & SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION

2 ADDRESSING VIOLENCE

TYPES OF VIOLENCE & ABUSE

VIOLENT BEHAVIOURS (HUMAN VS. ANIMALS)

UNINTENTIONAL/NORMALIZED VIOLENCE

INTER-GENERATIONAL VIOLENCE

SURVIVAL BEHAVIOURS

THE VIOLENCE LINK BETWEEN VIOLENCE AGAINST HUMANS & ANIMALS

INTERSECTION OF VIOLENCE & SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

INTERSECTIONS OF GBV & OTHER FORMS OF OPPRESSION

SURVIVORS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR VOICES

RISK FACTORS FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN EXPERIENCING & PERPETRATING VIOLENCE

METHODS TO ADDRESS

HUMANE EDUCATION

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION (HUMAN & ANIMAL)

MICROAGGRESSIONS & MICROAFFIRMATIONS

PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION

RECOGNITION OF VIOLENCE & ITS WARNING SIGNS

3 RESPECTING BOUNDARIES

BOUNDARY COMMUNICATION

HUMAN & ANIMAL BODY LANGUAGE

HOW TO SEE & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY BOUNDARY PRACTICES

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

BOUNDARIES WITHIN SELF

SELF-REGULATION, SELF-COMPASSION, SELF-AWARENESS

REJECTION SENSITIVITY

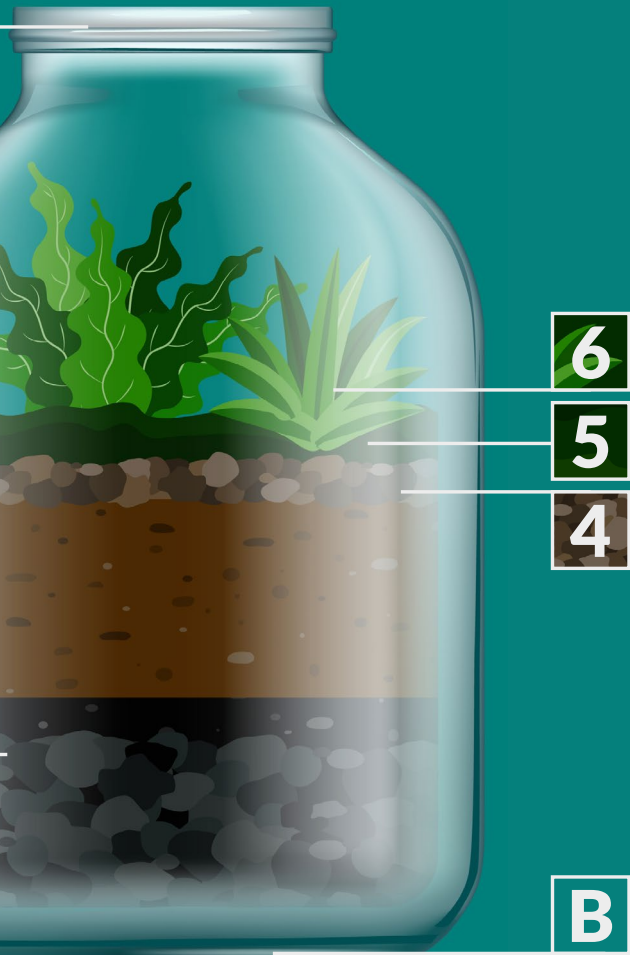
BOUNDARIES WITHIN RELATIONSHIPS

INDIVIDUAL, COLLECTIVE, & CULTURAL BOUNDARIES

CULTURAL NORMS

CONSENT IN ALL RELATIONSHIPS

IMPACTS OF COLONIZATION



# INTRODUCTION

A

LANGUAGE

FRAMEWORK INTENTIONS, RATIONALE, & OUTCOMES

SAFE SPACE

GROUNDING RESEARCH

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, DECOLONIZATION

# FOUNDATIONS

B

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

APPLICATION TO DIFFERENT AGES & CONTEXTS

PROGRAM TIMELINE

SAFE SPACE

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, ACCESSIBILITY

PROGRAM EVALUATION

FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

DISCLOSURES OF SENSITIVE INFORMATION (HUMAN & ANIMAL)

DUTY TO REPORT

AFTER CARE & FOLLOW UP

CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES

B

LIVING WELL TOGETHER

4

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- MEANINGFUL CONNECTION
- HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS & CYCLE OF VIOLENCE
- RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANIMALS
- CULTURAL SENSITIVITY
- ENDING RELATIONSHIPS
- HEALTHY METRICS FOR RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

- CONFLICT RESOLUTION
- CONSENT

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- DECOLONIZATION
- INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING & KEY TEACHINGS
- CONCEPT OF CARE
- ONE HEALTH / ONE WELFARE
- ANIMAL SENTIENCE

EMPOWERED ACTION

5

ACTION IN COMMUNITY

- DIGITAL COMMUNITY
- TECH-FACILITATED GBV
- BYSTANDER INTERVENTION
- EMPOWERING EACH OTHER
- BUILDING COMMUNITY (VIRTUAL & IRL)
- ADVOCACY FOR HUMANS & ANIMALS
- EXPLORING MALE ALLYSHIP FROM AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS
- CREATING SAFETY FOR HUMANS & ANIMALS
- CULTURAL CHANGE
- RESTORATIVE JUSTICE
- COMPASSIONATE ACTION
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- EQUITY-DRIVEN ACTION

ACTION WITHIN SELF

- MEDIA LITERACY
- ACCOUNTABILITY, FORGIVENESS, RESTORATION & TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
- PROCESSING HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR
- GUILT & SELF-FORGIVENESS
- SELF-REFLECTION & ONGOING ALLYSHIP
- SELF-EXPRESSION

