

# Shaking the Movers

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## Final Report



Saturday, March 20th, 2021

1pm to 4pm



Landon Pearson Resource Centre  
for the Study of Childhood  
and Children's Rights



Centre des services  
communautaires Vanier  
Vanier Community  
Services Centre



**Carleton**  
UNIVERSITY

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## INTRODUCTION

Shaking the Movers is a collaborative consultation model with children and youth, held annually in different regions of the country in English and French. Sponsored by the Landon Pearson Centre at Carleton University, this round table provides an open and safe space for youth to examine aspects of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the context of their lived experiences. Shaking the Movers workshops also provide a unique opportunity for youth to exercise their right under Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: the right to participate in important civil and political processes with the assurance that their voices will be heard and valued.

The purpose of this report is to highlight and showcase the voices of 21 young people who participated in this workshop on the rights of the child on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021, from 1pm to 4pm (see Appendix A for the event poster). Lead by students of the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa, the youth expressed themselves and their desire to be heard by sharing their opinions and recommendations. They spoke directly to the "shakers" of this world in their comments, which not only aims to improve outcomes, but also to build confidence and the ability of youth to contribute to the world around them.

In addition to discussing four specific articles of the convention (Articles 7, 8, 15 and 16) during this event, a message sent out by the Honorable Landon Pearson in September 2020, regarding the rights of children during the pandemic (see page 4), inspired the youth to bring to the table the aspect of COVID-19 that has been affecting the world's population for the past year. They were able to express their feelings and thoughts that have often been suppressed during this time of isolation and have had a great impact on their mental health.

## MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE LANDON PEARSON

### Reflections on the Civil and Political Rights of Children in a time of Pandemic

Until the Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989 people rarely talked about the political rights of children let alone their civil ones, the ones designed to ensure everyone's entitlement to participate in the civil and political life of society and the state without discrimination or repression. Even the 1959 UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child spoke primarily to protection and provision rights, to safety, health, education and so on. So, the inclusion of Article 12 in the CRC, the right to participate, was a major step forward. What was even more remarkable was the fact that the American delegate to the drafting process of the Convention insisted on adding after Article 12 the list of civil rights included in the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights the US had recently ratified. These rights, the right to freedom of expression and access to information, to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, to freedom of association and peaceful assembly and to privacy (Articles 13-16) are all essential preconditions for the exercise of political rights. The irony is, of course, that the US is now the only country in the world not to have ratified the CRC!

But why should Article 12 be considered a political right when it only speaks to children and youth under the voting age? In my view this is because of the reality that an informed voter necessary for a fully functioning democracy does not magically appear at the age of 18. Political skills have to be learned and practised because they represent the ultimate personal expression that shapes the governance of any country that claims to be democratic. Properly respected Article 12 can enable young people to have a say even before they have a vote. What Article 12 implies is that "there can be no talking about us and if you don't listen to us, you grown-ups, what you decide may backfire."

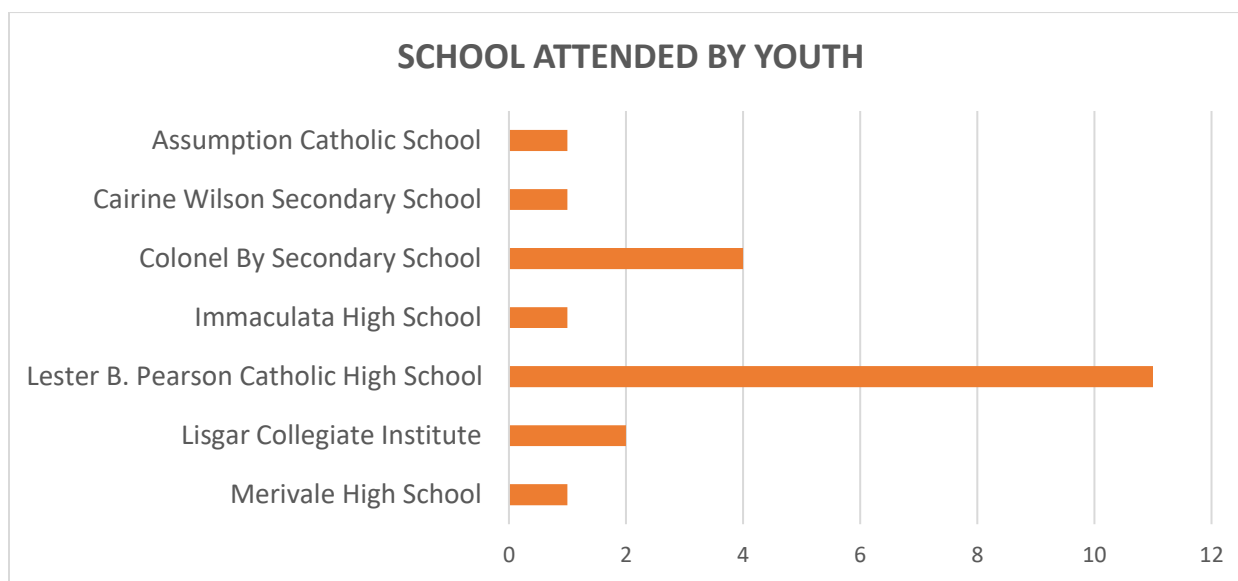
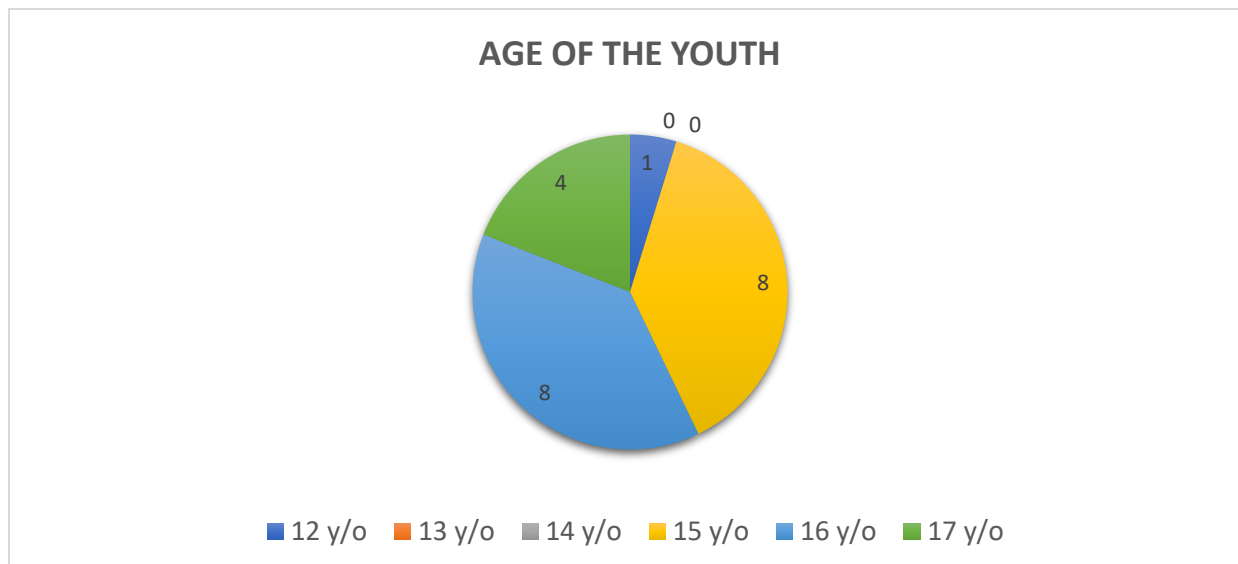
During this pandemic and the other challenges like climate change that are on the way the voices of youth are more important than ever. Young people are not the problem, they are the solution. We need to hear from them so that they can share with us their lived experiences of Covid 19 and direct our thinking as we collectively prepare for the future. Even little children have valuable insights and much to contribute to the continual planning that now has to go on. There can be no return to the way things were before the pandemic broke out but there can be a new normal, better than before, that children and young people exercising their civil and political rights can help us to construct.

