



SHAKING THE MOVERS

A Report to Give Children and Youth a Voice Regarding Oceans and Climate Change



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Shaking the Movers (STM): Report

Overview

STM Kwayhquitlum Middle School Facilitation

Shaking the Movers (BC)- Kwayhquitlum Middle school facilitation was held on March 16th, 2018. The purpose of the workshop was to engage youth in dialogue in regards to children's rights, climate change and oceans through the facilitation of educational activities and opportunities for open dialogue. This workshop was intended to raise the youths' awareness about children's rights and to provide the participants with the chance to have their recommendations, thoughts and concerns regarding climate change heard. The facilitation took place in Kwayhquitlum Middle School in Port Coquitlam, where participants were encouraged to think creatively to provide recommendations for how change can occur at individual, family, and community levels.



Demographics

The youths involved in this Shaking the Movers (STM) event included male and female students at the grade eight level. The participants, who are from the Port Coquitlam area, were not informed of the STM topic prior to March 16th and were encouraged to draw on personal experience and understanding of climate change and oceans, and how things like pollution affect people and the planet. Youth facilitators (1 male, 5 females) were 21-24 years old, all of whom are current SFU Criminology students.

Purpose of Report

This report represents the voices, opinions and recommendations of the youths who participated in the facilitation, and will outline the activities and discussions that occurred during this time. The purpose of the report is to hear the voices of the children/youths, the discussions that took place and the recommendations made by the youth participants. The focus of this report is on

their opinions about pollution in the ocean and recommendations at the individual, family, and community levels to help with this issue.

Introduction

Shaking the Movers

Shaking the Movers (STM) is a youth driven workshop that gives children and youth the opportunity to voice their opinions in a safe space. This space is created by establishing guidelines such as having only one speaker at a time and engaging in active listening when not speaking. In this safe space, participants' voices are listened to, and they are given a platform to give their recommendations and unique input on an important children's rights issue.

Friday, March 16th, 2018



Opening Circle

The facilitation began with a brief acknowledgement of the unceded territory of Kikwetlem First Nations people and thanks was given to them for sharing their land with us. Kwayhquitlum Middle School derives its name from the Kikwetlem First Nations people.

Brief descriptions of children's rights were told to the participants. Children's rights are a specific collection of human rights aimed to protect all people under 18 years of age. They are laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC was adopted by the United Nations as a universal standard for human rights for children on November 20th, 1989. The purpose of universal children's rights is to ensure that all children enjoy the protection of their civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights. The UNCRC has three goals:

To help children *reach their full potential*

To *protect children*

And to foster *mutual respect*





One facilitator explained that after the Shaking the Movers mini, the children's voices would be brought to the G7 in Ontario for the first time. The G7, also known as the Group of Seven, is an informed grouping of seven of the world's advanced economies. The G7 includes Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, Italy, and the United States.

From each of the G7's leaders, ministers and policy makers all come together to build a consensus and set trends each year on some of today's most challenging global issues. This is the **first time** that children's voices will be heard and taken into consideration at the G7. The theme for this year's most challenging global issue is climate change and oceans.

Shaking the Movers is based on a model similar to the Restorative Justice model, through which participants sit in a circle and have a platform to voice their opinions in a safe space. The participants in this STM were invited to say whatever came to their mind first and to participate actively. The talking piece used in this workshop was a seahorse, which represents patience, protection and content. It also represented our ocean theme. The participants used the talking piece as a tool to have the opportunity to speak and be heard when holding it. The individual

holding the talking piece could speak while other participants listened. It was explained to the circle that participants had the right to be heard, to be listened to, and to pass if they did not feel like sharing verbally with the group.

Next, participants were asked to introduce themselves using the following prompts: What is your name? What animal do you identify with right now? What is a value that is important to you within your classroom and school community? Animals identified by the participants varied:

Seahorse

Whale

Dog

Cat

Sloth

Panda

Polar Bear

Bird

Cheetah

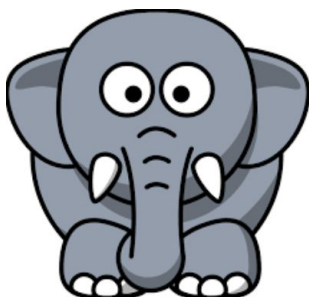
Guinea Pig

Wolf

Elephant

Sea Monkey

Sea Turtle



Values Charter

We created a values charter amongst the participants within the opening circle. All participants were asked what value is important to them and within their school community. The aim of this question was to create a safe space for the voices of the participants. Values mentioned were:



After the opening circle, the participants were split into three groups for the first activity. Each group was run by two facilitators. The purpose of the activity was for the participants to gain a better understanding of children's rights. There are 54 rights article within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Children (UNCRC). The activity focused on five that were important to the Shaking the Movers process and to ocean pollution and climate change.