CONFIDENT SELF-EXPRESSION

6

WITHIN THE SELF

- AUTHENTICITY
- EMPATHY
- SELF-CARE
- HEALING
- SELF-COMPASSION
- SELF-VALIDATION
- CRITICAL SELF-THOUGHTS & SELF-MONITORING
- BREAKING CYCLES OF VIOLENCE

EMOTIONS

- MANAGING EMOTIONS
- FEELING & EXPRESSING EMOTIONS
- ACCEPTANCE OF EMOTIONS

EDUCATION

- ANTI-OPPRESSIVE EDUCATION
- RESPONSIBLE REPORTING OF SUSPECTED ABUSE
- LIFE LONG LEARNING

ADVOCACY

- SELF-ADVOCACY
- ANIMAL JUSTICE

RELATIONSHIPS

- HEALTHY MODELS OF RELATIONSHIPS
- SEEKING EXTERNAL/COLLECTIVE HELP



## PROMISING PRACTICES FRAMEWORK

Humane Canada took a collaborative approach in designing the [Promising Practices Framework](#) to provide guidance to animal welfare organizations and GBV organizations to implement gender transformative GBA+ adapted programming.

### KEY FOUNDATIONS OF THE PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Key foundations of the program structure include;

1 TRANSFORMING PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

2 ADDRESSING VIOLENCE

3 RESPECTING BOUNDARIES

4 LIVING WELL TOGETHER

5 EMPOWERED ACTION

6 CONFIDENT SELF-EXPRESSION





## KEY THEMES

When asked to share some examples of how Humane Canada's Program Framework was used in community partners' adapted program or campaign, the below key themes emerged.

- › INTEGRATION OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES
- › TO INFORM PROGRAM DESIGN AND COMMUNICATION APPROACHES
- › EXPLORATION OF ANIMAL WELFARE AND INTERACTION
- › EXPLORATION OF EMPATHY, COMPASSION, CONSENT AND BOUNDARIES



Testimonials from the Humane Educator Group regarding the application of the framework include:

TESTIMONIALS

HUMANE EDUCATOR GROUP

“We used the framework to adapt our existing programming to further focus on the violence link. Our programs all focus on increasing empathy and compassion through the human-animal bond. Each course works on teaching the importance of consent, which students practice with interactions with the cats at our animal centre.”



“Animal body language to discuss how to respect animals by understanding what they are telling us and respecting their boundaries during interaction. We drew parallels to interacting with peers and discussed empathy and compassion through animal interaction and lessons on emotions.”



## TESTIMONIALS

## HUMANE EDUCATOR GROUP

“Our program emphasizes the importance of empowered action, particularly the power of bystander intervention.”



“The framework supported prioritization of content, though the content came from other sources or preexisting programming. We further highlighted the societal and cultural root causes of GBV as encouraged by the framework.”

These testimonials show there exists tremendous opportunity to further build the capacity of both animal welfare organizations and the GBV sector to implement key components of the framework.

Furthermore, organizations can be supported to apply a culturally rooted and intersectional approach to engaging men and boys to prevent GBV. Undoubtedly this framework is a significant contribution to program development for both GBV and animal welfare sectors to enhance their dual-impact in preventing harm against humans and animals.



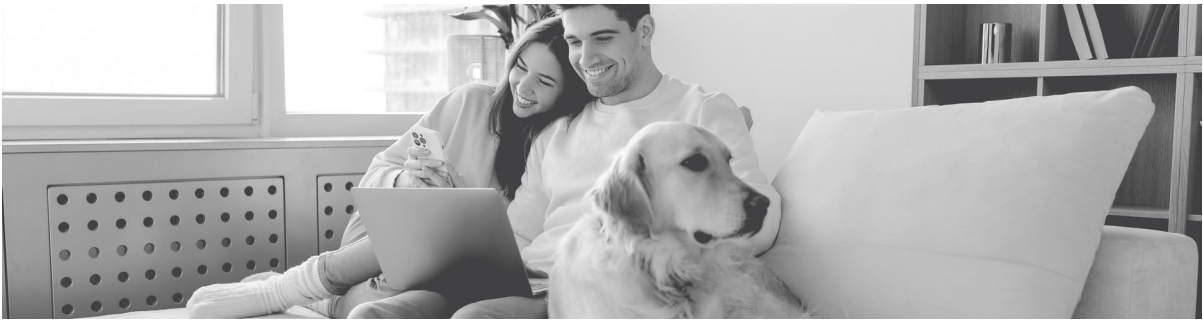


## KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

The Humane Canada Promising Practices Project Team engaged in extensive knowledge sharing, profiling the project at 8 conferences between May 2024-November 2025, reaching at least 306 participants. Conferences included Humane Canada’s Summit for Animals 2024 and 2025, Network to Eliminate Violence in Relationships 2024 – 14th Annual Conference, 2024 BCSTH Annual Training Forum , 3rd Annual International Summit on Ending Gender-Based Violence 2024, The Gathering 2025 - SaskSPCA, Summit for Animals 2025 Conference and the International Society for Anthrozoology 2025 Conference. In addition, the Toronto Humane Society presented at the University of Western’s Knowledge Exchange in October 2025, “The Violence Link: Understanding Connections Between Cruelty to Animals and Survivors”.

This significant outreach and knowledge sharing Humane Canada has conducted has the potential to inspire hundreds of other animal welfare organizations and the GBV sector to explore partnerships and joint programming to address the “violence link”.





## ONLINE LEARNING CENTRE

Given the infancy of this area of programming, the bilingual Online Learning Centre created by Humane Canada will continue to play a crucial role in building interest, awareness and capacity to address the “violence link” and engage men and boys in community interventions.

