

HEALTHY CHILDREN, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES ACTION TOOLKIT FOR POSITIVE CHANGE



United Nations Association in Canada
Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies

United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada)
Suite 300, 309 Cooper Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 0G5
Canada
Tel: +1 613-232-5751
Fax: +1 613-563-2455

Email: info@unac.org

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Writing and Coordination Team: Gabriel Ramsay, Project Officer; Maria Sterniczuk, Senior Project Officer; Kathryn White, Executive Director

Edited by: Tim Welsh

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ABOUT UNA-CANADA

The United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada) is a registered charity, founded in 1946, with a mandate to educate and engage Canadians in support for, and understanding of, the United Nations and its issues which have a global impact. A Canadian NGO, UNA-Canada runs a wide variety of programmes and activities to build Canadian capacity to identify and address emerging international issues on a national basis and to provide foresight and policy research capacity underpinning this innovative programming. With a professional, national secretariat in Ottawa and a regional office in Vancouver, Toronto and Calgary, UNA-Canada derives much of its strength and community outreach from its network of twenty volunteer-based branches and contact points.

Working with the private and public sectors, academia, community leaders, like-minded NGOs as well as multilateral organizations, UNA-Canada provides a place for Canadians to offer their made-in-Canada solutions to challenges confronting the global commons and to develop skills in living together in peace and prosperity. Key programmes target Canadian youth, human rights, sustainable development, environment, peace building and corporate social responsibility.

**Take a stance,
create positive change, become
a UNA-Canada member!**

**For more information, and for the full
scope of our work, we invite you to
visit our website at www.unac.org.**



ABOUT HEALTHY CHILDREN, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES (HC²)

The United Nations Association in Canada's *Healthy Children, Healthy Communities* (HC²) project is a community based engagement and research project which identifies and examines the health perceptions and priorities of young people. In doing so, the project uses the social determinants of health – the conditions in one's environment which impact health, such as employment, working conditions, literacy levels, education and social support networks. Engaging young people with health issues helps them through the transition to the teen years and into adulthood.

The project includes young people, child health stakeholders and the general public in dialogue and action to improve the health of Canada's young people. HC² successfully engages and empowers children to speak out and take action on their own health priorities in their families, communities, provinces and territories, both nationally and internationally.

Healthy Children, Healthy Communities has four objectives:

1. To identify child health PERCEPTIONS and PRIORITIES across Canada, from the voices of children themselves, child health stakeholders and general Canadians.
2. To exchange knowledge on the IMPACTS of SOCIAL FACTORS on children's health in diverse communities across Canada.
3. To develop MEASUREABLE and ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS for community development, provincial and national policy, and for the United Nations.
4. To ENGAGE and EMPOWER children to speak out and to take action on their own health priorities from a social determinants of health perspective, in their communities, provinces and territories, nationally and internationally.

The Toolkit for Action was created in order to achieve the project's four objectives and to move the cause of children's health forward throughout communities in Canada. This toolkit will provide a voice for children and youth to talk about their social world and to engage other members of their community in creating safe and healthy environments for the benefit of all.

Learn more at www.unac.org/hchc

FORWARD

In 2002, the United Nations held a Special Session on children where, guided by the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child, participating nations created a global vision for children called A World Fit for Children. Subsequently, the UN called on nations to create corresponding country-specific documents in order to make commitments towards realizing this vision, thus placing children's welfare on national agendas around the world.

In March 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a commission to support the study of the social factors which affect the well-being of people. The WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health brings together leading scientists and doctors to provide policy recommendations that improve health by addressing the social conditions in which people live and work.

The United Nations Association in Canada's Healthy Children, Healthy Communities (HC²) project was designed to bridge these two very important issues: the study of the social determinants of health coupled with the need to make children's health and children's rights a national and international priority. In doing so, this project, along with this toolkit, supports the voices of children and youth, and encourages them to share their stories, ideas and opinions with their communities. As an internationally recognized and innovative initiative, HC² is that put UNA-Canada along with our supporters notably the Public Health Agency of Canada, in the global vanguard,. UNA-Canada sought to put children's understanding of health at the centre of their own needs. We hope this toolkit will assist you in continuing this work by building even better approaches and solutions.

The Social Determinants of Health provides a framework for understanding health at a population and community level. Often, we think of health simply as eating well, being physically active and not being sick, but health is influenced by a lot of different social relationships and conditions that are developed and supported at the community level. To understand health issues among youth and adults, we must first understand the conditions in which people live, the relationships which they form and ways in which these environments affect their well-being.

It is only when we begin to work together, at the community level, with children and youth, that we can create the kinds of communities that support the healthy development of individuals over their lifetime.



Kathryn White
Executive Director

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INTRODUCTION

The *Action Toolkit for Positive Change* is a guide for creating positive community change through the voices of young people. The toolkit promotes the engagement of youth in identifying challenges and solutions from a holistic perspective of health* and bringing these ideas to community members for the development of concrete actions to help in the development of a healthier community. This toolkit is filled with activities aimed at engaging young people to explore the social factors at the community level which have the greatest impact on their health.

This Toolkit is designed for facilitators and leaders who work with youth. Whether you are a teenager, parent, guardian, teacher, youth worker, public health professional or part of a youth serving agency, whether you have years of experience working with youth or are new to the field, this toolkit will be helpful to you.

This toolkit is also for those youth and youth leaders who want to make a difference in the community in which they live and work. It is for those who believe in the need for deeper understanding of community needs and social change, and for those who want to create that change through their own energies and efforts. This toolkit stems from UNA-Canada's *Healthy Children, Healthy Communities* project, which focused on the health and well-being of 9 to 12 year olds. For the sake of this toolkit, however, "youth" refers to anyone between the ages of 9 and 18. All of the activities included in this toolkit can be adapted to the age group that is being served.

As a toolkit for action, this guide will help you and your group develop solutions and action. This toolkit offers helpful insights into how you can make your voice heard by decision makers and have an impact on the way your community is shaped and built. The big idea is to create opportunities to bring youth ideas and concerns directly to the decision makers, policy leaders and key people in the community who have the capacity to act on these recommendations.

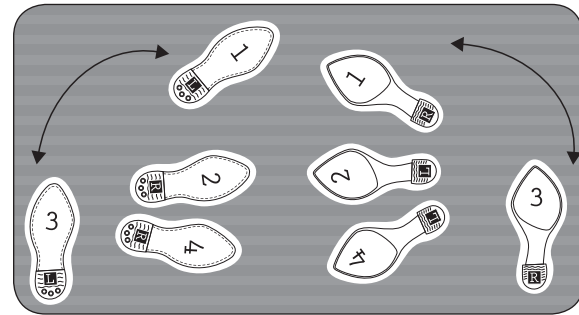
We hope you enjoy taking part in this initiative. We invite you all to become social activists with us and make child health a priority in your community.

* Holistic perspective of health is a view of health which emphasises the importance of the whole individual which includes their mental, physical, intellectual, spiritual and social well-being.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

The *Action Toolkit for Positive Change* will take you through four stages of activities leading to the creation of action plans for positive community change. In each section you will find clearly outlined goals and objectives with all the necessary information to engage youth in the specific health area being addressed. The activities proposed in each section will allow you to tackle complex issues with your group in a youth-friendly way. Follow the steps and choose examples, discussion topics and activities that will best suit your group's needs and interests. **The sections are:**

1. FRAMING RIGHTS AND HEALTH
2. IDENTIFYING YOUTH ISSUES
3. IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS
4. GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD
5. APPENDIX : MEETING LOGISTICS



FRAMING RIGHTS AND HEALTH. This section will help you and your group learn that health is not just about eating right, exercising and making regular trips to the doctor, but that it is also affected by a variety of social factors. Achieving positive health is also about exercising your rights. This section will help youth understand their rights as they are outlined in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and how these rights relate to health. **Activities include:** Child Rights and Responsibilities, Defining Health, Discussions Topics and Comic Book Storyline Creation.

IDENTIFYING YOUTH ISSUES. This section will help you and your group explore the health issues/problems affecting youth today. You will be encouraged to lead your group through activities that explore a holistic understanding of health, and include tips to help youth recognize the role that their community plays in their own well-being. **Activities include:** Problem and Issue Finding, Creating a Community Photo Album and Mapping Community Spaces and Services, Painting with the Medicine Wheel, Sketches and Improvisation Acting.

IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS. This section will encourage youth to think creatively about ways in which they would solve health issues/problems or concerns in their communities. **Activities include:** Discussion Topics on Solution Finding, Health Tree Colouring, Mapping Community Spaces and Services and a Family Friendly Community Checklist.

GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD. This is perhaps the most important section in the toolkit. This section will give you the tools to create an action plan to get youth voices heard at different community levels. **Activities include:** Creating community meetings with presentation and organization checklists, Crafting a Child Health Rights Declaration.

MEETING LOGISTICS. This appendix provides helpful hints and advice on how to hold successful meetings with youth. From tips on effective facilitation to strategies for setting an agenda, this section will provide you with all of the information you need to get your group up and running.

WHAT FACILITATORS MUST KNOW BEFORE THEY START

Dealing with disclosures and situations of possible abuse or neglect

Before you start, be aware that discussions about health often lead to sensitive and sometimes difficult issues. As the facilitator, you have the responsibility to ensure that participants feel safe and comfortable during the discussion. If for any reason you suspect a participant is in danger of **1. Hurting themselves, 2. Hurting someone else OR 3. Being hurt by someone else**, you have the responsibility to ensure the participants' safety by communicating with him/her and your local service providers. For youth under the age of 16 (18 in some areas), contact your local Children's Aid Society. For persons of the age of 16 or 18, community police or social services should be contacted. Be aware that the indicators people use to disclose stress or abuse are sometimes very subtle. Someone thinking about suicide might not blurt out "I'm suicidal!" but might suggest something like "I don't care if I leave this world" or "Nothing would change if I'd be gone".

In the event of a disclosure or suspicion of an abusive situation, check in with the participant with a one on one conversation. Be direct and ask open ended questions* to avoid leading them to a conclusion (you want their story and not your assumption). Build trust by offering alternatives and being frank and transparent about the steps you **MUST** take to ensure their safety. Ask him/her if they feel comfortable speaking with their parents or another authority figure and, if not, go directly to Children's Aid or child welfare/protection services. If you must contact social services because of a disclosure of abuse let them know that, you can *call social services with the participant present*, the *participant can call themselves with you by their side* or *you can call on your own*. Some people may feel cheated by a social or health system that hasn't worked for them in the past; be respectful of that possibility. In any case, whenever a child is involved, or suspected to be involved, in situations of abuse or neglect, taking action to guarantee safety is mandatory, and in some cases is enforceable by law. If you are unsure, simply call social service providers on your own and ask for guidance and specific steps forward.

Please note, it is not necessarily your job to fix the problem. Simply being the bridge between the child and the appropriate social services can make all the difference and is quite essential.

*Open ended questions require an explanation which cannot be answered by a simple yes or no. (e.g. A closed question such as, *Did you hit them back?* can be answered with yes or no and insinuates that an action of hitting was involved. Instead ask, *What was your reaction?* Or *What action did you take?* These questions require a developed answer and are action neutral.)



TIPS for Effective Facilitation of Youth Dialogue:

- Avoid jargon and complicated words.
- Keep it short, fun and include breaks.
- Ensure you are an active listener - in other words, don't just listen, show you understand with eye contact, nods and um-hums.
- Create a comfortable, safe space where participants feel they can openly express opinion.
- Ensure that you are inclusive of everyone's voice by giving everyone a chance to speak! Be careful, however, not to pressure participants into speaking when they may not want to.
- Sit with the group at their level so you don't look like an authority figure. Do not give the impression that you are there to preach & teach.
- Organise your group in a circle and, if you have a second facilitator, sit across from them, rather than beside. Make sure that you can see the entire group and communicate with the other facilitator through body language and eye contact.
- Foster group respect by asking youth to come up with ways to build a safe environment.



TIPS from a pro: **Mélanie, Ottawa Planned Parenthood**

Your choice of language can make a huge difference in how youth engage with you. Setting “ground rules” for acceptable behaviour can make you seem overbearing and authoritarian. Instead, empower the group by asking what they need to create a “safe space to talk openly”. Ask participants: “What can we do to help make this a space where everyone can feel comfortable sharing their thoughts?” Make sure that your body language reflects this openness: smile and make encouraging eye contact, especially with the quieter members of your group. Don’t forget, however, that this ‘safe space’ includes you as well: if there is something you feel would be important to add to the discussion that isn’t being brought up by the group, bring it up!

Dealing with tricky situations – What to do if you get...

- **Questions you don’t know how to answer:**
Be honest. Bring the question back to the group and ask participants if they have any thoughts. If the question is still unanswered, tell the participant you will find the answer and speak to them about it later.
- **Disrespectful or rude comments from a participant:**
Stay calm and remind participants of the safe space that was created. Bring it back to the group and encourage dialogue on the comment. Ask if everyone agrees with the comment.
- **Loud excited groups that don’t pay attention or listen:**
Lower the tension or excitement level by dimming the lights or turning off the music in the room.
This group might not be ready to participate in activities in a structured way. Instead, initiate a non-formal conversation with the group about the issues affecting them; take the time to get to know participants individually.
- **Quiet, non-talkative and shy groups.**
Ask clear and precise questions that are not abstract.
Ease the tension with a joke or funny anecdote.
Ask the group a question and give each participant a turn to answer.



TIP: To stay on track with your group, try creating a “parking lot” – a sheet of paper where you write the “off-topic” conversations that you want to put on hold for the duration of the meeting. Just make sure to come back to them at the end.

