

SHAKING THE MOVERS LONDON, ON

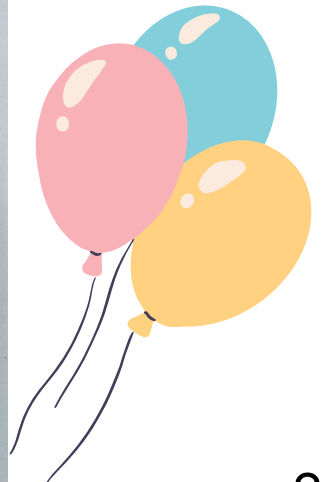
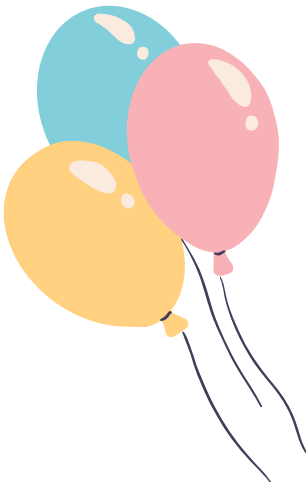
Exploring Freedom of
Expression and
Identity Through the
Lens of Children's Rights

November 15, 2025

Report Written by Stephanie Palozzi



This report is dedicated to the Hon. Landon Pearson, O.C who is sorely missed, but continues to inspire us to listen to the voices, viewpoints, and perspectives of young people. In honour of Landon Pearson, this report outlines important messages from young people about 'Exploring Freedom of Expression and Identity Through the Lens of Children's Rights'



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land upon which the STM workshop took place is the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron, the rightful caretakers and title holders of the land. We honour and respect the history, languages and culture of the diverse Indigenous people 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.



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Section

1



Shaking the Movers
Background

About Shaking the Movers

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 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 share 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 (Childhood and youth studies undergraduate 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 has 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.

At the end of each workshop, young people provide suggestions for the following year's STM rights-based topic.



Shaking the Movers, London: Overview

On November 15, 2025, in partnership with the Landon Pearson Resource Center for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights (Carleton University), the Boys and Girls Club of London and undergraduate students at King's University College engaged in the fifth STM event in London. There were around 30 youth aged 8-13 years old from across London and surrounding areas who participated in the workshop. The workshop took place at the Boys and Girls Club of London.

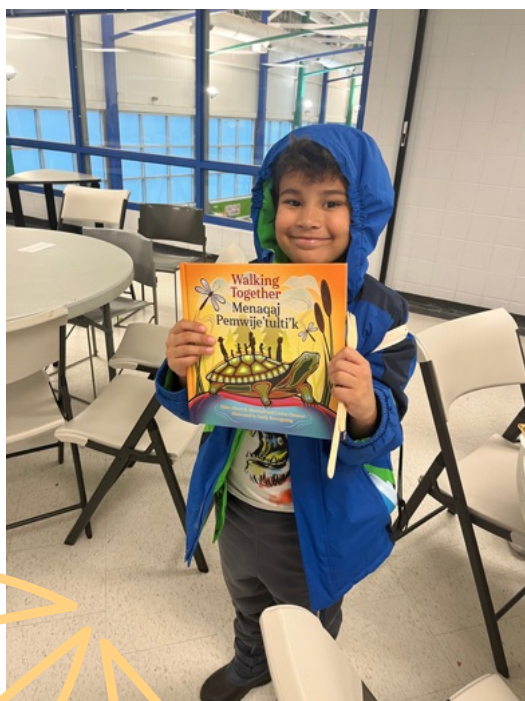
Sub-themes relating to the broader workshop topic (Exploring Freedom of Expression and Identity Through the Lens of Children's Rights) were selected by the undergraduate facilitators. The facilitators (students from two undergraduate classes) carried out their activities with the participants in breakout groups to create a personalized opportunity for engagement. The opening/closing activities and larger group discussions were regrouped and located in the main room. The insights that emerged from the children shed light on some of the areas that were identified as important to them, their lived experiences, and challenges/difficulties the children face in their daily lives.

The six sub-themes that were explored for this year's workshop include:

- MEDIA
- CULTURE
- HOBBIES
- PLAY
- PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL
- DISABILITIES



Features of Shaking the Movers



All participants received a 'change-makers' toolkit upon their arrival to the Boys and Girls Club in London. The tool kit contained a schedule of events for the workshop, UNCRC poster, TRC calls to action, pencil crayons, tote bag/pencil case that the children can draw on with fabric markers, clay and play doh for sculpting, participation certificate, stickers, King's swag, and the changemakers workbook. The workbook included ice breakers, rights-based activities, reflection questions, and space for children to express their ideas aligned with the schedule of the workshop.

The participants were also given a book titled "Walking Together Menaqaj Pemwije'tutlti'k" by Elder Albert Marshall, Eskasoni, Unama'ki and Louise Zimanyi, Tkaronto/Toronto (Treaty 13). This is a bilingual picture book that introduces readers to Indigenous perspectives through a dual-language format. The text is presented in both Mi'kmaw and English. The book reminds us that nature has rights and we have responsibilities. It also invites us to think about the more-than-human world and all our relations.



Recruitment of Participants

The Boys and Girls Club of London led the recruitment of child participants. They reached out to current members of their club to advertise the event. Additionally, they hosted an open house and members of the Shaking the Movers team (Students from Kings University) attended to share information about the workshop. They also registered participants and communicated with them leading up to the event. Additionally students from King's University posted the flyer in public places for children, such as local libraries and community centers.

About the Participants



The participants in this workshop ranged in age from 8 - 13 years old. Participants were recruited from London, Ontario and surrounding areas. Many of the participants were current members of the Boys and Girls Club of London. Some of the participants were returning participants who had been apart of STM in previous years.

Informed Consent

Prior to the workshop, each participant had been provided with an information package and 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. Through the entirety of the workshop, facilitators ensured the children were reminded of their rights to privacy and confidentiality as participants in STM.

