



**ACWS #LiftHerUp
2017 Municipal Elections
Final Report, May 31st, 2018.**

Contents

Background 3

Campaign Goals 4

Campaign Achievements..... 5

 Campaign Outcomes 5

Activities..... 8

 Municipal Pre-Election Day 8

Contact with Candidates..... 11

Social Media 12

 Municipal Post – Election Day..... 12

 Overall Signatory Highlights 13

 Analysis of People Elected 15

School Trustee Pre and Post – Election 17

Research & policy formulation – next steps 18

Lessons learned..... 19

Budget & expenditure..... 22

APPENDIX A – Municipality commitment 23

APPENDIX B – School Board Trustee commitment..... 24

Background

The #LiftHerUp campaign was created by Alberta women's shelters directors in response to misogynistic language and behaviours directed at female politicians in December 2016. These actions can act as a trigger for women living with domestic violence and abuse – and can be an enabler for their abusers.

The #LiftHerUp campaign was prompted by the shelter directors of ACWS. The municipal election campaign started preparations around August 25, 2017. Election nominations were formally submitted by September 18, 2017 and the elections were held October 16, 2017.

A commitment and details were created with input from shelter directors and community partners. A database of potential candidates was started. Launch events in major centers were planned and executed. Support was provided to shelter directors hosting events or contacting candidates directly.

"Violent language directed at women in the public eye gives tacit permission to violent and traumatic abuse that occurs behind closed doors. Its poison spreads. These words and actions are triggers for women living with domestic violence and abuse – and enables their abusers."

~ Jan Reimer, Executive Director, ACWS

Campaign Goals

#LiftHerUp Campaign activities as per the proposal to AB SoW.

1. Three parts
 - a. Write a No-VAW commitment
 - b. Send to every candidate in the province
 - c. Ask them to sign it

2. Build a #LiftHerUp section on ACWS website
 - a. Allows us to capture data and information
 - i. Candidates who've signed
 - ii. Information for concerned citizens

3. Conduct provincial launch event for the commitment targeting media.

4. Develop and launch an outdoor advertising campaign in rural and urban Alberta.

5. Develop a power point presentation to be distributed to all Shelter Directors which can be used at each municipality.

6. ACWS to present to Edmonton's WAVE Initiative about the commitment and ask for support for Domestic Violence & Your Workplace training.

7. ACWS to write to all Provincial municipalities offering Domestic Violence & Your Workplace training.

8. To develop, publish and launch a policy document which explores the links between Violence Against Women in public discourse and Violence Against Women in the domestic sphere.

Campaign Achievements

Campaign Outcomes

In the 8 week campaign period, we achieved the following:

Direct outcomes

1. Candidates signed the commitment demonstrating a change in practice.
2. New relationships were created. Some candidates who did not win the election are still seeking to promote the values of #LiftHerUp and are offering their support with our member organizations.
3. New collaborating organizations - EqualVoice north and south.
4. There was a high degree of media coverage during the campaign, demonstrating interest and buy-in.
5. Some candidates shared personal stories. These included:
 - Women who have been targeted with negative behaviours while campaigning or in office
 - Men and women officials who strive to ensure safe spaces in their municipal offices
 - Some shared history or history of support regarding personal stories of domestic violence
6. This campaign creates safe spaces and support for female politicians and public officials to have their stories of unacceptable behaviours heard.

Outputs

Based on the available budget, we were able to accomplish the following:

Goals	Outputs	Progress
1a. Write a No-VAW commitment	Two commitments written, as well as a details page for each explaining what the campaign is about. One commitment targets municipal candidates, the other school board trustees.*	Achieved
1b. Send to every candidate in the province	One employee has been charged to this task. As such due to the sheer volume of contacting EVERY candidate in the province, the focus has been on candidates in our member communities, however all candidates province wide are WELCOME to sign.	Achieved
1c. Ask them to sign it	The candidates were asked via email, during our launches, in media forms, through social media to sign the commitment. This will be ongoing throughout the campaign **	Achieved
2ai: Capturing data of candidates who have signed	The website has been built to capture, who has signed, location, ward, incumbent/challenger, municipal/school trustee.	Achieved
2aii: Information for concerned citizens	The website will list which candidates have signed ***	Achieved
3. Targeting media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 media advisories were sent regarding Edmonton and Calgary launches • 1 province wide media release sent regarding campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved • Achieved • Achieved • Achieved • Achieved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion piece created and send to Edmonton journal, Calgary Herald, distributed to SD to share in local communities • Further media release for end event • Post campaign media release 	
4. Outdoor advertising		Will not be achieved due to budget constraints
5. PPT presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A toolkit was provided to Shelter Director's to aid in local events • Forum questions created • Candidate lists provided upon request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved • Achieved • Achieved
6. Present to WAVE initiative		<p>Achieved</p> <p>ACWS is also presenting the campaign at the Women's Shelters Canada 1st national conference in Ottawa in June in the hope of replicating the campaign across the country.</p>
7. ACWS writes to Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email &/or letter sent to municipalities as follow up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved. • Additional mail to Municipalities in-progress in relation to the Council Code of Conduct.
8. Policy document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See note under research section. 	<p>In progress, publication set for September 2018.</p> <p>*See note under research.</p>