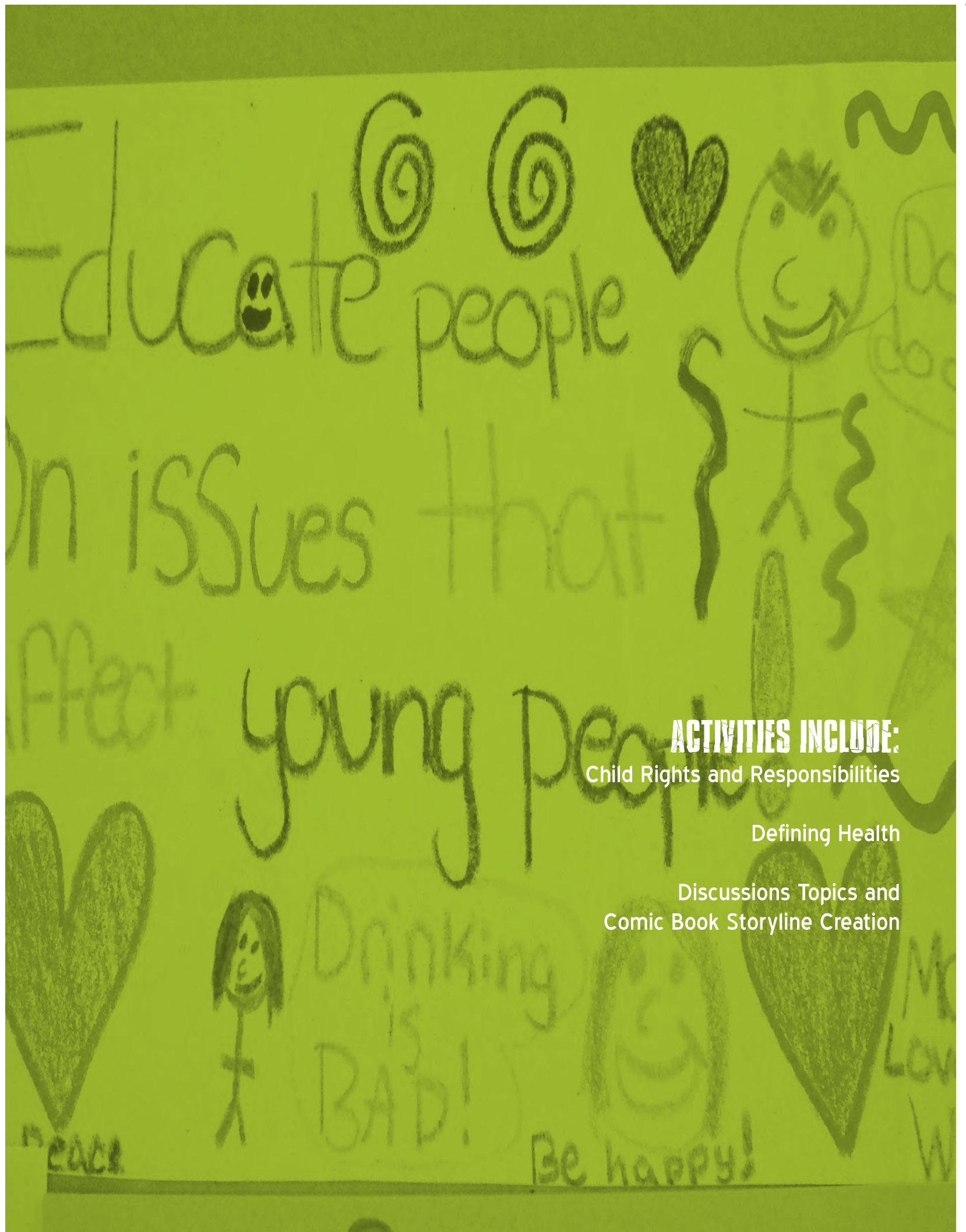
Eat
Healthy!



SECTION ONE

Framing Rights and Health

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ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Child Rights and Responsibilities

Defining Health

Discussions Topics and
Comic Book Storyline Creation

SECTION ONE

Framing Rights and Health

SECTION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Introduce participants to the concept of child rights and how it affects them
- Expand understanding and knowledge about health to a holistic perspective
- Introduce participants to the social determinants of health

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

- An introduction to child rights and other UN-speak
- Information on the social determinants of health
- Various activities to engage your group in understanding rights and health from a holistic perspective

A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO CHILD HEALTH - UNDERSTANDING CHILD RIGHTS

One of the goals of this toolkit is to encourage youth to think about their health from a 'holistic' perspective. What does this mean? 'Holistic' health is more than just eating healthy foods and being physically active; it is also about being mentally healthy and having positive emotions - feeling good in your body and in your mind. When we think about health, we must realise that it is essentially a human rights issue. Every individual on the planet has a right to lead a healthy, safe life that is free from discrimination and abuse. In 2000, members of the United Nations came together and decided that children (people under the age of 18), needed their own special rights; they drafted a document called the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which lists the rights of children. Child rights may not often be directly addressed when speaking with young people, but, in many ways, they form the basis of youth empowerment. By helping young people understand their rights, they become more dynamic as engaged citizens with a desire to change the world around them.

Understanding rights makes young people more prepared to understand their health. This section provides you with the information necessary to speak with your group about child rights. We want participants to recognize and convey that they have special rights and that those rights are there to protect them and provide them with a minimum of quality of life. In essence, this toolkit and all of the activities in it allow youth to embark on a process that is based on honouring their rights. Take some time to talk to your group about their rights and how they affect their health from a holistic perspective.

GETTING THROUGH THE UN SPEAK - TALKING ABOUT CHILD RIGHTS WITH YOUR GROUP

It's difficult, sometimes, to get your head around important and complicated subjects such as child rights.

Check below for some quick and useful information that will help you speak with your group about health from a rights-based perspective. These are some key questions and answers that should help you get started; feel free to explain them in your own words.

What is the United Nations?

The United Nations is like a big club, but the members are countries from around the world who work together for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people. There are currently 192 member countries which form the United Nations. Their headquarters is in New York City where they hold a meeting called the General Assembly, which is sort of like a world Parliament. Each country, large or small, rich or poor, has a single vote about the topics that are debated – topics like world hunger, child rights, women's rights, health, etc. The United Nations has its own flag, its own post office and its own postage stamps. Six official languages are used at the United Nations - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The head of the United Nations is called the Secretary-General.

What is UNICEF?

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the body of the United Nations that deals with all programs related to children and child rights across the world. UNICEF's mission is to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs (in education, health, nutrition, shelter, etc.), and to expand the opportunities they have to reach their full potential. In doing this, UNICEF is guided by the provisions and principles of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

What is the WHO?

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the UN body that deals with global health issues. The WHO is part of the UN. Their head office is in Geneva, Switzerland.

What is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child? Why is it important?

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed-upon set of standards and obligations that countries should follow to ensure the overall well-being of children. These basic standards, also called human rights, should be respected by all governments. These rights are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability, and therefore apply to every child everywhere. The Convention on the Rights of the Child treats children as individual and equal members of a family and a community – as human beings and as subjects of their own rights. The Convention is divided into a series of statements, called “Articles.” Each article outlines a different right. For example, Article 12 states that children have the right to give their opinion and for adults to take it seriously.

How do I talk with youth about the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

- Talking to young people about their rights is not always an easy task, but we feel it is important. When young people understand that they have special rights, and understand the full scope of those rights, they will be more prepared to be active and engaged citizens, ready to make a difference in their community.
- Check out http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pdfs/NCD-poster_e.pdf for a copy of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* in child friendly language or check out the articles outlined below for an overview.
- The activity below, “I have the right to...”, is a comprehensive way of engaging your group in a dialogue about their rights.

Key Articles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a BIG document. Here are some of the key articles directly related to child and youth participation and health. Consider introducing participants in your group to the following articles.

Article 12 (Respect the views of the child): When making decisions which affect children, children have the rights to be consulted and have their opinions heard.

Article 13 (Freedom of expression): Children have the right to express their views in creative ways, as long as it does not harm or offend others.

Article 14 (Freedom of thought, conscience and religion): Children have the right to choose their own religion and beliefs. Parents should help kids decide what is right and wrong.

Article 15 (Freedom of association): Children have the right to meet together and to join groups and organizations.

Article 17 (Access to information, mass media): Children have the right to get information that is important to their health and well-being

Article 20 (Children deprived of family environment): Children who cannot be looked after by their family have a right to special care and must be looked after with respect to their religion, culture and language.

Article 5 (Parental guidance): A child’s family has the responsibility to help children exercise their rights and to ensure that their rights are protected.

Article 24 (Health and health services): Children have the right to good quality health care, to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment and information to help them stay healthy.

Article 27 (Adequate standard of living): Children have the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs. Governments should help when families cannot afford to provide this on their own.

Article 30 (Children of minorities/indigenous groups): Children who are part of a minority or indigenous group have the right to learn about and practice their own culture, language and religion.

Article 31 (Leisure, play and culture): Children have the right to relax, play and join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities.

Article 42 (Knowledge of rights): The convention should be known to adults and children. Adults should help children learn about their rights.

Try the following activity to begin speaking with your group about the concept of child rights:

TALKING ABOUT HEALTH

When we think about health, it's easy for us to assume that it just means eating the right food and being active. But does health mean more than that? What about our mind, our emotions and our general sense of well-being or even the quality of our friendships? Don't they have an influence on our health too? And, more importantly, who and what has an effect on our health? This toolkit encourages you to get your group thinking about health in a holistic perspective – understanding that health is about feeling good in your body and mind and is influenced by a myriad of both external and internal factors. We call these factors the 'social determinants of health.'

UNA-Canada's *Healthy Children, Healthy Communities* project adopts the 'population health' and the 'social determinants of health' models for defining health. The 'population health' approach expands traditional ideas about health by focusing on communities and populations instead of only individuals. In treating the community holistically, the population health model considers physical, mental and social well-being instead of just an absence or presence of disease. When we focus on communities, we focus on the social factors in our lives that influence our health in positive or negative ways.

What are the social determinants of health and how do they affect us? The social determinants of health are a series of external conditions (such as economic and social factors) outside of a person's physical wellness that can determine the health of an individual and possibly their community. Social determinants are the elements of our environment that have an impact on our lives and play a large part in influencing our health.

The HC² project has used the list of social determinants provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). PHAC lists the following determinants of health:

- **Income and social status**
- **Social support networks**
- **Education and literacy**
- **Employment/working conditions**
- **Social environments**
- **Physical environments**
- **Personal health practices and coping skills**
- **Healthy child development**
- **Biology and Genetic endowment**
- **Health services**
- **Gender**
- **Culture**

Ask youth to consider:

WHAT KEY SOCIAL DETERMINANTS ARE RELEVANT IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND TO YOUR HEALTH?

The activities that follow will give you some ways that you can discuss this question and expand your group's understanding about health. Try some of the following activities then move on to Section 2 to further explore what your group thinks about the health issues affecting youth in your community.

“I HAVE THE RIGHT TO...”

ACTIVITY TYPE: Discussion

AGE GROUP: All youth

TIME REQUIRED: 15-20 minutes for discussion

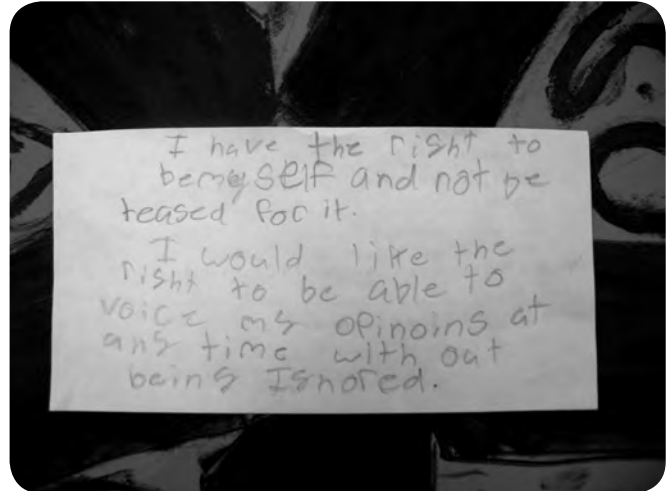
OBJECTIVE: To expand young people’s understanding about their rights and ask them to reflect on the idea of child rights.

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart with paper
- Markers

METHOD: Ask youth to sit around the table and tell them they are about to participate in an exercise regarding their rights. Put the following statement on a piece of flip chart paper: “I have the right to....” Ask youth to shout out answers to complete the sentence. Write down ALL answers. The point of this session is to brainstorm ideas on the things young people feel that they have a right to. Once youth have had a chance to express themselves, ask them to reflect on their list further. Here are some examples of questions that can help you guide the discussion:

- Are these all rights or are some privileges?
- Which are basic human rights and which are just things that they wish they had?
- Do young people in other parts of the world have these rights?
- Which rights are most important to you?



HELPFUL TIP:

Find a copy of the UN Convention on the *Rights of the Child* in child friendly language online directly at www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pdfs/NCD-poster_e.pdf or on our web site www.unac.org/hchc. Use it to further the discussion. How do the rights which the participants identified differ from those in the convention?



HELPFUL TIP:

Be sure to have the group agree on what will be done with all of the answers written down. Are the answers to be saved for later group meetings? Should they be destroyed? Who will have access to the information? It's important to give your group a voice on this matter so that they can feel comfortable expressing their views.



DEFINING HEALTH

ACTIVITY TYPE: Creative Discussion

AGE GROUP: All ages

TIME REQUIRED: 15 min for brainstorming,
30 min for discussion

OBJECTIVE: To begin introducing participants to the concept of holistic health and to the social determinants of health.

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart paper
- Colourful markers

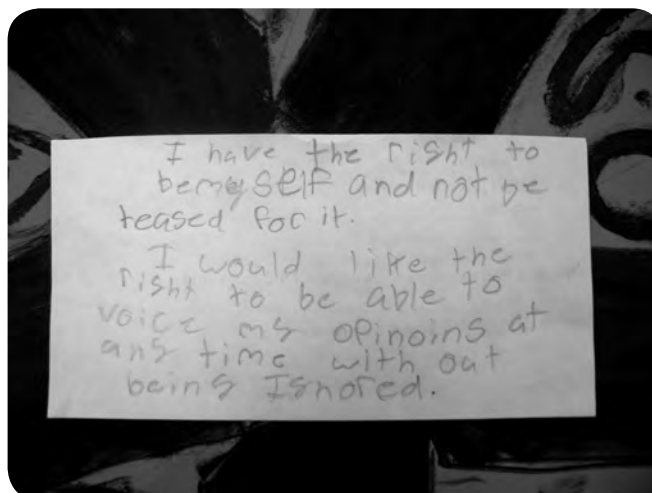
METHOD: Start a discussion with the group by asking them: "What is the first thing that pops into your mind when you hear the word health?" Make sure to let the group know that there are no right or wrong answers. Spend 5 to 10 minutes getting everyone's answers and writing them on a flip chart. Use open ended questions (questions that cannot be answered by a simple yes or no) to probe the group's thoughts about health and its different components. If participants are stimulated by the discussion continue with some of the suggested questions below. If not, check out the activity called "Painting Health - A Look at Health Through the Medicine Wheel" at the end of this section.