### ONLINE LEARNING CENTRE OBJECTIVES

Humane Canada’s Online Learning site identifies the below objectives:

- › INCLUDES INTERACTIVE MODULES, ACTIVITIES AND PRACTICAL TOOLS
- › DESIGNED TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- › RESOURCES ARE TAILORED TO HELP CREATE SAFE, EQUITABLE ENVIRONMENTS
- › EMPOWERS MEN AND BOYS TO ACTIVELY ADDRESS AND PREVENT GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

The Online Learning Centre features 6 courses and numerous resources including activity guides, evaluation resources and a community of learning.



# PROJECT STRENGTHS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Key stakeholder interviews provided space for practitioners to reflect on a key strength of the project. **Four key themes** emerged from interviews with community partners.

## KEY THEMES

1	COLLABORATION	69.23%
2	ENHANCED LEARNING	30.77%
3	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	23.08%
4	THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPLEMENT GBA+ HUMANE EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY	7.69%



**Collaboration** was most frequently cited by community partners (9/13 respondents), followed by **enhanced learning** (4/13 respondents), **project management** (3/13 respondents) and **the opportunity to implement GBA+ humane education in the community** (1/13 respondents) emerged.



The interviews illuminated significant appreciation and value for the opportunity to collaborate further within the animal welfare sector, and the GBV sector to explore ways to adapt programming to engage men and boys to prevent GBV.

Testimonials regarding project strengths and highlights from community partners include:

## COLLABORATION

### TESTIMONIALS

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

“The project was built collaboratively with many diverse voices, lived experiences. Wasn’t a top-down project implementation.”



“Very strong collaboration in the project, between and within GBV and animal welfare. The highlight was the 2-day workshops in January.”



## TESTIMONIALS

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

"The facilitators are inclusive, they brought together a diverse group of people across GBV and animal welfare. It was a tall order. Ensured it was community led and driven. This is a new area for the animal welfare sector. Bringing national partners - that's a very unique opportunity to implement a constellation of projects. Learning about the diversity in project work was really interesting. Great to hear and learn about these different approaches, diversity of projects and experiences in GBV, and animal welfare."



## TESTIMONIALS

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

“Different folks and groups that were brought together from different organizations, and varied lived experiences. There were different groups I wasn’t familiar with. GBV wasn’t something I ever considered in my work. It was very encouraging and inspiring to work with others that value this topic.”



“We were very flexible and adaptable to the needs and capacity of partners. We kept our core focus group folks because we were flexible and responded to needs.”



## LEARNING

### TESTIMONIALS

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

"I learned more about violence against women, and enjoyed the presentation by Dr. Jeffrey."



"Humane Canada provided space for learning new and different ways to implement programming, exciting to think about new opportunities."



## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

### TESTIMONIALS

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

"The project organizers, Sue and Claire, were a major strength of the project. Sue provided timely and very helpful support when needed."



"A key highlight was consistent and frequent check-ins with Humane Canada."

It's clear the areas of collaboration, learning and project management enabled a positive experience for GBV and animal welfare sector partners. This project was a unique opportunity for partners to explore the application of GBA+ and gender transformative approaches to humane education and proved to be a meaningful experience.





## AREAS FOR ENHANCEMENT

Numerous participants cited the desire for age-appropriate activities and curriculum which clearly address the violence link and embeds gender transformative approaches. In this way a more standard learning curriculum could be implemented across Canada, and impact could be compared and contrasted regionally.

Some participants also shared that they would have benefitted from additional learning opportunities as it relates to the adaptation of humane education to prevent gender-based violence and the engagement of men and boys. Lastly, additional time to initiate and foster localized partnerships and relationships with women's shelters and GBV organizations was cited by numerous partners. Indeed, one partner will be utilizing the new prevention resources to co-develop and co-implement a program in partnership with a human service agency.





# EVALUATION FINDINGS

## MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

Interviews with the Humane Educator Group allowed for reflections on the most significant changes from the project. The word cloud below demonstrates key themes which emerged, showing strong alignment to the project goals and outcomes.

OUTREACH

COLLABORATION

INNOVATION

**KNOWLEDGE-SHARING**

GBV-PREVENTION

After the interviews were complete, the theme of openness to prevent gender-based violence emerged from many animal welfare organizations. This area was further probed in the final survey by offering 6 potential themes. 4/9 respondents selected “Increased openness from the animal welfare sector to promote healthy relationships as part of their humane education programming” as the project’s most significant impact. The significance of this openness should not be understated, and lends itself to future innovation and investments in programming and initiatives.



## QUANTITATIVE RESULTS: PROMISING PRACTICES PROJECT

<b>CHILDREN &amp; YOUTH PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>AT LEAST 1,021</b>
<p>Number of children and youth participants in GBA+ Humane Education programs across Canada.</p>	
<b>GIRLS &amp; WOMEN</b>	<b>APPROX. 511</b>
<b>BOYS &amp; MEN</b>	<b>APPROX. 510</b>
<b>EDUCATORS ENGAGED</b>	<b>23</b>
<p>Number of educators engaged (Humane Educator Group, and other educators hosting adapted programs).</p>	
<b>HOURS OF PROGRAM DELIVERY</b>	<b>94.5</b>
<p>Total hours of program delivery from humane educators and GBV partners (i.e., in the community, schools) across Canada, including Alberta, Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Northwest Territories.</p>	
<b>COMMUNITY PARTNERS</b>	<b>31</b>
<p>Total number of community partners (steering committee and humane educator group).</p>	



## REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF PROJECT

<b>ATLANTIC REGION</b>	<b>4</b>
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<b>QUEBEC REGION</b>	<b>2</b>
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<b>ONTARIO REGION</b> (1 of which is expected to start in 2026)	<b>3</b>
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<b>PRAIRIES REGION</b>	<b>3</b>
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<b>PACIFIC REGION</b>	<b>1</b>
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## CREATIVE APPLICATIONS & DELIVERY OF PROGRAM 12

Number of types of creative applications and delivery of the program (ie. workshop, community event, campaign etc.).

