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SHAKING THE MOVERS

Building Our Communities of Care



Ottawa, ON

January 25, 2025

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Landon Pearson



**This report is dedicated to
the Honourable Landon
Pearson, O.C.**

**“Every child is a new chance
for the human race”**

-Landon Pearson

Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that STM took place on the traditional lands of the Kanien'Kehá:ka (Mohawk), Anishinabewaki, and the Omàmìwininiwag (Algonquin) Territories of which we are on.

Land acknowledgments offer an important opportunity to reflect on the long history of colonialism within Canada, although it is only one step in the ongoing process of reconciliation.

For more information on Indigenous Lands and Treaties, visit:
<https://nativeland>

Shaking The Movers: Background

About the Workshops

Shaking the Movers is a series of youth-led workshops that happen all across Canada.

They create a space for children to learn about and reflect on their rights through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Through learning about rights in the context of their own lives, children are able to actively engage in discussions about what they want see differently. Facilitators not only prioritize the voices of the children but also make sure they are being heard and listened to.



What's Unique about STM?

The Shaking the Movers workshops were designed by the Landon Pearson Centre to give children and youth a platform to engage with and share their experiences with children's rights. Since 2007, the STM workshops have utilized a model of collaborative consultation, creating a space for meaningful participation. Through shifting power dynamics between children and adults, meaningful social change is created.

Communities of Care

This year's theme, "Building our Communities of Care", combines our attention on the ways children and youth perceive care and their rights under the UNCRC which enable their access to their communities and care within these spaces. Care is understood as stemming from each child's perception of how they should be cared for, and so our definition of care becomes intricately related to social, cultural, political, legal, and economic practices which shape these children's lives. As well as being experiential, care is relational. It extends past children and their parents, and allows us to view care between children and other adults in their lives (teachers, coaches, etc.) and their peers (other children). The exchange of care is not always equal, between a child and an adult or from group to group, and so our definition of care is built around the varying experiences and circumstances for each child. This said, under Article 19, children have the right to protection against all violence, whether it be physical, mental, or emotional.

At the core of this year's theme, and indicative of this experiential understanding of care, is Article 15 of the UNCRC, Freedom of Association. This encompasses the teams, clubs, online communities, and relationships children have with each other, and has made this workshop itself possible. According to Landon Pearson, rights are indivisible and interdependent. It is not enough to address a single right as they all interact and are enacted everyday. If we accept that children have the right to create and join groups, they must also have the right for their ideas to be shared in order to appreciate the layers of care that exist in their daily lives so we can continue to learn from youths' experiences across contexts and varying relationships.



Overview of Participants

The participants at Ottawa's 2025 Shaking the Movers Workshop were between the ages of 11 and 15. They were recruited from four schools in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB). The school board collaborated with STM to send posters to local schools so teachers could share the information with their classes. Through this method, a total of 18 youth signed up to participate in the workshop. Consent forms were distributed to the guardians of each child prior to the event.



The completed forms were then returned to the facilitators upon arrival at the workshop. The consent forms gave permission for photos and audio recordings to be taken of the participants and shared within this report. That being said, not every child verbally consented to their photos being taken at the event. In these cases, their faces were not included in any photos, or the final report.

SATE SCHOOLS RECRUITMENT

Chantel Smith is the System Principal for the Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE) school initiative. Principal Smith assigned two of her staff to help us with recruitment for the Shaking the Movers Workshop. They circulated our poster through their network, signed up students and took care of parent/guardian permissions.

SATE Schools are those within the OCDSB which are committed to students' academic success and positive development of sense of well-being. Their collaboration with STM demonstrates the growing commitment to ensuring children's knowledge of their rights and care in which their voices are listened to.