Our adopted health definition

Health is defined in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Constitution as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This means that physical health and mental health go hand in hand. Indigenous peoples have a similar understanding of health, and believe that well-being is about the harmony that exists between individuals, communities and the universe (their environment).

Suggestion questions to stimulate your discussion on "What is health?":

- Is health only about not being sick?
- When do you know you are at your healthiest?
- Is it about our minds and emotions as well as our bodies?
- Can our family and community be part of our health? How do they influence our health?
- Does going to school influence our health?
- What OTHER THINGS can influence our health?
- What is stress? What stresses you out? How do you deal or cope with stress? What are positive ways to cope with stress? What are less positive ways we cope with stress?
- Is health related to where we live?
- Is health related to money?



JASON'S STORY

ACTIVITY TYPE: Creative Discussion and Drawing

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15-60 min

OBJECTIVE: To understand how social factors can affect health, and to brainstorm ideas on how to create a safer community

MATERIALS:

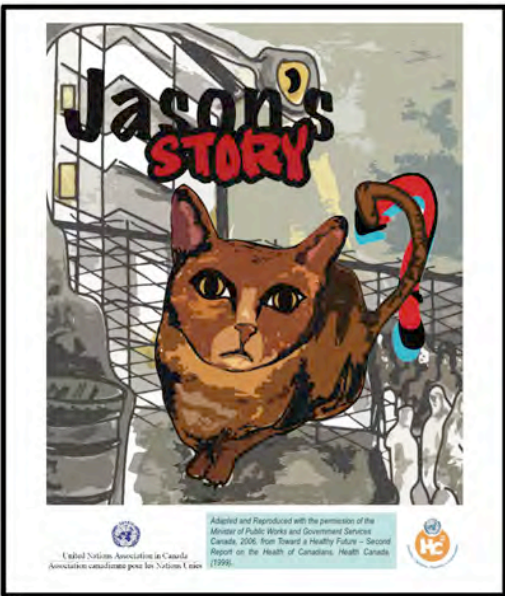
- Flip chart paper
- Colourful markers
- Jason's Story comic strip
- Comic strip template (below)

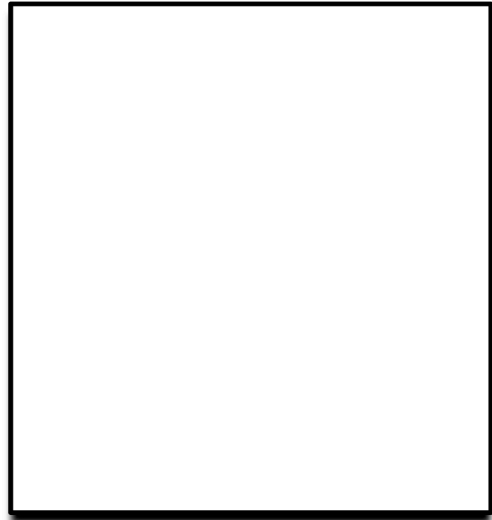
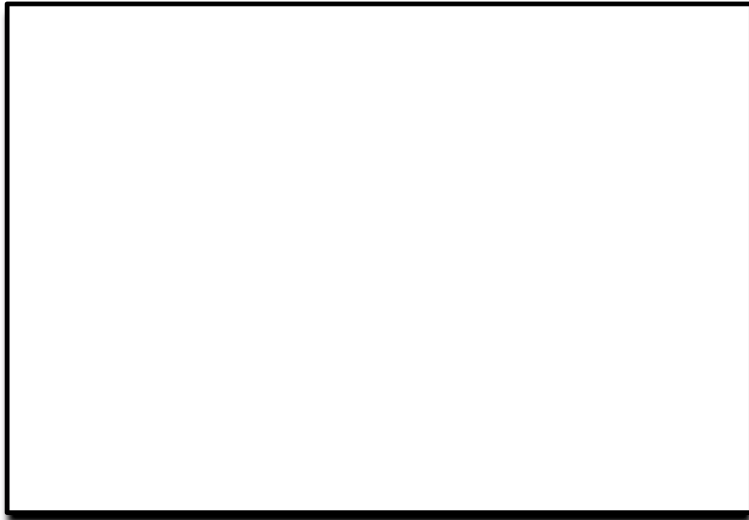
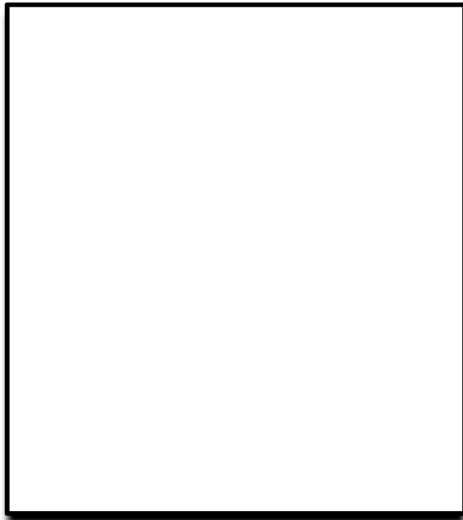


METHOD: This short comic strip shows how outside factors affect Jason's well-being. Many of these factors are out of his control and it seems as though nothing can be done to change them. However, now that Jason is hurt and has realised how these realities have affected him, what can he do? What can you do to help him? Refer to the comic with your group and consider the following points:

- 1) List the factors that Jason can and can not control. For example.
 - a. Jason can speak to others about his injury.
 - b. Jason can not move out of his neighbourhood on his own.
- 2) List factors that could help Jason stay safe in the future. For example,
 - a. Jason has a strong character and is a confident person
- 3) Brainstorm ideas in a group to help Jason move forward in creating a safer community.
 - a. What would he need?
 - b. Who could help him? Who could support and encourage him?
 - c. What would he want to change?
- 4) Using markers and the comic strip template found below, finish Jason's story.







UNDERSTANDING HEALTH

ACTIVITY TYPE: Creative Discussion and Brainstorming

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15-20 min

OBJECTIVE: To help participants understand how social factors affect their health

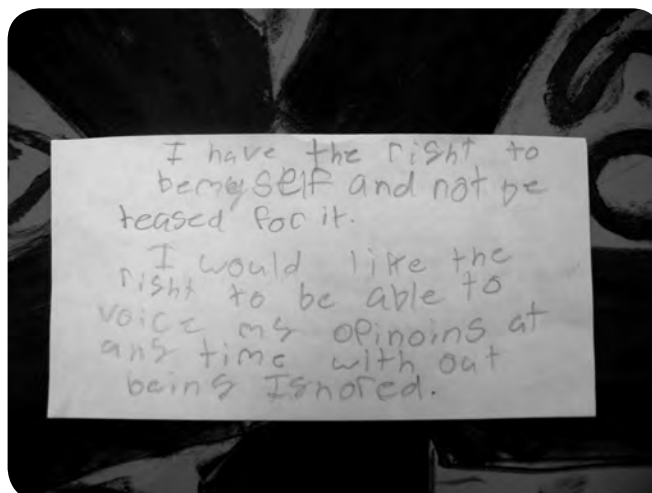
MATERIALS:

- Flip chart paper
- Colourful markers

METHOD: Split your group up into two. Ask one group to answer the following question: "How does my community affect my health?" Ask the other group, "How does my lifestyle and my choices affect my health?" Give participants 10-15 minutes to brainstorm some ideas, then ask a representative of each group to present their answers to everyone. Once the group has presented, stimulate discussion with some of the questions below.

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- What are the differences between the lists?
- Does your lifestyle affect your health in a different way than your community does?
- What are some of the most important ways that a community impacts health?
- What are some of the most important ways that our lifestyle and individual choices impact health?



PAINTING HEALTH - A LOOK AT HEALTH THROUGH THE MEDICINE WHEEL

ACTIVITY TYPE: Painting and Discussion

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 30 min for discussion,
60-90 min for painting

OBJECTIVE: To explore the concept of a holistic understanding of health through creative expression.

MATERIALS:

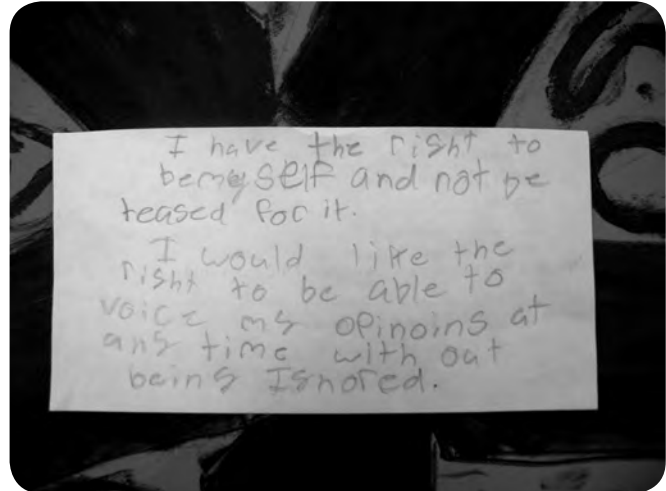
- 4 large painting canvases
- Colourful markers
- Acrylic or tempera paint, brushes and any other materials to 'create'

A BRIEF INTRO TO THE MEDICINE WHEEL, AS INTERPRETED BY HC'

Developed by Aboriginal peoples, the medicine wheel is a tool to explain a variety of concepts and philosophies. It is represented by a circle divided into four equal parts, each working together to create a balanced whole. Often its colors are Red, Yellow, White and Black - this, in part, invokes the image of four human ethnicities (red for Aboriginal people, yellow for Asian, white for Caucasian and black for African) sitting together around a table or fire, each having equally important histories, values and voices.

The wheel also defines health in 4 parts, each playing an equally important role in one's balanced health and lifestyle:

- Physical Health is related to our body's "mechanical" health. While physical illnesses such as diabetes or the flu can impact our physical health, exercise, a good diet and medicine helps the body stay in shape and healthy.
- Mental Health is related to our emotional health and well-being. Negative stress or mental illnesses such as depression or schizophrenia can impact our mental/emotional health. Positive coping mechanisms, a positive social network (family and friends), therapy and/or medication can help improve one's mental health.
- Intellectual Health is related to our curiosity and thirst for knowledge. Education and skills development impact our intellectual health by helping us better understand our world. Sexism, racism and stereotypes can often stem from ignorance and a poor understanding of our own intellectual health.
- Spiritual Health is related to our personal or collective set of values. Sometimes influenced by religion or family upbringing, our spiritual health is the part of us that makes us take a stand for the things we believe in. Standing up for women's rights or children's rights is important, as it can help our spiritual health by exercising our values and beliefs. The practical application of these beliefs by, for example, raising awareness with a charity fundraiser, also impacts our spiritual health.



FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS:

- What are the differences between the lists?
- Does your lifestyle affect your health in a different way than your community does?
- What are some of the most important ways that a community impacts health?
- What are some of the most important ways that our lifestyle and individual choices impact health?

METHOD: Introduce the medicine wheel and explain how the four parts of health interact with each other to create one healthy person. Separate your group into four and discuss how you could visually represent the model on four different canvases. Ask teams to discuss and create a communal painting.

Creative options:

- Have a recurring theme in each of the canvases to tie them all together.
- Represent each part with a single word or image.
- Chose issues that affect young peoples' health. For example.
 - **SEX:** Perceptions of gender differences, sexuality and sexual health
 - **DRUGS:** a discussion of illegal vs. legal drugs affecting young people
 - **ROCK:** How to stay strong, the influence of music and expression of one's self perception
 - **& ROLL:** Rolling with our issues. Ways we cope with stress and problems affecting our well-being.

YOUTH SUCCESS STORIES

United Way/Centraide Ottawa's Youth Action Panel "Makes it Happen"

The United Way/Centraide Ottawa Youth Action Panel is made up of dedicated volunteers aged 13 to 18. Their goal is to take ideas for creative projects and turn them into reality, empowering young people to believe in change, to take action and to make decisions about their community - in short, they support other youth in making a difference.

Each year on March 1st and November 1st, funding applications for youth-led community projects are submitted by local teenagers. These applications are reviewed by the Youth Action Panel, which submits its recommendations to the United Way/Centraide Community Services Cabinet. Grants of up to \$2,500 are awarded for individual projects; up to \$60,000 annually is invested by the Cabinet in helping teams of young people make their projects come to life.

How an idea can come to life

When a group of teens living with disabilities realized that children with special needs didn't have many recreational choices, they took matters into their own hands. The group organized the first-ever "Great Ottawa Overnight" - a one-night sleepover for teens with physical and developmental challenges. The night's activities included arts and crafts, wheelchair basketball, memory books and a group dinner. The event, which was supervised by recreation therapists from the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre, was funded by a Youth Action Grant from United Way/Centraide.

For 12-year-old Celine Walker, it was a fantastic night filled with new friends and experiences. "Even when you're in a wheelchair," she says, "it's important to get to try new things."

*Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre
2005 Youth Action Funding*

YOUTH ACTION GIVES YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE AND HELPS TO BUILD LEADERSHIP



~ Ban drugs and alcohol



SECTION TWO
IDENTIFYING YOUTH ISSUES

Just be happy

~ Ban drugs and alcohol



ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Problem and issue finding

Community photo album

Community mapping

Sketches and improvisational acting

Just be happy

SECTION TWO

IDENTIFYING YOUTH ISSUES

SECTION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Allow youth to openly speak about the health issues which concern them
- Encouraging youth to think about how their social realities impact their health

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

- Introduction
- Activities to help you explore with your group health issues affecting youth
 - Problem and issue finding
 - Community photo album
 - Community mapping
 - Sketches and improvisational acting

SECTION INTRODUCTION

The activities in Section 1 were designed to introduce to your group general ideas about health, child rights and social determination. In this section, you will find a range of activities and discussion topics that you can use to engage your group in prioritizing and speaking about the specific health issues that affect them most. Remember that the point of these activities is to think about the different social factors which can have an impact on health – from ALL levels of the community. Remind your group that, while brainstorming, ALL ideas are good, and there are no right or wrong answers.

Once you have taken some time to work through these activities and identify some of the health issues which are of most concern to participants in your group, move on to Section 3 for ideas on how you can brainstorm solutions to the health challenges and problems identified in this section. The information coming out of these discussions and activities can also be used to communicate youth realities to community decision makers and stakeholders; ideas on how to do this can be found in Section 4.



