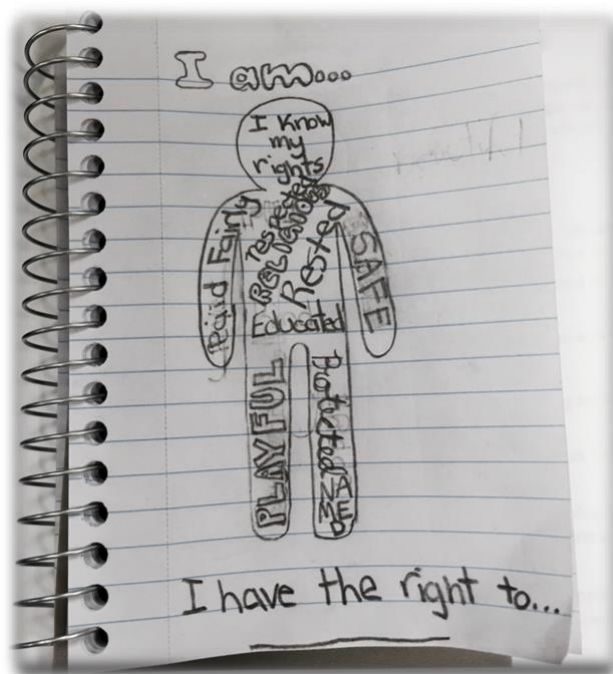




Shaking the Movers 2018 Children's Rights and Discrimination Ottawa



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



Shaking the Movers 2018

Children's Rights and Discrimination

Ottawa

The purpose of this report is to highlight the voices of young people who participated in a workshop on children's rights and discrimination on November 17, 2018. It records the experience of a group of young people who were supported in the exercise of Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child: the right to take part in important civil and political processes with the assurance that their voices will be heard and valued.



I'm not a future leader; I'm a leader now. I put down future leader as who I am not because right now I'm a leader—I don't need to be someone in the future. Adults will always say you'll be something in the future and I'm someone now.

~

The common theme here is our acceptance to learn things and we have common values to try and change the world and 'shaking the movers' and we want to shake the future and foresee these rights and make the future right for you and other people.



The Shaking the Movers Model

Shaking the Movers (STM) is a model for collaborative consultation with children and youth on public policy produced by the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights housed at Carleton University. This model is premised on the position that the authentic participation of young people in decisions affecting their lives is necessary for the best possible policy outcome. Consequently, at Shaking the Movers events, the voices of young people are the centre of all discussions with youth facilitators assisting in the creation of safe, collaborative spaces. Furthermore, young people's experience with meaningful dialogue with the "movers" of society not only improves outcomes but enhances the self-confidence and the capability of young people to contribute to the world around them. At these workshops, we enable children and young people to "have the floor," to present their unique perspectives and experiences, and to provide specific recommendations and input related to a children's rights theme.

Core Values of the Model

- Well-prepared
- Focused on the youth
- Rights-based
- representation to the extent possible
- commitment to young people, to the process, and to communication is obligatory

http://www.landonpearson.ca/uploads/6/0/1/4/6014680/shaking_the_movers_model.pdf

For more information about Shaking the Movers and to view past reports, visit www.carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre



Hon. Landon Pearson on Discrimination

Non-Discrimination: All rights for all children

The idea that all children have rights no matter who they are or where they come from is one of the most compelling cross-cutting principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the years since it was unanimously adopted at the UN in 1989, the CRC has challenged governments and child-serving organizations as well as individuals to rethink the place of children within the human family. The fact that the CRC has been ratified by every member of the United Nations, except for the United States, and that 196 States Parties, as they are known, are prepared to undergo international scrutiny with respect to their compliance with its articles is a sure indicator that there is world-wide acceptance, at least at an official level, of the concept of children as persons. Making sure that their rights as are fully respected remains, however, a huge challenge.