Landon Pearson,

September 25, 2020

## DEMOGRAPHICS

So, who were these young people involved in the conversation on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021?



ETHNICITY OF THE YOUTH*	
Canada	India
Congo	Nigeria
Jamaica	Thailand

*\*For those who decided to share with us.*

## ARTICLES EXPLORED

From the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text>

### **Article 7**

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

### **Article 8**

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

### **Article 15**

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

### **Article 16**

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.

2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

## AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

The afternoon started with an ice breaker where the facilitators asked the youth what they preferred between two options, using the reaction buttons of the clapping hands or the thumbs up. For example: Do you prefer pizza or sushi?

Then, they proceeded with a Kahoot of 7 questions to introduce the youth to the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

**Kahoot!**

### The Convention of the Rights of the Child

0 favorites

2 plays

28 players

1 - Quiz

**What is The Convention of the Rights of the Child?**



2 - True or false

**True or False? The Convention is international?**



3 - Quiz

**The Convention applies to which age gap?**



4 - True or false

**True or False? The Convention of the Rights of the Child applies to every country in the world?**



5 - True or false

**True or false? The Convention includes 34 articles about the rights of the children?**



6 - Quiz

**What is the goal of The Convention?**



7 - True or false

**True or False? Children have the same rights as adults?**



### **ON THE RIGHT TO PRESERVE THEIR IDENTITY**

The facilitators started the discussion by defining what identity is, then went on by talking about the right to identify your own gender identity, the infringements on the indigenous cultural identity, and how the pandemic has affected privacy online.

#### **What comes to mind when you think of identity?**

“When I think of identity, I think of nationality, culture, religion, basically things that contribute to how you act and the values you hold. It can also be your sexuality and basically things that would identify you as an individual.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“Who you are, what defines you, what part of you categorizes in groups, such as personality, nationality, beliefs and religion, it’s who you are.” – Asmaa, 15 y/o

“Who you are = your identity.” – Flavia, 15 y/o

#### **Is it possible for someone to not have an identity?**

“I don’t think it’s possible because we all come from somewhere and we all have a part in society, but some people’s identities are denied.” – Vanessa, 17 y/o

“It depends on where you are, for example if you are an immigrant or new to the country, then most of the time they don’t view your part. Even if you’re above 18, they don’t even take your vote.” – Bayan, 17 y/o

“Everybody has an identity, if you’re alive, you have an identity, but identity might not be recognized by different institutions or countries and that’s where there’s issues and people aren’t treated like people. Having no papers strips away your basic human rights.” – Emily, 16 y/o

“It’s not possible, because as an individual, you’re a collection of different influences in your life, so to go without having any sort of influence from their people, from their communities, it’s especially impossible in today’s society. So, I don’t think it’s possible to have no unique identity.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“I don’t think you can’t have an identity because let’s say you like something and you’re really interested and you follow it, that makes you a part of that and I feel like that’s a part of you and that’s your identity.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

The facilitators then shared a video explaining how some people have no nationality because they don’t have legal papers, and that way their rights are not recognized and/or denied.

Who are stateless people? - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJVU-fjPrzY>

“I learned that identity is important because without a birth certificate, you can’t really access anything like jobs, businesses, health care, etc. And without those things, you can’t survive the real world. If one’s



country has been erased, a part of your identity has been removed too and you miss out on opportunities.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

### **About Gender Identity**

**Do you think it’s important to have the right to identify to a certain gender? Is it important for that to be recognized and why?**

“I think it’s important when we start talking about legal terms and events. Here’s an example: there were a few times in sporting events where transgender females entered into track events and usually, they have the advantage over cisgender females and that comes through in the stats.” – Fred, 15 y/o

“I think it’s important to recognize that more people can be educated. One of my friends is transgender and he often gets cisgendered because a lot of people aren’t educated about this kind of stuff.” – Katie, 16 y/o

“A lot of people are not comfortable contributing to their fullest because they feel like their opinions and what they have to say isn’t going to be listened to because of how they identify themselves. One way that we can encourage people to be more involved in society, for example, even in the music industry, people think the public aren’t going to be supportive because of their identity, but when we understand that they are protected by different legislations and they are also educating people about these things, it’s easier for them to contribute and feel safe and encouraged.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

“Gender and sex aren’t the same and that is something that in school is taught more, which is important.” – Anonymous

**Transgender people can legally change their gender on their birth certificates, depending on the different legislations in different provinces. Do you think people who identify as non-binary or gender fluid should have the right to do that as well?**

“I think they should because it’s the same thing as if you identify as a guy or a girl or as non-binary, it’s just how you identify and I think if they’re not able to, it’s going to make a big hole in their mental health.” – Katie, 16 y/o

“Socially I agree 100% with her (Katie), but on a practical level, in terms of transgender people, if they go to the doctor’s or there’s an emergency situation, you can see what they are and do something about it. But if you didn’t make any of those solid physical changes and there’s an emergency and your birth certificate or identification says whatever you want to be, then it’ll cause more confusion and make the process harder and it’s not going to be the safest solution.” – Vanessa, 17 y/o

Afterwards, a matching game to learn different terms around identity and gender/sex was played, where the youth were given a definition and they had to choose the right word on the screen. Most youth already knew these terms and the facilitators were impressed.

## **About Cultural Identity**

The facilitators continued with a few “True or False” questions around the indigenous culture and residential schools. Some questions brought on comments from the youth, others seemed straight forward enough that they didn’t have much to share.

1. Culture is an individual right. **TRUE**, and it can also be a community right.

“It’s true because you don’t have to be a group to participate in your culture, even if you’re isolated from the rest of your culture, you can still participate in the culture.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

2. Canada has always been accepting of indigenous people practicing their culture. **FALSE**, they adopted the Indian Act to force children in residential schools.

“Before we were born, they used residential schools and forced the indigenous people to assimilate to their own (Canadian) culture, but now in this day and age, people are starting to accept them more.” – Angel, 16 y/o

3. Parents had the choice to send their children to residential schools. **FALSE**, at the beginning they were misinformed, but after a while, the government made it mandatory for all indigenous children to attend residential schools and police would actually come take the children away.