Agenda of the Day

HOUR	TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY
1:00	5 min	Welcome
1:10	10 min	Introduction
1:15-1:35	20 min	Ice Breaker
1:35-2:15	40 min	Theme 1 Activity
2:15-2:30	15 min	Snack
2:30-3:10	40 min	Theme 2 Activity
3:10-3:50	40 min	Theme 3 Activity
3:50-4:00	10 min	Closing Remarks

Activity 1

BUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES

ARTICLES FROM THE UNCRC:

Article 15 - Join and Create Groups:

Every child has the right to join or create groups and organizations. As long as no one is being harmed, you have the right to meet with others.

Article 31 - Play, Rest, and Be Creative:

Every child has the right to rest, relax, play, and take part in cultural and creative activities.

Article 17 - Access to Information:

Every child has the right to reliable information from the internet, radio, television, newspapers, books, and other sources. Adults have a responsibility to make sure the information is not harmful. The government should encourage the media to share a variety of information that children can understand.

Article 30 - Minority, Culture, Language & Religion:

Every child has the right to use their language, culture, and religion, even if these are not shared by the majority in the country they live.



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

Following introductions and a couple icebreakers, we introduced our first activity which would see the youth in small teams competing to build the tallest tower, while finding ways to support the difficult-to-use building blocks as well. Prior to construction, the youth were asked to think of some communities they are a part of and write them on the blocks. These included various school clubs, like the Boys and Girls club, the Muslim community, sports teams, and the Black community to name a few. In this way, we began to literally build our communities of care to highlight the ways we connect with and support each other - even when certain experiences (symbolized by the irregular blocks) make our lives difficult. By the end of the exercise, nearly every block was labelled with an outlet of connection for the youth, which they continued to reflect on in the next two activities.

What is a barrier to accessing these communities?

"A barrier could be money. If you wanted to join something and you don't have the money to be able to do that. Like, for example, if you are applying for university or something like that, that is a barrier."

"In high school, there is the Black Students Association but I feel like because of the name, most people feel like because they are not Black, they can't come to it. And yes, the idea is to unite Black students but just because you are not Black doesn't mean you can't come to it. That's why I prefer to call it a Diverse Association, because it's bringing people from different diversities."



What do you like about the BSA club?

"It's nice because I can express a little bit of my Black culture in Canada. In most places it's hard to do that but we are given the privilege at school to do it, so I can do it freely. Rather than having to do it at home, I can do it at school as well."



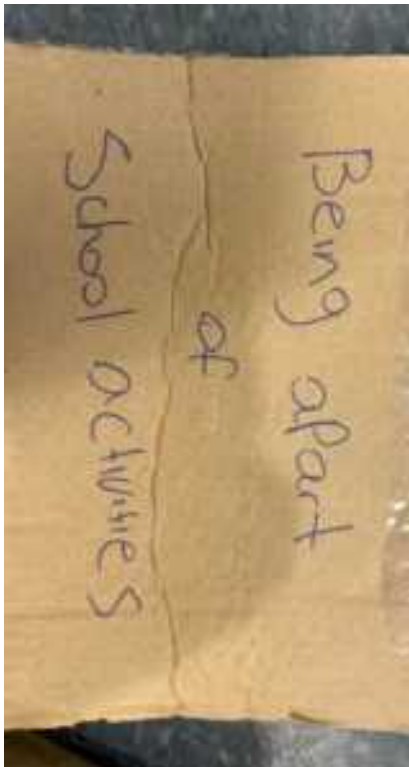
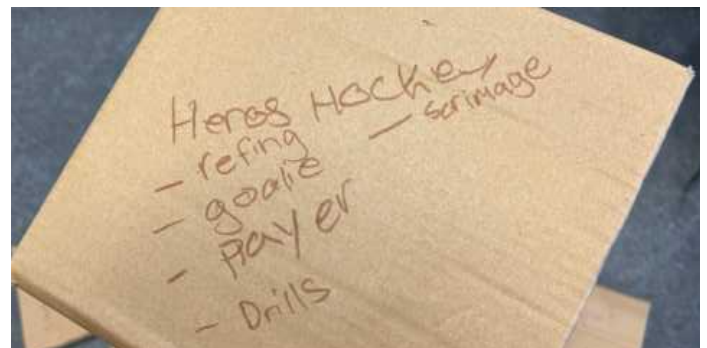
Facilitator -

Oh wow! Did you draw
the earth as a
community?