YOU GOT ISSUES

ACTIVITY TYPE: Discussion/Creative Writing and Drawing

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15 min for writing/brainstorming,
15-20 min for presentations

OBJECTIVE: To get youth thinking about their social environment and voicing their concerns about various issues which affect them.



MATERIALS:

- Index cards or paper with questions and room to write/draw (you can also just write these questions on flip chart paper)
- Colourful markers
- Flip chart paper

METHOD: Hand out to participants various question cards that ask them to express an opinion on certain topics in their lives and community. Ask them to respond to these questions either by writing out their answers or drawing pictures to express how they feel. Ask participants to express their ideas and visions to the rest of the group. Note that in this activity it is not what they draw or how they draw which is important; rather it is the description/explanation of the drawing. This work can be done individually or in groups, but make sure you take time to discuss the questions together.

NOTE: THIS ACTIVITY CONTINUES WITH “YOU GOT SOLUTIONS” IN SECTION 3

Starter Questions

- Life
- What is a healthy lifestyle? What actions do you take in order to stay healthy?
- What do you like about your life?
- Community
- What symbols would you use (in a flag or logo) to represent your community?
- Where are your favourite places in your community or school where you and your friends feel welcome and safe?
- Where are the places in your community where you feel unwelcome, or where you do not feel safe?
- School
- What in your school makes life good for you?
- What is bullying? How can it affect a person’s health? (physical and emotional)
- Environment
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you grade the environment in your community? Why?
- Do you feel safe while riding your bike or walking around your neighbourhood? How can people be encouraged to walk or bike more?
- Inclusiveness
- What does “cultural awareness” mean? How can it help or harm people?
- What does or should your community do to ensure that young people have somewhere to go, outside of school, where they feel they belong?



PRIORITIZING HEALTH ISSUES

ACTIVITY TYPE: Small Group Discussion

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 20 min for writing and discussion,
10 min for presentations

OBJECTIVE: To create a personalized and prioritized list of ideas, problems and issues that affect the health of youth in your community.



MATERIALS:

- Flip chart paper
- Colourful markers
- Construction paper
- Stickers

METHOD: Use the “Defining Health” activity from Section 1 to reintroduce to your group ideas of health. Or, start the activity by asking: What is the first thing that pops in your mind when you hear the word health? (this will ease the transition from talking about what health is to talking about what health is impacted by). Spend 5 minutes going around the group and getting some ideas of what health means to them. Then, separate participants in groups (of 4 to 6) and ask them: What problems and issues affect the health of people your age? Hand out a piece of construction paper to each group for them to write their answers on. When they are done, ask each group to list their answers out loud while a facilitator or note taker writes them on flip chart paper. Give 5 stickers to each participant and ask them to place a sticker next to the issue that they feel is the most important to them. They can put all 5 stickers on the same issue, or they can place their stickers on 5 different issues. Friends might try to influence each other’s opinions; make the vote secret, or simply remind participants that choices are personal.

The goal of this exercise is to create a prioritized list of problems and issues that affect young people. Ask open ended questions to see how participants understand the issues and at what level it impacts them, their community or their friends.



COMMUNITY PHOTO ALBUM

ACTIVITY TYPE: Photography, Collage and Discussion

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15 min to explain the activity/1 week to take pictures/60 min to distribute and present developed pictures and list issues raised in each picture.

OBJECTIVE: To capture the daily life of youth in their community, by examining health or social issues they may be facing and highlighting what they see as good/positive areas and areas in need of improvement.



MATERIALS:

- Community/School Investigator Sheet
- Disposable or digital camera
- Film development costs
- Poster board
- Colourful markers
- Tape
- Photo consent form (see Appendix)

METHOD:

Method: Provide a disposable or digital camera to each participant and ask them to take pictures of their community between now and the next time your group meets (or approximately 1 week). Ask them to take pictures of:

- things, places and people they love and dislike
- places they like to hang out
- places that they would love to see renovated to be friendlier to them and the community
- Places that startle or amaze them
- Places they find ugly and/or lovely
- Places they find healthy and others that are unhealthy

In the end, you will have an account of the best and worst places in the community. Have a discussion about these places, people or things. Order them or categorise them to brainstorm how things could be in an ideal community.

**If you wish to publish the pictures in a poster, website or home made magazine (a.k.a. 'zine'), ask youth to get written permission from the people in the pictures. **



COMMUNITY MAPPING FOR A PERFECT OR AT LEAST BETTER COMMUNITY

ACTIVITY TYPE: Exploring and Recording Community Hang-outs and Youth Services

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 30 min for drawing,
10 min each for presentations

OBJECTIVE:

Objective: Map out accessible social and recreational services for youth in your community. See what they feel might be missing in their lives/environment to make it a safer, more comfortable and beautiful place for them to grow up healthy. Brainstorm what a perfect child and youth friendly community would look like and what issues are prohibiting them from feeling that they live in such a community.

MATERIALS:

- Map of the community (multiple copies)
- Colourful markers
- Paper
- Optional: pictures from the community photo album (to provide a visual of your community)

METHOD: Find a map of your community (from your city services, Google Maps or Mapquest) and print it large enough to write notes and mark asterisks. Separate participants in groups (of 4 to 6) and ask them to mark down places they habitually visit, such their home, school, friends' homes, parks, stores, recreation sites, community centers or biking trails. Connect these sites with dotted lines (Green if they walk or bike, Blue if they bus, Red if they get a car ride). Add happy or sad faces next to the locations on the map to show if these are positive or negative places. Ask them to describe what they like and dislike about these areas. This will highlight some of the health/social issues your group is facing. Ask them to include dangerous road crossings or other unsafe areas.

THINGS TO CONSIDER: Are these places and services youth friendly? Safe? Judgement-free? Culturally safe? Are they easy to get to? Accessible to all?

Once done, ask each group to present their maps. Facilitators might want to create their own maps to add or discuss information on youth and community services that participants might not know exist. For example, free swim hour at the municipal pool, counselling services at a health center or health information at a public health nurse's office.

Seeking Solutions: Give a new map to each group and ask them to mark areas they would like to see improved. Ask them if a child and an adult would see this the same way. Give some coloring paper for them to draw the perfect community as a way to brainstorm what a perfect child and youth friendly community would look like.



COMMUNITY PHOTO ALBUM PHOTO PERMISSION FORM

I GIVE PERMISSION FOR MY PICTURE TO BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF A YOUTH EXPRESSION EXERCISE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS PICTURE MAY BE PUBLICLY DISPLAYED. I UNDERSTAND THAT I MAY NOT BE TOLD OF THE RESULTS OF THE EXERCISE.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

WITNESS: _____

DATE: _____



COMMUNITY PHOTO ALBUM PHOTO PERMISSION FORM

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NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

WITNESS: _____

DATE: _____



COMMUNITY PHOTO ALBUM INVESTIGATION SHEET

PICTURE	PLACE	NAMES OF PEOPLE IN THE PICTURE. PERMISSIONS TO USE THEIR PHOTO? YES/NO?	HOW DOES THIS PICTURE MAKE YOU FEEL?	WHAT IS THE MESSAGE IN THIS PICTURE?
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				



Solution To.....

HOMELESSNESS!

Everybody should have shelter so they won't get sick. Governments should make rents less so poor people can afford it.



SECTION THREE
IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

No more poverty

Solution To.....

HOMELESSNESS!

Everybody should have shelter so they won't get sick. Governments should make rents less so poor people can afford it.



ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

The Health Tree: How Can We Make Life Better?

You Got Solutions!

Family Friendly Community Checklist

Child Health Rights Declaration

No more poverty

SECTION THREE

IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

SECTION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Explore and identify ways in which issues identified by youth may be solved or addressed
- Work with your group to identify the people in your community who are important in helping turn solutions into reality

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

- Section introduction
- Steps for building effective solutions in your community
- Activities to help you explore solutions to health issues identified by your group:

The Health Tree: How Can We Make Life Better?

You Got Solutions!

Family Friendly Community Checklist

Child Health Rights Declaration

SECTION INTRODUCTION

Creativity and imagination are big parts of the 'solutions' game. Sometimes the simplest gesture or change in attitude can transform the world. Money, although very powerful and useful, is not always the answer to our problems. There are many ways to produce effective change at very low costs. Hard work, however, is often required. In this section, you will find many examples and activities to help implement at the community level solutions to some of the issues your group has previously identified.

Steps for Creating Effective Solutions for Your Community

Step 1: Get to know your issues of concern

Before starting on a solution finding activity, consider exploring in greater depth the issues and concerns your group has identified in the previous section. In order to build effective solutions, it may be important to better understand the issues that your group has identified as being of concern to them. Consider the following questions:

- How knowledgeable is your group about the issues they identified?
- Would more context or clarity help them develop better solutions?



TIP: If more information is needed, consider inviting a knowledgeable guest speaker (or speakers) from the community to address your group. Local youth leaders, police officers, social workers, dieticians, university or college professors or even municipal

councillors can lend perspective to the subject matter. And, by inviting them to meet your group, you are initiating the first step for bringing a youth voice to decision makers in your community (something we will explore further in Section 4). Don't be shy. Asking for help will only strengthen the work of your group. Here's how you can make it happen:

1. Think of who can help you
2. "Google" their name and organization to find their contacts
3. Phone, e-mail or send a formal letter inviting them to your next group meeting
4. Be clear on what you're asking them and give them a flexible time frame
5. A simple presentation is 10-15 minutes. Leave time for Q&A and then continue with a solutions activity or discussion

Step 2: Categorize your solutions

As you move through one or more of the activities proposed in this section, help your group focus on what they want to see changed. The strategies you use, and the people and organizations you deal with, will depend on the different areas of change you want to address. By knowing where change needs to happen, you will find it much easier to locate and contact the appropriate people for help.

Examples of behavioural change:

Personal behaviour: going on a healthy diet, starting a new sport or physical activity, keeping up with positive self talk or self esteem

Family behaviour: getting your voice heard by your siblings

Individual behaviour: stopping bullies, getting people to recycle more

Community behaviour: building more art and more inclusive sport programmes

Examples of changing how things work:

Changing school rules and policies: elected student representatives, longer recess, better food in the cafeteria

Changing municipal rules and policies: creating a youth advisory committee in city council, investing in art programmes, starting a theatre group in a park

Changing Provincial and Federal systems: having a child rights ombudsman, more services for First Nations children, fixing the foster care system

When your group comes up with their solutions, try grouping the solutions by subject matter or by areas of change. Use the list above as an example, or think of your own.

Step 3: Consider who can help you

There are many resources available to help you create positive change in a community setting. The first and most important resource at your disposal is PEOPLE! Governments, companies and communities are all made up of people who make decisions, not robots! Getting the right people on your side will make a huge difference in your group's efforts to create positive change. Section 4 will provide tips for planning community impact meetings which will get your voices heard by these important people. Before that can happen, however, you will need to ask your group to consider who the key players are in relation to the solutions they are seeking. For example, ask them: "Who in the community can share advice with you?" "Who can open doors and provide assistance?" "Who are the decision makers?"

Solutions from the HC² community roundtables

The UNA-Canada's Healthy Children, Healthy Communities project asked young people and health stakeholders around the country to identify solutions for health problems confronting 9-12 year olds in their communities. Check out the list below for some of their ideas; use them to further explore possible activities or plans for your community. They might come in handy if your group needs a little direction in creating solutions.

Solution Examples

- Increase funding to schools and after school programmes
- Make the school a community hub with social services and programmes for all
- Prioritize programmes for vulnerable youth
- Address the stigma around emotional well-being and mental health
- Promote positive community development
- Create mentorship programmes
- Expand activities for young people in arts, culture and non-competitive sports
- Create a "Youth Advisory Committee" or "Community Action Group"
- Celebrate youth and diversity/multiculturalism
- Create youth contests through the school, internet or community:
 - community services scavenger hunt
 - film, photo, essay writing competitions etc
- Get political; involve municipal government, school boards and educators

When you feel ready to bring your group together to discuss solutions to health issues in the community, the activities that follow provide helpful ways to structure your conversation. When you have finished this section, move on to Section 4 to learn about turning your group's solutions into realities for community change.

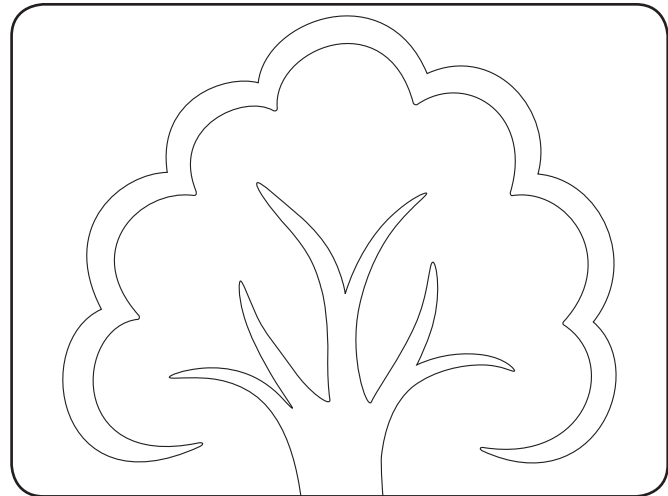
THE HEALTH TREE – HOW CAN WE MAKE LIFE BETTER?

ACTIVITY TYPE: Creative Writing and Drawing

AGE GROUP: Children and pre-teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15 min for writing/drawing;
15-20 min for presentations

OBJECTIVE: To find solutions for the issues that young people have identified as affecting them.



MATERIALS:

- Tree-branch diagram sheets for every participant
- Colourful markers
- Flip chart paper
- Stickers (8 for each participant)

METHOD:

Photocopy the health tree sheet attached to this exercise and hand one out to each participant. Ask them to work individually to answer the question How can we make life better for people your age? Instruct participants that they may focus on the issues they explored in the previous section or on an issue of their choice by drawing and/or writing their ideas around the tree. This activity also provides an opportunity for participants to develop more complicated statements, such as ideas for affordable housing. Once they have had about 15 minutes to come up with ideas on their own, ask each participant to list their top three answers out loud while a volunteer writes them on flip chart paper. This group discussion should take about 15-20 minutes

If you have time and are getting a good vibe from the group, prioritize ideas by giving 5 stickers to each participant and ask them to place a sticker next to the solution that they consider the most important. They can put all 5 stickers on the same solution, or they can place their stickers on 5 different solutions. Be sure that participants are not influenced by their friend's decisions; make the vote secret or simply explain to the group that choices are personal.