“The government came in and other school officials came in and just took them without asking or giving them a heads up.” – Vanessa, 17 y/o

“I think sometimes it was a choice, but the problem was that the parents had no clue, they thought it was just some normal school and it ended up being a lot more than that. But there were also parents who thought they were doing the right thing and they weren’t forced per se, but they were just very misinformed.” – Emily, 16 y/o

4. Students in residential schools were malnourished and abused by teachers. **TRUE**, corporal punishment was justified by the belief that it was the only way to save souls and civilize the savages.
5. Residential schools were very far away from reserves, so it made it harder for parents to see their children. **TRUE**, they didn’t want parents to interrupt the civilization process, so they made residential schools further away.
6. Many indigenous children died in residential schools and the parents never knew. **TRUE**, after students died, they buried them; around 6 000 children died, and they can’t identify them to this day.

## **Why do you think the Canadian government established residential schools?**

“It was a way to force cultural assimilation on people who were indigenous and also a way to remove their identities so they couldn’t be represented through their own culture, and sort of dilute their identity.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“At first it was like a way of sympathy, they wanted to show that they could educate these kids and make them speak English that everyone understood. But then as time went on, it turned into actually

ripping people of their culture, their languages and things they actually need to have. Initially the indigenous people thought it was a good idea, but then it wasn't an advantage for them." – Princess, 16 y/o

"If I'm not mistaken, I think that residential schools were created by Christian churches and the Canadian government, so it was an attempt to try to convert the aboriginal culture and indigenous youth, to convert their religion and change their identity." – Asmaa, 15 y/o

### **What year do you think the last residential school was closed?**

Some answers from the youth: 1990 something? 1997?

The answer: It was in 1996. They stopped using them before 1996, but the last school closed down in 1996.

### **Why do you think the Canadian government targeted indigenous children specifically?**

"With the European colonizing, as well as Africa and other countries, a lot of people changed educational system because it's easier to influence younger children than adults that already have their culture and their history. So, it's easy to influence the children and assimilate them to the Western or European/Canadian culture, so that they believed that what the Canadian government was doing was right." – Keren, 15 y/o

"It's also easier to give children opinions on important things, like how they are told that their language is bad or that the culture is savage, and there's an influence there on their whole group." – Vanessa, 17 y/o

"I feel like the government were very future-minded and I think they understood the easiest way to make the changes and perfect them in the future was to start with the young people because it would be a waste of resources to try and assimilate the older generations because they wouldn't be there in the future where the government would need them to cause actual changes. So, the younger they are and the faster they assimilate them, the quicker the future would look like the way they wanted to." – Anslem, 16 y/o

To conclude, a video was shared that explained better the cultural genocide in Canada through residential schools and the reconciliation that is trying to take place now:

Canada's Cultural Genocide of Indigenous People - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Gi0ycmekE>

## **About Privacy**

### **What does privacy actually mean?**

“Privacy encompasses a lot of things and your identity is part of that. Having privacy is the right to, for example, file complaints and not have your name be put out there to the public.” – Emily, 16 y/o

“It’s part of deciding who gets what information concerning you and being able to decide where certain information is being disclosed.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

“The right to not share anything in your life.” – Katie, 16 y/o

“Privacy to me when I first think about it is being able to have freedom, for example, being able to practice your religion without any negative effects towards your religion and basically having freedom to do things that you would normally do.” – Asmaa, 15 y/o

“The right to privacy, especially in the digital age, would be the right to have pictures and information regarding yourself removed from a site if that’s something that you want, and also having consent if you have your photo taken. I know Canada has a two-way consent, if someone is recording a phone call, if the other person consents to have the phone call recorded, then you can. Just to protect things that you say and aspects of your online data.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“Being free from getting disturbed or from public attention.” – Princess, 16 y/o

“Privacy is a right that everyone should have and deserves, for anything they want to do in their own time about being observed or without their privacy being taken from them by recording.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

### **Do you know any examples where your privacy can be compromised?**

“Online, especially online.” – Katie, 16 y/o

“Searches by the police in school without warrant is also an invasion of privacy.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

“Social media, let’s say on TikTok you post something, and many people can just see TikToks and share them, and most people don’t really ask for consent or their permission, so I feel like that’s a lack of privacy there because many people don’t know their videos/pictures are being saved into people’s photos or on their computers.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

“I once heard from a teacher that it’s illegal for students in university to record a teacher who is lecturing, unless you have the permission to.” – Princess, 16 y/o

“Another way of invasion of privacy are things like your personal information, whether that be websites where you buy things from or credit card information or things like that, sharing that personal information without the consent of the owner could also be an example.” – Andy, 16 y/o

“Privacy like in school whenever someone tries to share your work or your mark, I think that would be invading privacy.” – Asmaa, 15 y/o

“Websites in general, where software are taking too much of someone’s personal information, that’s a really significant breach of privacy. Especially now there are a lot of lawsuits and investigations, for example Facebook and Google taking too much information from people’s browsing history, voice recordings, and just in general, using pictures of yourself where someone doesn’t give their consent explicitly. We’re approaching lots of privacy issues in the digital age with how much can be tracked about you and how much can be archived about your activity on the internet. I think that’s an area of privacy invasion that we need to be looking into and protecting consumers’ rights when using technology.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“For example, breaching and invasion of privacy, especially in the times now where the technology is advancing, it can be almost masked and hidden to show us good things, like with encrypting. For example, ads and things like that; so normally ads are catered to and based off of things that you like or the things you do. How do they get that information in the first place, you have to ask yourself that question.” – Andy, 16 y/o

“Websites tracking people without their consent.” – Flavia, 15 y/o

**Question from a participant:**

“I don’t know if this is considered under the right to privacy, but in the airport, if you’re a certain type of nationality, they can do excessive research on you and let other people go past you. Does that count as violating a right to privacy?” – Bayan, 17 y/o

**Response from the facilitators:**

“If they think there’s something suspicious, they have the right to search, but it depends on the laws and their duties in the country. It is an invasion of privacy because they are interfering in your personal stuff, but in a way, some people have access to that because of their jobs. It also depends why they are stopping you and to what level they are interrogating you, so if there’s nothing going on and it’s just the way you look and they go through extensive research about you or they search you in an inappropriate way, it does go against your privacy.”

The facilitator then presented an online quiz on privacy from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada: <https://services.priv.gc.ca/quiz/en/youth>

Question about posting items: “As soon as you submit that survey, they have that data and they can make info out of that.” – Bayan, 17 y/o

“Think first, because in theory, I agree with the fact it’s a creepy world out there, but the internet also has some benefits.” – Emily, 16 y/o

Question about someone you don’t know adding you on social media: “You should deny their request because it’s really easy for someone to create a fake profile by collecting information regarding who you could potentially be friends with and impersonating that person. The safest way to reserve your own personal information would be to deny people you don’t know.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

Question about your information being completely private if your privacy settings are that only your friends can see it: “Even though your profile is private, the social networking page you’re on can definitely take your information and share it without your consent cause they have all the info about the profiles we make.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

Question about when you receive an email saying you won a contest, and they need your information to send you the money: “This is likely a scam and they’re trying to steal your money and your bank information.” – Keren, 15 y/o

“Most of the time what happens is you don’t remember signing up for anything like that and most people don’t sign up for those cause they know they are scams or they’re just ads that pop up depending on what you search for, and even if they do search and sign up, they would not really ask for your banking information.” – Sweny, 15 y/o

To inform youth of the dangers of sharing too much information online, a video was shown to give examples of information not to share:

Online Privacy for Kids – Internet Safety and Security for Kids -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiKeLOKc1tw>

The facilitators also played a game to review some of the tips from the video by giving scenarios and asking the youth how they would react.