## COMMITTED TO CONTINUING PROGRAM DELIVERY 9

Number of community partners committed to continuing to deliver the program.

## SECTORS ENGAGED 2

## PARTNERS COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMING 10

Number of partners committed to continuing to implement GBA+ gender transformative humane education programming.



**MEMBERS IN THE COMMUNITY OF LEARNING**

267

**NEW PREVENTION-FOCUSED RESOURCES**

31

Number of new prevention-focused resources in the Community of Learning.

**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGES**

4

**CONFERENCE REACH**

306

Number of new prevention-focused resources in the Community of Learning.

**FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS**

3

Number of humane educator focus group meetings.

**WEBSITE VISITS**

1,321

Total number of website visits as of November 27, 2025.



## ANALYSIS OF KEY OUTCOMES



### OUTCOME 1 GREATER MULTI-SECTORAL COLLABORATION

Greater multi-sectoral collaboration between VAW, GBV prevention organizations, humane educators, and animal shelters, resulting in unique GBA+ humane education community-based programming.



Humane Canada worked in close collaboration with GBV organizations, humane educators, and animal shelters to explore the role of humane education in addressing the violence link and engaging men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. 24 organizations across the GBV and animal welfare sectors were engaged as steering committee members from across Canada. Results from key stakeholder interviews indicated cross-sectoral collaboration was a key strength of the project with 9/13 citing this as a key strength, and the same number indicating Humane Canada was successful in this area.





Humane educators had the opportunity to reflect on this outcome within interviews. One partner cited *“high levels of collaboration, and good diversity with various partners. I would like to work more closely with women’s shelters, however also needing to reach out to new partners which engage men and boys. In addition, there’s a need to engage more Indigenous voices, and Indigenous men to explore healthy masculinities and roles in community.”*

Another partner expressed gratitude for a *“deeper relationship with Humane Canada which was a big win.”* The group interview with Humane Canada project staff reiterated the flexible approach used to elicit strong collaboration. *“We were very flexible and adaptable to the needs and capacity of partners. We kept our core focus group folks because we were flexible and responded to their needs.”*





It's encouraging that 4/8 partners surveyed shared their intention to increase or deepen collaboration with local women's shelters. 4/8 partners surveyed responded that their multi-sectoral collaboration with the GBV sector is "to be determined". It is notable and encouraging that no participants stated they had zero plans to increase or deepen multi-sectoral collaboration.

Key stakeholder interviews and the post-assessment survey glean important insights regarding the reach, curriculum adaptations, and promising practices which emerged for facilitators. GBA+ adapted humane education was delivered across Canada, including in Alberta, Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Northwest Territories and is explored next.



## WORKSHOPS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Three animal welfare organizations engaged children and youth, adapting their existing curriculum and learning tools to address the violence link. Two partners implemented programming in school, while another implemented on-site. Many practitioners spoke about compassion being built inherently when children and youth hear stories of trauma from animals.

One partner shared the following as it relates to the engagement of boys and young men which can be helpful for future programming in this area.

### TESTIMONIALS

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

"I ensured the curriculum profiled pictures of boys experiencing emotions. Before discussing canine body language, we talk about how humans express emotions with their body. I asked students to identify which emotion the kids in the pictures are feeling based on the faces they are making. Both pictures I show of kids being sad/crying are of boys."

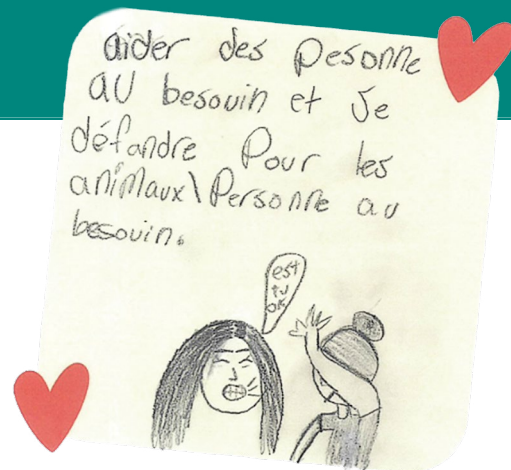




The same participant also ensured the positive representation of men and boys being compassionate towards animals and respecting boundaries. For example, a boy is asking whether it's okay to pet a particular animal/dog (practicing boundaries and consent). In addition, exploring the diversity of animal types, breeds, personalities was used to re-iterate the importance of celebrating diversity in humans and our interactions. One facilitator re-iterated that *"humans and animals have a lot in common (can feel joy, pain, fear, can dream, play with their friends, form bonds, etc.) and so just like us, deserve to be well treated and protected."*

### EXAMPLE MY ACTION PLAN

One partner shared a "My Action Plan" activity with youth participants showing how they will show compassion to a person or animal this week. One example is beside.



Another partner shared *"my organization's workshop was very aligned with the project's broader objectives, and I hope I'm building their confidence to become male allies."*





## COMMUNITY-BASED

There were two partners which implemented adapted humane education programming in the community, and one partner implemented a program focused solely on GBV prevention. Another partner is currently developing a new long-term partnership with a human service organization to implement gender transformative GBA+ humane education.