Participant -

No... It's a
soccer ball.

The facilitator had imposed their
idea of the participant's drawing,
but sometimes, kids aren't thinking
of the whole world, they just want
to play soccer



Activity 2

WHAT DOES CARE MEAN TO ME?



ARTICLES FROM THE UNCRC:

Article 24 - Health, Water, Food, and a Safe Environment:

You have the right to be healthy through accessing nutritious foods, a safe environment, healthcare, and to be educated about your health!

Article 27 - Food, Clothing, and a Safe Home:

You have the right to not be hungry, to have weather appropriate clothes, and a home that you are safe in.

Article 28 - Access to Education:

You have the right to attend school and receive an education. You also have the right to be safe in your school.

Article 29 - Aims of Education:

When you are in school, you have the right to be taught about your rights and how to respect other people's rights, as well as other people's cultures and differences. Included in this, is the right for you to be taught how to protect the environment.

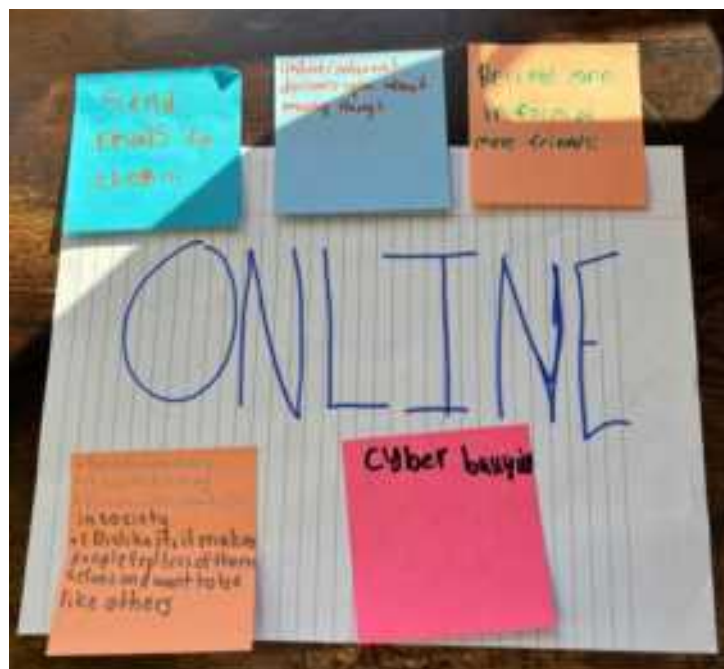
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

We started by discussing the articles of the UNCRC as a group, focusing on how children have a right to these types of care. Around the room, there were pieces of white paper hung on the walls. These were labeled with some of the different communities identified by the children (home, school, sports team, art club, etc.). Sticky notes and markers were then passed to each member of the group. They were asked to go around to the different communities and identify ways that they are, or are not, shown care.

"I think I made a connection with the activity where we put sticky notes on the paper. I got to see peoples opinion and I could kinda relate with other people's answers and mine."

- Participant





Through this activity, the participants seemed to feel most connected to their friends and school communities. The conversations between facilitators and youth highlighted this fact. Many related to the various school communities they are a part of, the friends they made in these contexts, and the support systems that they offer youth. The organized sports and clubs that schools offer were mentioned by a majority of the participants as they felt a strong sense of community through them.