But what does it mean for children to have human rights? Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948 by the countries that had come together after the end of the Second World War to prevent another one from ever taking place, reads “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” At the time that was not actually true so the idea of human rights is in reality a human construct, reflecting an agreement among many peoples and nations that the infliction of enormous pain and suffering on other human beings does not bring about the peace and security that all need in order to have meaningful lives. It was the gross inhumanity that characterized the first half of the last century, including two world wars, that motivated nations from around the world to come together in 1948 to adopt this Declaration and since human wrongs can only be modified by articulating the right ways in which we should relate to one another, the Declaration set in motion the negotiation within the United Nations of a whole set of human rights treaties and conventions to address the different sets of circumstances in which people are not treated as “free and equal”. Among the first was a Convention on Refugees and another for the elimination of racial discrimination. There are also important conventions against torture and genocide. There is, of course, a Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and a more recent one that addresses the concerns of persons with disabilities. CEDAW was adopted in 1979 and a decade later came the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizing that children, owing to their age and maturity and their vulnerabilities, have rights to special protections and guidance, and that these rights belong to every single one of them

Article 2 of the CRC reads:

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parents or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, birth, or other status.



2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians or family members.

The message of Article 2 is very clear but there remain far too many cases both in Canada and abroad where it is not being heard. Children are suffering greatly in areas of armed conflict such as Yemen and Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, parts of Africa and Latin America where the political attitudes or religious beliefs of their parents make them innocent victims. In many parts of the world children are forcibly separated from their families, trafficked, recruited into armed conflict or hard labour or prostitution. Children everywhere continue to be ignored in adult decision-making. This is painfully the case with respect to climate change where the questionable choices of grown-ups will have long-term effects on their children's future lives. In Canada, Indigenous children continue to be discriminated against and so are racialized children. LGBTQ2 children encounter many barriers as do children with disabilities and there are other children who suffer from negative stereotypes imposed on them not only by adults but also by other children. Progress is being made but the voices of children themselves need to be heard ever more strongly. Shaking the Movers XI provides an opportunity for children and young people to raise their voices about what they see happening or are experiencing themselves. And hopefully, to share ideas and suggestions about what more can be done at a practical level to break down barriers and promote both the richness of our diversity and greater inclusion in the human family to which we all belong.

Landon Pearson, September 12, 2018





Ottawa Workshop on Discrimination

November 17th, 2018

The Ottawa 2018 STM on Discrimination was a one-day workshop that brought 12-17 year olds from across Ottawa together at the Vanier Community Centre. Like at all Shaking the Movers conferences, this event created a space for young people to express their views without anyone over the age of 30 present. Youth facilitators guided discussions among the participants and had great success in making the conference a welcoming and safe environment. In just a few short hours, young people connected and revealed personal insights from their own experiences of discrimination as well as the many forms of exclusion they have witnessed. This report highlights some of those revelations as well as brings to light the recommendations that sprang from the voices of the young people present.

Convention on the Rights of the Child Youth-Identified Articles on Discrimination

Article 1 Everyone under 18 has these rights	Article 2 No child should be treated unfairly on any basis	Article 7 The right to a name
Article 8 The right to an identity	Article 14 The right to choose your own religion and beliefs	Article 16 The right to privacy
Article 19 The right to be protected from being hurt or mistreated	Article 28 The right to a good quality education	Article 29 The right for education to develop your talents and abilities
Article 30 The right to practice your own culture, language and religion	Article 31 The right to play and rest	Article 32 The right to be safe and paid fairly
Article 42 The right to know your rights		



Morning Workshop

Learning about Children's Rights

The morning workshop was devoted to an exploration of the Convention on the Rights of the Child broadly. Participants were then asked to think about the ways in which discrimination reflects a violation of children's rights. Unfortunately, this workshop revealed, once again, that children are largely unaware of the Convention on the Rights of the Child before attending a Shaking the Movers event. As the young people highlighted in their recommendations, this situation must change.

Activity 1: Getting to Know You Bingo

Participants wandered around the room meeting people in order to fill out their get to know you "Bingo Card." In the process, young people learned more about what makes the participants unique as well as learning about their commonalities.