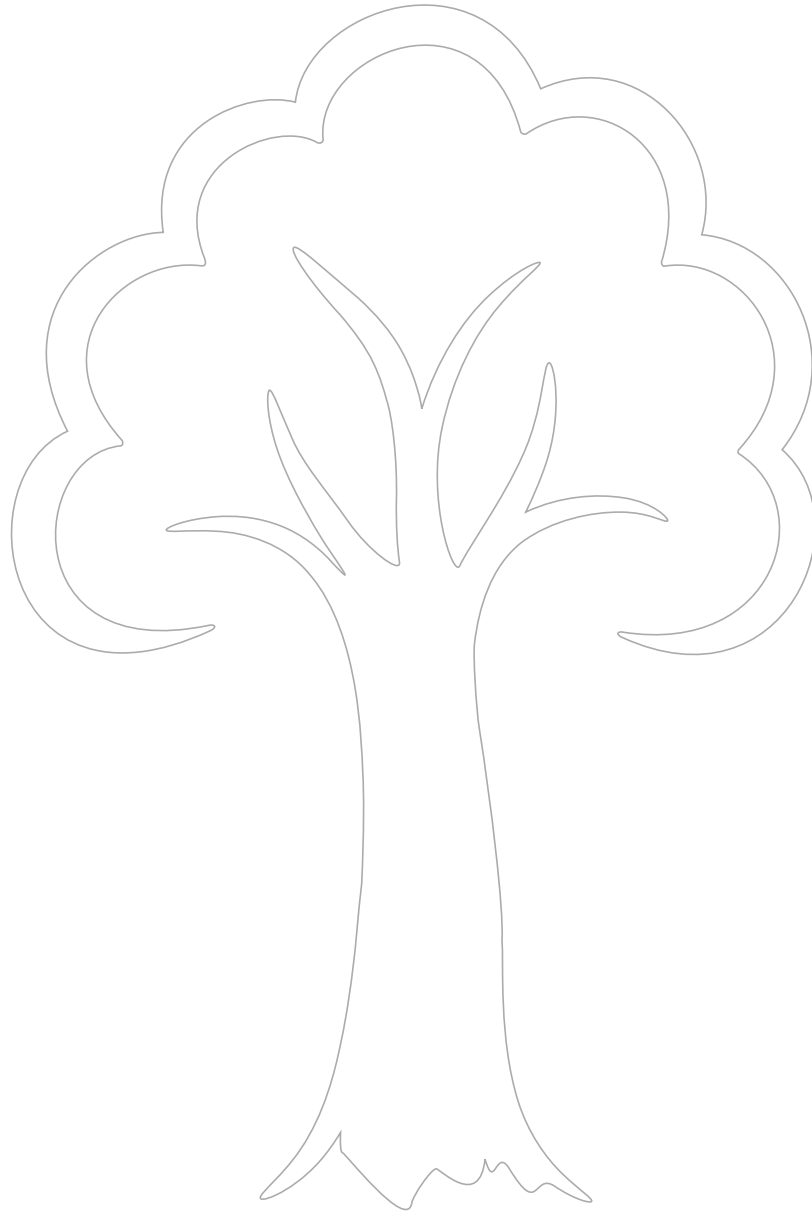
TIP: You can use the tree diagram as an analogy for health. Every piece of the tree can represent a different aspect, as follows:

- Roots: Things needed to support health (e.g. a supportive family, great friends)
- Trunk: Things needed to keep strong and healthy (e.g. proper nutrition)
- Branches or leaves: The ways in which they grow because of the support they receive (e.g. I am a happy person, I can support others)

This activity enforces the themes of citizenship, responsibility, and human and environmental sustainability



HOW CAN WE MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE YOUR AGE??



YOU GOT SOLUTIONS

* You can use this as a follow-up activity to "You Got Issues" (found in Section 2)

ACTIVITY TYPE: Discussion/Creative Writing and Drawing

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 15 min for writing/brainstorming,
15-20 min for presentations

OBJECTIVE: To find solutions for issues young people have previously identified or discussed



MATERIALS:

- Index cards with questions and room to write/draw
- Colourful markers
- Flip chart paper

METHOD:

Before your group meets, prepare index cards with questions from the example list below or from concerns and issues that have been previously brought up by your group. Some of the examples below follow-up on questions from the "You Got Issues" activity. Hand out index cards and ask participants, either by themselves or in small groups, to write or draw their ideas for addressing the issue. When completed, ask participants to present their ideas to the group and continue the discussion. Record the discussion on flip chart paper so you can refer back to it later when presenting these ideas to community decision makers (see Section 4). To spur discussion, ask what part of this issue affects them the most and what exactly they would like to see changed. Ask who should assume responsibility for fixing it and who could help. Ask what should be done and what they can do.

QUESTIONS FOR INDEX CARDS:

- Community
- What would an ideal neighbourhood look like to you?
- How could we improve your favourite hang-out?
- What three things **MUST** be included in a community for you to be happy and healthy?
- School
- How can your school deal with bullying?
- If you could change anything in your school to make you or your friends happier / healthier, what would you do?
- Environment
- What should the community do to improve accessibility and promote walking, biking and public transportation?
- If you could change anything in your community to increase its accessibility, what would you do? (accessibility for people with disabilities, accessibility for young people to travel safely)
- Imagine you are in charge of Environment Day. Can you create some activity ideas to involve young people in helping out and learning about the environment?
- Inclusiveness
- Does your community respect the diversity of young people?
- How would you promote the importance of multiculturalism, inclusiveness and respect?



THE FAMILY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY CHECKLIST

ACTIVITY TYPE: Complete a community checklist rating the aspects of your neighbourhood that can detract from, or contribute to, family well-being. This will assess both the services that already exist in your community and the service areas that need improvement.

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens, teens and adults

TIME REQUIRED: 20 min to 7 days,
depending on your group's knowledge of the community

OBJECTIVE: To work with your group to rate your community and its services

MATERIALS:

Download & print PDF at http://www.familyimpactseminars.org/fi_checklist_ffc.pdf

METHOD:

Download a copy of Alberta's Family Friendly Community Checklist at the link above. Rate how your community is doing in a variety of categories. Calculate the overall score and explore how things can be improved for the benefit of all.

CATEGORIES INCLUDE:

1. neighbourhoods
2. schools
3. playgrounds/parks/public spaces
4. security
5. health and wellness
6. family serving agencies
7. parenting
8. children
9. teenagers and young adults
10. seniors
11. workplaces
12. public involvement and support

****Available in English only****



CHILD HEALTH RIGHTS DECLARATION

ACTIVITY TYPE: Creative Writing and Drawing

AGE GROUP: Children and pre-teens

TIME REQUIRED: 45 - 60 Min.

OBJECTIVE: To develop a statement on your group's health concerns, needs or solutions. This statement will be used in Section 4 to present your ideas to health stakeholders and decision makers in the community.

MATERIALS:

- Construction paper
- Colourful markers
- Scissors
- Glue or scotch tape
- Stickers
- Poster board

METHOD:

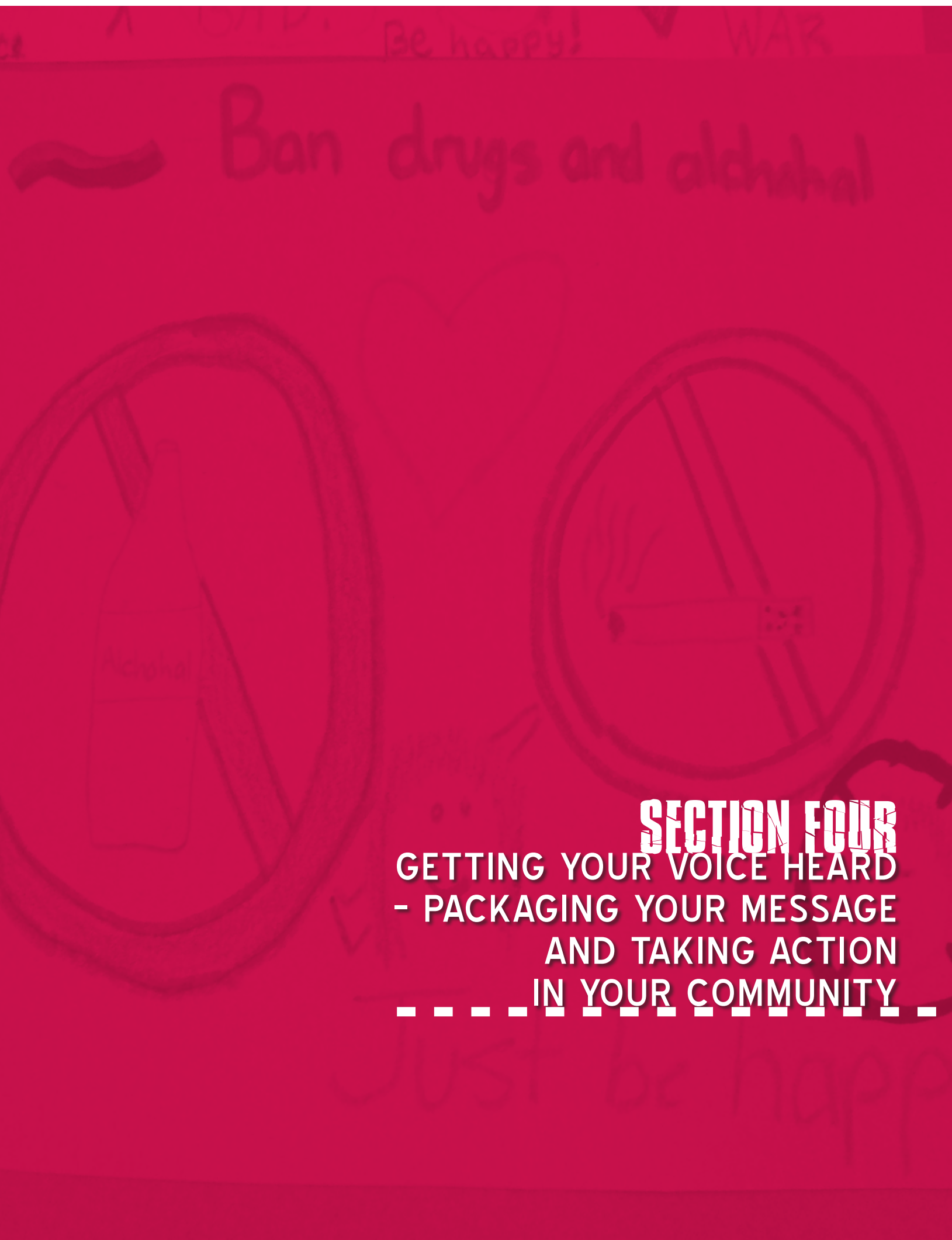
This activity is a good way of following-up on any of the earlier issue-finding or solution seeking activities. The goal of this activity is to produce a statement or declaration that could be presented to key stakeholders and decision makers in the community.

Ask participants in your group to pick an issue or solution that they would like to illustrate. Cut sheets of 8.5 x 11 construction paper in half and give one to each participant along with some colourful markers. Have participants use symbols, drawings, poems, stories and collage to create colourful representations of their individual statements. Afterwards, bring the pieces together and glue them onto a large poster board. Write a title on top such as - Child Health Rights Declaration of Antigonish, Nova Scotia!!



TIP: Limit your group to using colourful markers and construction paper. With lots of craft supplies like ribbons, glitter and buttons, participants loose track of expressing a clean and readable message and mostly create beautiful blobs of art.

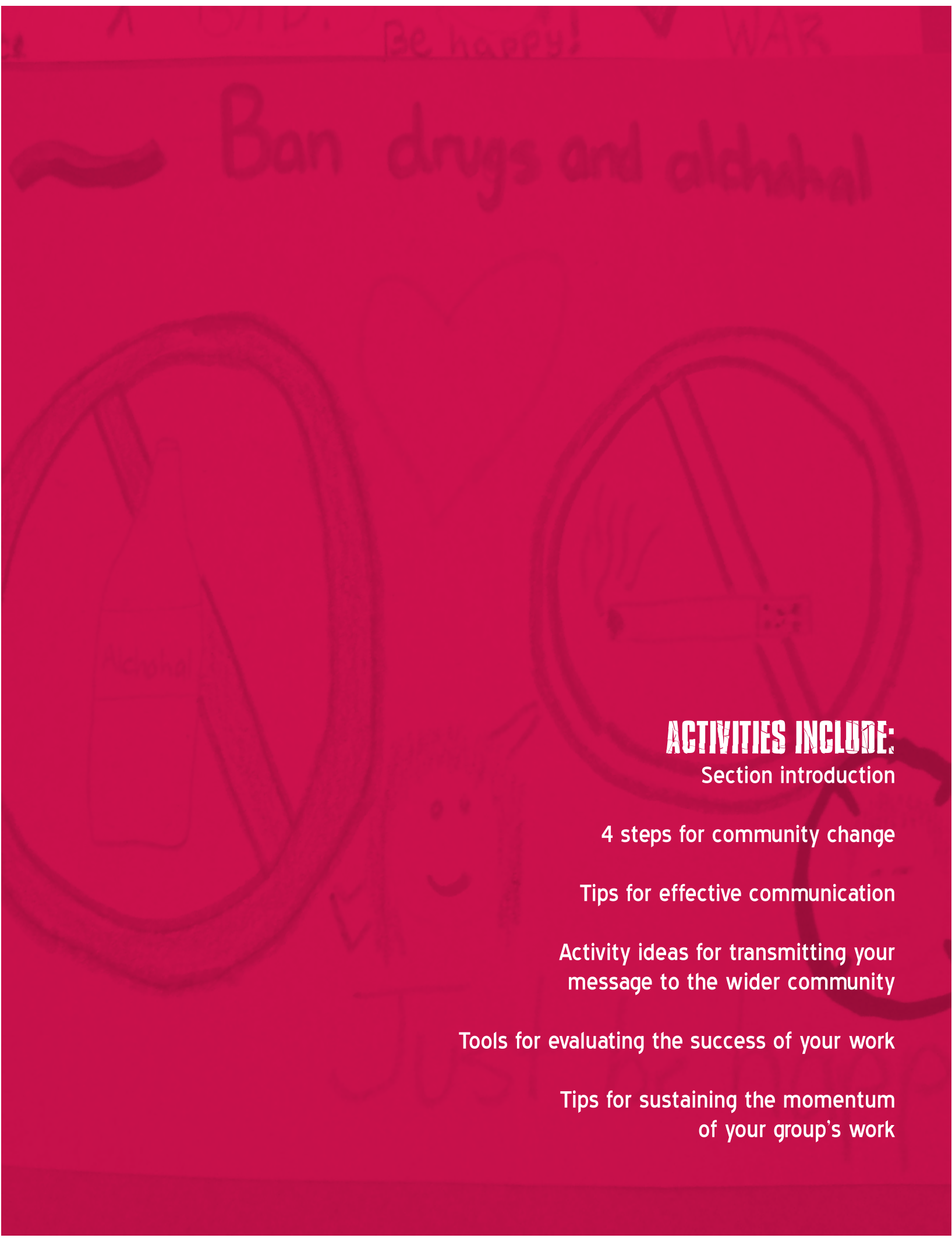




SECTION FOUR

GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD
- PACKAGING YOUR MESSAGE
AND TAKING ACTION
IN YOUR COMMUNITY





ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Section introduction

4 steps for community change

Tips for effective communication

Activity ideas for transmitting your message to the wider community

Tools for evaluating the success of your work

Tips for sustaining the momentum of your group's work

SECTION FOUR

GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD - PACKAGING YOUR MESSAGE AND TAKING ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