* Appendices A, B, C and D commitment details and commitments

**Candidates with available contact information were contacted in more than one format on more than one occasion. Please see appendices E and F.

***Data was collected of candidates who signed the commitment. A list of candidates who signed was posted on our website <https://acws.ca/has-your-candidate-signed>.

Activities

Municipal Pre-Election Day

The campaign started by a creation of a commitment as well as commitment details. There was a high degree of collaboration regarding this commitment, including reaching out to community partners for feedback ie: YWCA Edmonton, AASAS, shelter directors et al. We sought legal advice, resulting in naming the campaign a commitment rather than a pledge.

A website was designed to provide information, be interactive and collate data. The campaign project was presented to the shelter directors at their quarterly meeting.

There was substantial media coverage as follows:

- Global : <https://globalnews.ca/news/3742396/liftherup-campaign-supports-female-candidates-ahead-of-civic-elections-in-alberta/>
- Edmonton Journal: <http://edmontonjournal.com/health/women/liftherup-campaign-a-call-to-action>
- Calgary Herald: <http://www.calgaryherald.com/health/liftherup+campaign+call+action/14772928/story.html>
- Radio-Canada: <http://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1057073/politique-sexisme-alberta-election-femme-misogyne>
- Edmonton Metro: <http://www.metronews.ca/news/edmonton/2017/09/18/liftherup-campaign-calls-out-violence-against-women-in-politics.html>
- Prairie Post: <http://www.prairiepost.com/index.php/news/alberta/item/13171-women-s-shelters-trying-to-lift-her-up.html>
- Lethbridge Herald: <http://lethbridgeherald.com/news/lethbridge-news/2017/10/25/campaign-looks-to-create-safer-spaces-for-women/>

- Vancouver Sun:
<http://www.vancouversun.com/touch/health/women/23liftherup+campaign+cal+l+action/14772927/story.html>
- 630CHED shared global news coverage via twitter
- Radical Citizen Media: <https://radicalcitizenmedia.com/2017/09/20/latest-update-liftherup-edmonton-campaign-launch/>
- Community TV posted via twitter

Due to the time constraints and the sheer number of potential candidates of the 2017 Municipal Elections, this campaign focused on 26 shelter member communities. Communities excluded were those with on-reserve shelters and Lloydminster because these community's elections are during a different period than the targeted 2017 election period.

There were three launches: one in Edmonton, one in Calgary and another in Grande Prairie. Some shelter organizations reached out directly to candidates in their area.



Calgary Launch – September 20, 2017



Grande Prairie Launch – September 19, 2017

Contact with Candidates

Candidates were given various opportunities through email and telephone to sign the commitment. (See Appendix G).

There were approximately 345 initial emails sent to candidates, with an added 112 once additional candidate contact information was posted. There were approximately 685 follow up emails. Approximately 214 follow up phone calls made. Further, candidates who did not list phone numbers or emails, could be sent a message on their webpage. Approximately 20 candidates were contacted in this manner.

An additional 457 emails were sent to candidates and elected officials asking them to continue to #LiftHerUp post-election.

Feedback from candidates who had not signed when contacted by telephone:

- They had overlooked the commitment due to the overwhelming amount of emails and requests for surveys
- The email had gone to their junk/spam folder
- Or the candidate indicated they had not received the email at all
 - o Most cases candidates requested a resend and often signed after

Overall the response from candidates was positive. Most candidates were pleased to sign. There was some additional feedback that bears mention:

1. Some candidates indicated they strongly supported the campaign, would share the details on their social media, but were unable to sign the commitment due to a desire to not sign any commitments during their campaign:
 - a. This was true of some candidates
 - b. Many candidates with this sentiment did not follow through on social media as they indicated they would
2. Some candidates (male and female) felt this commitment was either:
 - a. Sexist towards men
 - b. Singling out only one group for support
3. Some candidates had really well thought out questions:
 - a. Once answered, these candidates signed

Social Media

Upon signing the commitment candidates were given the opportunity to share a tweet or Facebook message. Several candidates did choose to use this messaging. Several others pulled parts of the commitment and posted to social media.