B	I	N	G	O
Can Juggle	Saw a live concert in the past year (Whom did they see?)	Plays a fall sport (What sport?)	Wears the same size shoe	Will sing "Row, Row, Row, Your Boat" (Have them do so)
Has been to the movies in last 2 weeks (What did they see?)	Read 3 or more books in the past 3 months (Which book did they like best?)	Does a good impression of a famous person (Whom did they impersonate?)	Has been in a drama production (What was their most recent show?)	Have a computer at home
Worked a part time job this summer (Where?)	Favorite food is pizza	Has a birthday in the same month as you	Has traveled out of the U.S.A. in the past year (Where?)	Went to a Tiger, Platoon, Liar, or Redwings game in the past year
Can do a cartwheel	Knows a clean joke (Have them tell you)	Has a different eye color than your own	Plays a musical instrument (What instrument?)	Watches "Will and Grace" or "Friends"

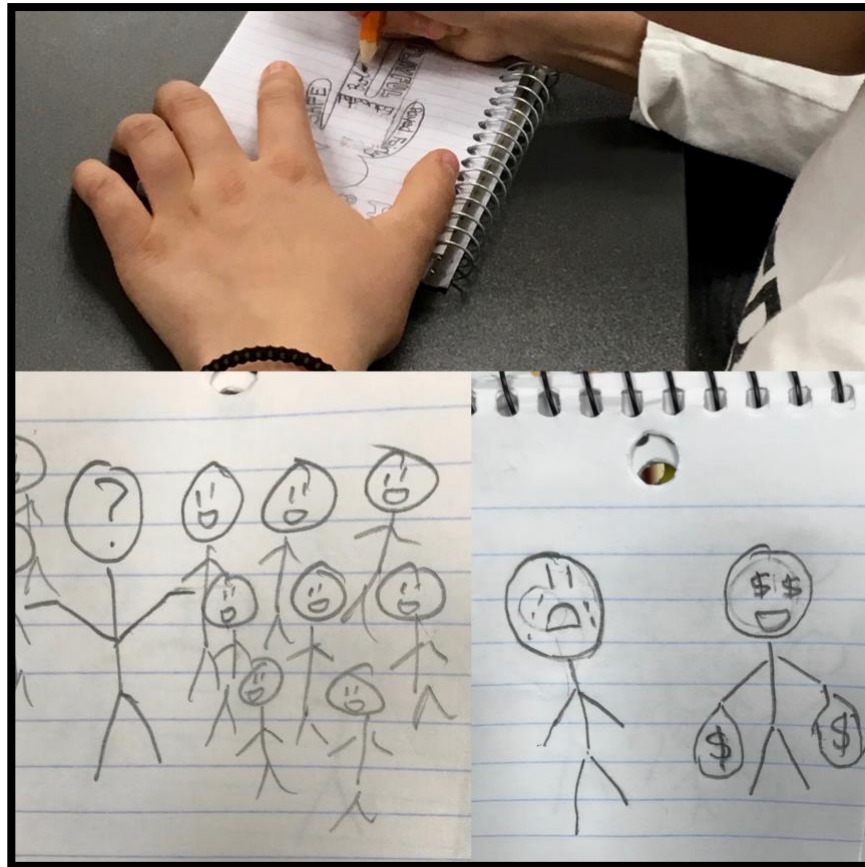


Activity 2: Rights Charades





Activity 2: Drawing Rights Discrimination



In the Words of Young People

I learned about the right to play and rest...that's pretty cool.

I learned a lot of people here have the same values and morals as me.

I learned a lot more about the articles.

I learned about everyone and their perspectives on the world and how they would change the world. It showed me other ways one can engage with the world. Other peoples' perspectives are really interesting.



I didn't know about my rights. I thought that if you want to know your rights, it's your job to find out, but actually, I have the right for someone to teach me about them.

I learned about other people's perspectives and that it's easy to say what we want to do but a lot more difficult to put that into action. I love this idea of an open space where everyone can come together and put together an action plan to create change.

I learned about all of these rights, I didn't even know this existed before.

It's important that more kids know about where they can find their rights.

Seeing the Issue and Working for Change

In the final activity of the morning, participants shared some stories about discrimination that they had witnessed or experienced themselves. They were then asked to describe the super power they would want to have to improve the world we all live in.

Protection from being hurt and mistreated is so important because it's not fair to live life thinking that people will hurt you.

Women still don't get paid as much as men—it's not fair that women are discriminated against.

In my class, a girl is discriminated upon because of her culture and it hurt me to hear that because it's not right.

Children don't know their rights.



I know people who are discriminated upon because of their religion and it's unacceptable.

I didn't know women were paid less than men. It's not fair and we need to change things.



My superpower could be that I wish I had a million hands because if I did I would be able to finish my homework fast and also write different documents and research articles that would help law makers make a better place for children.