SECTION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Work with your group to organize your ideas and package your message about the changes youth want to see in their community.
- Learn how your group can connect to the larger community and work with them to produce change leading to better health for young people.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS SECTION:

- Section introduction
- 4 steps for community change
- Tips for effective communication
- Activity ideas for transmitting your message to the wider community
- Tools for evaluating the success of your work
- Tips for sustaining the momentum of your group's work

SECTION INTRODUCTION

By now, your group has likely been working for some time with the earlier sections of this toolkit, learning about health from a holistic perspective, learning about rights, examining and voicing concerns about health issues, and even coming up with some concrete solutions to improve young people's well-being. But where do you take it from here? How can you help to give young people an active voice in the community? How can they effectively transmit their message to the people in the community who need to know about it? No matter what ages the participants of your group are, young people have the right to voice their opinions and have their concerns taken seriously. This section provides you with information about how you can work with your group to take these messages to local health experts and decision makers, and begin to foster positive change at the community level.

BECOMING SOCIAL ACTIVISTS - KEY STEPS TOWARDS COMMUNITY CHANGE

If your group wants to make the community a better place for young people to live, you can't do it alone. True community change happens when different people come on board and collaborate to make things better. In other words, it's about cooperation. This section will help you package your message so you can effectively communicate with and engage the rest of your community.

Get the Ball Rolling: 4 Steps for Community Change

1. **Package your message:** Turn the issues and solutions you identified into clear and focussed ideas that

you can communicate to stakeholders in your community. You can write this out as a document or an electronic (ie. PowerPoint) or conventional presentation. Showcase your group, your main goals and your proposed ideas for generating change.

2. **Seek support and help for your ideas:** Strategize on who can help your group turn proposed solutions into reality. Creating community change happens when others come on board; think of the key people in the community who can help you and reach out to them.
3. **Get your voice heard:** Take your group's message to members of the community by planning a community impact meeting.
4. **Create a plan for the future:** Follow-up on your preliminary initiatives and decide what your group can do in the long term.

Creating positive and meaningful change in your community can seem like a big task, but with the proper organizing, your group can do anything! However, meaningful community change takes time. Be proud of small achievements, and don't try to do everything at once. Your group will have to meet regularly in order to follow up on your plans. If you're up for the task, read on!

Step 1: Package your message - How to turn ideas into concrete steps for change

By this point your group has worked very hard at learning about child rights and factors that affect health; you have identified areas of concern and even proposed solutions for some of these issues. Honour

that work by putting it together into a small packaged document or presentation that can communicate your findings to key stakeholders in the community. Keep it simple, short and sweet. Here are some options you can choose depending on how you will want to present this information.

Option 1: Write up a document. It's longer and more technical but anyone can read it and know exactly what your group has done and what they want to achieve.

Option 2: Create a PowerPoint presentation. It's faster, straight to the point, and you can directly incorporate digital pictures of all your activities from previous sections instead of transcribing them into a document.

Option 3: Write a speech to be presented at a meeting, on the radio, in a blog, in a web video or even on the school intercom or at a school assembly.

Whichever options you choose, here are the basic elements that need to be included:

- Briefly tell us about your group – what's your mandate?
- Tell us why you have been coming together
- Tell us about the activities you worked on and the discussions and conclusions that came out of them
- Tell us about how you propose to take action



TIP: Grouping your issues or solutions into themes will make it easier for your group to communicate its message to the community. You should also consider supporting your proposed solutions with statements about why you feel they are needed. For example: "We believe that better mental health services are needed in our community because young people feel they have no where to turn when they are having problems. We also know that 1 in 5 young people in Canada today suffer from mental illness."



TIP: If you took part in activities through which you developed art pieces, use the paintings or the drawings to talk about your message; this will provide an interesting visual counterpoint to your message.

An example of packaging your message:

Who we are:

Ophelia's Voice is a leadership development programme for girls aged 12 - 14 focused on skill-building, empowerment, and education around topics such as healthy sexuality, body image, and media awareness.

What is our mandate:

Our goal is to make girls confident in their leadership abilities, to promote awareness and education about the issues that affect them, and to ensure that they are engaged in their community and ready to take action!

Why we came together:

Over the past 2 months, we have been meeting regularly to take on the activities in the United Nations Association in Canada's HC² Toolkit for Action. We have been discussing how we can make life better for youth in our city by looking at community health issues of concern to us. For all of the issues we identified, we have proposed solutions which we would like to share.

What we discussed

The top 3 issues which we would like to bring to the attention of decision makers in the community are: self-image/self esteem, poverty/affordable housing, and substance abuse. We also talked about violence, mental health, and stress, and believe as well that these are big issues.

Our recommendations are to increase funding for youth programmes (specifically programmes that improve youth self esteem), to make affordable housing more accessible, and to educate youth about the actual realities and facts behind substance abuse.

How we will take action:

We will begin by presenting our message to key decision makers in our community and then writing a letter to our M.L.A. or M.P. about what we'd like to see changed!

In the example above the Edmonton, Alberta based group has packaged their message in a way which is short and to the point, and perfect for generating interest/awareness in their activities. However, we suggest that, when preparing your thoughts for a presentation or a community meeting, you take advantage of this open forum and go into more detail about the kind of changes you would like to see.

Step 2: Seek support and help for your ideas

Once your group has organized its ideas, it's time to share them with community members who are willing to listen and offer advice or help. These are the key players who will turn your proposed solutions into

reality. Here's what you can do to reach out to them:

- Make a list of people who you think can help you
- Do some research about the experts in your community
- Expand your list of people to include stakeholders from a variety of sectors

Your group may already have some ideas about which individuals in the community will be most useful; work together to brainstorm a list. Depending on the issues they have chosen to address, your group may not know exactly who the best people to contact are. You will have to do a little research by going online, at your local library, asking others, etc.

It's important to learn about "Who's Who in the Zoo." Get participants in your group to think about existing organizations in their community that might already support initiatives similar to theirs (or that address similar subjects). Find out names, phone numbers, email addresses and any other necessary contact information. For example, your group may decide that they want to involve the manager of the local grocery store – who he/she is, and where and how can they be reached? Doing as much research as possible will make the next steps a lot easier.

Sometimes, there are many more people that can help us with our cause than we think. When it comes to health, we often think of "the usual suspects" - doctors, community health workers, nurses, teachers and social workers. Meaningful change, however, comes only when we involve as many different levels of the community as possible and work together for the benefit of everyone. Refer to the list that your group brainstormed and then check out the list we propose below. Consider whether you have representatives from the organizations listed following this section. If you do, great! Make sure you have contact information for them. If you don't, do some more research. Are these individuals that could help you?

If you don't know where to start on this process, try the Community Networking Grid activity below. This activity will get participants in your group to begin thinking about the different people in the community that can help them with their goals.



TIP: Don't think that an organization won't be able to help just because they represent different issues than the ones you are advocating for. It is important to include as many different voices as possible and consulting with people from a variety of ages and backgrounds can only add depth to your

group's Action Plan and ideas. Sometimes there are multiple ways that we are connected to someone or something else; when you think about the kinds of people in your community that you want to approach, try to bring your message to people that:

- Sympathize with your goals and objectives
- Have the ability to create momentum for your message
- Can act as sponsors for your work
- Can act as advisors to your work
- Are decision makers in the community
- Are part of a larger network
- Have access to resources

A checklist of organizations or people in your community who can help you:

Be sure to approach as many people from the list below as possible. The more people you engage in your desire for change, the greater the chances are that you will find someone who can truly make a difference. Check out the Appendix for a contact tracking sheet that your group can use to organize their information on the following people and organizations:

- Mayor
- City/township/municipal councillors
- City staff representing youth portfolios
- Aboriginal representatives (off & on-reserves: for example, Friendship Centres, Métis groups, band office, education and youth workers)
- Local Members of Parliament (MP)
- Local MLA or MPP (local representatives in provincial government)
- A representative of the local/regional/provincial/territorial health authority
- School board trustees
- School administrator
- School teachers
- Coaches/sports leaders
- A Girl Guide/Scouting leader or rep
- Foster parents' association
- Court workers
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA/PAC) members
- Child advocates (aboriginal and non-aboriginal)
- Labour representatives (Local Labour council)
- Anti-poverty group representatives
- RCMP/police representatives working on youth initiatives
- Youth safe house workers
- At risk youth committee representatives
- Private sector organizations and companies
- Commerce and/or business associations
- Media representatives
- Shopping mall representatives
- Local non-profit organizations in your community who support various youth programmes (United Way, YMCA)

Step 3: Getting Your Voice Heard

Now that you have a message to communicate and a list of potential partners who might be able to help, you are ready to begin making positive changes in your community. An effective way of initiating this is by using the message and the list of contacts you created to organize a community impact meeting. A community impact meeting is a meeting which brings together your group and various local stakeholders and decision makers to discuss how the community can be improved. It provides an opportunity for your group to actively voice their concerns and to transmit their message.

Organizing a Community Impact Meeting

Why organize a community impact meeting?

- To bring your group's message about child and youth health concerns to the larger community
- To bring to the table community decision makers and stakeholders who will listen to your group's proposed solutions
- To provide a space in which youth and community members and decision makers can come together to share their ideas and visions for a healthier community
- To assign people with tasks and to come up with ways that youth and the rest of the community can work to bring the proposed solutions into reality.

Here's a checklist of "To Do's" to help you out:

- Reserve a meeting spot and time with a request to the appropriate person
- Prepare invitations and send them out (refer to the list you prepared in Step 2)
- Solicit donations of some food or snacks if your budget is really small
- If you want, invite media (by phone or e-mail) in order to expand the outreach of your message
- Prepare your presentation (decide if you want to use PowerPoint or if you just want to stand up and speak)
- Prepare a meeting agenda (see the Appendix for an example)
- Divide tasks so that you know who does what on the day of the meeting and who does what in preparation for the meeting
- Prepare any necessary material you want for the meeting (handouts about your group, copies of the activities you did)
- Prepare an evaluation form for your meeting so that you know if people enjoyed it or learned something. This form can give you helpful tips and advice for the future. (Check out Step 4: Planning for the Future and the Appendix for example forms and questions)
- After your meeting, follow up with the participants to thank them for coming to listen to your ideas and remind them of the things that they committed to



TIP: Effective Communication Strategies

So you want to get your message out there, but you don't know where to start? There are a number of ways you can get your information out. Think big but keep it simple.

COMMUNICATION	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
<p style="text-align: center;">PASSIVE</p> <p>E-mail Letters Radio and television ads Website forums Blogs</p>	<p>You can target a larger audience quickly and with relatively low costs.</p> <p>Allows you to transmit easy and point form information</p>	<p>Audience can choose to ignore and never reply</p> <p>Bulk mail-outs and ads can be impersonal.</p> <p>Message can be lost or misunderstood</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ACTIVE</p> <p>Telephone conversations Meetings Roundtables Focus groups Web or telephone conference calls Chats and live forums</p>	<p>More personal and can create an emotional bond that creates higher motivation for participation</p> <p>Can offer more information.</p> <p>Allows participants to brainstorm and build on local knowledge, and to ask questions and clarify ideas.</p>	<p>Costly in time and money</p> <p>Harder to organize</p> <p>People might not show up or be friendly to your cause.</p>

Invite community members to your community impact meeting by:

- Writing them a letter or email
- Posting an ad about your meeting on a community website or forum
- Calling people to invite them

Tips for effective communication at your meeting:

- Be clear about your message and what you are asking for
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Make sure you provide lots of time for people to ask questions
- Have a note taker or two at the meeting that can write down what people say. This will give you an important record of the proceedings which can be used later
- Decide who is going to facilitate the discussion
- Have a realistic agenda
- Leave time for breaks

Other Ideas for Getting Your Voice Heard

Organizing a community impact meeting takes time. Your group may not have the time to commit themselves to the work it takes to organize such a meeting. If this is the case, here are some other ways you can bring the voices of youth in your group to the wider community that will still make a big impact.

Go to an existing community meeting where you can present your subject matter

There may already be opportunities in your community for your group to bring their issues to the attention of decision makers and other community leaders. City or Municipal Council meetings may offer outside organizations a chance to share their ideas. Get your group to do some research about the kinds of opportunities that exist in your community, and then:

- Secure a presentation time for your group to present ideas.
- Having the Child Health Declaration you created on hand creates a visual and child-friendly way to present ideas.
- Send an invitation to supporters to join you at the meeting.
- Collect contact information for the individual who you are presenting to.
- Follow up to see if your ideas were adopted.

Write a letter about your group and your ideas to your MP, MLA, Mayor or other community decision maker.

Is there a really great writer in your group? Have them draft a letter which you can send to various decision makers in your community or in other parts of the country. At this point, you've already packaged your message (in Step 1), so translate that message to a letter. Divide tasks amongst your group. For example, have one person do research on your decision maker's contact information; have someone else prepare the envelopes and postage to mail the letter (though you can also send it electronically); assign one participant to write the letter and another to review it.