One animal welfare organization reflects that as a result of their participation in the project they have confirmed a new long-term partnership with a human service organization supporting vulnerable youth with precarious housing. The partner stated *“Animals can be integral to open up conversations on empathy, consent. This can act to deepen work, and establish an integrated vision. We will implement the curriculum (5 modules) with their existing men and boys program in the future.”*



One animal welfare organization shared that they engaged residents with mental health and substance abuse issues, some of whom were engaged in sex work.

**TESTIMONIALS****ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANIZATION**

"I started the discussion with cat/dog body language understanding (so they could support one another and their animals if needed). One resident adopted a cat which came from an abusive household. We geared the conversation to animal abuse first, however it opened up their own experiences of abuse/harm."



This reflection demonstrates the power of humane education as an entry point to support survivors and engage in prevention discussions.





An Indigenous partner shared the *“need for adaptation with engaging Indigenous communities, recognizing ongoing trauma, and multi-generational trauma in Indigenous communities. This was the first time the community and men specifically came together to discuss GBV. There is high prevalence in the community and it was a very needed conversation.”*

The partner also shared *“the importance of engaging the women’s circle so they can support them in the future. The First Nation also engaged with the women’s circle to share what the men were doing so they could also support them. We adopted a dialogue-driven approach, with overall good support and was well-received. There are opportunities for further rolling out [adapted human education programming] when veterinarians come to the First Nation in the Fall each year.”*

Utilizing their strong networks and local connections, the one GBV-focused organization developed a new program, **Turning Towards**, which engaged 25 men in the community (invitation only) to engage in discussions regarding healthy relationships, male accountability and community care.

A total of 1,021 children and youth were engaged in adapted GBA+ humane education programming across Canada. This reach is a significant testament to the commitment of partners and their ability to leverage relationships with schools and educators.



## DIGITAL/CAMPAIGNS

The PEI Humane Society launched a 5-part social media campaign with input from Humane Canada. The campaign sought to increase awareness regarding boundaries and empathy with animals (example of an asset below). The campaign assets can be found on the Online Learning Centre website [here](#).

### DIGITAL CAMPAIGN METRICS

The campaign resulted in the below metrics:

<b>AVERAGE REACH</b>	3,900
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<b>SHARES</b>	120
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<b>VIEWS</b>	1,154
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<b>VIRAL REACH</b>	3,750
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### EXAMPLE

### BURLINGTON HUMANE PODCAST

Another digital adaptation includes the Burlington Humane Society which partnered with Humane Canada to develop and produce a podcast focused on the roles of the animal welfare sector to prevent gender-based violence, and engage men and boys.

The podcast can be found [here](#).



## INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

One partner shared that given this was a new area for the organization, focusing on enhancing awareness and knowledge internally would be strategic for longer-term engagement and support.

### TESTIMONIALS

### COMMUNITY PARTNER

“We decided to focus internally and featured the project and GBV-prevention content in our bi-weekly newsletter (twice in the month of April 2025). We reached 202 staff members. We focused more on communication materials, including what healthy communities look like and explored the violence link.”



The diversity of approaches and community engagement is an example of immense creativity, and organizational readiness to engage men and boys to prevent GBV.





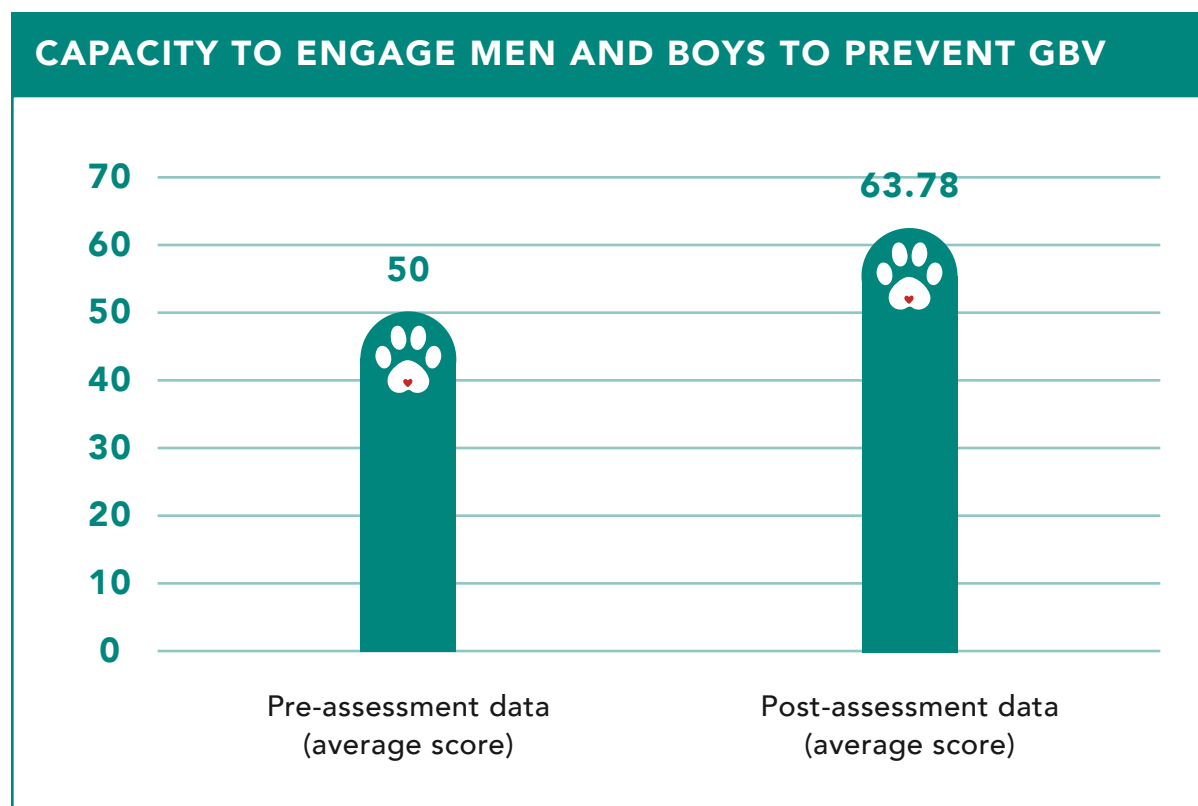
## OUTCOME 2 ENHANCED ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT & CAPACITY

### Enhanced Organizational Commitment and Capacity to Address the “Violence Link” in Humane Education, by Utilizing Gender-Transformative GBA+ Frameworks.