I would want super strength so that I could do all the work for children in sweatshops and give them a home and human rights and needs and everything they need to live.

Immortality would be my strength. If I can't die then I can do anything. I can stop a robbery if no police are there and I can help people. It's hard to stand up for rights because you might be scared that someone might hurt you.

I would be able to read minds. A lot of people have difficulty speaking their minds and it would be helpful to understand how they are feeling and their view points on things for people who

are scared to share their experiences on discrimination because they might be judged on what they say. If someone is non-verbal and they can't speak, this would help them especially.

The power to listen. It's important to listen to young people.

The ability to time travel. I would like to change some of the unfortunate events that happened in the past to make this world somewhat of a better place.

The closest thing we have for time travel is history class. Knowing what happened prior in history helps us shape the future.

The ability to read faster. Knowledge is power and I would want to read and know everything and learn everything. Once you are educated you have the ability to make the world a better place.

If I had a superpower, it would be to pause. Article 31, the right to play and rest. That's something that looking back I have taken for granted. Looking back at times in my childhood as well, there's some memories that are really special and getting to just pause.



The ability to translate and understand all the different languages across the world. Under article 30, many children do not have access to the right to education. I would want to bring their voices to the global world and project their voices which can be really hard.

I would remove all the hate from all people. I want people to be happy in the community. Hate comes out of fear. All of the abuse of articles in the CRC stem from hate in some way. We're all different but if we can learn from each other and see each other eye to eye that can help make a better society for people.

I wish I had the ability to help anyone and make them happy.

If I had a superpower, I would time travel because if you look back in history, what we are dealing with now is a consequence of what we did in the past.

My super power would be to take a break and rest and regain energy.

Afternoon Workshop 1

Identity and Discrimination

The first of three thematic workshops focused on the theme of identity and discrimination. Before the participants began the structured activities on this topic, the facilitators felt it was important to have a general discussion on what identity meant to the participants.



How you act

**Who you are
and your beliefs**

Self-Expression

Ever changing

What makes you, you

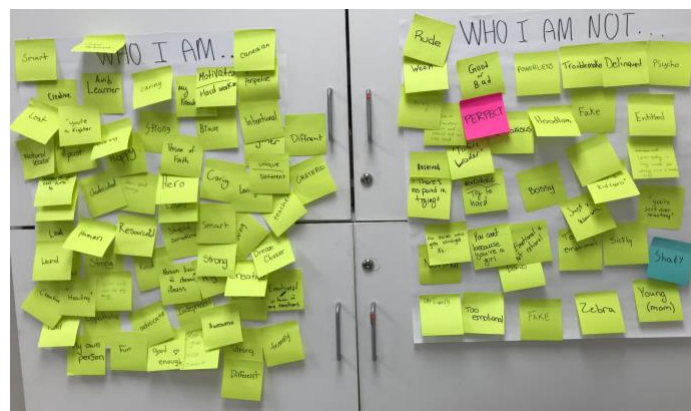
It evolves as you grow

**Not a statistic set of
characteristics**

What you think

What is Identity?

After this discussion on identity participants were asked to write down on sticky notes what others think of them or what others have said to them in regards to their identity. Next, participants were asked to write on a stick note how they see themselves and/or how they would like the world to see them.



What Discrimination Looks Like



In the Words of Young People

How did it feel to write about who you are?



Good for writing who you are but bad for writing who I am not

I have struggled with mental illness in the past, it was difficult to distinguish what word went on what sheet...it felt really opening to finally be able to write who I am then writing down the negative notes down and say that is not how I am willing to be looked at anymore.

I'm not a future leader; I'm a leader now. I put down future leader as who I am not because right now I'm a leader—I don't need to be someone in the future. Adults will always say you'll be something in the future and I'm someone now.

Writing down the negative ones, my old self would have put it down as who I am not (like weird) but now I realize that's who I am and that's okay.

People assume there is an Asian stereotype that all Asians are smart...I'm an Asian that doesn't get As.

For someone to say that you're just a kid, it makes a barrier to who they can or can't be. You're just a girl means that's all that you are and that's not good enough. Or you're just a kid. Yes, I'm a kid but it doesn't mean that I can't break barriers and be my own person. It fits into discrimination because we're always being told who we can or can't be or what we're expected to be. It's a huge part of identity discrimination.