SHAKING THE MOVERS
Sat Nov 15th 2025

EXPLORING EXPRESSION, IDENTITY AND RIGHTS

For 8- 13 year olds
Come participate in games, having fun, and learn about children's rights together

INFORMATION
✉ mmansur@bgclondon.ca
📍 184 Horton St E, London ON

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER SCAN THE QR CODE

bgc KING'S
Western University - Canada

AGENDA

Time	Event	Lead Persons
10:00 am – 10:15 am	Introduction and Welcome	STM Team
10:15 am – 10:20 am	Icebreaker	CYS 3351; CYS 3355 to support
10: 20 – 10: 40 am	Breakout Rooms: Icebreaker (Question 1 & 2)	
10: 40 am – 11:10 am	Breakout Rooms: Sub-theme rights performance & Discussion	CYS 3351; CYS 3355 to support
11:10 am – 11: 20 am	Coming Together: Discussion & Sharing of Group Ideas	STM Coordinators
11:20 am – 11: 25 am	BREAK	
11: 25 am – 12: 00 pm	Breakout Rooms: Icebreaker (Question 3) Everyday Lives Activity	CYS 3355; CYS 3351 to support
12: 00 pm – 12: 30 pm	LUNCH BREAK	
12: 30 pm – 12: 40 pm	Coming Together: Discussion & Sharing of Group Ideas	STM Coordinators
12: 40 pm – 12: 45 pm	BREAK	
12: 45 pm – 1: 25 pm	Breakout Rooms: Proposed Solutions Activity	CYS 3355; CYS 3351 to support
1:25 pm – 1:30 pm	BREAK	
1:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Coming Together: Discussion & Sharing of Group Ideas	STM Coordinators
1: 45 pm – 2:30 pm	Closing Activity & Conclusion	STM Team

Section

2



Introductions/Our
Little Library

Introduction to Undergraduate Facilitators

Students in CYS 3355 worked in small groups to develop two rights-based activities for the workshop. The first activity they developed focused on unpacking young peoples lived experiences and perspectives on this year's Shaking the Movers theme of expression and identity. Each group focused on different ways they could explore this topic with the children. The goals were to find creative ways that could invite children to engage in discussions in a meaningful way. The second activity focused on unpacking the young people's proposed solutions and recommendations for adults, that would help create supportive environments where children and young people's identities matter and they are free to express themselves.

In their groups, the students created detailed plans for their activities. They also designed and created materials to support their activities. Each group drafted and submitted written proposals that demonstrated how their activities supported children's rights and provided opportunities for children to be active participants. During class time, the students practiced their activities in order to refine them for the event. They paid particular attention to the extent to which their activities were conducted in a child-friendly manner. If this may have been lacking, students supported one another by providing feedback that could ensure a child-friendly approach so that the activities spoke as clearly to the participating children as possible



The students came to the STM event and implemented their activities with the children. They also used different forms of documentation to collect traces of what the children said and did as their planned activities unfolded. They were particularly focused on documenting the children's voices and providing details from the discussions that emerged.

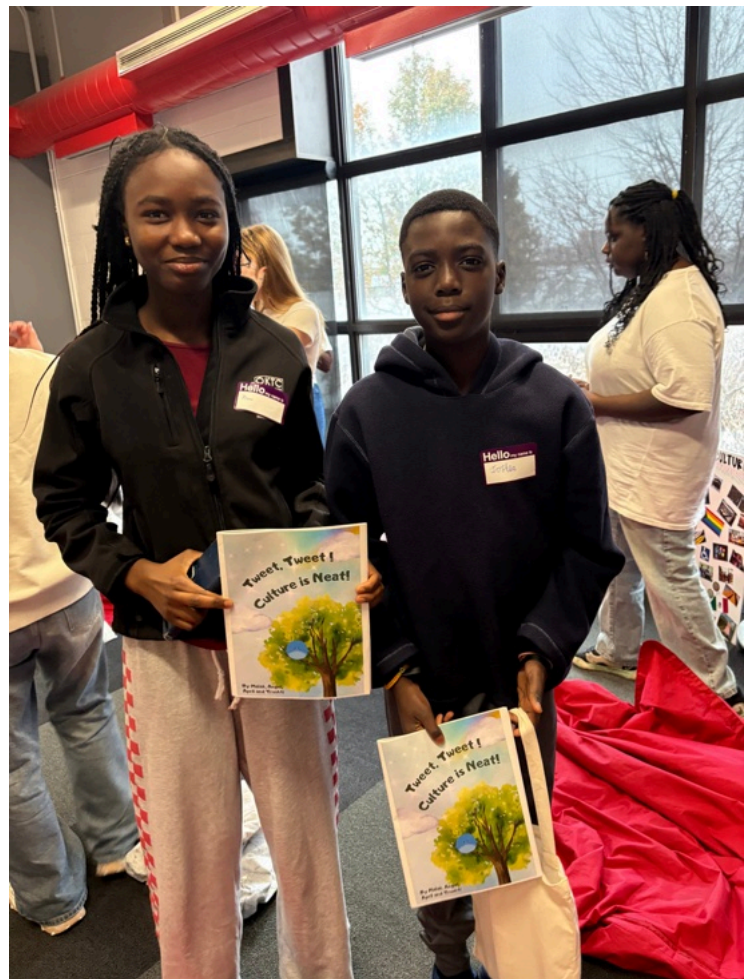


After the STM event was done, the students collaborated with their small groups and reviewed the collection of traces they each had from the event. Students had discussions about what they learned from the children and organized their notes. The next steps included creating a knowledge mobilization piece using an arts-based method to share back the children's ideas. The students used different forms of visual arts that ranged from videos and posters to scrapbooks and zines. These methods were intentionally selected because they provide an opportunity for both adults, youth and children to engage with the data that was produced during this event. By way of concluding, the students wrote individual reflection papers that encouraged them to think about the STM process, what they learned from the children, and how this will inform their future engagement with children and youth.