Scenario 1: If you want to share a photo of a friend or tag a photo with your friend, what should you do and how would you react?

“First, I would ask them if it’s ok to post the photo with them and also to tag them cause they may not want other people knowing their account username and stuff.” – Keren, 15 y/o

“I would also show them the picture, so they know exactly what’s going to be out there.” – Vanessa, 17 y/o

“I think if you want to post a photo with a friend and tag their personal account, you should be considerate of whether or not both your accounts are private and if they’re comfortable with being identified in an image that you post and if you are both ok with the content of the photo because it’s really easy for other people to share the photo around and take screenshots. So, if you don’t want something that’s attached to your name and your identity to be seen, then you shouldn’t share openly.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

Scenario 2: If you are logging on to a computer or on any social media platform and by accident you type your password so that everybody sees your password, what would you do and how would you react?

“If you think someone saw it, you could change your password just in case.” – Katie, 16 y/o

"I think you should immediately change your password to something that is harder to guess because if everyone sees it, even your friends can just log on and misuse it to send people chats that aren't nice, and that would just make you look like a bad person because they don't know who's behind the screen and who's actually saying these things." – Sweny, 16 y/o

**We are currently doing everything online because of the pandemic, do you know how the pandemic can have such an impact on our privacy?**

"With Covid, they're asking us to stay inside the house, everything is becoming virtual. Even though it's good for us to stay inside so we can be safe, soon it's going to be one of those normal things that most of the time you'll stay quarantined. As soon as that was passed on, there were so many new rules and they enforced it to check all immigrants in airports, and now that's an enforced rule all around. They are probably going to do the same thing with covid so quarantine is going to be something that is common even after covid, so they can keep everything virtual and all that. Not lockdown, but they are going to use quarantine as a solution to everything. I feel like that, but it might be an exaggeration." – Bayan, 17 y/o

"For online, I think it'll be more dangerous because everybody is on their devices so you're logging into more stuff because you're bored, and the hackers are also home so they could be on their computers and watching everything you sign into. Everybody has a higher rate of them being able to see what you're doing cause you're always home and don't really have anything else to do so you're on your devices." – Yoma, 12 y/o

"This is kind of a stretch, but say someone does something bad and it's pandemic, everybody is wearing masks on and you can't really tell who it was who committed these crimes, so it's possible for a lot of people to be unsafe." – Katie, 16 y/o

"The impact doesn't have to be bad, it could be a good impact. Everything is literally documented, we're online and doing everything online. One day you say you want this and that, and the next day you find what you want being advertised and that's the same thing as Emily said, with Google they track what you're using and their main point is to just increase how long you sit on the app, so they will send you things that you want to see, things you want to buy; that's how they're exchanging that data." – Bayan, 17 y/o

"I know a bunch of schools are in situations where people are still going in person. They have to keep privacy recollections of who knows about cases in the school. Like my school, if someone has a covid case, they don't say the person who tested positive, they just say someone got a covid case so there's protection against people who test positive for covid. That way they don't get discriminated against and they won't get attacked because if schools are getting shut down because one person got a covid case, there's a chance that that person could get attacked if they know that person tested positive." – Anslem, 17 y/o

"One way the pandemic has a significant impact on our privacy is the fact that we need to be using a lot more programs which allow people to see more, for example our homes. Before the pandemic started, it used to be uncommon to have video calls with people where you turned your camera on, and people could see more about your personal life directly through the screen. There's also a lot of programs that

we use, for example Zoom, that previously had a lot of scandals to do with how much information they took from their users and how much they were keeping in regard to your data and personal information. In general with the pandemic, it can seem a little bit more invasive.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“I think more people are using social media nowadays to interact with their friends since they aren’t able to see them in person and I feel like a lot of people are just hacking into people’s social media accounts and that’s happened to me. I saw an email that someone logged into my account and I immediately had to change my password, I feel like everyone is logging into people’s accounts and getting them hacked and sharing their personal information or their photos.” – Sweny, 16 y/o

“I see that during the pandemic a lot of people began channels and Instagram accounts and using social media to communicate, and I think their privacy was exposed like that. Especially during the pandemic, we’re all using our technology and it can easily be tracked down.” – Asmaa, 15 y/o

Another video was presented about privacy and collecting data around the world through facial recognition, location tracking, etc., for the purposes of contact tracing and social distancing and isolation, etc.

Online privacy during the COVID-19 pandemic - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uARqnQ4wCVc>

“They are taking these measures and even after covid, when we get herd immunity, they’re probably going to keep those stuff to keep on tracking us cause it’s already there and they already paid a lot of money for it, so might as well keep it. But I mean, that’s just a theory.” – Bayan, 17 y/o

### **ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY**

After reading Article 15 in a big group, the youth were asked what stood out to them around the topic of freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly:

“What stuck out to me is that your right to protest would be restricted and it needs to conform with your democratic values, so it seems like there is a limit to the extent that you’re able to protest. There’s an emphasis on serving certain values, like public health and in general, the wellbeing of the community over your individual right to assembly or association.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o

“That association is allowed in peaceful assembly, so I think that gives a lot of leeway for a bunch of people to talk about and protest about issues as long as they keep it peaceful. I don’t think a bunch of children that are passionate about a topic would want to risk getting it cancelled or dismantled because of the violence. Most of us are very calm people and that gives us the opportunity to protest about these things because it’s allowed.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

“It looks like there are a lot of exceptions, like you do have a right to protest, however you can’t basically disrupt other people’s safety or things like that. Which I understand, safety of course is very important, but it seems like this could lead to governments having some leverage and space for law and order, and not necessarily in a good way.” – Emily, 16 y/o



## **About Protesting**

The facilitators followed up the conversation with a short video to show an example of children speaking out and protesting:

Children lead Denver marches on day 8 of George Floyd protests -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qGnIYaEDr4>

"I saw how the kids were stepping up and talking about the issue which normally doesn't really happen because they're either unsure of what they have an opinion on and the girl who said that we need to educate our children, I find that's really important because if children are not educated, they can't really pass on their knowledge to their kids." – Sweny, 15 y/o

"I like how it showed a lot of the kids were educated and other kids can be educated and know what they are talking about." – Katie, 16 y/o

"I like the way they made the kids say something about racism and stuff. It's pretty nice to hear what everyone has to say, I think it's important to do that. More people should know about this and talk about what they think about it (the situation)." – Yoma, 12 y/o

The youth were then able to put their knowledge to the test by playing 2 truths – 1 lie, where they needed to find which one of three statements was the lie.