I'm an over thinker but I always get judged by it. I feel that it's just part of me. I always get judged by teachers and friends, who say you should not be like that. When I try to explain, I don't think it's a negative thing but they tell me I'm wrong. They say overthinking is like a mental illness. It's not something to be ashamed of.

It was really about perception for me. I wrote out two separate lists. I wanted to write broken because that's what I was told I was. When I was writing out my list, I wanted to write down broken *and* healing. In society, there are so many negatives that we forget to focus on the positives. I am someone who has struggled and who is healing; Finding who I am from the broken pieces. Sometimes you just have to see the best in people. It's difficult but you want to see the more positive side in you. You faced something, yes, but you overcame it. Focus on your strengths. We can define ourselves as broken and a negative or as healing and strong.

I wrote unfriendly because I don't like talking to new people. My friends say I'm friendly but people who are new judge me before they really know me.

In the Words of Young People
What are the barriers to your self-expression?



Self-doubt

Society and the media. They portray this image that you have to look and act in a certain way. When you're different, people paint you as weird. I feel that the media controls society and people and plays a big role in everything.

The media perpetuates stereotypes; the belief is that if the media is portraying it, it has to be right.

People telling you that you're confused or too young to make a decision about your identity. That takes away your right to self-express and it's really damaging. You spend your whole life thinking "why bother?"

In TV shows black female characters always have straight hair as well as the other girls that I hung out with. That makes me feel like I have to straighten my hair every single day.

All my friends have a superhero of their background on TV and I have no one.

The media really builds up a lot of people but tears down a lot of others. It's only now they starting to get Disney princesses that have a different skin colour.

A lot of people say this person isn't dark enough or slightly less black or Asian in this particular photo. I get where they're coming from but that's also tearing down a positive initiative. A strive for the better gets torn down because it's not perfect. Society needs to be happier that change is happening and not get bogged down in the nitty gritty...yet.



Action Statements from Participants



I need to be more independent, a lot less selfish and appreciate what I have
I want change, acceptance, and people who understand me

I need to be “normal”
I want to be accepted for who I am

I need to know my rights
I want to be a better person

I need to believe in myself more and be more confident
I want to work harder to achieve my goals

I need to be accepted for who I am not through what others want me to be. Sometimes on an assignment when I don’t do as well as I usually do, people say “oh that’s not you, you need to do more and push harder.” Sometimes we get tired and its fine not to be perfect all the time.
I want to be a better person always. There’s no ending with being a better person. We always have to push ourselves to be more.

I need to manage my time more wisely, to be okay with who I am, learn to live in the moment, and meet more people
I want love and acceptance in the world, for people to have empathy, equality, and change to make the world a better place.





Recommendations to the Movers

Support Shaking the Movers

- ✚ Continue more programs like Shaking the Movers. I think it's really good that you guys are actually talking to kids and taking their ideas
- ✚ Expand and try to get Shaking the Movers to every city

Partner

- ✚ Partner with smaller NGOs and let youth take initiatives. Let's have a big room with everyone together where you can see all points of view.
- ✚ Keep up the good work but also work together and don't separate. Do things together.

Keep the Conversation Moving

- ✚ Get the conversation moving. I feel that writing is an excellent way to get thoughts down but also think about how you can connect with people on a personal level to help them understand
- ✚ It would be a good idea to talk about what we are good at, bad at and talk to our peers to help us grow
- ✚ It's so important to keep the conversation going. We should start rights education and listening to young people from grade 3 and do it once every three month.

Discrimination and the Economy



Not being treated equally with others—in my old school some of the teachers refused to help me because I am not a native English speaker. They refused to help me when I saw they would help other students.

Discrimination is viewing people who are poor as lazy or saying that they deserve to be where they are.

There's a lot of talented young people that come from low income communities and they don't get the same chance to engage in the same activities.

For sports, some young people can't participate because of financial constraints and it's not fair that a young person who wants to but can't participate.

For field trips, sometimes teachers will pay for the trips out of their pockets for students who can't afford it but that depends on the school. It can be hard for people to come out and say that they can't pay for it.

Sometimes, depending on who you are, you don't have the same opportunities. Women get paid less than men, women of colour are paid even less. Women who are pregnant can't sometimes access their rights.