There were some citizens and candidates who tweeted their thanks or pride in candidates who had signed the commitment. In some cases individuals would ask people to check out the ACWS campaign. Some media such as the Metro and Prairie Post used social media to spread their article about Lift Her Up. The #LiftHerUp hashtag was used approximately 160 times.

"When people see positive discourse among public officials, they mirror that behaviour in how they treat their fellow citizens."

- Lana Cuthbertson, Equal Voice
North Chapter Chair

Municipal Post – Election Day

Overall Signatory Highlights

Overall 232 candidates signed the commitment. Of the 26 communities targeted, 18 had candidates respond. Please see Appendix E for complete list of candidates contacted.

Strongest responses were:

Community	Signatures	Candidates Running	
Banff	13	18	
Grande Prairie	17	24	
Edmonton	50	84	All returning incumbents signed (10/10)
Strathcona County	18	29	Mayoral candidates (4/5)
Red Deer	25	32	
Lethbridge	21	32	
Medicine Hat	10	23	

Communities that had candidate contact information, but limited candidates who signed:

Community	Signatures	Candidates Running	
Calgary	40	89	
Cold Lake	2	11	
Fort McMurray	8	27	
Lac La Biche	4	31	
Peace River	3	13	
St. Paul	5	16	In addition a county candidate signed as well
Strathmore	5	13	
Taber	4	13	

Some communities had limited contact information available; as such they had the lowest or no response to the campaign:

Where incumbent contact information available:

Community	Signatures	Incumbents contacted
Brooks	2	6
Camrose	0	7
Grande Cache	0	5
High Level	0	5
High River	2	5
Pincher Creek	0	5
Whitecourt	0	6

Little or no contact information available:

Community	Signatures	Contact	
Fairview	1	1	Acclaimed mayor had contact information only
Hinton	0	1	Incumbent candidate
Rocky Mountain House	0	2	Incumbent
Slave Lake	0	3	2 incumbent, 1 challenger

Analysis of People Elected

Elected officials based on the 26 communities produced a total of 212 mayor and council officials elected. Of these, 70 candidates signed the commitment.

Of the 26 communities targeted, 17 had candidates respond who were later elected. The three candidates who signed in Peace River were not elected.

In summary, there was great coverage province wide. There were no geographical locations that stood out as not having signed the commitment. There was not an over representation in urban areas with under representation of rural. Further, while not the focus of the campaign, all of the 26 communities with the exception of one have female representation.

Strongest responses were:

Communities	Signed	Elected	
Grande Prairie	9	9	3 female councillors
Red Deer	9	9	female mayor 3 female councillors
Edmonton	11	13	All returning incumbents signed (9/9) 2 female councillors
Lethbridge	7	9	2 female councillors
Banff	4	6	Female Mayor 2 female councillors
Strathcona County	7	9	1 female councillor

Communities that had candidate contact information, but limited candidates who signed:

Communities	Signed	Elected	
Calgary	5	14	Mayor signed 3 female Councillors (one expressed public support, but would not sign)
Medicine Hat	3	9	2 female Councillors
Cold Lake	2	7	1 female Councillor
Fort McMurray	4	11	5 female councillors
Lac La Biche	1	9	Incumbent mayor was the one who signed 1 female councillor
Peace River	0	7	None of the 3 candidates who signed the commitment were elected 2 female councillors
St. Paul	3	7	Female Mayor

Strathmore	2	7	4 female councillors – more than half
Taber	1	7	1 female councillor (signed)

Some communities had limited contact information available; as such they had the lowest or no response to the campaign:

Only incumbent contact information available:

Community	Signed	Elected	
Brooks	1	6	No female councillors
Camrose	0	9	7 were incumbents, including mayor 2 female councillors
Grande Cache	0	7	1 female councillor
High Level	0	7	Female mayor 1 female councillor
High River	2	7	2 female councillors
Pincher Creek	0	7	4 incumbents re-elected 1 female councillor
Whitecourt	0	7	Female mayor

Little or no contact information available:

Community	Signed	Elected	
Fairview	1	6	Acclaimed mayor – signed 3 female councillors
Hinton	0	7	1 female councillor
Rocky Mountain House	0	7	Both incumbents elected Female Mayor 2 female councillors
Slave Lake	0	7	3 female councillors

"Sexist, demeaning and violent language directed at women in politics [...] indicative of a pervasive subculture that dehumanizes women, and then calls them "not tough enough for politics" when they speak up."