A quantitative analysis of average scores regarding the capacity of the Humane Educator Group to engage men and boys to prevent gender-based violence was undertaken. Pre-assessment capacity levels showed an average score of 50/100 (0-30- low, 40-60-moderate, and 70-100-high) showing room for growth and enhancement. To maintain validity and reliability the same question and rating was posed again 11 months later, showing an increased average capacity level of 64.





This is encouraging data, and demonstrates Humane Canada was successful in achieving enhanced capacity of animal welfare organizations to prevent gender-based violence. Furthermore, the dynamic and wide-ranging adaptations in schools, on-site at animal welfare organizations, in digital/social media and community, across the country demonstrate this outcome.

Data gathered in the pre-assessment phase indicated strong buy-in and support from senior management with only one-quarter of respondents citing this as a core challenge. 9/12 respondents shared this was their lowest area of concern (seven potential areas given for consideration of participants). This buy-in from senior management is very encouraging and paves the way for future work and capacity-building in this area.

The online learning centre and the significant number of new GBV prevention resources created will continue beyond the life cycle of the project and can be used to further capacity-building efforts.





## OUTCOME 3 INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMAL WELFARE PRACTITIONERS

### Increased Knowledge of Practitioners in the Animal Welfare Sector to Engage Men and Boys to Prevent GBV.

The Promising Practices Project was a unique opportunity to explore the intersections of GBV perpetration and harm against animals, and its prevention. While some practitioners within the Humane Educator Group did have backgrounds in social work and GBV, for many the concept of gender-based violence and its prevention was a new topic.

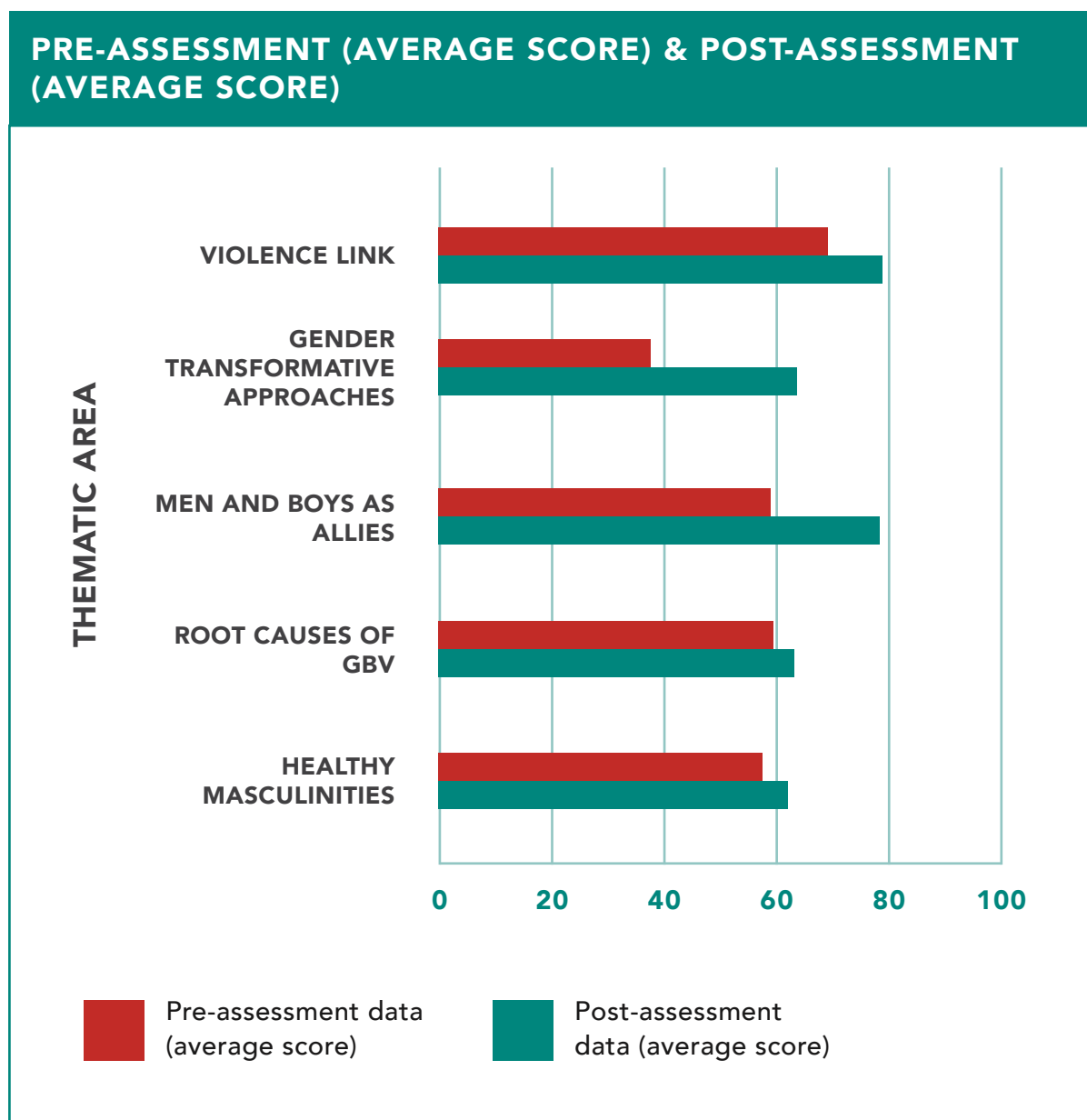
In November 2024, a pre-assessment was conducted with the Humane Educator Group to assess knowledge levels of key thematic areas. These same areas were assessed in November 2025, with results in the below chart.