Students in CYS 3351: Facilitating Child Advocacy were tasked with facilitating children's knowledge of their rights. To do so, students came together in groups and composed a children's rights storybook to generate discussion on the theme of children's identity, expression and rights. Once established in their groups, students reflected upon children's identity, expression and rights and narrowed their focus to a particular focus area within this broad theme. Next, they proceeded to explore international children's rights laws broadly and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) specifically to select a UNCRC article applicable to their theme of children's identity, expression and rights. Finally, they conveyed understanding for their UNCRC article through composing their children's rights storybook.

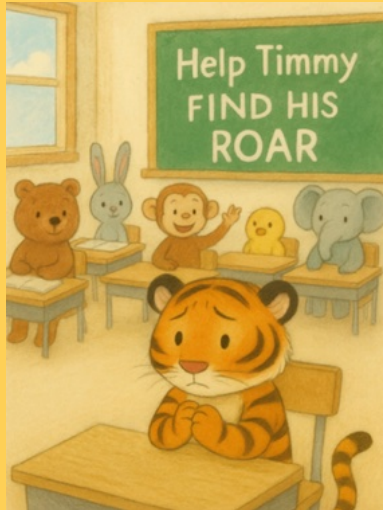
The result of this reflective and practical process saw each group come up with a story that included hobbies, social media, culture, play, inclusion, and participation in schools. These books were designed to first inform and then elicit the participating children's perspectives on a specific children's rights and how they felt it could be upheld within their specific storybook theme. Their responses generated thoughtful and practical views on how children can advance rights, expression and identity in their lives.





Our Library

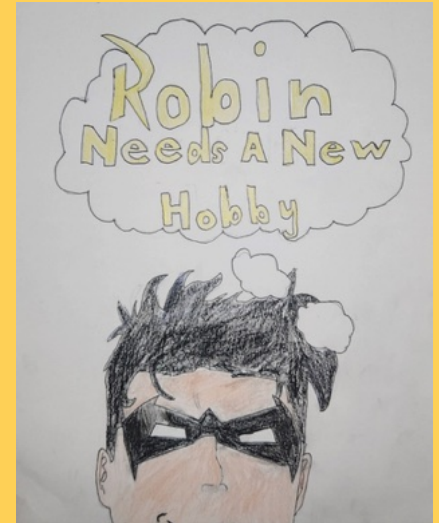
click the links to enjoy our stories



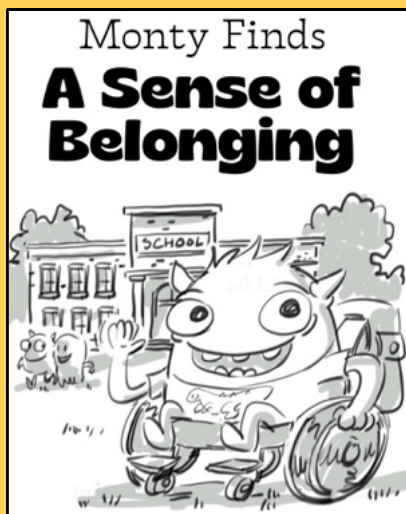
[Help Timmy Find
His Roar](#)



[Tweet, Tweet!
Culture is Neat!](#)



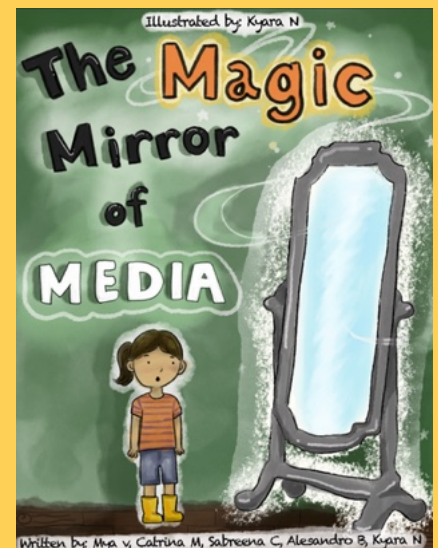
[Robin Needs a
New Hobby](#)



[Monty Finds a
Sense of
Belonging](#)



[Laura 's Right to
Play](#)



[The Magic
Mirror of Media](#)

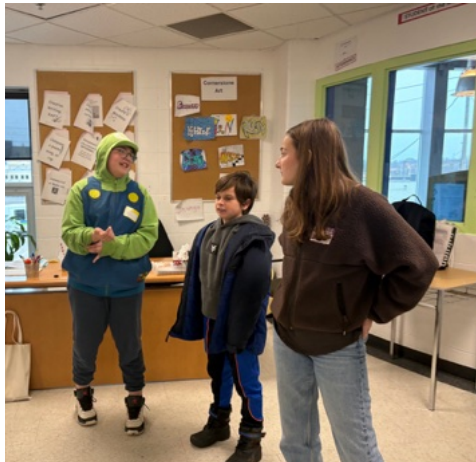
Section 3



Insights on
Sub-themes

MEDIA

The media group highlighted the importance of internet safety with the participants. This brought an understanding on being able to maintain freedom of expression in a safe manner through creating examples of online profiles, stranger awareness, and knowledge of various digital platforms.



Are digital platforms safe?

"depends on what digital media platform, when they are safe it is because you can make the account private, when they aren't safe it is when you cannot make it private"

"I think most are safe, and talk to people you don't know. it is not safe when you send the information"

"most online apps give you the feature to block them or not to talk to them, so it is safe if you want it to be safe"

What should/shouldn't you put in your bio?

Should

"favourite colour"
"keep it private"
"a movie"

Shouldn't

"your address"
"what school you go to"
"saying something like i like to go to the park on blah blah blah street"





Can online platforms protect your privacy?