Round 1:

- a) I can protest even though I am a minor.
- b) Protests are legal.
- c) All protests need violence if you want to be heard.

All the youth agreed that c) was the lie.

"I think number 3 is a lie because you can have peace for a protest, it doesn't necessarily have to be violent." – Yoma, 12 y/o

Round 2:

- a) The police are allowed to arrest me for protesting.
- b) I don't have any rights once I am arrested.
- c) I am allowed to take pictures and videos during a peaceful protest.

Everyone agreed the lie was b).

As the facilitators mentioned, a lot of people, even adults, don't know their rights if they get arrested, so they proceeded in telling the youth what they were:

1. You have the right to know why you are being arrested, the police have to tell you the reason for the arrest.

2. You have the right to speak to a lawyer right away, you can stop talking after you have shared your desire to have a lawyer, they can't ask you questions anymore.
3. You have the right to have an adult with you because you are a minor: your mother, your older brother, your cousin, or anyone you choose that is 18 years and older.

### **Why does someone want to protest? What's the goal of protesting?**

"To try to get your point across or to have your voice be heard in situations where your voice isn't exactly heard. Let's say the government doesn't exactly agree with your ideals or you don't side with certain people, because different people have different opinions and different views on different things, so protesting is a method of getting your voice heard. If a large amount of people decides to protest, they can definitely get the attention of the government." – Andy, 16 y/o

"Protesting enables you to have a vehicle for communicating your main point. It's also a really good opportunity to have a unified voice through protesting because it shows a large group of people can be able to unify despite their differences on one topic. I think protesting can also be different, so it's not just people holding demonstrations, you can also have more of an economic protest where for example, you boycott a lot of goods. I think protesting is a really good way to target different areas like policy for a government. If you believe something is wrong, it gives us a lot of opportunity to correct things in our society which we no longer agree with." – Isabelle, 17 y/o

"Protesting is a way for you to stand upon an issue that is going around. I feel like protesting is a way that you can get your voice heard obviously, but protesting can definitely turn violent if there is an issue that is sensitive, and most people don't react very well on sensitive issues. During quarantine, we saw a lot of protests and some were not very peaceful. That's a negative thing about protest, that they can turn violent and get out of control." – Sweny, 15 y/o

"To express away their feelings towards a certain rule or law. It depends if there are a lot of people because for some laws, it's not convenient for them (government) to change it because a bunch of people need it. If we're being real, what's more important is the convenience of the people who have the authority over the minority in this case. If they change something, they're going to have to change something else, and if they change that, there's going to be something else that comes up. It sort of all comes together." – Bayan, 17 y/o

### **Do you have any examples of any recent protests that we heard of or that you participated in?**

"I've been seeing lots of mean protests against Asians since the coronavirus situation and them getting attacked for no reason. Also, 2 for sexual assault and rape victims, a lot of ladies have been going to protest for that. And still for black lives matter and things like that." – Favour, 15 y/o

"I've been seeing a lot of protests connected to police brutality, that ties into racism. Recently I read a book which was called All American Boys, which portrayed what happens when police brutality happens to you and how it affects you mentally. So, it changed my opinion on the whole protest and everything." Sweny, 15 y/o

"I'm not exactly sure if this was a protest, but I remember at some point last year, there was a bunch of teacher strikes going on and at the time as well, my school had a bunch of students walk out of class out of protest. There were a few instances where some people had interactions with the police, but overall, it wasn't a disaster and nothing major happened to people because it was relatively calm with the way they handled things. The point that they did want to make was passed across to the people who had to listen in a peaceful way." – Anslem, 16 y/o

"I was at a protest, it was about Doug Ford and class sizes, and we literally just walked out on the streets, there were chants, and the police did show up, just because people were crossing the road which was unsafe for them." – Katie, 16 y/o

"The walkout was about protesting class sizes, and here we are now with less class sizes and much more virtual school, so protests are efficient. We can express how we feel, but it does take a lot of time for it to actually legislate something." – Bayan, 17 y/o

**What are your emotions towards protests? Are you guys scared, or happy when you see that on TV, that people are regrouping? What do you feel inside?**

"It depends on the protest and it depends on the person and who and what they support. Sometimes when it gets violent, I feel uncomfortable because I don't think that violence is the way to get your point somewhere. I think it depends on who you're supporting and why you're protesting, the reasoning behind it all." – Asmaa, 15 y/o

"Some protests make me very emotional. I remember last summer the Black Lives Matter protests. There was a lot of violence between protesters, that made me feel very uncomfortable and emotional cause black people are already displayed as violent, so that made me feel bad and lots of people had negative things to say about the BLM protests." – Favour, 15 y/o

"Sometimes the way a protest is, in terms of if its violence or nonviolence, can change your perspective on the movement as a whole and derail its meaning. Especially with the BLM protests, a lot of violence escalated and, as a result, police involvement. A lot of people changed their perspective on the movement which was not the point. Generally, if I see a nonviolent youth protest, for me it's really important and it feels invigorating because I think it's a really good way to demonstrate that, especially youth today, are willing to unify and change. For example, the political structure of a country, like with protests in Russia with Navalny and the corruption from the Russian government, I found that really significant for me personally because I'm half Russian, so I thought that was really important and it was something that I enjoyed seeing." – Isabelle, 17 y/o

"During George Floyd protests, there was a lot of violence and that may have been interesting or "fun" to watch on the news, but on Twitter when I saw people in peaceful protests, I found that way more empowering and it gave me hope that maybe we could create change. With the violence, it may have been more interesting to watch, but that just kind of created this fear that there could be a civil war happening in the US." – Kiran, 16 y/o

"Recently there has been an interesting discussion with protests and whether they should be peaceful or not. My point of view at this point is that it's understandable that sometimes protests get violent

because people are so angry and frustrated, and after marching peacefully and no change happens when they march peacefully, there's just this frustration build up and I think that's when more violent protests occur, it's quite controversial though." – Emily, 16 y/o

"How there are different standards around the world on what is considered violent and nonviolent protests, like with the people that were storming the Capitol recently. That is a violent protest, but of course the people in power in different cities and states said they weren't considered violent, because of how they've set standards as to what can be considered violent, whether it's based on either race, religion, or their identity, and the different characteristics that are easy to be discriminated against. I feel like it's prime time for some people when they go into protest, but they diminish what they're trying to protest about because they make them out as violent or as a menace to society. Meanwhile, some are doing even more peaceful protests than the people that are entitled to the same rights, but because they have this privilege, when they do get violent, the protests aren't seen as violent, but seen as passionate." – Anslem, 16 y/o

**Do you guys know any of the restrictions that we have facing our rights to protest because of Covid? For example, if people are diagnosed or waiting test results for Covid, they can't participate in protests.**

"We need to wear masks and not be too close to each other. Everywhere we go in a public place we are required to wear a mask, so why not in a protest because there are thousands of people involved." – Sweny, 15 y/o

**Can you give other ways you can protest during the pandemic while following social guidelines?**

"There could be ways of doing it online like creating educational resources and sharing it around." – Katie, 16 y/o

The youth also came up with a few ways people have been using technology to help them exercise their right to protest during Covid-19, which also helps connect people around the world, through online petitions, social networks, hashtags, sharing images, blogs, etc.

### **About School Clubs: Associating at School**

**Are you in any clubs at school?**

"There's a Black student association club at Lester B. Pearson that focuses on different black issues around the world, we talk about the struggle to educate people more about African and black people, cause when people think about black people, they think African American, so we want to shed light on that. We also talk about not only difference about black people, but different topics affecting the society in this day and age." – Favour, 15 y/o

"It's a club called Newspaper where anyone can come there and participate, writing about something, whatever they're interested in. Something that I read was an article about BLM that our whole team had

worked on. I found it really interesting because it's not just for our school, it's for everyone to read. I think that is another way to get your voice heard and I found that really inspiring." – Sweny, 15 y/o

"At Colonel By, we also have a black excellence club and a safe club which is for people who belong to the LGBTQ community, and we also have a feminism club. And especially with the black excellence club, for Black History Month, they did a lot of outreach and they got in touch with a lot of important community members in the black community to discuss their own perspective on the month and black history. They also prioritize, for example talking about black history and different kinds of inequalities, but they also talk about the achievements of the black community and I felt like it was something really important to cover regarding our current climate." – Isabelle, 17 y/o

"We have a broadcasting thing at school and during February, every week or so, they would have an episode dedicated to a certain subject on black people and how their lives are affected. I found it a very simple, yet very meaningful way to send a message to the whole school." – Asmaa, 15 y/o

"In my English class, every day we would recognize the black heroes around the world. I found out that there are many people who are heroes, and they face a lot of challenges and overcome them, and that's what makes them heroes, they don't have to be famous or anything." – Sweny, 15 y/o

### **What do you think are the goal of clubs in schools and the benefits of those clubs?**

"The main point of clubs is to raise awareness and to allow students that are engaged in the same topics to talk about it." – Asmaa, 15 y/o

"They create a safe environment for people to discuss whatever concerns, like their own community, and it's also a good way for people to meet people who identify in a similar way. And also, for people who don't belong to certain communities who engage with different issues or events that would concern them. I think it's a really good opportunity for spreading awareness, be able to communicate in a safe and controlled environment at school, and for also discovering new interests and passions. It's really beneficial to gaining new skills and new knowledge, and you can also improve your own skills and have different kind of events you want to work on, like perform outreach. I feel like it's something that can be very enriching, and something that the majority of students participate in because the benefits are very obvious." – Isabelle, 17 y/o

"One of the main purposes of these clubs is to have an environment that builds a community where people in those communities can share each other's ideals in a safe space. And also in general for education cause these things like racism are a result of ignorance. So, the clubs are a foundation and starting point for that education cause if you educate one person and that person can talk to someone else about it and in the long run at least everyone hears about it so it's a good starting point to spreading awareness." – Andy, 16 y/o

"I was kind of scared to participate in the clubs, but when I would see them and hear about these clubs and what they were doing, it really inspired me to be there and participate and spread messages, and just interact with people and hear their stories." – Sweny, 15 y/o

"I'm quite lucky at my school we have a lot of clubs, I think there are at least 10 of them, some are environmental based, cultural clubs, a debating club, art clubs. I think it's super beneficial, before I

moved to this school, I didn't have any of this so I'm super surprised and I think it's quite a Canadian thing, but I'm interested to see what other schools are like because I think it's quite good." – Emily, 16 y/o

"My school has a few clubs, some aren't functioning the same or at all because of Covid, a bunch were group based. But they did make some new ones, I think there's a chess and gaming club that works well online, so they made that one, and there used to be a writing club and a drama club that's still working actually and they're doing their stuff online as well." – Anslem, 16 y/o

"These aren't considered clubs, but our school has this TV show thing where they get Grade 12 to make a show talking about the news at the school and teachers, and after that, they would be assigned a project about something that is going on in the world like the George Floyd movement or the Uyghurs Muslims in China. They would have to talk about it and make like a documentary series over a month span and it would just be sick, so many videos about them stating facts." – Bayan, 17 y/o

"A whole bunch of our school's clubs shut down because of Covid, but the ones that are really focusing on right now are of racial protests, indigenous rights, Muslim rights, black lives matter and stuff like that. There's also a bunch of volunteer clubs where we do fundraisers. Most of our clubs are academic based right now, it's about learning new things and different cultures and everything." – Vanessa, 17 y/o

#### **What is the utility of those clubs? Why do you think clubs are useful in school?**

"If it's cultural or academic, you learn new things about the culture for example or learn how to debate better and it also forms a community, and you can meet new people and make new friends." – Kiran, 16 y/o

"I think clubs and extracurricular activities are really important in making friends, especially when you're new it's probably the prime way people make friends when they're new and that's really cool how it works." – Emily, 16 y/o

"It allows you to be more active, more present, you're not just some random kid that can't say nothing until they're 18, you can actually say something. It's just a little contribution in your area, not the world." – Bayan, 17 y/o

"There are clubs that also let you show your skills to other people and teach them how to do what you can do." – Katie, 16 y/o

#### **About Minors in the Workplace: Associating with Work and Harassment at Work**

The facilitators started off by giving some definitions on terms seen in the workplace like "union", "collective agreement", etc. and explaining how adults and minors all have the same rights in the workplace. That youth are protected against discrimination and harassment from managers, colleagues and even customers and no one can treat them differently based on any of their personal characteristics, not even because of their age.

**What do you think when you think about discrimination and harassment at work, and what can you do if you're facing this type of behaviour from someone?**

"When I think about discrimination at the workplace, it can represent itself in many different forms. Sometimes it's not outwardly violent or typical verbal harassment you might experience, it could be smaller things like people underestimating you because of your identity or assuming based on your gender you would be assigned a task more menial. For example, there's a stereotype that for a lot of women if they are working in offices, they are running for coffee or are secretaries. In general, I think that when you are facing discrimination, it's a difficult thing to interact with because sometimes when you are working, you're in a place where you are more disadvantaged to be represented. So, a lot of times people suggest to escalate the issue to the resource department, but it can be something that's difficult to navigate cause it can lower your standing with other people in your workplace or you get assigned with some kind of reputation. We need to make improvements with making people more comfortable to actually feel like they can be represented, and they can actually reach out to higher ups in HR so they can resolve their issues and also feel safe and comfortable at the workplace." – Isabelle, 17 y/o

"What I think you should do if you're discriminated or harassed at work is I think you can file a complaint under the Human Rights Code. I'm not sure if I'm saying the right thing, but I also think it's really hard to get out of that situation in the first place, but I think the next steps would be to file a complaint." – Asmaa, 15 y/o

"If I was working at a store and I'd be facing work harassment, I'd basically ask them to leave the store in a calm manner, but then if they insist, I'd call on the manager to deal with that situation." – Fred, 15 y/o

**Do you think that minors benefit from the exact same protection as adults do at work?**

"When you first get your job as a minor, I think they tend to be a little easier on you because you might not know a lot of things. I volunteered and they taught me how to perform specific tasks, and they just kind of give you attention or a supervisor to be there for you in case you need help. For adults, I feel like they just trust them to know a little bit about their work area since they're applying for that job, because there are certain requirements for you to actually be capable to do that job, so they expect that from you." – Sweny, 15 y/o

"I've volunteered at multiple places, and adults when you're working, they can be rude to you, they think they can take advantage of you and stuff like that. It's just not really a good working experience for a lot of us. And they just are disrespectful. We're looked at as the less responsible ones and adults as the most responsible ones, so no, we're not treated equally." – Favour, 15 y/o

To conclude, the facilitators had the following Kahoot prepared:

True or False? Approximately 75 million children work in dangerous conditions.