MOBILIZING OUR RIGHTS

ARTICLE FROM THE UNCRC:

Article 12 - Respect Children's View

Children have the right to give their opinions and have adults take them seriously.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

The youth were given a piece of paper, some pens, and a list of prompt questions. We asked them to take some time, reflect on the workshop, and answer the questions they felt drawn to. Once everyone was done, they folded them into paper airplanes. Then, everyone lined up and threw their airplanes, mobilizing their rights!

PROMPT QUESTIONS:

1. What articles are most important to you?
2. Of the articles and themes discussed today, what do you feel is ignored or underplayed?
3. What did you learn today?
4. What connections can you make to your own life?
5. If you could tell adults anything, what would you say?
6. What changes would you like to see/expectations do you have from adults?
7. Who plays a role in making these changes?
8. When and where do you see these themes in your everyday life?
9. What themes would you like to see in future STM workshops?



WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY:

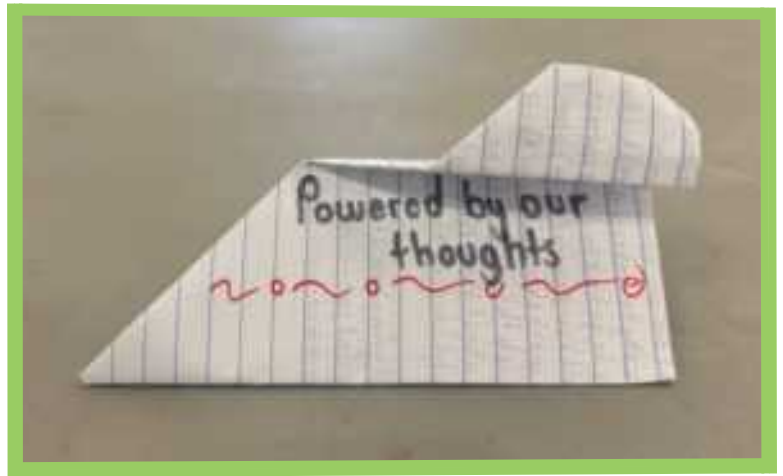
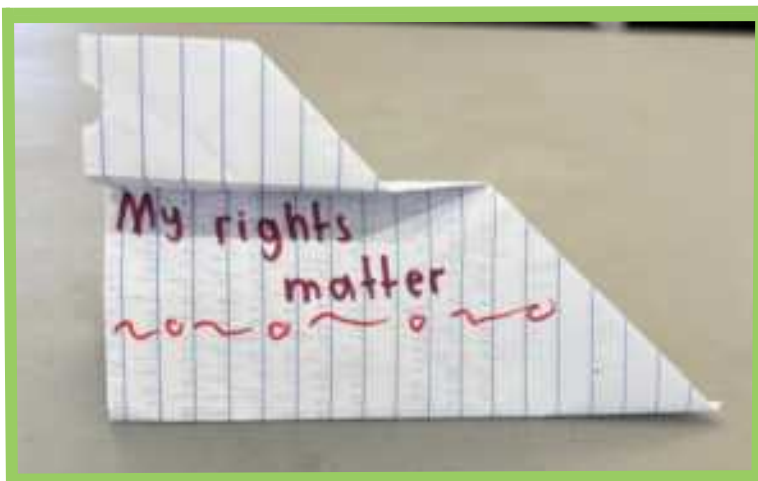
“Coming to this workshop today, I learned specifically what some of our youth rights are.”

“I didn't know my rights at first but now I do know my rights.”

“I liked that this community helps me learn more about our rights and the different perspectives that people have.”

“I had a wonderful time at Shaking the Movers. I learned that I had the right to make groups; if I ever feel the need to make or join a group, I can as a child.”

“If I could tell adults anything, I would tell them to help make changes (better changes) within our community and to be more mindful of what other people in our community want.”



“I liked that it was a safe place to talk about our perspective on things.”

“Coming to this workshop today, I learned specifically what some of our youth rights are. Some I already knew, like I already knew that we had the right to form groups, but it surprised me how little I knew.”