- Lisa Skierka, Equal Voice South Chapter Chair

School Trustee Pre and Post – Election

School trustee candidates were added to the campaign as school boards are a level of government. To ensure as close a comparable as possible, school boards targeted were those that reflected the same communities as those targeted for the municipal elections.

Candidates were invited to the same launches as the municipal candidates. Due to time restrictions methods of contact differed for the trustees. Further difficulty obtaining contact information greatly restricted the number of candidates that could be contacted. In rural areas school districts greatly overlap communities; we attempted to ensure each of the 26 communities targeted had school board representation as well. Please see Appendix F for a complete list of all school boards targeted and all candidates contacted.

Candidates were sent the email of the launch on September 25, 2017. Edmonton and Calgary candidates were given follow up phone calls. All candidates were sent a follow up/reminder email October 11, 2017, and a “last chance to sign” email October 13, 2017. A total of 92 trustee candidates signed, of these 43 were elected, representing 17 school districts.

Highlights of the campaign:

School Board	# signed	Of those # elected
Calgary Board of Education	16	3
Calgary Catholic School District	5	3
Edmonton Public Schools	17	6
Edmonton Catholic Schools	10	4
Grande Prairie Public School District	7	5
Grande Prairie Catholic School District	2	2
Foothills School Division	7	3
Holy Spirit Roman Catholic School Division	3	3
Medicine Hat Public School Division	5	3
Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education	3	2
Red Deer Public School Division	4	1
Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools	2	2

Research & policy formulation – next steps

ACWS is committed to developing a public policy document on this issue. This research is breaking new ground and has required a significant additional investment in time and resources than anticipated. Consequently, ACWS has delayed publication of the policy. We advised the Ministry of this likely delay in a meeting in January 2018.

However, to ensure a continuation of the momentum we have:

1. Recruited a policy intern from the U of A to conduct research (costs paid primarily for by ACWS).
2. Surveyed all candidates who signed the commitment and collected stories and data about their experience in the campaign.
3. Interviewed a selection of shelter directors about the campaign and the overlap in terms of shelter clients.
4. Received permission from Duluth Domestic Violence Intervention Project to use their specially developed 'Power and Control wheel' to be applied to women in politics.
5. Are conducting a literature review of the existing academic work in this field.
6. Are in discussions with staff in Status of Women Ministry regarding a focus group of current and former political representatives.
7. Aiming to complete research, design and publication of the policy document for an event booked at the Metro Cinema (Edmonton) in Fall 2018. (costs to fall on ACWS and not to be included in the remit of this project application.)



Lessons learned

Key observations

- (a) Data preparation takes time. To ensure a complete candidate list to be compiled requires more time, as well as assistance from individuals in the smaller communities. Locals know their communities best.
- (b) It would be productive to have more involvement in local communities from members, to do so however, they require more time to plan for an event/campaign of this magnitude. Many organizations had other activities happening at the time of the launches.
- (c) We must also be cognizant that not all ACWS members will have political buy in, the political climate of their community may be such that to engage in a campaign of this type could potentially have short term repercussions, ie: funding or land approvals, that outweigh the advantages of this campaign ie: public awareness. In communities such as these, there is potential for other ways to present the #LiftHerUp campaign commitment goals.
- (d) Given how under-developed the academic research in this area is the ACWS research offers an unusual and distinctive exploration of the topic for policy-makers and academics.

Strengths:

- Created a manageable and recordable number of communities to reach out to
- Many candidates (larger areas) when contacted by phone had heard about #LiftHerUp
- Feedback from many candidates who read the commitment, the lingo/language used did not offer them hesitation
 - Some candidates asked for clarification on points in the commitment, once explained – they signed.
- Some candidates and citizens tweeted asking candidates to sign the agreement
 - Several retweets by candidates and citizens
- Most interactions were positive – including citizens and some candidates calling attention to #LiftHerUp

Limitations:

- With time and resources being so short, could only reach a small percentage of communities – those with shelter members
 - Does this completely reflect our entire province?
 - Would the numbers hold with including more rural areas?
 - How would the numbers reflect with other large urban areas?
 - How would communities without shelters respond?