"I don't think that they protect your privacy because they are meant to share your life with other people"

"It's all about what you share and who you share it with"

"They do not force you to share it"

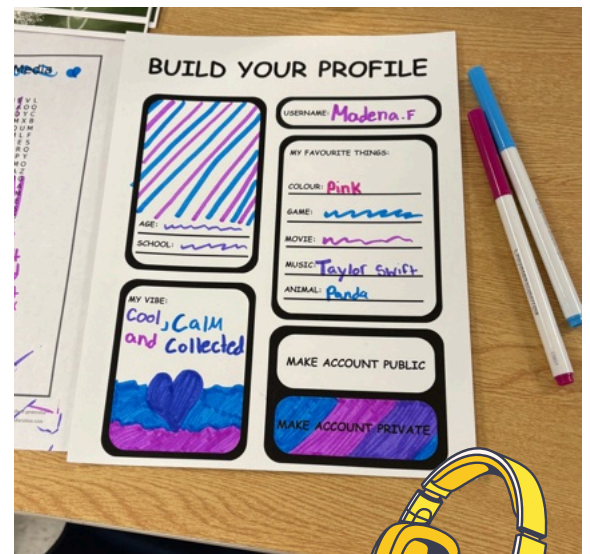
"My dad sometimes post photos and I can see them on google and he chose to put it there"

What would you teach adults about expressing yourself online?

"Not all we post on social media is goofing around, it is a way to expressions, and we are completely different then in person because you can be yourself and have fun and meet other people"

"I met a friend online when he was 7 and we have been playing for 4 years but his parents sometimes don't let me play with him because they thought I was a bully"

"Feels like i'm doing something worth my time because Im doing something I like and I learn more on websites than that school"



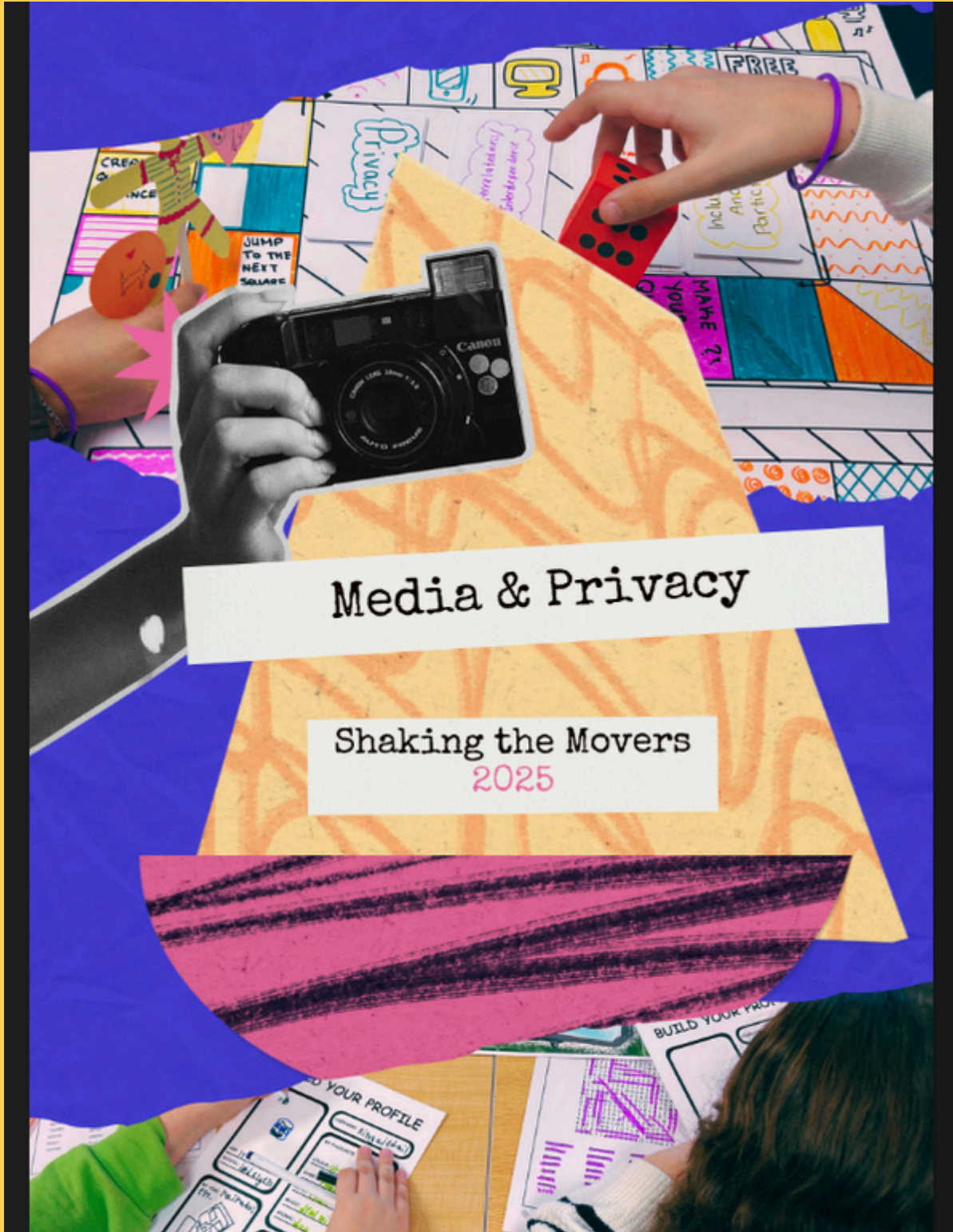
How can digital platforms make you feel included?

"social media can make you feel included because you don't have to show your face, it is kinda like a blind date because they can't judge you and you can be included in the games"

"If you want to play a game that no one wants to play, you can find a people that want to play the same game"



↓ click to view magazine ↓



Media & Privacy

Shaking the Movers
2025

[link for magazine](#)

The culture group shared differences amongst others in the group and those around them. This group outlined the importance of understanding others and how they express who they are and the right to be themselves.



How does media influence culture?

"Internet destroys culture"

"Media influences community"

"Social media is it's own culture"

"You shouldn't let media impact you like that, why can't you be the representaiton for yourself"

The goup discussed that the internet is part of culutre and confusion came from the internet not originating from a specific country, or ethnic culture. Instead, the internet can be used across a vast area with different cultures, and creating its own unique culture online

culture



"Outsiders can be insiders. People can belong even if they come from different cultures"



What is an important part of culture to you?

"Food"

"Clothing"

"Celebration"

"Music"

"Religion"

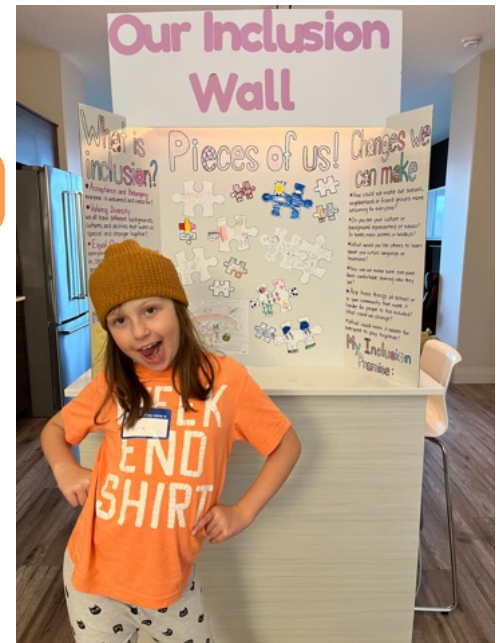
"Hair"

"Don't make assumptions on people based on their cultures"





"The internet can help people learn about culture, they can just look it up"



How can we share culture at school?

"Assemblies like Christmas mass"

"There's no celebrations of Eid or Diwali"

"Clubs"

"We only have the Canada flag in school"

"We can talk more about different cultures at school"



Creating your own person activity insights

- Hobbies, online interests, and family traditions can all be part of their cultural identity.
- Realized that many of them share similar interests or have overlapping cultural experiences.
- In their portraits, students included aspects of culture that are not immediately visible to others, elements that can only be learned about through conversation.
- This helped them understand the concept of "invisible identity" and what it means to
- acknowledge hidden aspects of someone's cultural background.

"Traditions are a part of culture, I think they should be shared with others so everyone can learn and appreciate them"

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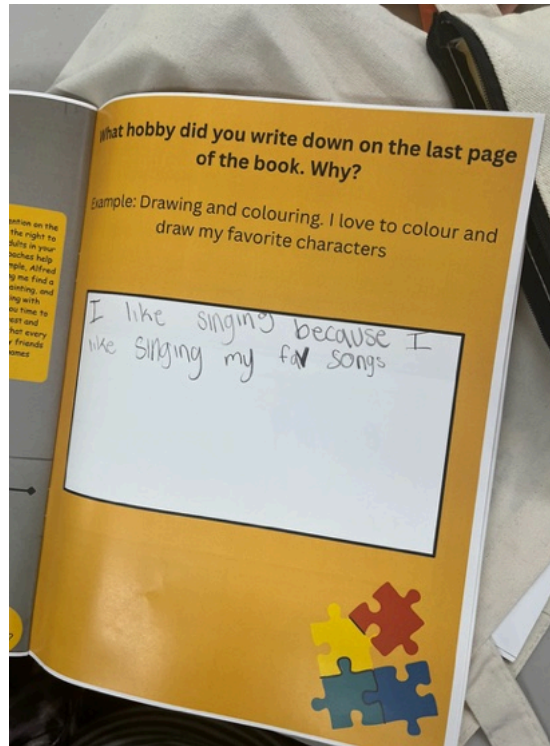
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[link for video](#)

H O B B I E S

In this group, participants shared their favourite hobbies and how it represents who they are as individuals. The importance of having hobbies creates individuality and being able to partake in these activities is a right in freedom of expression.



Why are hobbies important to you?



"We can play when we are bored"

"I get to sing my favourite songs"

"I like to play outside and rest"

"it's important to play and rest because it is happy, fun, and nice"

"I can play video games with my friends"

Is there an adult that you like to talk to about your hobby?

"I like talking to my teachers"

"I like talking to my mom and dad" Participants then found a picture of two adults kayaking, cut it out and put it on her collage, then she labelled it 'my mom and dad'



What changes from adults
do you want to see so
you can do your hobby?

"To buy me more supplies"

"More art class options"

"The school could ask us for what we
like so there can be clubs for what
we like"



Why do you think
you deserve time
to play?

"Because I work
hard"

Do you have a safe space to do
your hobbies?

"Outside is a safe space"

"I go to the park near my house since it is a safe space"

"My home"

"My favourite place is to go upstairs and play video games and watch tv"



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This group highlighted how participation in schools can impact their education and comfortability in the classroom. As well as how to create a more welcoming place to learn.

Participation in Schools

What do you enjoy about classroom participation?

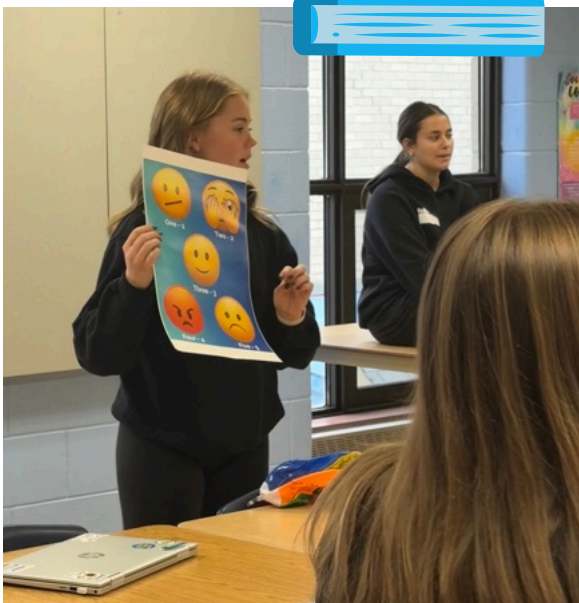
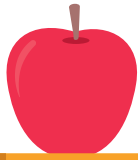
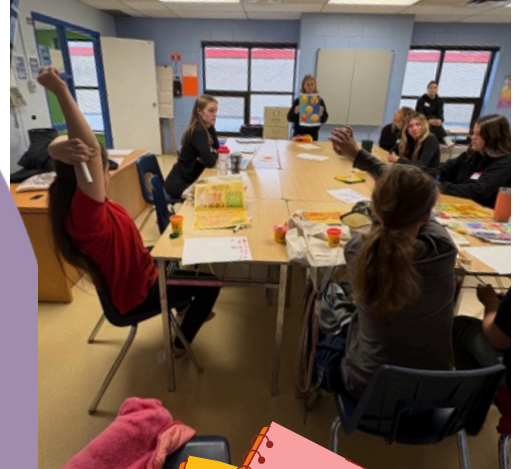
"When I can listen to music"

"When I am allowed to doodle in class"

"I get a candy when I get a question right or wrong"

"I feel normal when I get a question right"

"I would feel like wanting to get up and dance"
(when getting a question right)



What do you dislike about classroom participation?

"I feel shy" (when teacher forces participation)

"I feel embarrassed" (when answers questions wrong)

"The teacher makes me answer a question if they think we are not listening"

"I want to crash out" (when people are talking when answering a question)

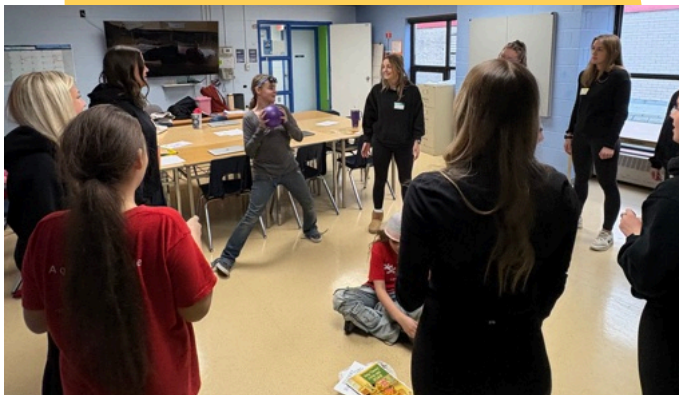
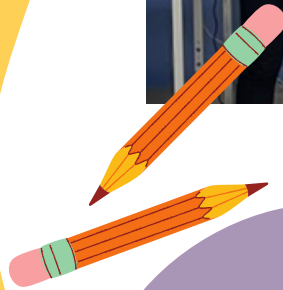


What does classroom participation look like?

"People sitting down and answering questions when they speak"

"When people have good body language, when they have confidence"

"Sitting down and waiting your turn to speak"



Good Classroom

- "Kids are listening and being good"
- "Support animal"
- "Raising hands"
- "Fidget toys"
- "Calm teachers"
- "Nobody interrupting"
- "Sitting with your friends"
- "Calming corner"
- "Desks in rows not separate"



Bad Classroom

- "I don't like strict people in the classroom"
- "Teacher is mean"
- "Trash on the floor"
- "Sad student in the classroom"
- "People fighting"
- "People talking over someone who is presenting"



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[link for video](#)

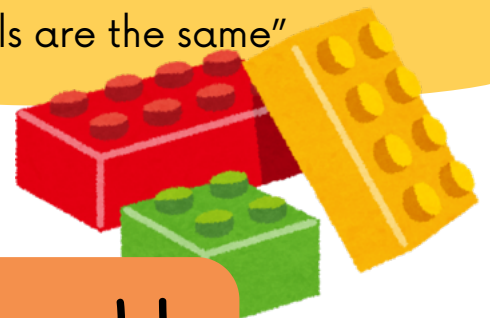
PLAY

This group explored the importance of play in giving everyone equal opportunities to grow through play. They discussed inclusion and involvement with others through play to create a safe environment to express their interests.



What makes you feel included?

- "make friends with anyone who felt left out"
- "playing soccer"
- "including kids"
- "making up games with friends"
- "treated respectfully and equally as everybody else"
- "boys and girls are the same"



"Yes, everyone should have the right to play"



Soccer is just
for boys
"No that's
not right"

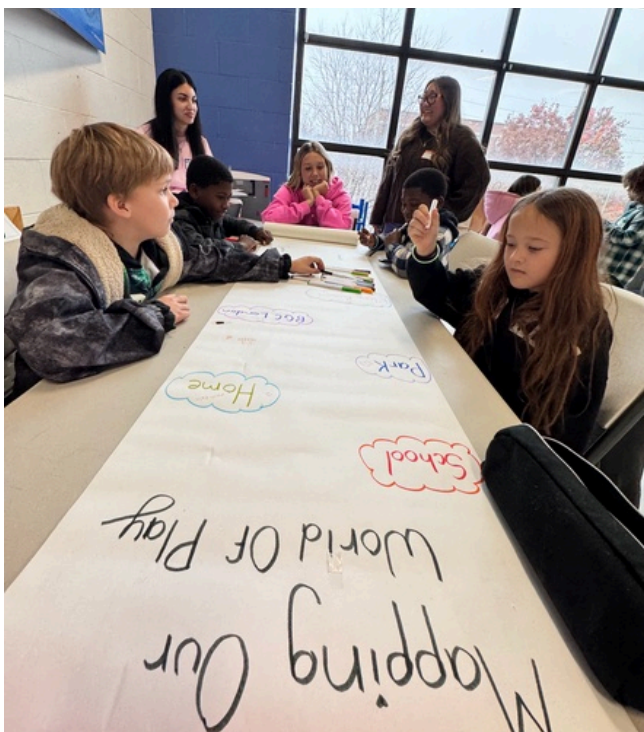


How can adults join playing
games?

"Act like a kid"

"they can ask how to play"

"sometimes we just want space when
were playing with our friends"



Why is play important?

"because you get to have friends"

"boys and girls make it more
interesting"

"to have fun"



↓ click to press play ↓



[link for video](#)

This group touched on the importance of understanding differences with disabilities and what the youth can do to support their peers in the community.

Disabilities

How do you make sure people with disabilities are included in your school?

"Invite them to play with me and my friends"

"Play with them to make them feel included"

"Play video games with them like GTA, Cod, and Fortnite and Snapchat call them"

"Be partners with them"



How can schools better support a sense of belonging?

"Be kind to them"

"Not letting people be bullied by not hurting people's feelings or hitting people"

"By having more clubs in school. I don't have many clubs at my school and there are not many club meetings. This can make people feel like they belong because people can meet friends that like the same things"



What would you include in your school to support disabilities?

- Ramp
- Elevator
- Ramp beside the stairs so you are still close to people
- 'Buzz for help' button
- Wheelchair button
- Wheelchair lift
- By the stairs there should be bumps so you know where you are if you are blind

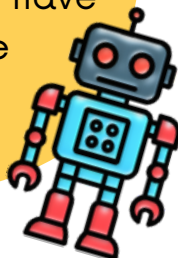


How can you better understand people with disabilities?

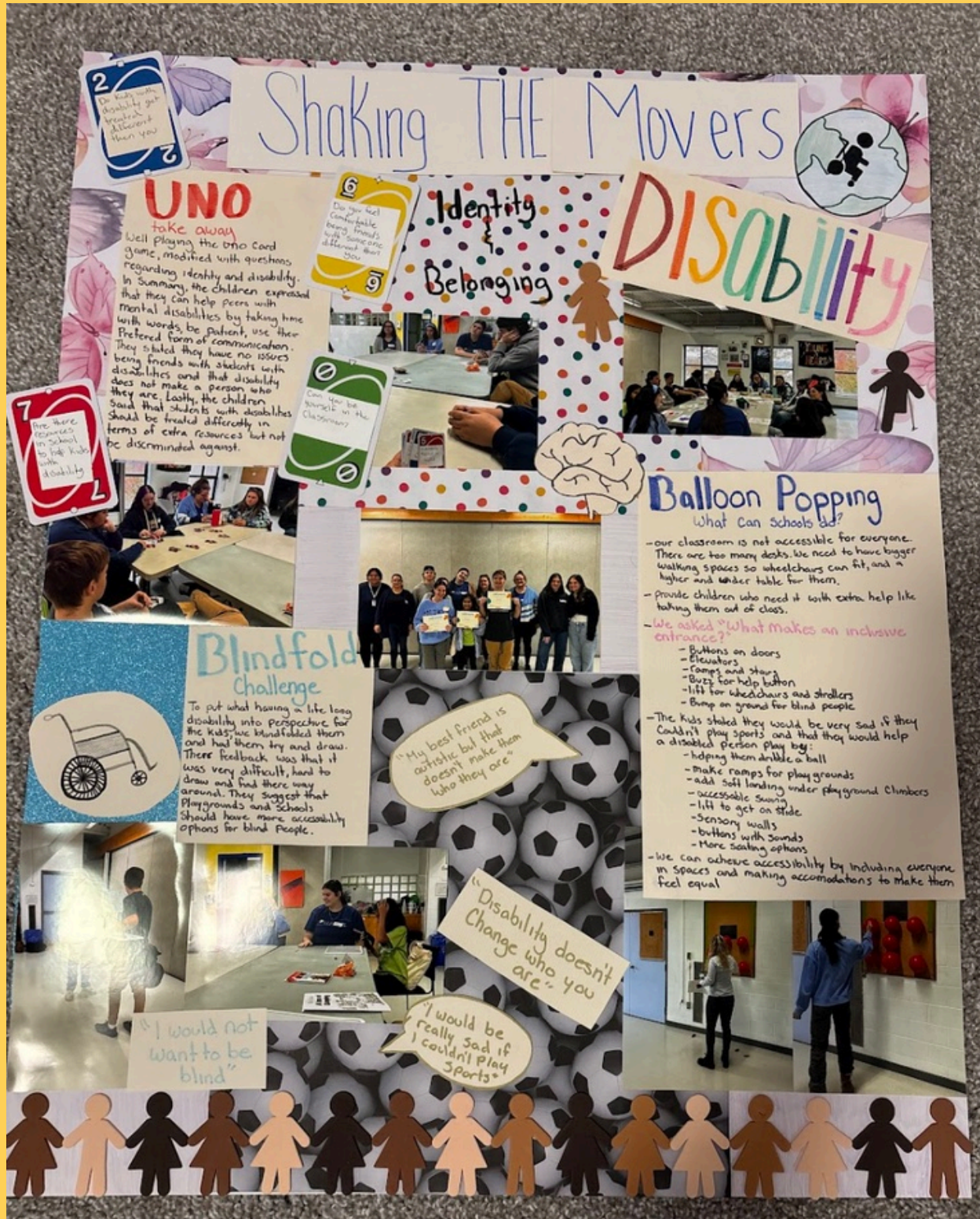
"There are resources in the schools to help with disabilities"

"You can communicate with a classmate by if they have ADHD you can take your time with words"

"With kids with autism you can take your time to get to know them for example, my little brother has autism and loves robots. So I have to include robots in things he doesn't like, like in math"



↓ click to view collage ↓



Section

4



Additional Insights:
Solutions for Change

This section highlights key areas the youth seek for changes to be made in various aspects of their everyday lives to allow the ability to explore their freedom of expression and identity through the lens of children's rights.