THEMATIC AREA	PRE-ASSESSMENT*	POST-ASSESSMENT*	DIFFERENCE
VIOLENCE LINK	69.6	78.67	+9.05
GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES	38.3	64.67	+26.36
MEN AND BOYS AS ALLIES	58.8	78.56	+19.73
ROOT CAUSES OF GBV	59	65.33	+6.33
HEALTHY MASCULINITIES	57.17	62	+4.83

\* AVERAGE SCORE OUT OF 100



Encouragingly, all five areas for assessment showed positive increases in knowledge levels, with the most significant improvement within the area of gender transformative approaches (average increase of 26.36) and male ally-ship (average increase of 19.73). The areas of healthy masculinities, root causes and the violence link all saw average increases between 4-9 points. Pre- and post-assessment of knowledge areas are also represented in the below chart.





It's very encouraging to see increased knowledge levels, particularly in the areas of gender transformative approaches and men and boys as allies given the focus of the project. Other thematic areas saw more moderate increases in knowledge (i.e., violence link, root causes and healthy masculinities) these could be further augmented with additional knowledge sharing and capacity-building opportunities.





## OUTCOME 4 INCREASED RECOGNITION

Increased recognition regarding the importance of humane education in preventing gender-based violence, and building male ally-ship.



Within the post-assessment survey, all respondents (8/8) shared their support for humane education to have a dual purpose to prevent GBV.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Humane education should be geared exclusively towards the humane treatment of animals in community-based programming	0
Humane education should somewhat address gender-based violence in community-based programming	5
Humane education should strongly address gender-based violence in community-based programming	3



This recognition was also illuminated within the key stakeholder interviews with folks sharing the below.

**TESTIMONIALS****KEY STAKEHOLDER**

“For me, I loved this project because it gave me more of an opportunity to integrate compassion and care into our programming. It was valuable having the tools to be able to have these conversations with youth.”



Given this was a new area for many educators, and animal welfare organizations this recognition and support will be invaluable in fostering future innovation and impact with children and youth across Canada.





## OUTCOME 5 INCREASED OPENNESS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Increased openness from the animal welfare sector to promote healthy relationships as part of their humane education programming.



One unanticipated outcome emerged from the project. Five areas were provided to respondents of the final post-assessment survey regarding the project's most significant change. Participants were asked to select only one of the five areas. Interestingly, 4/9 participants selected "Increased openness from the animal welfare sector to promote healthy relationships as part of their humane education programming". This was somewhat surprising, as this area was not an initial project outcome, however this resonated with numerous participants. Similar to the strong recognition of partners regarding the utility and value of humane education to prevent gender-based violence, this area will also enable significant innovation and impact. This openness was evidenced by the nine organizations which will be continuing to implement adapted GBA+ humane education programming.



# LESSONS LEARNED

The below are key lessons learned which can support future program development, implementation and evaluation.

## KEY LESSONS

Humane educators played a crucial role in addressing the 'violence link' within their community and educational programs. Many were able to successfully leverage their networks and partnerships to implement adapted GBA+ programming.

Engaging the participation of women's shelters and GBV prevention organizations to provide inputs into gender transformative humane education could elicit even deeper partnership work between sectors and have greater relevance and enhanced GBA+ integration.

Additional program guidance in the initial stages in how to implement the promising practices framework and curriculum guide could have been beneficial for planning and facilitation purposes.

Many humane educators who implemented adapted GBA+ humane education cited their participation as a significant and meaningful opportunity for them to build their awareness and deepen their skill sets to address the violence link. For many it was well aligned with broader strategic goals of the organization regarding addressing human rights and program innovation.

Humane Canada provided exceptional project management and coaching support with national partners, and was cited by numerous partners as a key strength and highlight of the project.



**KEY LESSONS CONT'D**

Flexibility with community partners' adaptations and applications of the Promising Practices Framework was cited as a strength by partners and contributed to strong engagement rates and rich diversity of programming and digital initiatives.

The extensive network and relationships possessed by Humane Canada was critical to ensuring strong participation in the steering committee, and amongst the 13 implementing organizations.

Building partnerships with organizations with expertise engaging men and boys could have proved beneficial in building the capacity of humane educators even further to address the violence link and enhance their reach and impact with men and boys in the community.



In addition to age-specific program guides, humane educators would have benefited from specific activities (presentations, handouts) which clearly link humane education, gender-based violence prevention, and promotion of healthy masculinities.

The project resulted in significant continuity and sustainability of programming. Nine partners will be continuing their adapted curriculum in various sites in the community, in schools, and through social media channels.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

The below includes recommendations from the project evaluation results and key findings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to harness and build off the immense interest and passion of humane educators to address the violence link and explore the importance and entry points of gender transformative approaches within humane education.

Apply longitudinal studies to assess outcomes related to gender-transformative humane education amongst boys and men specifically to gauge impact on behavioural change within their relationships.



Form a GBV prevention technical group which can provide coaching and technical input into gender transformative approaches, new programming tools, and learning content to animal welfare organizations to further deepen knowledge and capacity levels to engage men and boys.



## RECOMMENDATIONS CONT'D

Scale-up community-based gender transformative humane education programming across the country, in all provinces and territories.