10 out of 10 of the youth said True.

Prostitution and slavery are considered dangerous work conditions, but also work that is too physically demanding or require too many hours in a day. Article 32 recognizes the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child 's education, or to be harmful to the child 's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development.

## YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussions that took place during the afternoon, here is what the youth would like to see change in their reality and for future generations of children:

- “They should inform the young people more about our rights and freedoms because most of the stuff that we talked about today, I did not know about and it would have helped a long time ago and it can help more people be more informed.” – Keren, 15 y/o
- “The lack of identity being represented in society and how that was generational. I think because when your parents move to a new country and don’t have a nationality in that country, it causes many rights to be taken away for example, they cannot work or get education because there is no birth certificate or proof of nationality. The government should pay more attention to those victims with lack of identity and offer them rights.” – Anslem, 16 y/o
- “You can be born with a nationality, but then if the government decides to take it away from you, for whatever reason, for example with historical cases with genocide. It’s easier to persecute certain individuals by taking away their passport, therefore their rights that are associated with having a nationality. I find it really important that we solve this area because a lot of people they can go undocumented and be subject to a lot of different kind of abuses that people face when they are not recognized and don’t have the legal protection that a citizen of the country would. I think it’s especially a prominent issue when it comes to topics like human trafficking where people who are undocumented and for whatever reason would not want to be recognized by the law or by the government officially would be subject to a lot of danger when it comes to, for example being exploited for manual labour or for more dark areas like sex trafficking and such.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o
- “I think they should acknowledge that many people died (in residential schools) and in order to do so, they should create some kind of a day for them to celebrate their culture and recognize those children that died and sacrificed their identity for the government.” – Sweny, 15 y/o



- “Give them reserve land with clean water. The indigenous people still don’t have drinkable water even today, and we live in Canada, which makes no sense.” – Flavia, 15 y/o
  
- “More visibility towards our own rights should be communicated for children, and also I think it’s important to communicate with children through different ventures, like communicating through social media; it would give more initiative towards visibility since people these days are knowledgeable about world events from social media. For example, what is happening in different countries or trending on Instagram, or Twitter, and being able to acknowledge which platforms and modes of communication children are most comfortable using or active on to provide them with information and knowledge about their own rights. There is also a misunderstanding between the generations on social media, those barriers are important.” – Isabelle, 17 y/o”  
(Students in the chat box recommended platforms: Twitter, Tik Tok, Instagram)
  
- “One of the things I was thinking about is how most schools right now are using Google classroom and Google docs, and for safety, I don’t think there’s major concern with it right now, but Google isn’t known to be the best in terms of privacy. It’s interesting that right now there’s no real choice, if you want to pass your classes, you have to use Google classroom, email, all those things, and your data is at risk, but you don’t really have a choice.” – Emily, 16 y/o

## PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

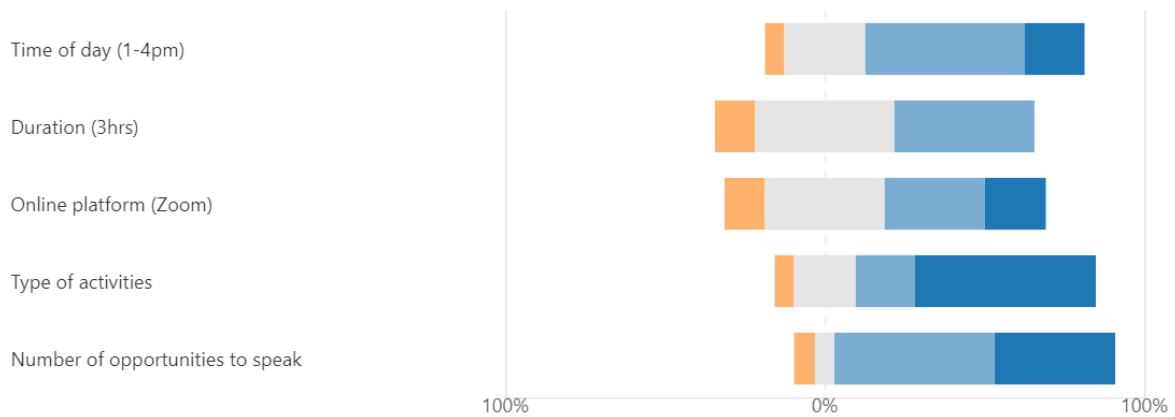
Overall, how did you like the event?

16  
Responses

★★★★☆  
4.31 Average Rating

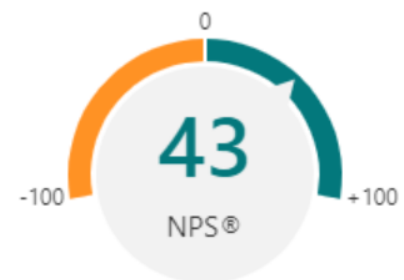
Please tell us how much you liked these aspects of the event:

Hated Disliked Neutral Liked Loved



How likely are you to recommend this event to a friend?

Promoters	9
Passives	5
Detractors	2



### What was your favorite part of the event?

The breakout room on child rights and identity.

The kahoots and discussions between each other

The breakout rooms

Getting to hear people's opinions.

The Kahoot and the opportunities to speak

The breakout rooms where we all had time to discuss were the best part.

When we played kahoot

The first part when we talked about right to identity and right to privacy

Knowing about the rights we have as children because most people aren't educated on that.

the activities like the kahoots

My favourite part of the event is when we discussed about people with no identity and their struggles. I come from a family of refugee parents so I was happy to see people raising awareness. I also liked when we learnt more about children's rights, some that I was never aware of!

The topic of Identity and lack of it

Being able to talk together

Hearing everyone's thoughts

I enjoyed being able to learn about a variety of different topics concerning youth from a legal/societal perspective. I particularly liked how a lot of the topics were very relevant to youth (privacy issues, our legal rights as youth to work, youth rights for protesting).

I liked that it was driven by youth.

### What did you learn today?

child rights, identity acceptance and no identities, privacy, and the right to protest.

I learnt a lot on discrimination and rights of children, as well as identity and privacy and being aware and conscious of where you take a step on the internet.

That your privacy is important

-I learned that student workers have the same rights just as adults

-More about residential schools

I learned a lot of things such as the type of rights we have in a work, the kinds of rights in a protest, what is an identity.

I learned that the Convention of the Rights of the Child applies to children aged 0-17.

How to not put too much information on the internet.