Get involved online. Post information about your group and your ideas for change on community websites or blogs where others can read about the visions you have for your community.

There are a ton of ways that you can communicate your group's message online. Do some research into organizations in your community who host websites where you might be able to post some information. Seek out blogs where you can start conversations with people about your group. A site like www.takingitglobal.org provides places where your group can create their own site and share information about their group with youth around the world!

Get media savvy. Write a press release and send it out to your local paper or to a national paper. Be vocal about your visions for community change. If you're not sure how, check out the UNA-Canada's Understanding and Engaging the Media for NGOs, which can be found by visiting www.unac.org/sb. In it, you'll find step-by-step tips for writing a press release and ideas about how to disseminate it. Check out the activity idea that follows for some more ideas about using the media to transmit your message

Step 4: Planning for the Future - Once the ball starts moving...

If you've successfully engaged in some of the activities proposed above, congratulations! You and your group have made the first steps towards community change and active youth engagement. If you want to make sure that your ideas are taken seriously and that you continue to work to improve the lives of children and youth in your community, we encourage you to keep working away at your ideas and to follow up on any activities you have tried. Consider getting your group involved in the following:

- Organizing or participating in more meetings
- Gathering support for your ideas by continuing to communicate with decision makers in your community
- Staying in contact with the people who have supported you:
- Write a newsletter and send it out to your contacts to report on your progress and activities
- Send thank you cards or letters to the individuals who have been supporting you and ask them for their continuing support and help
- Follow up with your supporters or the members who attended your meeting. Draft an evaluation questionnaire to see if members of your community are supporting your ideas in the work that they are doing. Check out the Appendix for examples of evaluation questions and a template for an evaluation questionnaire.

Remember, real community change takes time. Don't give up on your cause. Bringing youth voices to decision makers in the community is an incredibly important process that creates ripples which may not be felt until months or even years down the road. The important thing is to continue to foster energy and determination in your group. Remind them that their voice is important and that it is their right to make their concerns heard. Even if people don't pick up on their ideas, it doesn't mean they can't or shouldn't keep trying. Don't give up on your message. At the very least you will be forever changed!

COMMUNITY NETWORKING GRID

ACTIVITY TYPE: Brainstorming

AGE GROUP: All ages

TIME REQUIRED: 15-30 minutes for activity and discussion

OBJECTIVE: To think about the different ways that you are connected to the community. To establish multiple levels of connection in order to get a better sense about who can help you promote your message.



MATERIALS:

- Flip Chart Paper
- Colourful Markers

METHOD:

If your group is large, split participants up into groups of 5-7. Give each group a sheet of flip chart paper and some markers. Ask each participant to write their name in bubbles (draw a circle around your name) on the paper (or just write the word "youth" or your group's name in the middle). Ask participants to draw lines to the different groups/individuals that they are connected to. For example, youth are connected to schools and to parents. Then ask them to draw lines identifying the various levels of connection they see on the page. For example, youth are connected to schools and parents, but parents are also connected to schools. At the end, you'll have a visual image with a ton of circles and lines. It may be messy and hard to read, but it shows that we are connected to many things in the community and that these are all individuals and organizations that can help us in our cause.



TIP: Use this activity as an icebreaker if you decide to conduct a community impact meeting. It's a great activity to use if you have people around the table from various backgrounds as it allows people to see how they are connected to one another and how they can help one another.



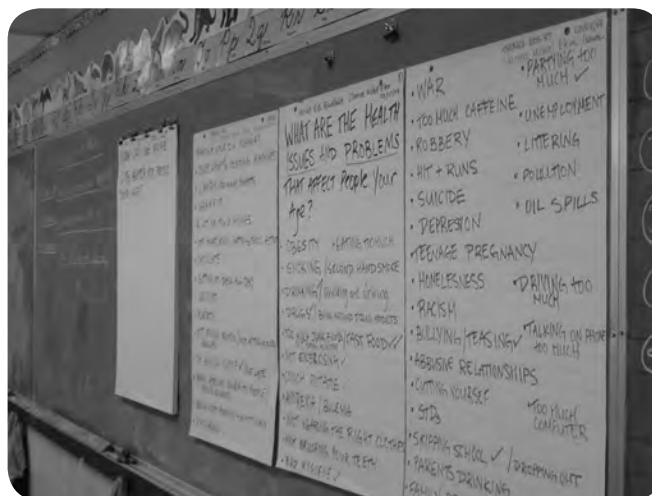
COMMUNITY NEWS

ACTIVITY TYPE: Media Messaging through Writing and Public Speaking

AGE GROUP: Pre-teens and teens

TIME REQUIRED: 1 – 5 hours for writing and contacting appropriate media venues

OBJECTIVE: To raise awareness about local health issues, and to give young people a sense of responsibility in their community.



Giving young people the opportunity to investigate and report on issues which are of concern to them will give them a sense of responsibility and maturity. Encourage young people to research the ideas and concerns raised by their issue-finding activities, and to present this research in a public forum. For instance, report on how child rights are being respected or neglected in your community. This could be done on the school intercom in the morning or afternoon, as a live broadcast, or by publishing an article in community papers, web blogs, forums or specialty websites such as Facebook, MySpace or deviantART.

Asking young people to write about their concerns and publish them in a public forum leads to knowledge building and awareness throughout the community which will ignite a sense of responsibility among young journalists and reporters. Make some noise loud enough to get people to pay attention to your message. But, be respectful; obnoxious attention-mongering will damage your group's credibility and the public's support for your message.

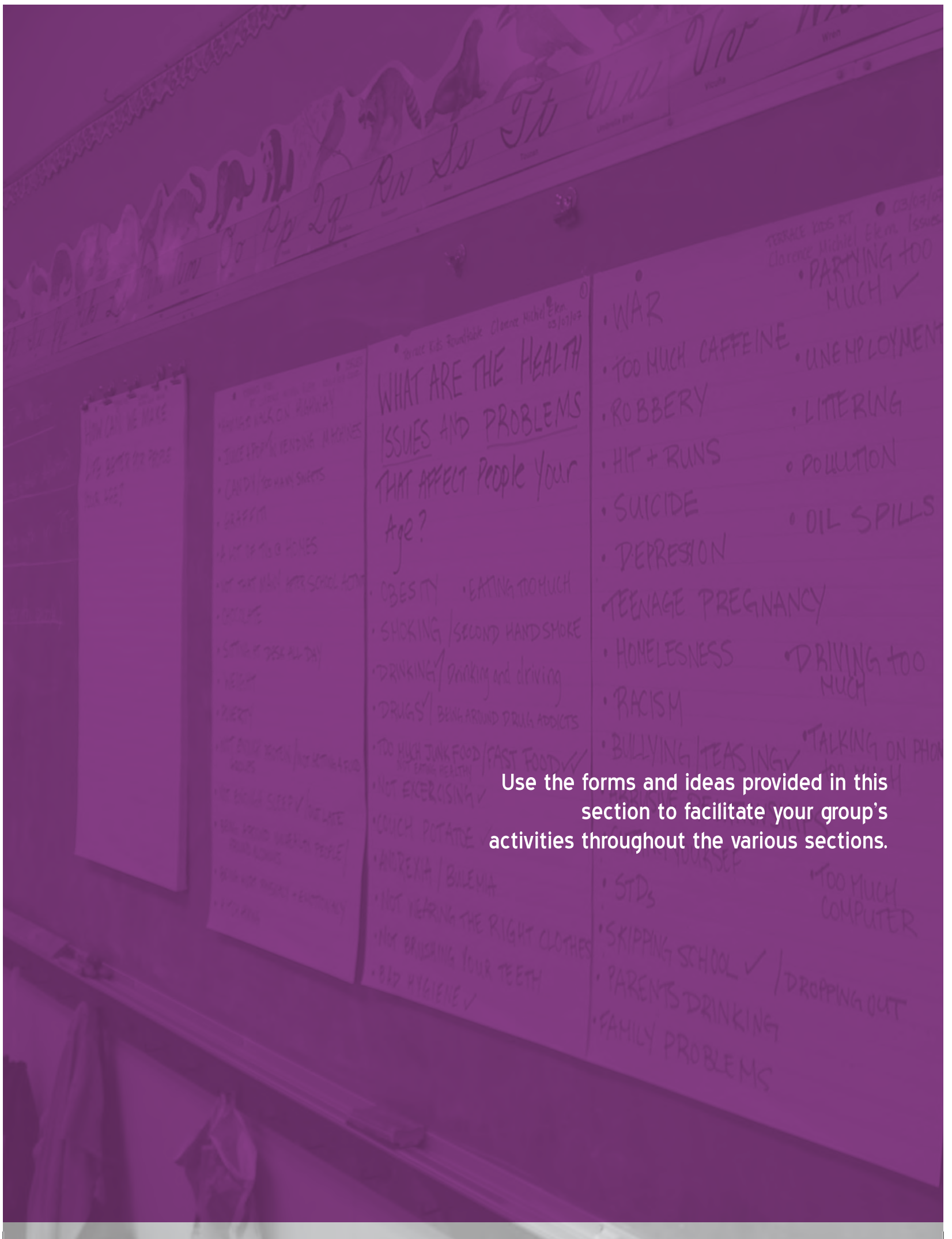
MATERIALS:

- Computer or paper
- Lots of ideas

METHOD:

1. Divide participants into different groups and give each group a list of topics (such as health, rights, or sports) that they can explore, report on, or photograph. This exploration may also include interviews and self reflections.
2. Have participants brainstorm and interview each other on potential topics to be covered in an upcoming paper or broadcast.
3. Choose places and people in the community to visit or interview which will add substance to your stories, such as community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs or local stores.
4. Write a full story about your topic and pitch it to the media.
Give your audience a forum to comment upon your story. This will initiate a dialogue which can help further your reasoning and insight into the issues.





HOW CAN WE MAKE
LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE
YOUR AGE?

- JUMPING / EXTENDING JUMPING
- CANDY / TOO MANY SWEETS
- GRAFFITI
- A LOT OF TOBACCO
- NOT GETTING INTO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
- DRUGS
- SITTING AT DESK ALL DAY
- WEIGHT
- QUIET
- NOT BEING LISTENED TO / NOT GETTING INTO
- NOT BEING SLEEPY / NOT LISTENING
- NOT BEING HELD IN PEOPLE'S
- BEING HELD IN PEOPLE'S
- BEING HELD IN PEOPLE'S
- BEING HELD IN PEOPLE'S

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH
ISSUES AND PROBLEMS
THAT AFFECT PEOPLE YOUR
AGE?

- OBESITY
- EATING TOO MUCH
- SMOKING / SECOND HAND SMOKE
- DRINKING / DRINKING AND DRIVING
- DRUGS / BEING AROUND DRUG ADDICTS
- TOO MUCH JUNK FOOD / FAST FOOD
- NOT EXERCISING
- COUCH POTATOE
- ANOREXIA / BULEMIA
- NOT WEARING THE RIGHT CLOTHES
- NOT BRUSHING YOUR TEETH
- BAD HYGIENE

• WAR

• TOO MUCH CAFFEINE

• ROBBERY

• HIT + RUNS

• SUICIDE

• DEPRESSION

• TEENAGE PREGNANCY

• HOMELESSNESS

• RACISM

• BULLYING / TEASING

• STDs

• SKIPPING SCHOOL

• PARENTS DRINKING

• FAMILY PROBLEMS

• UNEMPLOYMENT

• LITTERING

• POLLUTION

• OIL SPILLS

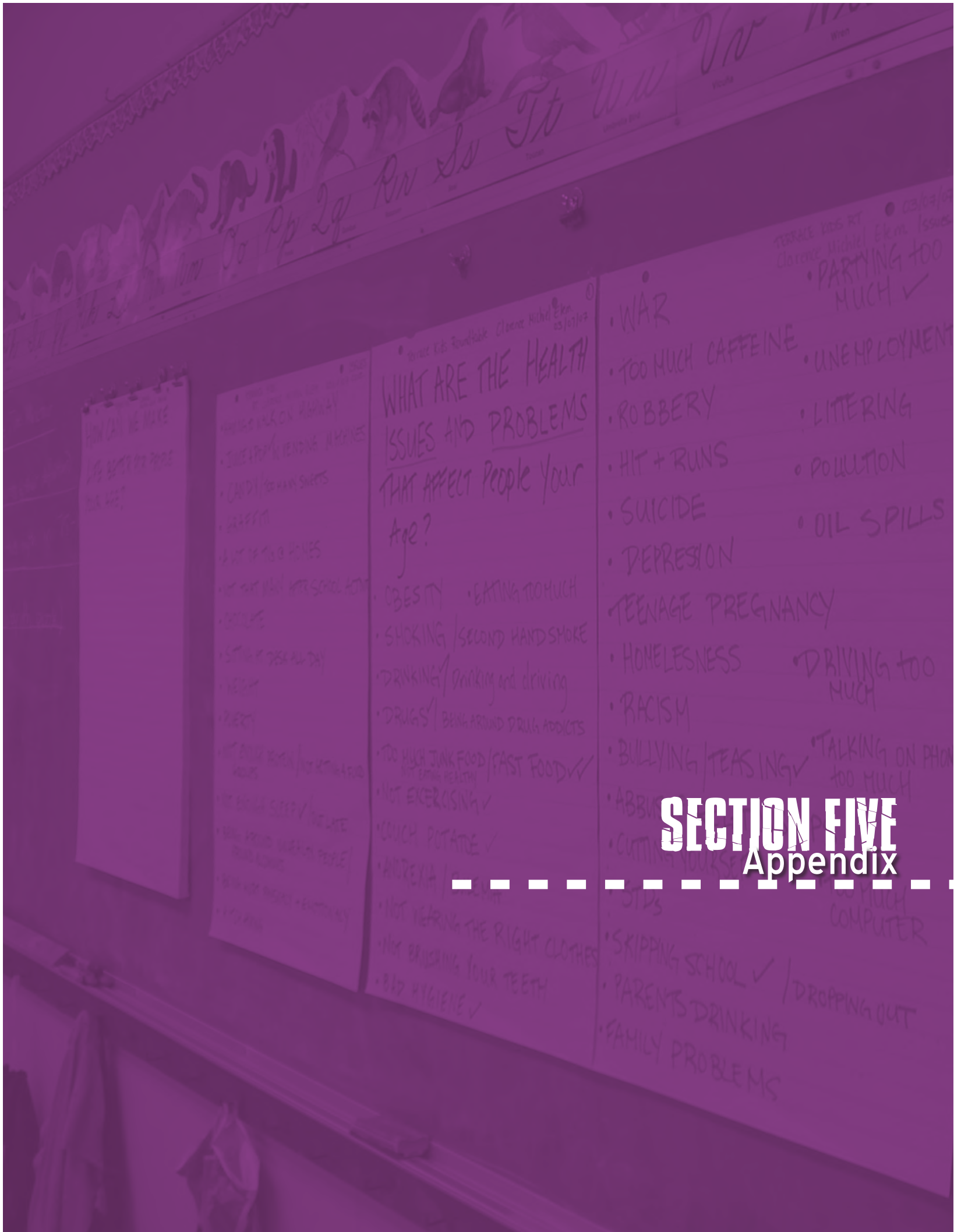
• DRIVING TOO MUCH

• TALKING ON PHONE TOO MUCH

• TOO MUCH COMPUTER

• DROPPING OUT

Use the forms and ideas provided in this section to facilitate your group's activities throughout the various sections.