Sometimes newcomers are paid more but it's because they are given a job in which they are jeopardizing their safety which is not okay—even though you make more money it's only because the employer knows it's not a safe environment for you.

←Making Connections→

The CRC and Economic Discrimination

Article 32
The right to be safe and paid fairly



Participants expressed shock to find that some young people, such as migrant workers, are not paid properly in Canada.

Article 29
The right for education to develop your talents and abilities



Participants noted that if you don't get a good education it can lead to difficult economic conditions later in life.

Article 7
The right to a name



Some participants recounted stories of people they knew experiencing discrimination in the work place because others found their names too "foreign."



Article 19
The right to be protected
from being hurt or
mistreated



Participants noted that someone abused in their childhood and has PTSD/chronic breakdowns would not be able to easily hold a job.

Article 30
The right to practice your
own culture, language and
religion



Participants discussed how recent legislation in Quebec infringes of the right of young people to choose their religion and to enter the public service.

Article 31
The right to play and rest



Participants discussed how many sports teams have high fees to play and it was very damaging to the self-esteem of a student who could not afford those fees.

Article 16
The right to privacy



Participants explained how some refugees and recent immigrants experience an invasion of their privacy on the job hunt when certain questions are asked of them.

Article 28
The right to a good quality
education



One participant explained how a teacher refused to give them notes because the teacher felt the student had “decided to stay home” rather than recognizing that this student has a serious mental illness.



Recommendations to the Movers

Challenge Workplace Discrimination

- ✚ Stop supporting and buying from places that discriminate against people and then hopefully they will go out of business and lose money

Support Recent Immigrants

- ✚ When immigrants first come to Canada we put them in dangerous situations and people are still working there later on. This situation is unfair and it needs to be stopped.
- ✚ New immigrants to Canada should be given a package of information that clearly outlines their rights. Teaching people about their rights will help them to stand up to discrimination

Facilitate Inclusive Hiring

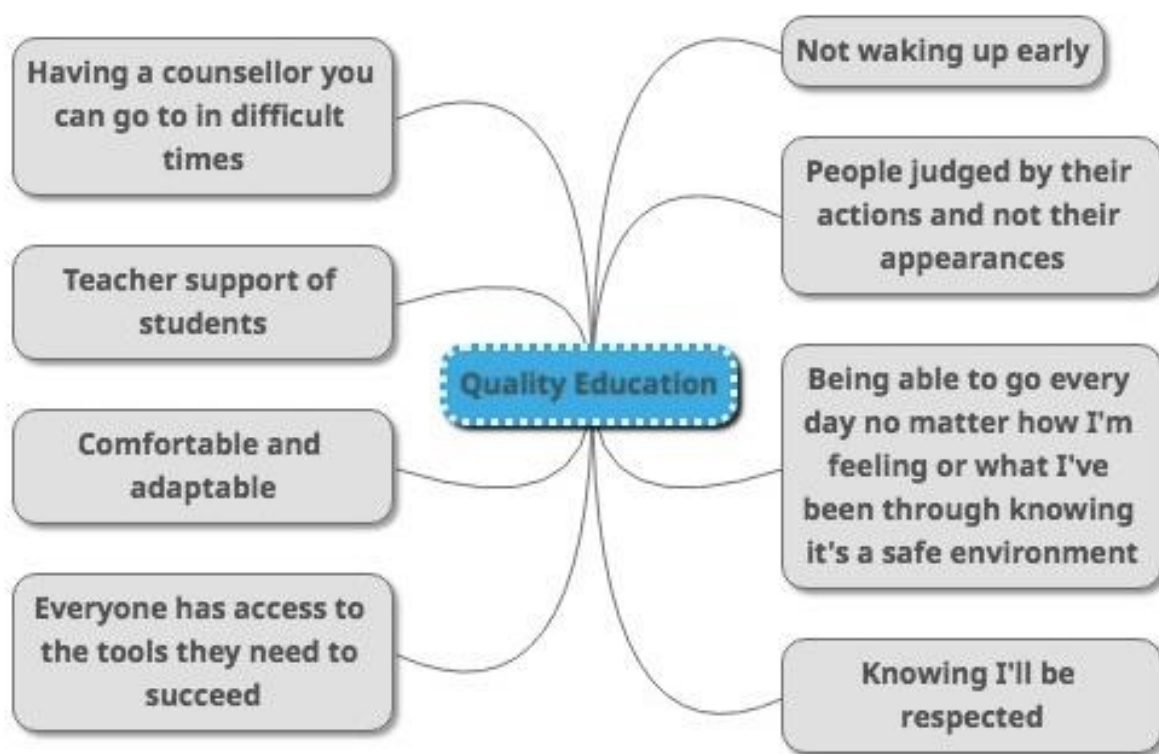
- ✚ Help companies develop blind interview practices