That there are other ways to protest other than walking out in large groups as it encourages violence and going against covid rules

That I have the right to privacy and I also learned LGBTQ terms which I did not know before.

i learned that employers should take into account and remember that potential employees are students

Children's rights, Different ways people identify, Residential schools, Privacy etc.

I learn about the different resources children have when it comes to rights of identity and protests and their positions in work

About privacy, protests and rights.

I learnt about protesting, my rights at work, privacy (online and in person) and identities.

I learned about how youth are entitled to the same protections/rights as adults when working. I also learned about how the pandemic has impacted our privacy.

I learnt about my rights as a child.

**Additional comments or suggestions:**

Very friendly

Nothing else, the event in general was pretty informative on the topic. I learned some things.

Thank you guys so much. I really loved this event

I like how our voices get to be heard for once! Most people don't take minors seriously.

I think that there should be more screen-sharing time for written documents. It was sometimes difficult to retain the information covered and then immediately discuss it afterwards.

I thought that there weren't enough opportunities for the discussion to develop and flow. The questions were often not open-ended and hence the conversations weren't particularly insightful, although we did learn some interesting facts about our rights as children.

## FINAL WORDS

Throughout the afternoon, the youth were able to discuss amongst themselves and discover quite a few things based on Articles 8 and 15 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Here are some of the many things they have learned:

- That people, even adults, need to be educated more about all these children's rights and how to deal with them.
- That some people have no papers, therefore no identity to the eyes of governments, and therefore are denied some of their rights.
- That transgender and non-binary people can legally change their gender on their official Canadian documents.
- That the last residential school closed in 1996 and that the government is working on reconciling with the indigenous population.
- That you shouldn't share too much information online because anyone can use that information in a negative way, even friends. Lots of websites and social media platforms also track your information, and though they need your consent, they don't always have it.
- That the pandemic brought on a whole new aspect to online privacy with virtual schooling, facial recognition and contact tracing for Covid, dangers of being more present and active online because of isolation during lockdowns, certain programs not always being safe and secure to transfer information, etc.
- That protests don't always have to be violent or through demonstrations in the streets to be effective, and youth can also have their voices heard through these protests.
- That school clubs are a good way to make friends, develop your skills, learn new things about specific topics and be exposed to different perspectives.
- That minors have the same rights in the workplace as adults, and employers must be considerate towards students and give importance to their studies.

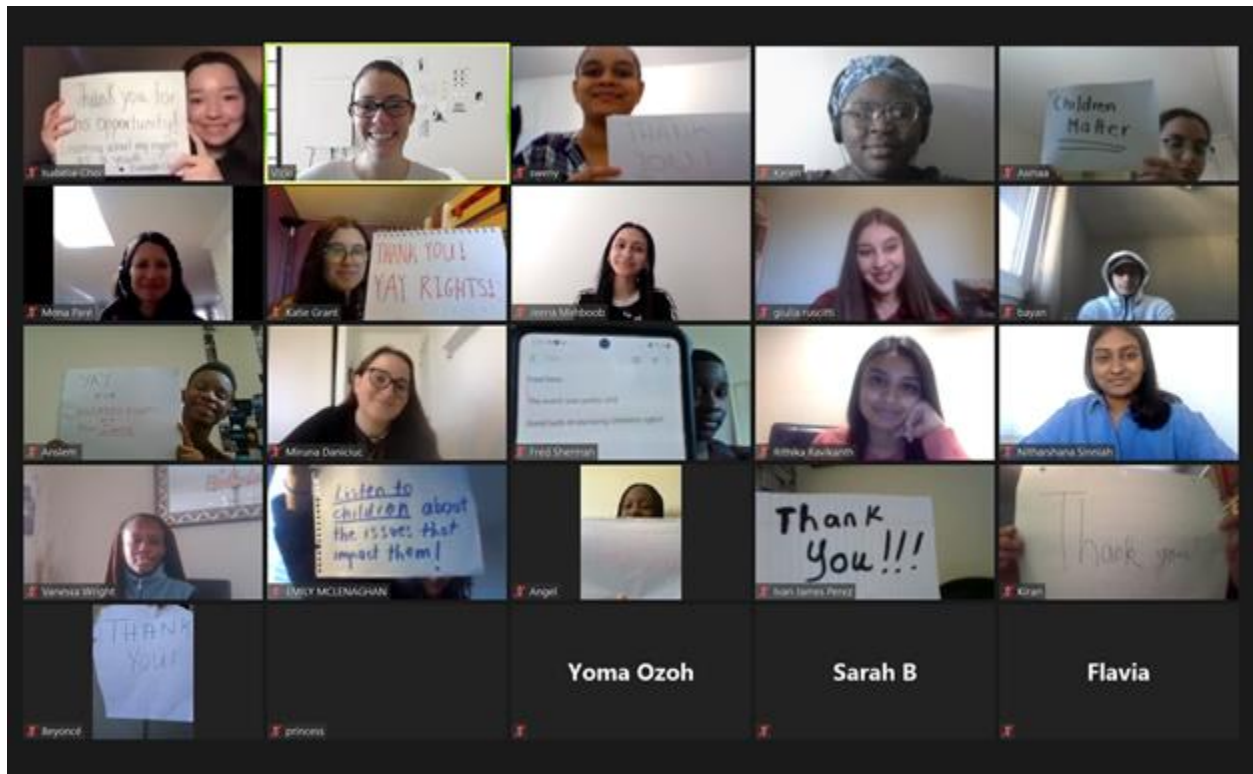
The youth really seemed to have enjoyed their time at the "Shaking the Movers" event, as it is apparent through the comments on the next page, and a group picture was taken at the end to commemorate the event. They also expressed an interest in participating in other similar events to voice their opinions and ideas around different issues that concern them.

“Thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend, I really enjoyed the event. Have a good day!” – Sarah, 16 y/o

“Thanks so much for the opportunity, learned a lot about my rights as a child. This really opened my eyes to new things.” – Favour, 15 y/o

“Hello, thanks for having me at the event, it was an amazing experience.” – Anslem, 16 y/o

“Thank you for the event, it was very interesting, fun and very insightful too!” – Asmaa, 15 y/o



*Non legible messages to take note of:*

*“Thank you for this opportunity! Learning about my rights as a youth!”*

*“Yay for children’s rights and their events!”*

*“The event was pretty chill. Good luck on pursuing children’s rights.”*

## APPENDIX A – EVENT POSTER



# SHAKING THE MOVERS

If you are between the ages of 12 and 17, are passionate and like to use your voice to amplify issues young people are facing in today's society, we want to hear from you on children's rights of freedom of speech, of association, of identity, etc.!

**MARCH 20, 2021**  
**1 - 4 PM**  
**VIA ZOOM**

**To register:**  
**<http://bit.ly/37LBsEF>**

### **EARN:**

- *Volunteer hours*
- *Monetary compensation of 20\$ for active participation*
- *Bonus 10\$ for referring a friend who participates*

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

**[vtrudel@cscvanier.com](mailto:vtrudel@cscvanier.com) OR 613-297-9842 OR**

**<https://carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre/shaking-the-movers/>**



Landon Pearson Resource Centre  
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and Children's Rights



Centre des services  
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