HOW CAN WE MAKE
LIFE BETTER FOR PEOPLE
THAT ARE?

- JUMPING ON PLAYWAY
- CANDY/TOO MANY SWEETS
- GRAFFITI
- A LOT OF TOBACCO
- NOT GETTING INTO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
- DRUGS
- SITTING AT DESK ALL DAY
- WEIGHT
- QUIET
- NOT BEING LISTENED TO/NOT GETTING FEEDBACK
- NOT ENOUGH SLEEP/BEING LATE
- NOT BEING HELD UP TO PEOPLE/PROBLEMS
- BEING NOT HELD UP - EXERCISING
- ...

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH
ISSUES AND PROBLEMS
THAT AFFECT PEOPLE YOUR
AGE?

- OBESITY
- EATING TOO MUCH
- SHOKING / SECOND HAND SMOKE
- DRINKING / DRINKING AND DRIVING
- DRUGS / BEING AROUND DRUG ADDICTS
- TOO MUCH JUNK FOOD / FAST FOOD ✓
- NOT EXERCISING ✓
- COUCH POTATOE ✓
- ANOREXIA / ...
- NOT WEARING THE RIGHT CLOTHES
- NOT BRUSHING YOUR TEETH
- BAD HYGIENE ✓

- WAR
- TOO MUCH CAFFEINE
- ROBBERY
- HIT + RUNS
- SUICIDE
- DEPRESSION
- TEENAGE PREGNANCY
- HOMELESSNESS
- RACISM
- BULLYING / TEASING ✓
- ABUSE
- CUTTING YOURSELF
- STDs
- SKIPPING SCHOOL ✓
- PARENTS DRINKING
- FAMILY PROBLEMS
- UNEMPLOYMENT
- LITTERING
- POLLUTION
- OIL SPILLS
- DRIVING TOO MUCH
- TALKING ON PHONE TOO MUCH
- TOO MUCH COMPUTER
- PARTYING TOO MUCH ✓

SECTION FIVE
Appendix

SECTION FIVE

Appendix

Use the forms and ideas provided in this section to facilitate your group's activities throughout the various sections.

Setting a Meeting Agenda:

By now, your group has likely been working for some time with the earlier sections of this toolkit, learning about health from a holistic perspective, learning about rights, examining and voicing concerns about health issues, and even coming up with some concrete solutions to improve young people's well-being. But where do you take it from here? How can you help to give young people an active voice in the community? How can they effectively transmit their message to the people in the community who need to know about it? No matter what ages the participants of your group are, young people have the right to voice their opinions and have their concerns taken seriously. This section provides you with information about how you can work with your group to take these messages to local health experts and decision makers, and begin to foster positive change at the community level.

WHAT: YOUTH HEALTH MEETING AGENDA

WHEN: MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2007

7 P.M. - 9 P.M.

WHERE: YELLOWKNIFE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE, ROOM 5

MEETING OBJECTIVE (WHY): To provide a space for youth to voice their concerns about things that affect their health and well-being within the community.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS:

- What are the health issues that are affecting young people today?
- What are the solutions to the health problems experienced by youth?

MEETING AGENDA:

7:00-7:30 p.m. Introduction and Icebreaker Activities

7:30 -8:00 p.m. Activity #1

8:00 - 8:15 p.m. BREAK and snacks

8:15-8:45 p.m. Activity #2

8:45-9:00 p.m. Conclusions and Wrap Up



TIP: Make sure that your objectives are clearly outlined and that you leave enough time for the icebreakers, activities and wrap-up. If your group is going to meet more than once to talk about a specific issue, it is always a good idea to end with a small discussion about future activities/plans for your next meeting.

Checklist: Things to do when planning a meeting:

- ✓ Establish the objective and focus of the meeting.
- ✓ Draft a meeting agenda.
- ✓ Secure a meeting location.
- ✓ Brainstorm invitee list and invite participants.
- ✓ If working with youth under 18, send out permission forms to their parents/guardians. If you think forms could be a barrier for the participation of some, get verbal consent from parents/guardians or work within the policy of an organization.
- ✓ Invite a guest speaker. Having an expert representing a topic or organization make a small presentation will get things going and puts issues in context.
- ✓ Get food and drinks.
- ✓ Acquire all necessary equipment and materials, audio-visuals, markers, flip chart paper, stickers, scotch tape, camera, kitchenware etc.
- ✓ Secure 1 or 2 note-takers.
- ✓ Invite the media and publicize your meeting.
- ✓ Prepare all necessary materials.
- ✓ Send a reminder email to all confirmed participants.
- ✓ Use the deliverables from the meeting to inform your future work.

Effective Note-taking

The note-taker has a very crucial role in the meeting because he/she will document everything that is happening. When you have a written account of your meeting, you can use the information to let others know about the issues that were discussed, or inform them about youth perspectives. Here are some suggestions regarding note-taking:

- Select a note-taker to keep the minutes for your meetings
- Make sure participants are OK with having someone take notes. By introducing the note-taker at the beginning of the meeting.
- It may be helpful for the note-takers to be individuals NOT taking part in the proceedings of the meeting so that everyone involved can fully participate in the activities.
- Encourage the note-takers to listen carefully
- If individuals consent, record their names and contact information. You might want to communicate with them results and other information from your group.
- Let the group know that these are their notes too! Encourage participants to add or take away any

information included in the notes.

- Sometimes sideline conversations or emotional reactions contain important information.
- Take exact quotes from people around the table and use them to get your message out in future communications.
- Example: Canadian Senator Wilbert Keon noted that the *“Talking Back to Grownups: Healthy Children, Healthy Communities”* report will go a long way to creating the education and awareness necessary to change the way we think about health care.”

Evaluation

Conducting an evaluation of your meeting or project is a great way to gather information on how you can improve your efforts in the future. In reference to the activities and actions in this book, an evaluation questionnaire can be designed to determine:

- Whether or not youth participants in your group are seeing the benefits of / enjoying the activities and the processes they are undertaking.
- Whether or not participants in your community impact meeting enjoyed the process.
- How participants in your community impact meeting have been taking up the solutions that youth proposed to them.

Depending on the nature of your meeting, its length, the participants involved, and what you want to find out, there are many ways to design an evaluation questionnaire. Consider the following questions and take a look at the example provided below to guide you.

- What elements of today’s discussion were most important/interesting to you? (Meeting New Contacts, Research Presentation, Facility and Food, etc.)
- What parts of the meeting could have been improved? Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the roundtable process?
- Was there anyone missing from this session that we should include in our future research? Who? From Where? Add Contact.
- What did I learn?
- Please, use any one word to describe today’s activities!
- What activity did you like the best?
- If at all, will the information provided today add to or change the way you approach children’s health in your sector/work?
- Based on today’s discussions, what areas of research would you like to see more focus on in the future?
- Is there anything else which you would like to add?

EVALUATION

Thank you for participating in the _____
 We would appreciate your feedback. Your evaluation of this event will help us to build programmes for the future and to continue similar dialogues for the betterment of Canadian communities.

I represent the following sector (please circle):

- a) Government
- b) Non-profit
- c) Youth serving agency
- d) Law enforcement
- e) Media
- f) Education
- g) Youth
- h) Other _____

Please indicate which workshop session you participated in (please circle):

- a) Youth Engagement
- b) The Built Environment
- c) The 21st Century Canadian Youth

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements
 (please check in the appropriate box)

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The content of the Roundtable was interesting and informative					
The format of the Roundtable was interactive and engaging					
Facilitators were strong					
The National Roundtable was well organized					
The Roundtable achieved its outlined objectives					
The session has expanded my understanding of the social determinants of health					

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
The speakers provided valuable background to the subject and interesting perspectives					
From this Roundtable, one can say that the HC ² project, as a whole, has made positive contributions to work on the social determinants of health in Canada					
I have created new connections which I can use to advance healthy community development					
These new networks and relationships will allow me to strengthen my work					
This session led to innovative ideas which could improve the health of communities					
I learned how my sector can contribute to building healthy communities					
I will change the way I work because of what I have learned					

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I will bring what I learned to senior levels of my organization					
I have learned how my sector can contribute to building child and youth friendly communities that advance youth participation and engagement					
I have learned how my sector can contribute to creating a healthier built environment					
I have learned how my sector can contribute to bettering the lives of children and youth in Canada by equipping them with the tools to deal with today's realities					

How did you benefit most from the _____?

What aspect of the _____ would require improvements for the future?

Given what you have learned about the Healthy Children, Healthy Communities project and its examination of the social determinants of health:

- a) What are its strengths?
- b) What are the areas that need the greatest improvement?

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

ICEBREAKERS AND FEEDBACK ACTIVITIES

An Icebreaker is a name game or activity to make people laugh and to relieve the discomfort of meeting new people. Depending on how well participants know each other already, you may choose to have a long or short game or even no game at all. Some icebreakers which have proven successful in the past are:

- **Silly Questions**
 - Gather your group in a circle ask everyone to introduce themselves (name, age and/or where they come from), and to answer a silly question such as:
 - “If you could have a super power, what would it be?”
 - “If you could be anywhere in the world right now, where would you be? And you can’t say at home sleeping...”
 - “If you were a jelly bean, what color and flavour would you be? In a magical world, what magic trick would happen once you were eaten?”
 - “What word or phrase would you write on your car licence plate?”
 - “What would you do with a million dollars?”
- **The M&M Game**
 - Hand around a bowl of M&Ms candy and ask each participant to take a handful. For each piece of candy participants must answer a question invented for that color, e.g.
 - Purple: “Who is your favourite musician or band?”
 - Yellow: “What is your favourite hobby?”
 - Red: “Do you have any pets at home?”
 - You can also do this with a roll of toilet paper. Have each participant take a long piece; for each square they have, they must say something about themselves.
- **Mad Lib Storytelling**
 - Hand out a blank sheet of paper and a pen to each participant. Ask them to start writing a story (“Once upon a time...” or “Jimmy was this skeleton...”). After a sentence or two tell the group to pass their papers to the person sitting directly to the right of them. Repeat the process until the papers return to the original owners. See where the imagination of the group will go! Just read out loud and laugh!

GLOSSARY

Active communication is a two-way communication where ideas are exchanged by more than one person, such as a phone call discussion or a live internet chat.

Active listening is not just listening but showing that you understand what someone is saying. It is listening very carefully so that you make sure to properly interpret someone's message and concerns.

Article 12 ("Respect the views of the child") is from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It states that children have the right to be consulted and have their opinions heard and considered in decisions that affect them.

Cold calling is when you contact someone by phone (in a company, organisation or agency etc.) that you do not know and have never spoken to in order to pitch an idea.

Community impact meeting is a meeting where diverse community members gather to discuss a certain issue with the goal of being better informed and/or planning a certain action.

Front-line workers are youth workers, social workers, public health nurses, facilitators etc. who work directly with people in the community.

Gatekeepers are individuals who have decision making powers. They can open doors (communication) with other people to help your cause.

Grass-roots action is a term for community-based initiatives in which local knowledge and expertise is utilized to solve problems.

HC² is the UNA-Canada's acronym for the Healthy Children, Healthy Communities project

Health is defined in the World Health Organization's (WHO) Constitution as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. This means that physical health and mental health go hand in hand. Indigenous peoples have a similar understanding of health; well-being is about the harmony that exists between individuals, communities and the universe (their environment).

Holistic perspective of health is a view of health which emphasises the importance of the whole individual which includes their mental, physical, intellectual, spiritual and social well-being.

Mission statements are a statement outlining the overall goals and objectives of an organization, team or group.

NGO stands for Non-Governmental Organization.

Open ended questions require an explanation which cannot be answered by a simple yes or no (e.g. A closed question such as, Did you hit them back? can be answered with yes or no and insinuates that an action of hitting was involved. Instead ask, What was your reaction? Or What action did you take? These questions require a developed answer and are action neutral.)

Passive communication is a one way communication where information is offered without instant feedback, such as a news paper article or television commercial.

Private sector organizations are for-profit companies and businesses.

Public sector organizations are government, NGO's and community health organizations.

Social determinants of health are a series of external conditions (e.g. economic and social conditions) outside of a person's wellness that can determine the health of an individual and possibly their community. They are factors in our environments that have an impact on our lives and play a large part in influencing our health.

Social factors in our environment have an impact on our lives and play a large part in influencing our health.

Stakeholders are the people that hold a stake in a particular issue. Child health stakeholders can easily be aunts and uncles as well as parents, teachers and family doctors.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed upon set of standards and obligations that countries are required to follow to ensure the overall well-being of children. These standards, also called human rights, should be protected by all governments and are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of age, race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability. Therefore, they apply to every child everywhere. The Convention on the Rights of the Child promotes a vision of the child as an individual and as an equal member of a family and community – a human being and a subject of his/her own rights. The Convention is divided into a series of statements called "Articles." Each article outlines a different right.

Youth empowerment is a term which is easily and commonly thrown around in various ways. The UNA-Canada defines it as the process by which youth learn the skills and confidence to voice their opinions and to take decisive actions in their own lives as well as in their community to advocate or move forward an agenda.

**“be the change you want
to see in the world”**

Mahatma Gandhi



United Nations Association in Canada

Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies