

Shaking the Movers Waterloo Region

BUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES OF CARE

April 5, 2025 Report written by Aidan Grenier & Adan Imran















This report is dedicated to the Hon. Landon Pearson, O.C., whose enduring legacy inspires us to listen to young people. In her honour, it shares their messages on 'Building Our Communities of Care.'

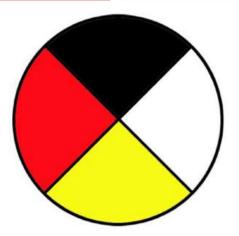


Land Acknowledgement

The land upon which the Shaking the Movers workshop took place is the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and the Chonnonton Peoples, the rightful caretakers and title holders of the land. We honour and respect the history, languages and culture of the diverse Indigenous peoples who call this territory home. We will continue to think with young children during these workshops about how we can care for the lands, respect mother nature, and better understand our collective responsibilities to the land, water, animals and each other for future generations.

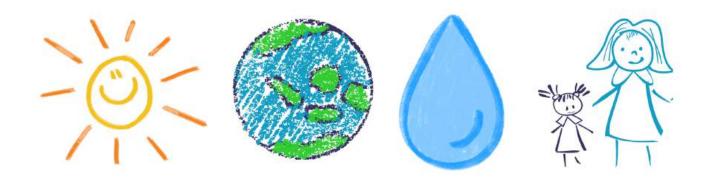








Land Acknowledgement Activity



We wanted a land acknowledgement not only to be something that was spoken, but also something that was remembered as something meaningful for the children. We decided the best way to do this would be to do a summarized version of the "Haudenosaunee Greetings to the Natural World."

In this short activity we gave out papers with the words Earth, Water, Sun, and Teachers/Elders written on it to the children. We then asked the children to say something about one of the four categories that they were thankful for. After each child expressed something they were grateful for, everyone would say together: "Now our minds are one." This activity supported children's engagement in recognizing that we should all be thankful for these natural things we often take for granted.



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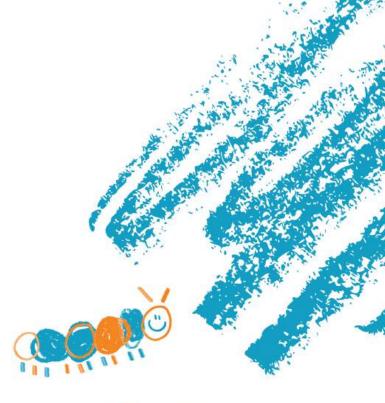




SECTION 1

Shaking the Movers Background







Background

About Shaking the Movers



https://www.unicef.ca/sites/default/files/2021-09/CRC_POSTER_FINAL_EN.pdf

Shaking the Movers (STM) is a country-wide annual event that is led and driven by young people. STM is sponsored by the Landon Pearson Centre at Carleton University to raise the voices and viewpoints of children and youth. STM compiles a series of workshops to create a space where children and youth can come together to discuss the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in the context of their own lives.

Children and youth participating in this initiative explore their ideas, voices and experiences and exercise their

rights with the assertion that they will be listened to and heard by decision-makers. STM also provides the facilitators (students) with a unique experience to learn from the young people who participate in the workshop(s).





Since 2007, the Landon Pearson Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights has designed workshops to provide spaces for children and youth to present their unique perspectives and experiences, and provide specific recommendations and input related to a children's rights agenda. Following each workshop, the viewpoints of the participants are consolidated into a report. Landon Pearson made it her priority to ensure that these reports reach the hands of the 'movers' and that they respond to young people's concerns and recommendations in the reports. The 'movers' consist of academics, educators, government officials, advocates, professionals working in child-service delivery systems, and others.



Background

About the Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region

The <u>Children and Youth Planning Table</u> (CYPT) is a community-wide partnership of over 1,000 service providers, researchers, planning bodies, and funders dedicated to supporting children, youth, and families in Waterloo Region.

CYPT's vision is happy, healthy children and youth—today and tomorrow, and its mission is to unite young people, organizations, and decision-makers to take collective action that prioritizes the well-being of all children and youth in the region.

Building on the success of three rounds of the <u>Youth Impact</u>
<u>Survey</u> (YIS) which engaged youth ages 9–18, CYPT launched the
first Waterloo Region-wide Child Voice Project (CVP) to center the
voices of children ages 8 and under whose voices are often
underrepresented. CYPT reached out to establish partnership with
the Ontario project of the International and Canadian Child Rights
Partnership (ICCRP; <u>www.torontomu.ca/iccrp</u>) funded by the
Government of Ontario. This connection led to a Shaking the
Movers pilot, with the valuable support of the Landon Pearson
Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights.



Introducing the Facilitators



Undergraduate students Aidan Grenier from Conestoga College and Adan Imran from McMaster University led the workshop as Lead Facilitators. Local youth were then recruited to be the Youth Facilitators for the day of the event.

The Facilitators were responsible for helping children explore and understand their rights. To prepare, they completed a multi-day training supported by the ICCRP Ontario and Landon Pearson Centre.



















The first training session focused on the introduction of children's rights, and the STM theme, and highlighted what it is and how to practice rights-based facilitation. The facilitators worked together to define what a "community of care" is. They then narrowed down to the four subthemes that they wanted to present to the children: Community, Allyship, Equity, and Face to Face Connections. The training ended once four sub-themes were selected.

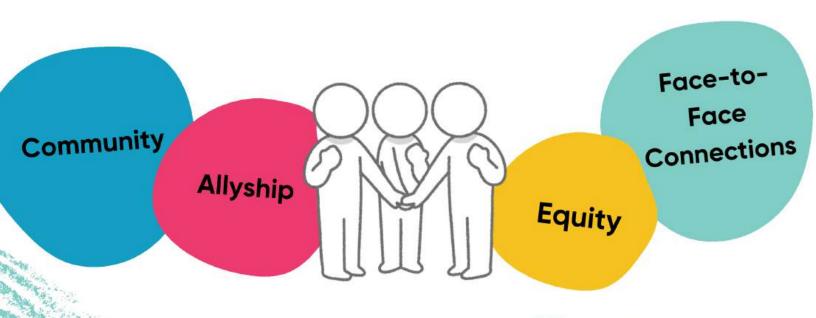
In the second training session, youth facilitators split into four subtheme groups, with two facilitators assigned to each. They developed one icebreaker and two activities to engage the children in their groups, then shared their ideas and received feedback for improvement.

In the final training session, each group of facilitators finalized their activities for the children. The result was a set of meaningful and engaging activities that helped children explore what a caring community looks like, while also expressing their views on the subthemes they participated in.

Overview

Shaking the Movers Waterloo Region: Child Voice Project

Sub-themes relating to the broader workshop topic (Building Communities of Care) were selected by the youth facilitators. The facilitators carried out their activities in person with the participants in breakout groups to create a personalized opportunity for engagement. The opening/closing activities and larger group discussions took place in the main discussion room. The insights that emerged from the children shed light on some of the areas that young people identified as important to them, their lived experiences, and challenges/difficulties the children face in their daily lives. The four sub-themes that were explored for this year's STM workshop include:





Recruiting Participants



The Children and Youth Planning
Table led the recruitment of child
participants. They reached out to
partner members of their
organization to advertise the event.
Additionally, they attended a local
health and wellness fair targeted
towards families of young children
to promote the upcoming event.
They also promoted the event
virtually and made registration easy
to do through a Google Form.

About the Participants

The participants in this workshop ranged in ages from 6-8 years old. Participants were recruited from Waterloo Region.

Informed Consent

Before the workshop, each participant had been provided with a written consent form to review and sign with their parents before participating. This included consent and having their viewpoints and comments shared through this report. All families had the choice to consent to have their photo images taken or not. Consent was obtained for those photographs in this report.



Theme:
Building Our
Communities
of Care

Agenda

1 PM

Informal welcome of children + their families, engaging them in consent/assent again and ensuring comfort

1:30 PM

Formal Welcome - Orientation -Icebreaker - Introducing the theme and sub-themes/groups, CR & well-being; Group Organizing and Instructions

2 PM

Small group work (40 minutes including another icebreaker)

2:40 PM

Each group report in plenary

3 PM

Bio break: snacks & bathroom!

3:15 PM

Small group work (35 minutes)

3:50 PM

Each group report in plenary

4:15 PM

Conclusion including group photo & next steps

4:30 PM

Distribution of participant gift certificate, after snack







SECTION 2

Introductions & Subthemes





Introductions

We started the day off with some child friendly music and some fun short activities for the children to play with facilitators while we waited for the registration portion of the day to be finished. The youth facilitators engaged with the children by playing Simon Says and Pictionary. Once all the children had arrived we introduced the children to what Shaking The Movers: Child Voice Project was and what they were there to participate in. The children watched a short video on Children's Rights and then the lead facilitators introduced this year's STM Theme: Building Our Communities of Care.

Afterwards the youth facilitators were introduced and each group gave an elevator pitch on what each of their sub-themes were about and what they would be doing that day. Each group was designated a specific colour so children could easily remember what group they were a part of. Children were then asked to vote with their feet and walk over to whichever group they wanted to be part of for the day.

















Caring Communities

The aim of this sub-theme was to show that our communities make up a large part of those that care for us. It also focused on differentiating different types of communities such as family, friends, sports groups and neighbours. The goals for the activities in this group were to identify what a community is, what positive aspects of a community are and what an ideal community looks like for the children.



Activity One: Human Knot

In this activity, children were asked to make a circle and connect hands with someone who wasn't next to them, essentially creating a knot. They would then attempt to unravel the knot that was created from this. This activity was conducted twice. The first time though, the children were not allowed to talk, but the second time they were.



"Not talking is hard"

"In community, it is important to talk to each other"

"Leaders are important for giving instructions."

"Neighbours - so you're not lonely when you walk outside"

"Friends- so you can grow up with other people and not feel lonely"

"Be you, be different;
everyone is different in the
community. If we were all
the same no one would have
special personalities."

Activity Two: Telephone

In this classic activity, children were asked to form a line and think of a word that connects with what community means to them. They would convey it through a subtle whisper to the child next to them. The aim was to ensure the message stays the same until the very end. At the end when the message was said aloud, the children would reflect on why this very word resonates with community.

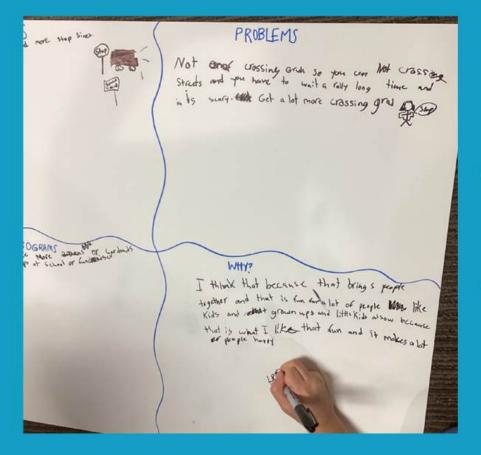
Key Issue: Crossing the Road



Activity 3: Building Your Ideal Community

In this activity the children were split into small groups and were told they were going to be creating their own communities.

They were tasked with identifying key issues in their communities that they would like to fix.



"After school we have crossing guards like everywhere so they help stop, but during daytime, some people don't stop at the stop sign."

"Lower the speed limit and add more stop signs, "people don't like to stop at the stop sign"

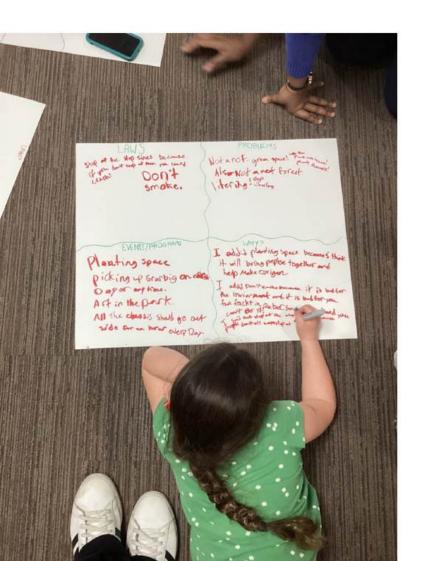
"Not enough crossing guards so you can cross streets and you have to wait a really long time and it's scary."

Key Issue: Bullying

"If someone is bullying somebody else, like why don't you just go over and say hey, would you like to play with me to the person getting bullied."

"You can tell them to stop and if they don't stop, you can walk away. If they follow you then you can tell the teacher cause you have to look for solutions before you tell the teacher."





Key Issue: Smoking

"A lot of people smoke in my neighborhood and it's bad for them and the community. It's bad for plants and you, when you breathe it in, it's not good for your lungs"

"They banned smoking in Quebec, that should be a law here too"



Caring Face-to-Face Connections

The aim of this sub-theme was to show that face-to-face connections are important when building a community of care. This group focused on relationship building and teaching the children how to better connect and make friends with others. The activities in the Face-to-Face Connections group were created to spark conversation between the children so they could make new friends and share their interests with each other.



Activity One: Memory Cards

This activity was designed to reflect the children's experience at the event, They began by drawing something on a "memory card" that symbolized their day, then went around speaking one-on-one with others to learn the meaning behind each card and sign them as a keepsake. To wrap up, they presented each other's cards based on these conversations, using a rotating two-line format to ensure everyone connected.



Many of the children connected over their shared interest of Pokemon. The children bonded and continued to talk about who their favourite pokemon were and why they were their favourites.





Activity Two: Broken Telephone

The activity connected to the topic by showing different types of communication and how effective they are. In the activity the children listened to various messages through different means while at the end discussing which round they enjoyed the most and which one was the easiest. All the children agreed the message delivered in person was the easiest to process and pass along.



"I learnt to be nice and help people"

"I learned that I have to give good reasons and not just say things because then no one will listen to me or believe me"

"I learnt that we should be a connection and work together and that I should care about others"

Activity Three: Mafia

The activity connected to our topic through communication itself, the way the game worked was that there was voting at the end of each round about who the "mafia" is. The children were asked to advocate for why they chose who they did and what reasons they had for doing SO.





Caring through Equity

The aim of this sub-theme was to show that equal does not always mean fair and that equity is about using their individual talents to help make things fair for everybody. The facilitators crafted activities that expanded on the ideas of equity by comparing individual talents to superpowers and how not everyone has the same skills so we should use our powers to help others.



Equity means giving everyone what they need to do well and feel included. It is not about giving everyone the same thing. It is about making sure each person gets the right support. Every person has different strengths, or "superpowers," and they can use them to help others.

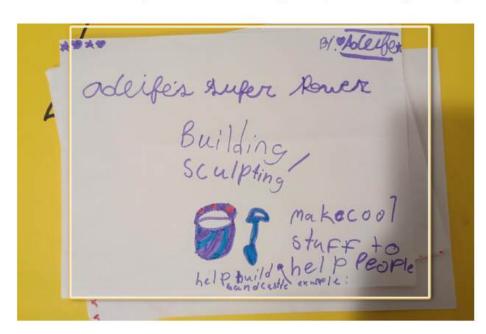
"Why is equity important?"

"Someone who can teach someone else to talk"

"My cousin let my family stay in their basement when we first came to Canada" They let us

"Boys can be flexible too"

"How do you see equity everyday?"



"When my friend was hurt, I brought them inside to get ice"

"My teacher helps me in math"

"Helping others when they need help"



What did the children identify as their superpowers?

Super Hero 1

Their superpower was their ability to include others and help everyone feel like they belong!

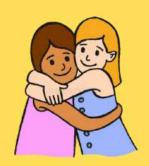


Super Hero 4

They identified their superpower as the ability to empower others. They understand it is important to stand up for others and help people where they are able to.

Super Hero 2

Their superpower is building and sculpting: which allows them to help others work together and support each other!





Super Hero 5

They identified their superpower as building, reading and teaching. They identified they would enjoy helping others through teaching.

Super Hero 3

They identified their superpower as karate because it allows them to protect their friends!



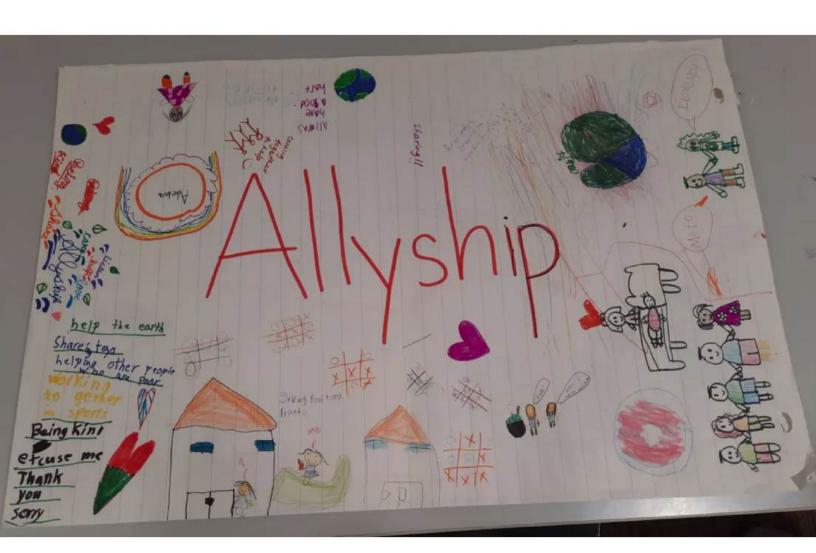
Super Hero 6

They identified their superpower as hearts which allows them to be kind to others and care strongly for others.



Caring through Allyship

The aim of this sub-theme was to show that allyship can mean a lot of different things to different people. To us, we believe that allyship is about friendship, being kind to others and working together. This is reflected within the activities, The facilitators planned activities where the children would be working in teams to better understand what it means to be a friend and how we can support the people in their lives.



"What is Allyship?"

"Not laughing at people"

"Being kind to people you see"

"Teamwork" "Lo

"What did this activity teach you about allyship?"

"Help other people if they need help"

"The web we did was connecting us to others"



Icebreaker: The Friendship Yarn



Participants took turns tossing a ball of yarn to each other while first learning about each other but also allyship and why it is important. The children were asked questions such as:

Why is it important?

"Someone you don't know needs help so you got to help and show them respect"

"In soccer the teams work together to score goals and get a trophy"



Activity One: Three-Legged Sandwich Quest



In this activity two children stood on a towel together and were tasked with moving the towel to get ingredients for a sandwich without stepping off the towel. After all the ingredients were gathered one of the two children were blindfolded and they had to build the sandwich using instruction from their partner who could see.

What was learned about allyship

"Teamwork is explaining it together and learning together"

"Talking and helping someone to do the same"

"It will be more easier for them to do the work if I describe and that's helping"

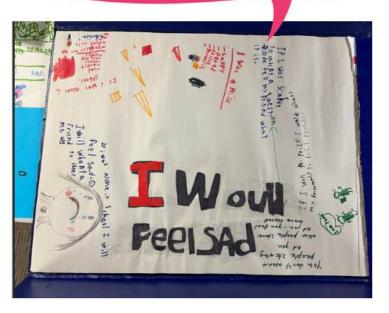
"Without people the world would be boring"



Activity Two: Allies in Print

In this activity, participants had the opportunity to reflect on situations they might encounter and explore how they would feel and how they might want to be supported by others. Using craft materials, they visually represented their thoughts, while facilitators documented their responses.

Prompt: How would you feel if you were alone at lunch?



Prompt: How would you feel if you were scared to ask a question and how would you want your friends, family, teachers to help you?



"I would want someone to ask me to play"

"When someone is lonely you should help them and when you are lonely they will come to help you" "I don't want people staring at me when I ask a question so I will ask it in the hallway and I know my teacher will help me, because people staring makes me feel weird"

"I would want to answer the question with someone also answering it with me"

"I would ask someone to play soccer." "I want someone to support me so that I know that I am okay"





SECTION 3

Additional Insights:
Hearing from Parents/Guardians

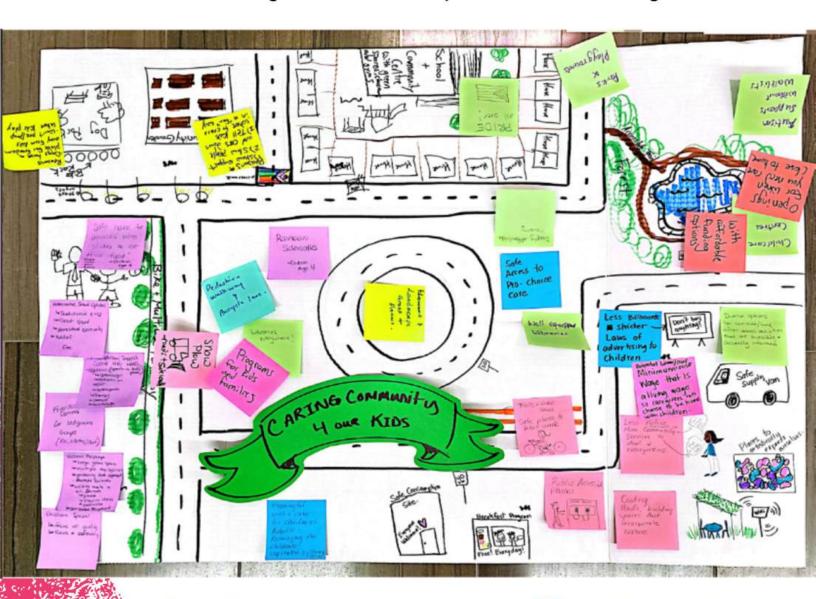






Additional Insights from Parents/Guardians

We also wanted to receive insights from the caregivers about their thoughts on the theme of a community of care and then also the four subthemes of equity, face to face, allyship and community. We first asked the parents to draw what a community that cares about their children looks like and the reasonings behind what they added to the drawing.



On the Sticky Notes

"Programs for kids and families"

"Diverse options for low-cost/free after-school activities that are accessible and culturally informed"

"places to artistically express ourselves" "School and community centre with green spaces, classrooms and gyms"

"Trails and bike lanes. Safe places to bike and walk." "Less billboards – stricter laws of advertising to children" "Pride crosswalk (reasons 1.

Show support 2. Slow people and cars down 3) tell kids where to cross in a "fun" way)"

"Less police. More investment in community services to deal with emergencies"

"Breakfast program (free, every day)" "Friendship Centres for Indigenous groups (FN, Metis, Inuit)"

"Multidisciplinary
Support Centre that
works together
(specific to
kids/youth)"

"Childcare centres – with affordable funding options, and openings for when you need care close to home"

"Little libraries"



We then asked the parents/guardians specific questions regarding each sub-theme to hear their thoughts.

What are the small but powerful ways neighbours, schools and local groups can come together to show children they are valued and supported?



"Inclusive playgrounds —
visuals, communication aids for
children and grownups to be
able to express themselves"

"Safe spaces for children to gather and be able to walk to school/grocery stores safely"

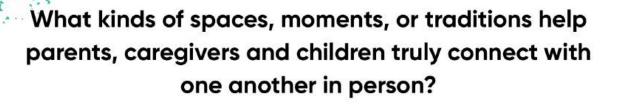
"Involve kids in community gardening; libraries; parks"

"Design around kids"

"Giving kids the opportunity
to lead. Ask their opinions
about social issues and
involve them in
implementation"

"Have kids contribute to the art of places"







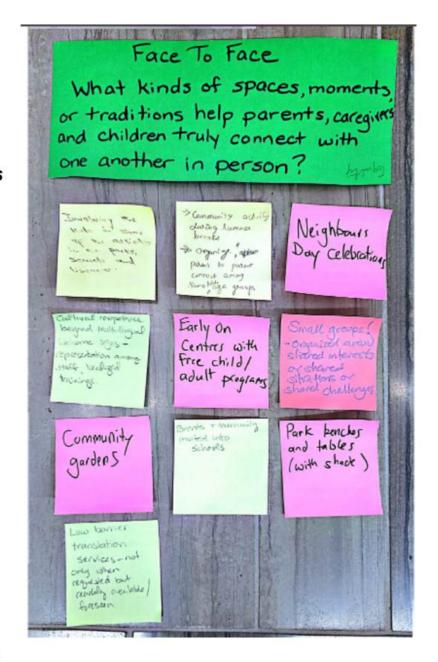
"Involving the kids in some of the activities in the parks, schools and libraries"

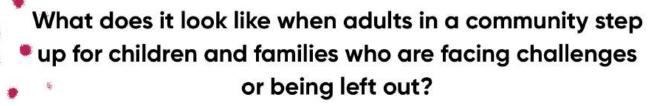
"Community gardens" "Early On Centres with free child/adult programs"

"Small groups! – organized around shared interests or shared situations or shared challenges"

"Community activity during summer breaks. Organize parent to parent connect among same kids age groups"

"Low barrier translation services – not only when requested but readily available/foreseen"









"Advocating for children sharing their voices to shape the community"

"Safe schools where students see themselves represented in adults, books and the environment"

"Neighbourhood associations and community centres as key players in support networks (with resources from municipalities)"

"When adults themselves seek to form communities, children feel safer and bolder about speaking about their challenges and feel more included."