UNCRC Articles used in the activity:

- Article 12: You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.
- Article 31: You have the right to play and to rest.
- Article 24: You have the right to the best healthcare possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.
- Article 19: You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.
- Article 6: You have the right to be alive.

The groups played a charades game during which the participants tried to guess the rights as acted out by their peers. While one member acted, group members guessed what the main idea of that right was. The group members took turns acting out rights article from the UNCRC. The Rights Game allowed participants to engage in a fun group activity.

Debrief

The rights game was followed by a small debriefing within the three small groups. The questions that were asked included:

Did you know about these rights?

The majority of the responses were similar to one another. Some stated that they were **not aware** of the UNCRC and its 54 articles. However, a number of the students were aware of various rights included in the UNCRC, and explained that they had previously learned about children's rights. Participants expressed **interest over UNCRC sections that protect mental health**. Some

of the students voiced **concerns about the possibility that rights can be taken away** from people in certain contexts.

How did learning these rights make you feel?



The students stated that learning about their rights made them feel **“safe and secure”**, and **“like [they have] more of a voice”**. There was general agreement that **children’s rights give children power and support**, because there is a requirement for adults to treat them with respect and act with their best interests in mind.

In regard to *Article 12* (You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously), the students expressed support of this right. One student stated that they think **this right is very important**. There was a general consensus that adults often do not take children seriously just because of their age, which can be frustrating. The students said that **it is important for adults to listen to children and youth, because when children and youth are heard, “it’s like you matter”**.

During the discussion of *Article 31* (You have the right to play and rest), some students explained that they did not feel that students at their school had to be concerned about the protection of this right, because they are given adequate time to play and rest. The students added that, although they enjoy this right, **many children in other countries are not given time to play and rest**, and this may be because of economic problems or child labour. It was acknowledged that many children do not receive the same degree of UNCRC protection that the students of Kwayhquitlum receive.

When discussing *Article 24* (You have the right to the best healthcare possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well), the students talked about how although they may be protected by the UNCRC, there are **children in other parts of the world who do not have this right**. For example, in their classroom, they were learning about Cape Town where there is limited water, and people are only allowed a certain amount of water each day. The students expressed concern about the people in Cape

Town and their inability to access clean water. One of the students said, **“If you have the right to fresh and clean water, isn’t that in the way of that right?”**

When discussing the right to nutritious food, the students talked about what is really in the food they buy from the store. They said that you do not always know what ingredients make up the products you buy, and that you cannot really know if you are not there when it is packaged. Nutrition differences in the food eaten by people in different households was also discussed. The students said that **some parents may not be able to afford healthy food**, and as a result will buy the cheapest food, which is often less nutritious. The students felt that this possibility of less nutritious food is unfair, because parents should not be allowed to prevent their children from getting proper nutritious meals. They elaborated that **the government should play a role in ensuring that children are provided with clean water and nutritious food.**

Of their own access to healthcare, students said that **“in Canada healthcare isn’t an issue”** because Canadians can freely visit a doctor when they are sick or injured. It is easy for anyone to receive the treatment they need when they need it. The students also said that some children who move to Canada still may not receive the best healthcare possible because their parents may not understand Canada’s system of universal healthcare.

Discussions of *Article 19* (You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind) brought up the topics of education and parents. Students said that children who are unable to go to school and whose education suffers as a result have had this right infringed upon. The students also expressed **concern over parents who are not capable of properly caring for their children**. Parents with addiction, parents without resources, and young (teenage) parents were specifically mentioned as being unable or unwilling to take care of children, which is in violation of this right. The students mentioned that in the case that a family member is causing a child to be hurt or mistreated, there are various people who children can go to for help. These include other family members, family doctors, teachers, counsellors and higher authorities. There was **resistance to the idea of going to the police for help because of fear that the police would separate the family** instead of helping to solve the problem and taking into consideration how separating the family will affect the children. Reasons students gave for

this fear included: “**you just want your parent to get help, not taken away**”, “**you ... want it to be resolved and keep your family together**”, and “**having the parent taken away can have a big toll on the mental state of a child**”.



How can other children become more educated on their rights?

The students stated that there must be **more discussion about children's rights**. Many of the students involved in this STM had been previously unaware of their rights, and felt that they “**still have a lot more to learn**”. They suggested that people like policy makers and STM facilitators should visit more schools to educate children on their rights under the UNCRC, because **knowing their rights gives them “confidence in who they are and what they can do”**.