Afternoon Workshop 3

Discrimination and School

The final of the three thematic workshops focused on the theme of discrimination in the school. The workshop began with a discussion of the mark of quality education.



In the Words of Young People

What barriers have you experienced or witnessed in schools?

When I first came to Canada, I had a conference with my school. The worker wanted to know what we are planning to do before they gave us the English test. After the conference, I told her I want to be a doctor and she told me that I will never be able to do that because I came here when I was 16 and I didn't speak English and therefore could not get into university. She told me I had to go to college or just finish high school and get a job. Even if it's true, I'll never give up. Now after two years I speak English and I'm taking university level courses and I plan to go to university. This teacher never tested me. She only judged me.

Teachers often refuse to listen to students, even when you tell the office something the office only believes the teachers.



I have seen physical discrimination. When the school elevator breaks down they just don't care about the time it takes someone to get around.

In drama, a teacher would often fail me. In an activity, you had to get up on the spot and improvise—if you stumbled the class would yell “DIE” at you. One day, the night before I had had a psychotic break and got really upset. I found I couldn't do the activity and ran out of the class. The teacher told me that it was not okay that I had run out and left the class during the activity. She said it wasn't fair to everyone else. This teacher could have taken a moment to make sure that I was okay. Mental health still isn't understood and still isn't given the same weight as other problems by some people.

Certain students get special perks for being super Catholic in a Catholic school and my teacher will single me out in an area that I know very little about.

I was told that I couldn't audition for a part in a school play because they said they needed a white girl to play the lead.

I see gender discrimination when boys are favoured in gym class.

I was given the evil eye in a Catholic school for participating in Mass even though I'm not Christian.

People shouldn't assume someone isn't smart because they have a disability. I have seen a teacher just give a student with autism crayons to colour while the teacher focused on teaching the rest of the class.

School buses aren't always accessible to all students.



Recommendations to the Movers

Enhance Teacher Training

- ✚ We should focus more on learning about learning disabilities in schools as well as for teachers. Teachers don't really see learning disabilities as a real disability so they don't give you enough support.
- ✚ Teachers should be trained on how to deal with their own biases.

Support Student Initiative in Schools

- ✚ Teachers should help support student initiatives. For example, at my school we held a potluck during Ramadan and the Vice-Principal offered to fast with us.
- ✚ Students should be able to learn what they want to learn. For instance, if I have an interest in astrology, I should have a course in that.
- ✚ There should be a student feedback session when the curriculum is being developed.

Creative Inclusive Environments

- ✚ Everyone should be treated equally and schools should have teachers that support them and answer their questions.
- ✚ It is important that teachers understand the needs of students. Schools should feel as safe and comfortable as home.
- ✚ Teachers need to be aware of what goes on behind the scene in their students' lives.
- ✚ All schools should have a social worker and a guidance counsellor on campus.
- ✚ Staff should come from diverse backgrounds so that staff can understand the different struggles of students who come from different backgrounds.
- ✚ Make sure teachers don't favour certain genders.



*Looking at the world today
I just want to shout*

*Can we right these wrongs?
I sometimes doubt*

*We all have problems
Discrimination abounds*

*But when we hear from the youth
The answers are found*

*They have voices and rights,
Ideas galore!*

*So, when we give them our ear,
We'll only learn more*

STM Youth Facilitator



As is evident in the report, young people today continue to witness and experience clear violations of their rights; Discrimination permeates their lives in social settings, educational environments, and the workplace. Moreover, this problem is compounded by the reality that many young people feel many adults not only ignore their perspectives, they also feel that many adults view them as incapable of contributing to solutions. From our Ottawa STM we know this incapacity far from true. As one young person succinctly said: “I’m not tomorrow’s leader, I’m a leader today.”

This report is respectfully submitted to the members of CRAN and to all movers in our society.



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