Launch a Pilot Innovation Fund for Humane Canada to administer small grants for GBA+ humane educators/animal welfare organizations to adapt the Promising Practices Framework and learning resources within local communities across Canada.

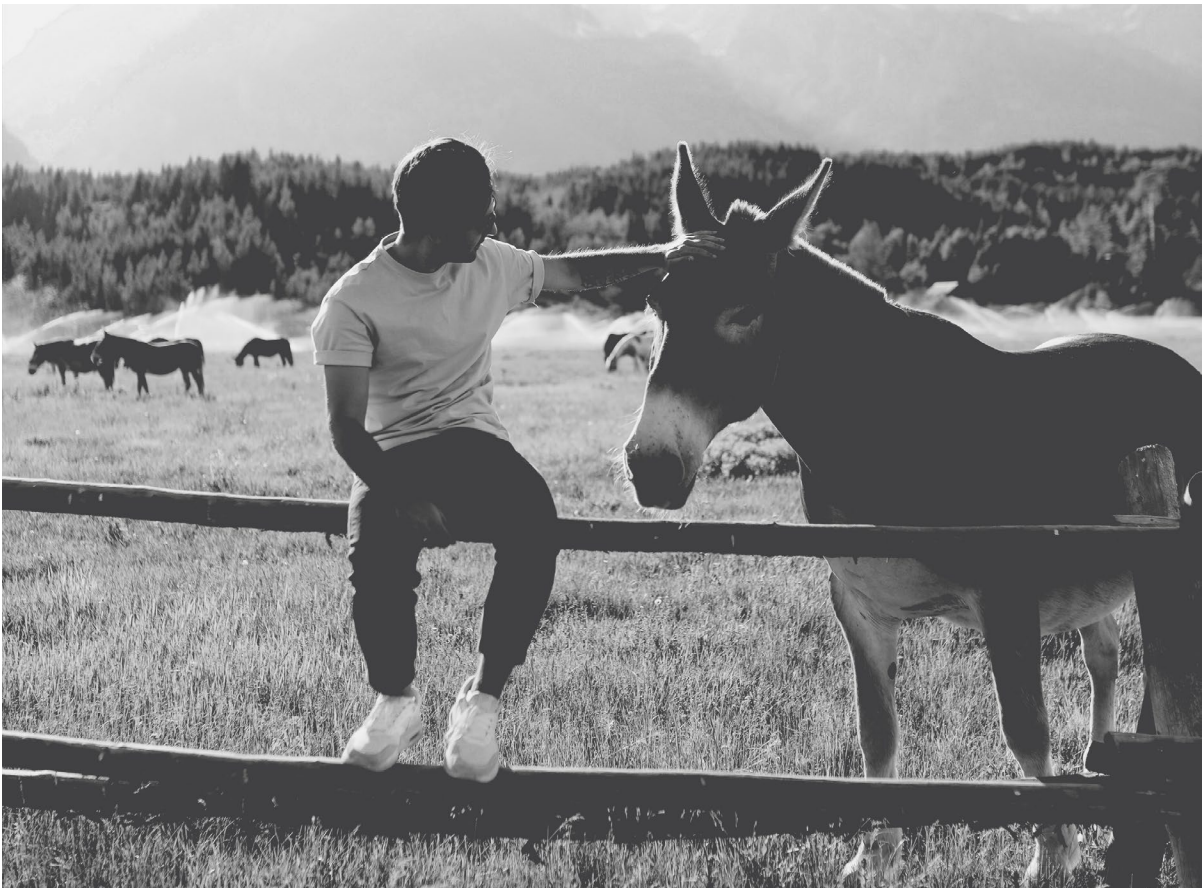
Leverage Humane Canada's ACT Network to share lessons learned from gender-transformative humane education and foster shared learning and knowledge.



Humane Canada effectively leveraged their reach and membership to play a meaningful role in coordinating and fostering multi-sectoral collaboration between GBV and animal welfare sectors to address root causes of GBV and harm against animals.

Encourage deeper partnerships between local women's shelters, GBV prevention/engaging men and boys organizations, and animal welfare organizations to adapt the Promising Practices framework towards deeper and sustained impact to prevent gender-based violence and harm against animals. This will encourage highly intersectional and community-driven approaches.





# CONCLUSION

The Promising Practices Project represented a significant program innovation and cross-sectoral collaboration opportunity between two sectors with aligned visions. The large steering committee Humane Canada built is a testament to the strong interest across both sectors. The Humane Educator Group played a crucial role in implementing adapted programming which addresses the violence link, and led programming in schools, community, on-site in animal welfare agencies, and online. Humane Canada was successful in achieving enhanced knowledge and capacity levels to engage men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. Finally, Humane Canada developed a tremendous amount of highly accessible and innovative prevention-focused resources which can influence new animal welfare organizations to pursue GBV prevention goals.



High rates of gender-based violence (GBV) persist across Canada. This issue demands a multi-sectoral response rooted in collaboration, innovation and impact. With this spirit in mind, Humane Canada launched an innovative program **Engaging Men and Boys as Allies in Preventing Gender-Based Violence Through Community-Based Humane Education Programming**. Also known as The Promising Practices Project, this work builds on Humane Canada's ACT initiative and significant partnerships with animal welfare organizations across Canada. The project is also strongly rooted in Humane Canada's philosophy of "One health one welfare" that "recognizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health and environmental health." The overall purpose of the project was to deepen cross-sectoral partnerships between the GBV and the animal welfare sectors to embed gender transformative approaches, ultimately to engage men and boys as allies to prevent gender-based violence.



**FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT**

[HUMANECANADA.CA](https://www.humanecanada.ca)