What do you think about the relationship between having rights and having responsibilities?

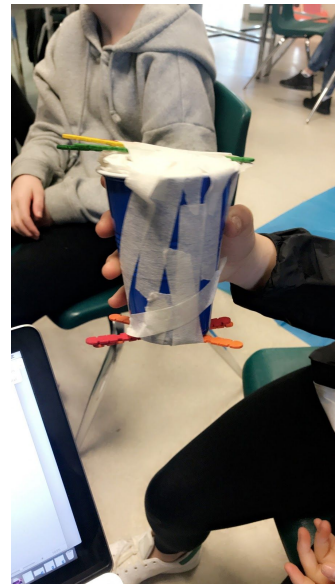
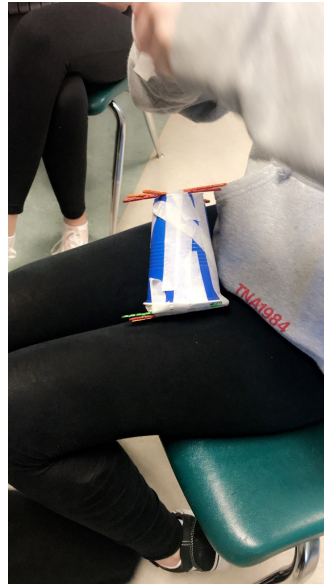
When the students learned that for each right they have, there is a corresponding responsibility, their responses were positive. The students felt that it is fair for them to have responsibilities. They said that **if you are given something then you need to respect that thing**. It will not just be given to you; you need to care for it and be responsible with it.

Egg Drop

We then introduced a fun and creative activity to teach the youth about ocean pollution. We provided each of the three groups with an egg, which represented their Earth. Their job was to protect their ‘Earth’ and provide it with care. We taught the participants about the issues of ocean pollution by asking them facts or questions about climate change and oceans. For each fact or question they got correct they were given a piece of material. Each material given is used to protect their “earth” (egg). Materials and questions that followed the materials included:

- Cup: How much of the Earth does the ocean make up?
 - *Answer: 70%*
- Tape: Over 1 million seabirds and 100 thousand sea mammals are killed by pollution every year?
 - *Answer: True*

- Popsicle sticks: The trash island is twice the size of which American state?
 - *Answer: Texas*
- Toilet paper: There are approximately 1.5 billion pounds of trash which enters the ocean each year?
 - *Answer: False - the answer is 1.4 billion pounds*



Debrief

How do you think ocean pollution affects us?

It pollutes water

Animals die

Certain animals might be targeted by certain material in the ocean- fish might get caught in plastic and can go extinct

Kills fish we need to eat

Cases air pollution

Lots of people throw garbage and recycling in the ocean. It directly affects marine life

Risking the lives of marine animals

Some of the fish that we get can get polluted and we cannot eat it. Same case with water

Recommendations

With every right you have a responsibility. Therefore, we asked the participants to think about the rights they learned earlier, and share what they could do to fulfill their responsibility?

We assigned each group to provide recommendations for either individuals, family, or classroom community. We asked the participants to give three answers for each of the levels:

1) Individual

- Try recycling before throwing it into the garbage
- Use paper instead of plastic
- Don't use saran wrap, plastic bags, or one-use items. If you do, re-use them.

2) Family

- Use glass containers. Not plastic anything
- Eat take out. Less to reduce trash. Cook!
- Pick up trash in public spaces!

3) Classroom

- Repurpose plastic water bottles. Example: use it as a door stopper
- Educate your classmates
- Tell your teacher to use less plastic



Better recycling system: different people going around classrooms collecting things

Reduce your use of plastic within the classroom

Instead of buying plastic water bottles, use reusable water bottles

Use the recycling bin more and making sure your classmates use it

Closing Circle

One of the facilitators closed the circle with the same talking piece we used for the opening circle- seahorse. Participants were asked:

What is one thing that stood out to you or learned new today?

Learned more about rights and how there are rights and responsibility – if we're getting a right there's a responsibility that comes with it

A lot of fish die each year

I feel bad for all the fish that die each year

I learned that we do have a lot of rights

Learned about rights

Children are obligated to have the best healthcare

Children have rights

There is a right to live

As youths we have many rights

1.4 billion pounds of garbage go into the ocean each year

There is a trash island twice as big as Texas

Surprised about the trash island because Texas is really big

There are a lot of fish and mammals that die each year

