How To Use This Manual

The development of this manual was borne out of a need for increased awareness and understanding of community members' rights when interacting with police, information about and access to the police complaints system, and increased dialogue of community-police relations. The Community Education and Access to Police Complaints Project believes that addressing biased policing individually and systemically, and at the same time integrating this with other priorities in the community, we will work towards making the City of Toronto a safer place for all.

To this end, we have developed a manual as a starting point to address some of the issues that interrupt community safety, with a focus on education on community members' rights and what to do if those rights are violated. It is important to note that some of the resources may appear out of context and may not be completely comprehensive or balanced in their coverage of issues. We will be providing additional resources as they become available and revisions to the manual will be based on feedback from workshops and on-going tracking of police complaints. We welcome your input and invite you to make comments to help us with this important task.

The manual is divided into seven sections. The first section comprises of the introduction to the project and manual. The following five sections are workshops on: Youth Rights/Youth Criminal Justice Act; Parent and the Youth Criminal Justice Act; Newcomer & Immigrant Awareness and the Police; Hate Crimes; and the Police Complaints Process. The final section includes a number of Warm-Up and Ice-Breaker activities. Each workshop includes additional resources and handouts.

The workshops are designed to be tailored to specific group needs. Users can follow the agendas as laid out here, or, exercises from the various workshops can be pulled together to create an individualized agenda that addresses particular concerns of a group. Workshop exercises include notes for facilitators on what to look out for and possible answers to common questions asked. Each workshop also has resource materials that can be distributed to participants. The Warm-Up Activities section offers a variety of energizing activities that can be incorporated at any point to engage workshop participants in the session.

We recommend that you read through and familiarize yourself with the resources included in this manual before you facilitate a session, so that you are able to appropriately answer questions that may arise.