"I experienced culture shock when coming to Canada because everyone consumes themselves with media and put up an image to try and be like everyone else, Nigeria isn't like that"

"My school should buy more school supplies"

"The school could ask us for what we like so there can be clubs for what we like"

"I don't really like picking teams because it's not fair"

"Cultures have different holidays but they aren't all celebrated in schools"

"We only have Christmas assembly"

"You are allowed to voice your own opinions"

"My class doesn't support wheelchairs"

"You have the right to celebrate who you are"



"We have a big washroom for accessibility where you wave your hand and the door closes behind you, more schools should have that"

"Social media has a lot of strangers"

"We talked about invisible disabilities like ADHD and to treat them fairly"

"A right is something you like and everyone has so we should learn about them more"

"Girls have rights"

"I liked learning about disability"



"Adding something from our cultures to schools, we need education on different immigrants"

"We talked about how to be safe on instagram"

"I learned about rights and Article 2"

"You have the right to play and rest"

"We have the right to keep our identity and to protect ourselves"

"Sometimes it helps to get out of class to support disability, like a break"

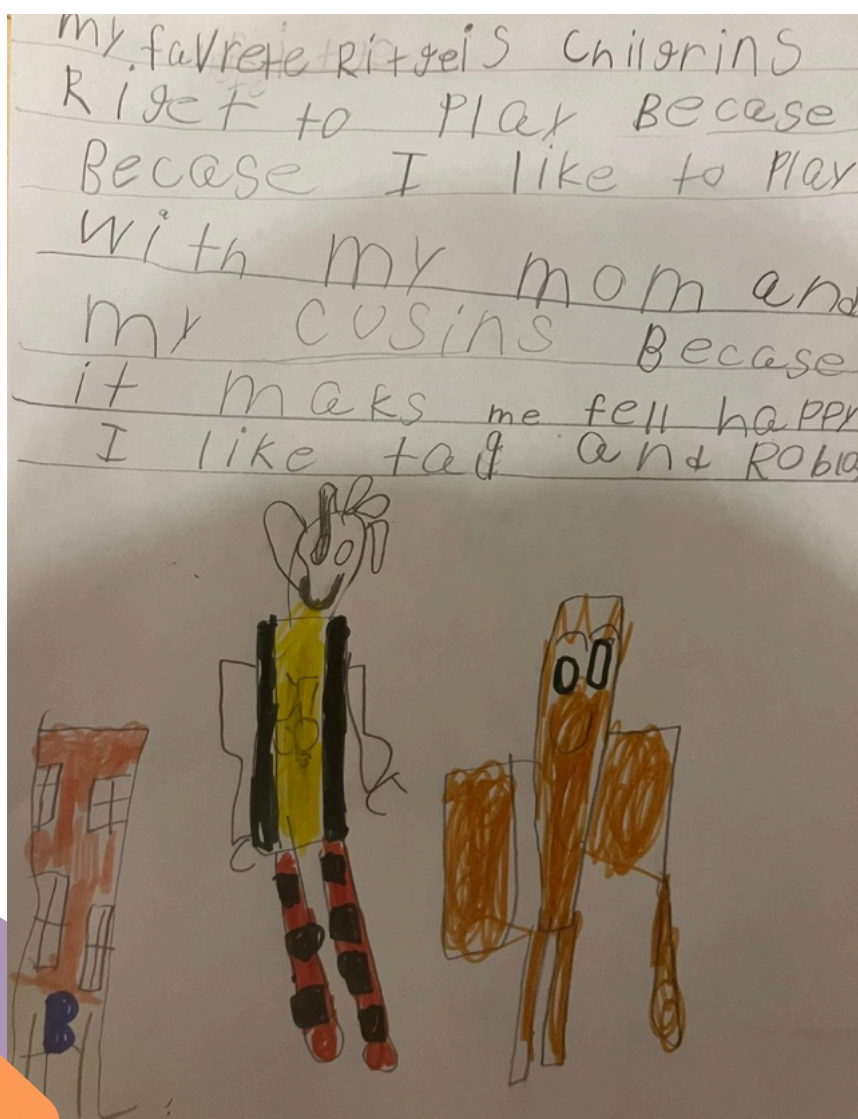
Section 5



Concluding
Thoughts

This has been the fifth Shaking the Movers event at King's University College and the second in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club of London. The gathering revealed important insights and recommendations shared by the young people who participated. They were open to expressing their opinions and the changes they would like to see in their world to make it a place where all children belong. They shared how happy and joyful they felt being able to share their perspectives, participate in the event and learn about their rights. Children's identities are entangled in various activities and places that are a part of their daily lives. The participants shared insights about how their identities are shaped and how they shape spaces through the opportunities they have to express themselves. As one participant stated "Everyone has something unique about themselves." Overall the children shared their knowledge about important aspects of their lives that deserve attention from adults.

We hope that decision makers gain perspectives from the participants in relation to 'Exploring Freedom of Expression and Identity Through the Lens of Children's Rights.'



"I had fun a thousand times infinite"

In closing another fantastic year of Shaking the Movers, we would like to thank and acknowledge all of our sponsors for helping make the workshop possible. These include the Landon Pearson Centre, the Department of Childhood and Youth Studies (King's University College at Western), the Boys and Girls Club of London, and the John M. Davitsky Foundation for their generous financial contributions and access to valuable resources. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the hard work of faculty and students in the Department of Childhood and Youth Studies. Special thanks to our STM Lead Facilitator: Marcy Gallant for all of her hard on the day of the workshop. Special thanks to Mirna Mansur for all of the time and effort put into recruitment - we couldn't have done it without you! Finally, a big thanks to Stephanie Palozzi for all of her hard work and dedication putting together this final report.

Most of all we would like to thank each and every young person who generously gave their time and shared their viewpoints for the purpose of informing this report and decision makers across Canada. We sincerely ask that the 'movers' read, share, and listen to the children's ideas to create actions for change. Thank you and we will see you again next year!