"Child-friendly resources about injustice in multiple languages"

"Opportunities for seniors and children/youth to connect"

"Child friendly rallies and protests. No banned books! Anti-bias and anti-stigma practices across social services"



How can our community make sure every child – no matter their background or needs – has the same chance to thrive and feel included?

Equity

every child-no matter their

Universal

Design in

buildings and

How can our community make sure

background or needs - has the same

chance to thrive and feel included?

tee subsidy

programe

"Neuro-affirming practices in school, childcare, medical offices, public spaces"

"FREE options for after-school activity options that are affinity based – at schools and community centres, libraries"

"Pride beyond the flag – in policy and practice, consultation with queer families and community organizations - let

"Being an immigrant this is much more needed for our kids. Equality starts from school, so that all kids learn and treat others the same way."

"Fee subsidy programs (after school, weekends, summer)"

after school -weekends Parks - Summel PREE options Priole heupvel them lead the way" Equal (e fee) for ofter-school The flog - in activity options access to commpolicy + proofee, that are affinity. unity resources Consultation up! based - od schools · Jyms, play area; queer families and CCs, libraries sports music, ele and community org let them lead I believe in Being an invigount try " was come this is much more needed browkide. a givene way -> Equity Starls from School, so that all kids lown and treat others se-"Universal design in

Neuro-affirming

school, childcare,

medical offices,

public spaces

practices in

buildings and parks"







SECTION 4

Concluding Thoughts





Concluding Activity

For the final activity of the day, we asked all the children to spend time writing or drawing all the things they had learned about building communities of care and about their sub-groups onto sticky notes. We then told them to put those sticky notes on the wall surrounding each of their sub-theme posters.









Comments on the Day

What did you like?

The sticky note activity

"Connecting with each other" and "making new friends"

The snacks, games
/ activities

Making crafts and drawing

Any suggestions for next time?

Try giving all the different sub themes more time to experience the other themes

"More groups so you can do more activities."

(alternating / rotating groups)

More games, activities

"You can also do this in June or during summertime so that we can have four days, one for each topic"



Recommendation for creating communities of care

Planting Space/ Garden Centre:

- "Make like a little garden in the park and people can come and plant stuff in the garden"
- It's important for the community "because plants give you air to breathe and people are cutting down trees to make wood. So when you plant, you could plant plants and trees to help the air."
- It brings people together "because then you can get to know people when you plant".

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Event (BBQ or Gardens)

 "I want to see more BBQ or gardens and field trips at school or fundraisers" because "we can get things done when we work together like kids and grown- ups".







Youth Facilitators & some STM participants

This event wouldn't have been possible without the help of many different people and organizations. We would like to acknowledge everyone who came together!

First, we want to thank each and every child who participated in this event. We truly could not have done any of this without you! We also would like to thank the parents/guardians who participated in the "parents/guardians feedback" portion of the event as well.

Next, we would like to thank The Shaking the Movers Team; specifically Tara Collins and Chidera Onyekwe for providing us with their time, experience, support, training, and the Shaking the Movers framework which we used to craft the subthemes and activities we had planned for the day of the event.

Shaking the Movers Team

- Dr. Tara Collins
- Chidera Onyekwe

Child Voice Project Advisory Team

- Solami Okunlola
- Alison Pearson
- Barb Cardow
- Goranka Vukelich
- Keri Neeb
- Jen Butler
- Stacey McCormick
- Violet Nemek
- Kyrie Vela-Webb
- Keerthana Ratnarajah
- Monica Trela
- Abbey Macintosh
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- Autumn Chambers
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- Jahmeeks Beckford