“In my life, I've always been well educated on my rights, but the problem was that I would be too shy to embrace them. Like when a certain teacher had forced me to go back to class during my breaks, I knew I had the right to play but I felt overpowered by the teacher to correct him. Now, empowered by this workshop, I will use my voice to correct this problem.”

“I would want to tell adults to be careful about who they choose to vote for because 1 vote that you put creates a big impact not just on you but everyone.”

WHAT WE LEARNED



This section highlights what the youth learned throughout the workshop. They identified areas of the UNCRC, their own lives, and the communities they are a part of that they had not previously known or considered.

“I learnt that I had the right to make groups; I can as a child. I learnt that I have a right to join communities without hustle; we live in a very diverse and multi-culture world today filled with tons of communities.”

“I learned that there are many communities to go to. If I had the chance to tell adults anything, I would tell them to be more supportive and explain things more than once.”

“I learned about different communities.”

“I learned about the importance of rights, and various more rights, such as being accepted by communities, and the right to a safe home. I knew I had the right for a home, but I didn’t know you had to feel safe in it.”

“Today I learned that I have many rights as a student. People who have more power can make sure we have a say in things.”

“I learned more about human rights. Changes I’d like to see are for teachers to let us go to the bathroom.”

“I learned a lot of things today like how people think that kids should have voting rights. I am glad I got to share my opinion.”

SOLUTIONS FOR CHANGE

FROM THE YOUTH:

"I think hate online and cyberbullying would be ignored the most. It seems like social media is failing to protect minors where they can."

"I think adults need to understand that we don't have the same mental capacity as them and that as adults they need to put more effort and care when dealing with us."

"I think youth should learn more about our rights. In school, we have small conversations like how we have freedom of speech. That's the only conversation I have ever had about rights. I think we should have more conversations about youth rights and I think it should come up more in school."

"I think people over 18 play a role in these changes and that it should stay that way because kids don't know about what is right and what is wrong and that maybe if their opinion is nice they should have a way to express it."

"To help me, I wish the adults could make part of their time to teach their children about their rights. I want to see independent gen-2 children who correct child-rights offenders."

THE ENVIRONMENT AS A COMMUNITY OF CARE

Some of the participants recognized the environment as a community that they are a part of. Through the three activities, they identified ways that the environment cares for them, ways we can care for it, and calls to action for adults and decision makers.



"Here adults, here is my words: care more about the planet, or it is going to be uninhabitable very soon."

"The people that have higher power like the government should focus on fixing problems. Whereas for an example the environment and where kids can't speak up about things."

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The Shaking the Movers Workshops continue to create a platform for youth to learn about their rights. As they used their voices to speak on issues affecting their communities of care, this report works to amplify them. We were able to engage with a diverse group of children and youth from a wide age variety. As there is no universal childhood, there were many different perspectives and experiences brought to the workshop. We would like to further highlight this point, the participants were comfortable participating at different levels, whether it was through, written, spoken or simply active listening, there was engagement with the workshop and each other. This is one aspect that has not been highlighted through this report, as the youth came from a variety of schools, many did not know each other when they entered. Through the workshop, it was incredibly hopeful to see relationships form as they bonded over their life experiences. Through this, we were able to see a community of care be formed.

WHAT ARTICLES WERE MOST IMPORTANT TO THE YOUTH?

“Article 17 - Access to information, it is already a rights and should be embraced. Parents and counsellors, stand up let our children know their rights, they are tomorrow’s leaders.”

“I personally think Article 15 is most important to me because it recognizes that us children have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and so it is important to be able to protest and share our opinion of certain things. Especially in high school, I really think our voices should be heard no matter what.”

“From the articles, I learnt that we pretty much have a lot of rights. The right to play, be creative, the right to rest and join groups.”

“The biggest thing I picked today was an educated voice. The article that mentioned a little bit of - children should exclaim their rights of play and making groups - spoke to me.”