- Time was very tight in preparation time and in roll out time
- Due to some feedback from some shelter directors
 - These communities – even if contact information was readily available – were only contacted via email
- Not all communities have public contact lists for candidates
 - Further returning officers of communities without contact information refused to release said contact information
 - Point of interest:
 - Two communities Fairview and Brooks – candidate contact information was limited, both these mayors were acclaimed – still signed the commitment.
- Trustee information is difficult to locate
 - Proved to be time consuming
 - Further ensuring school districts that cover the shelter members were included was daunting – needed more time dedicated here
- There were many projects on the go in shelters – made going into the community to do some additional photos/social media piece too time restrictive.

Suggestions for future campaigns

Social media

- Raised the profile leading up to the campaign
- Keeps the momentum going
- If provincial or federal campaign, there will be likely far more social media
 - o Watching for instances of the behaviour we are trying to stop
 - o Potential for negative feedback may be higher
 - More resources may need to be dedicated to this area
- Need a more efficient way to track social media and the hashtag

Website

- Potentials:
 - o Great if there was an automated updating system – that said there were mistakes made by some candidates who signed up as a trustee/municipal candidate when they reflected the other – would still require manual checks
 - o Great if there was an automated “thank-you” response to candidates who signed

Advertising

- PSA development could have an impact if we had the resources:
 - o Having signatories of the 2017 Municipal Elections might be a way to avoid partisanship but show leaders speaking about the commitment
 - o Creates a visual buy-in
- Radio and/or televised advertisement – could reach province wide
- Raise the profile leading up to the campaign
- Keep the momentum going
- Use the LiftHerUp signage – push on social media
- Post-election: life stories

Budget & expenditure

Planned budget	Status of Women Grant \$10,000
Salaries	\$8,750
Website/advertising	\$500
Event logistics	\$750
Total:	10,000

Actual expenditure	Status of Women Grant \$10,000
Salaries	\$8690
Website/IT	\$857
Event logistics	\$739
Total:	\$10,286

APPENDIX A – Municipality commitment



Alberta Council of Women's Shelters

#LiftHerUp Campaign

2017 Municipal Elections

www.acws.ca/liftherup

Follow the links or visit our website to sign

2017 Municipal Election Commitment – Lift Her Up Campaign

As a candidate in the upcoming municipal election:

- I express my respect and support of women in public life.
- I will treat all candidates with respect, regardless of gender and create an overall culture of inclusion.
- I commit to do my part to prevent all instances of sexist and violent behaviours, and to hold all candidates to the same standard of conduct, recognizing that sexist or violent language and representation do a disservice to all candidates and to the public at large.

Should I be elected I will adhere to this same level of conduct and will:

- Pursue policies which eradicate all forms of societal violence
- Advocate for women, children and seniors who experience violence and abuse.
- Work towards increasing the number of women in positions of leadership.
- Honour the diversity of women and work towards addressing the barriers they may face.
- Recognize that as a community leader, I have a role to play to encourage dialogue and education on the importance of ending violence against women and girls

This commitment demonstrates my understanding that by promoting equality, I as a candidate help to reduce long term costs, build stronger communities and by doing so I Lift Her Up.



Alberta Council of Women's Shelters

#LiftHerUp Campaign

2017 Municipal Elections

www.acws.ca/liftherup

Follow the links or visit our website to sign

2017 School Board Election Commitment

As a candidate in the upcoming school board election:

- I express my respect and support of women in public life.
- I will treat all candidates with respect, regardless of gender and create an overall culture of inclusion.
- I commit to do my part to prevent all instances of sexist and violent behaviours, and to hold all candidates to the same standard of conduct, recognizing that sexist or violent language and representation do a disservice to all candidates and to the public at large.

Should I be elected I will adhere to this same level of conduct and will:

- Work towards increasing the number of women and girls in positions of leadership.
- Advocate for supports and education for students who experience violence and abuse.
- Honour the diversity of women and girls and work towards addressing the barriers they may face.
- Recognize as a trustee that I have the opportunity to set an example, create direction and hold others accountable while representing families at large.
- Recognize that as a community leader, I have a role to play to encourage dialogue and education on the importance of ending violence against women and girls.

This commitment demonstrates my understanding that by promoting equality, I as a candidate help to reduce long term costs, build stronger communities and by doing so I Lift Her Up.