



**Advocacy & Public Engagement (APE)
Standing Committee Mandate**

The **Advocacy & Public Engagement Committee** is one of four OCTEVAW standing committees through which the Coalition works to achieve its goal of ending violence against women and, through leadership, education, advocacy and political action, of promoting a coordinated response to women and their children who have experienced abuse. All Standing Committees report to the OCTEVAW Steering Committee through their chair, who represents them as a member of the Steering Committee. All OCTEVAW members are encouraged to participate not only on committees of particular interest to them, or to which they bring pertinent skills, but on every committee, on a rotating basis.

The mandate of the **Advocacy & Public Engagement Committee** is to work strategically to effect positive change through collective action and to coordinate and conduct advocacy and communication efforts on behalf of OCTEVAW and to promote understanding of violence against women issues within the community. These efforts must align with, and support the aims of the Coalition and correspond to the priorities of the membership. The committee members acknowledge the inter-relationship of the work and priorities of all OCTEVAW committees and of the Coalition.

Like other standing committees, the **Advocacy & Public Engagement Committee** is dedicated to the principle that its work must encompass all forms of violence against women, as defined by the OCTEVAW Constitution, and embrace women in all their diversity.

The committee is a forum for its members to:

- Discuss and analyze issues relating to violence against women and their children including (but not exclusive to) current and proposed legislation, related government and agency policies, and the current political and social climate
- Discuss and analyze current and possible/probable media reports on issues of violence against women and their children as well as public understanding of these issues
- Discuss and learn about media relations, communications tools and public/media sentiment on violence against women and their children issues
- Coordinate OCTEVAW's response to violence against women and children issues and crises and develop appropriate, consistent messaging on behalf of the Coalition
- Promote networking and advocacy by members on behalf of the Coalition with politicians, policy-makers and outside organizations on a local, provincial, national and international level involved in issues of violence against women and their children

These goals are accomplished by:



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- Developing and implementing action plans in response to identified issues and in harmony with OCTEVAW's strategic plan
 - Developing an annual work plan, including timelines and costs for approval of the Steering Committee
 - Holding regular meetings with focused, issue-based agendas
 - Developing, maintaining and updating information materials for the purpose of public education on violence against women issues, including partner abuse, sexual violence and children who have experienced woman abuse
 - Developing website content, ensuring the website is maintained and regularly updated, and that the "Members Only" section meets members needs and is being used to its full potential; promoting the use of the website by members, the public, and the media
 - Maintaining a list of Coalition members who are capable of and willing to speak to media
 - Actively engage the media on violence against women and their children issues and provide quick, coordinated response to crises or major news events with implications for the VAW community
 - Participating in public awareness opportunities such as consultations, conferences and hearings, to bring attention to violence against women and their children issues
 - Utilizing the OCTEVAW infrastructure and membership base to facilitate interagency and inter-sectoral cooperation on related issues and actions, specifically including networking, cooperation and joint action with other provincial violence against women coordinating committees on issues that support the aims of the Coalition
 - Communicating and liaising regularly with the membership, Steering Committee, other Standing Committees and the public to advise on current efforts and to invite involvement
 - Providing regular media training opportunities for members

Membership of this Committee:

- Open to any OCTEVAW member
- Suitable for members who are interested in the work of the Committee as described above
- Encouraged for members who bring advocacy and public engagement skills to teach and to share as well as members who want to learn such skills
- Encouraged for women survivors of violence