

ARC Action, Research and Change

Who are we?

ARC is a group of activists who are committed to ensuring that the equality rights of women impacted by violence remain on the minds and in the work of all agencies, systems, ministries and political leaders so that meaningful change can take place. Through advocacy there is dialogue, through research there is information, and combining both, there is change to eradicate violence against women.

What are our guiding principles?

Accountability;
Action;
Advocacy;
AR/AO Framework
Challenge and Conflict;
Choice;
Consultation;
Diversity
Educating and Mentoring;
Equality and Inclusion;
Evaluation;
Joy & Celebration;
Leadership;
Power sharing;

How do we work?

ARC recognizes that all women face misogyny and sexism; however some bear an additional burden of oppression due to racism and other forms of discrimination. We further recognize that every woman and child has the inherent right to social and economic justice and that every woman and child has the right to self-determination.

This group works from an anti-racist anti-oppressive feminist framework; which means we understand society as being fundamentally based on patriarchal social relations which intersect with racism and multiple other forms of oppression on the basis of class, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender identification, colour, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, political affiliation, record of offences, marital status, family status, life experiences and appearance.

ARC is an organization that will remain rooted in this framework and will ask questions, reject the status quo, and challenge existing power relations and privileges as we believe that racism and oppression can and should be eradicated. We will take a pro-active stance and approach in our work with the empowerment and equality rights of women at the center.

We recognize that most of us are socialized not to recognize these power relations and that it takes work to come to understand how these systems work and intersect and ultimately deprive us all of reaching our true potential. We recognize that we are all in different locations in terms

of learning and unlearning and we ask only that we all commit to doing this work together recognizing that we will make mistakes along the way. We will need to challenge one another and be challenged and this is good. Change only comes when we question and challenge the status quo.

We will actively lobby the municipal, provincial and federal governments to provide proper funding and support for programs that address racism and oppression and that serve communities that are marginalized. We will incorporate our knowledge of how all forms of oppression intersect in women's lives in our efforts to effect social change via public education and media campaigns, and direct political action. We will identify and refuse to participate in government programs and processes that contribute to systemic oppression.

Why become a member?

ARC was formed by a group of activists who are dedicated to ending violence against women and wish to engage likeminded women, including survivors of violence and others who are not employed by agencies doing this work, to organize and take action. ARC will think creatively about how best to work together so that all who want to can have meaningful participation in our work. We look forward to animated, fulsome discussions and to including all voices dedicated to ending violence against women in our work.

If you are passionate, determined and ready to move things forward in a manner focussed on action then this is the group for you. Online meetings, email correspondence and a focus on challenges and solutions will make this group a force in Ontario. We plan to use all our limited time as wisely and effectively as possible. We welcome your suggestions as to how best to do that. We are confident that moving forward with our collective voice we can make some progress on ending violence against women and their children that is long overdue.

What can you expect from membership?

A voice, a collective experience, a conversation, opportunity to act, engage, meet with political figures all in the name of advocacy, research and change.

What will it cost you and your organization?

For individual membership we are requesting a \$25 donation; talk to us if you need to negotiate your fee.

For organizational memberships we are requesting \$250

How we will we make decisions and explore direction?

A consensus based decision-making process will be used by ARC. Effort by membership will seek to reach agreement on a course of action to address an issue or set of related issues. In a consensus process, the membership will work together to find a mutually acceptable solution.

Successful consensus processes follow several guiding principles:

- *Consensus Decision-Making*—Members make decisions by agreement rather than by majority vote, however if no consensus can be reached, decisions will be based on majority 50% plus 1.
- *Inclusiveness*— To the extent possible, all necessary interests are represented or, at a minimum, approve of the decision.
- *Accountability*—Members may represent VAW groups and interests. Members are accountable both to the women they serve and to the group process.
- *Facilitation*—The meeting facilitator is accountable to all participants and manages the process, ensures the meeting process are followed, and helps to maintain a productive climate for communication and problem solving.
- *Flexibility*—Members design a process and address the issues in a manner they determine most suitable to the situation.
- *Shared Control/Ground Rules*—Members share with the facilitator responsibility for setting and maintaining the process and for creating outcomes.
- *Disagreement and Conflict*—*from time to time we anticipate we will disagree. That is ok and to be expected. Conflict will be resolved by talking through our differences in a respectful manner, and, with the help of a third party, where necessary.*
- *Commitment to Implementation* – All Members commit to carrying out the agreed decisions and actions.

Elements of a Consensus-Based Decision

- All members agree with the proposed decision and are willing to carry it out;
- No one will block or obstruct the decision or its implementation; and
- Everyone will support the decision and implement it.

Levels of Consensus

- I can say an unqualified “yes!”
- I can accept the decision.
- I can live with the decision.
- I do not fully agree with the decision, however, I will not block it and will support it.

ARC structure- Sage Women's Council

Our council currently consists of eight founding women who are currently functioning as the Council for the first year. This council will seek out membership and host an election in the following year.

The Council membership will consist of up to 9 active members and a significant number of the council membership seats will be filled by survivors. There will be specific designation to youth and elder membership. The council is committed to reflecting the wealth of lived experience of women from across the province of Ontario from all directions. Council members will offer the skill and expertise as identified by the membership to lead and move the mission forward.

Position priorities include:

Council Member- Youth Council Member- Survivor Council Member- Financial

Council Member -Social media Council Member- Elder Council Member-Political

Council Member- Networking Council Member- Administrator Council Member- Founding

Council Member- shit disturbing bad ass

So if you want to become a member or have some questions?

Please feel welcome to email or contact us via our website www.arcstopvaw.ca

Approved by founding members August 2015