# Liard Aboriginal Women's Society Youth for Safety Project (DRAFT)

November 2016 Watson Lake, Yukon



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# **Executive Summary**

Youth for Safety is a three-year Youth empowerment project designed to foster community safety and justice for young women and girls centered on the town of Watson Lake, Yukon and nearby Kaska First Nations populations in Two Mile area, Upper Liard and Lower Post, BC.

This project was initiated by the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS), a non-profit, charitable, community-based, aboriginal organization providing social development services to the Kaska Nation in the Yukon and northern British Columbia. LAWS worked in collaboration with Watson Lake community organizations, external facilitators and an evaluator to deliver Youth for Safety.

The project recognizes the need for active female and male Youth participation in addressing issues of violence against young women and girls, and is designed to provide Youth with the knowledge and skills needed to assume a leadership role in promoting safety and justice for Youth women and girls, Youth to Youth and within the community at large. The focus of the project is providing support to young women and girls (under 18) who are at risk of falling victim to sexualized/physical violence through empowerment and advocacy and engaging the community at large. The project is intended to increase safety of youth and community members in Watson Lake by helping Youth learn ways of restoring and preserving dignity of those who experience violence, while also learning new skills to increase safety.

The focus of the November session was to build relationship, overview the social justice topics the group learned last year, explore Dene ā'nezen (dignity), and begin planning the vigil for the December 6<sup>th</sup> National day of Remembrance and Action against Violence against Women.



# Participants

24 youth total signed up for the workshops. 14 youth came for the entirety of the two days. 6 youth came for a part of the 2-day workshop. 4 youth did not show up for any of the workshops. One youth decided to drop out of the program after the first day. A total of 20 youth participated in all or part of the workshop.

NAME		GRADE
1.	Austin Nolan	8
2.	Jamie Dennis	8
3.	Brianna Pete	9
4.	Daniel Doctor	9
5.	Faith Papineau	9
6.	Gabriel Goupil	9
7.	Hope Papineau	9
8.	lan McLeod	9
9.	Jenny Kroeker	9
10.	Julian McDonald	9
11.	Kalem Frank	9
12.	Maximus Johnson	9

NAME	GRADE
13. Sabrina Jansen	9
14. Trynaty Thompson	9
15. Airian Woodhouse	9
16. Hunter Wolfe	10
17. Jasmine Johnson	10
18. Kolby Schmidt	10
19. Nathanial McMillan	10
20. Piper Allen	10
21. Zoe Wolfe	10
22. Cian Hobbis	11
23. Tony Gioia	11
24. Kiera Stubenberg	12

#### In addition, the following elders and community members were in the room:

Ann Maje Raider (LAWS) Crystal Stewart (LAWS) Kristel Vance (LAWS) Leda Jules (LAWS) Fanny Vance (LAWS) Mida Donnessey (Kaska elder) Linda McDonald (Kaska Teacher) Martina Volfova (Kaska Language facilitator)



# Focus Topics

The focus of the November session was to build relationship, overview the social justice topics the group learned last year, explore Dene ā' nezen (dignity), and begin planning the vigil for the December 6th National day of Remembrance and Action against Violence against Women.

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the 20 youth who participated in the workshop and the 24 youth who signed up for the project!



In addition, thank you to the following community/school partners for assisting in the project!

Mary Maje (LAWS) Fannie Vance (LAWS) Ann M. Raider (LAWS) Mary Charlie (LAWS) Crystal Stewart (LAWS) Kristel Vance (LAWS) Dorothy Smith (RRDC/LAWS) Allan Wade (Centre for Response Based Practice) Cathy Richardson (Centre for Response Based Practice) Linda McDonald (WLSS) Jean Maclean (WLSS) Sanjini Philips (Regional Social Worker) May Stewart (LFN Justice) Cam Lockwood (RCMP) Julie Laliberté (LAWS facilitator) Renée-Claude Carrier (LAWS facilitator) Martina Volfova (Kaska Language facilitator) Sarah Gillett (Beringia Community Planning) Jeff Cook (Beringia Community Planning)

# 1. Introduction

Watson Lake Secondary School (WLSS) in partnership with community agencies have embarked on a three-year Youth-led learning project called "Youth for Safety" (YFS). YFS is based on learning topics of safety, dignity, justice, violence against girls and women, and activism; it explores how men keep women safe and how women stay safe. An introductory session was offered to educate and recruit Youth for the project in October of 2016.

The project will celebrate and honour existing Youth strengths, knowledge, and strategies on how to stay safe. Youth will also learn new tools and skills to increase safety in the community. This year, there will be a total of five (5) two-day workshops from November to March 2017. All workshops will be in the class room and will explore topics in an interactive way, using youth-led projects to address different aspects of safety and social justice in Watson Lake.

This report summarizes the November workshop and main topics explored, looks at content of material covered, details the results of the survey administered, and offers some practical reflection and ways to improve the future workshops.



# 2. Agenda

# The workshop agenda was as follows:

### TUESDAY

Time	Activity
10:00	Opening prayer
	Check-in and introductions (1-10, highlight and lowlight)
	Ice-breaker : <b>barnyard</b> -Everyone has a piece of paper taped to the bottom of their chair with an animal on it (cat, dog, chicken, wolf, etc). Participants have to only communicate by using the sounds their animal would make to find their animal groups. i.e. meowing if they got "cat" and find all the other "cats" in the group. Then they sit with their new groups. This is a way for everyone to get used to each other, act silly, and sit with people they normally do not sit with.
	Go over plan for the two days. -getting to know each other (relationship building) -teambuilding -learning how to work with each other, creating safety -planning vigil -Dene a' nezen: dignity
	<b>Program overview- looking at 5 sessions</b> November: getting to know each other and planning vigil December: planning and executing vigil January: Begin planning March 8 <sup>th</sup> celebration February: Continue to plan March 8 <sup>th</sup> celebration March: Finish planning and execute March 8 <sup>th</sup> celebration
	Housekeeping -bathroom, being in the halls, participation, breaks, room clean up
	Teambuilding/GTKY activity- West wind blows
11:00-11:10	Break
	Group Norms- Creating safety -Victim's aren't to blame -Victims always resist -Violence is deliberate
	Truths from last year- principles of dignity
11:55-12:53	Lunch
	Why are we talking about gendered violence? -stats and infographics from last year's workshops

	Montreal Massacre info/movie -https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/12/06/montreal-massacre-victims- honoured-on-26th-anniversary.html
	Brainstorm vigil ideas
1:53	Break
	Work on vigil plans
	Teambuilding- team red light
	Check out (1-10)
3:00	Clean up room
3:10	Dismissal

#### WEDNESDAY

Time	Activity
950	Opening prayer
	Check-in (1-10)
	lce-breaker
	Go over plan for the day
	Dotmocracy for vigil ideas
	Teambuilding : Group facts
	Watch clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTvSfeCRxe8
9:50	Break
	Dignity activitythe little things we do to preserve dignity
	Break into committees for vigil planning
11:55-12:53	Lunch
	Vigil planning in committee groups
1:53	Break

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	More vigil planning
	Survey
	Game
2:55	Check out
3:05	Clean up room
3:10	Dismissal

The agenda was flexible due to the changing nature of the school environment and for any unexpected delays. It also allowed for facilitators to customize activities for the energy levels of the group. The agenda was structured in an arc, meaning the beginning and ends were scheduled with lighter material, such as teambuilding or games, and the middle was scheduled for more in-depth conversations or activities about the topics. Because of the potentially emotional nature of the topics of safety and violence, this arc can help with containment so that youth leave the room in a positive headspace.



# 2. Focus topics and content

The focus of the November session was to build relationship, overview the social justice topics the group learned last year, explore Dene  $\bar{a}'$  nezen (dignity), and begin planning the vigil for the December 6th National day of Remembrance and Action against Violence against Women.

#### **Building Relationship**

To continue to build relationship, below is a breakdown of the agenda, focusing on activities that promote and build respect, trust, and relationships between students, facilitators, elders, and community members present in the room.

#### **Opening prayer**

Every YFS workshop opens with an opening prayer in Kaska by an elder in the room. Linda McDonald translated the prayer into English.

#### Introductions and Check-in/out

This gives an opportunity for everyone in the room to introduce themselves and let the group know how they are doing that day. For the November session, participants were asked to give a number from 1-10 (1 = not doing well, 10= doing very well) about how they were doing. This gives facilitators and group members a chance to get a small glimpse of how everyone is feeling that day. The youth were also asked to give a highlight from the past few weeks.

By doing a "check-out" after every day, it provides a sense of whether or not the youth's day has improved, worsened, or stayed the same. It also provides a chance for the youth to reflect on the day's learning.

#### Games

Games have been a popular activity with the youth since the beginning of the project. Games are also a way to re-capture a groups' attention if the energy is feeling stagnant or stale. The group played several games during the workshop, such as "Splat", "Move your butt", "Team red-light green light", and "wave sit", "barnyard", and "guessing the facts"



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#### **Group Agreements**

Group agreements can be an important way to establish safety in a group and to set some expectations for the entire group. The youth were asked in the October orientation what *they* want in the group agreements to enhance the student's autonomy, responsibility and ownership.

Participants finalized and signed a "group contract" showing that they will respect and uphold the agreements in the sessions. These group agreements can be referenced anytime a group member is breaking the group norms.

NOT INTERRUPTING NO PHONES TEAMWORK~ PRIDE self respect NO SWEARING NO NAME CALLING no con TREAT EVERYONE WITH DGNITY

#### Social Justice Overview

To reflect on what the youth learned last year and to bring the new students up to speed on the social justice issues discussed in YFS, we had some returning youth bring up YouTube clips from last year, such as the "1 in 5" Superbowl, and "it's your fault". We also showed the video "Masks off" spoken word performance by Jeremy Loveday and a clip from Jackson Katz Tedx Talk entitled: Violence against women—it's a men's issue.

After a verbal explanation of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women in Canada, we showed the youth a video of a previous vigil for the Montreal Massacre to give them an idea of how they typically were run.



It's Your Fault: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hCONg\_ajpY</u> What if bears killed 1 in 5 people: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNVFPkmZTQ4</u> Masks off: A challenge to men <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlb4Pu23kqw</u> Jackson Katz <u>https://www.ted.com/talks/jackson\_katz\_violence\_against\_women\_it\_s\_a\_men\_s\_issue</u> Montreal Massacre: <u>https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/12/06/montreal-massacre-victims-honoured-on-26th-anniversary.html</u>

#### Dene ā'nezen (Dignity)

Dignity is a central component of response-based practice. Last year, we explored what the concept of dignity meant for the youth, and why it was important to uphold. In the context of gendered violence, the importance of upholding the dignity of victims is a central component in healing from an experience of violence.

We used experiential activities to demonstrate the concept of upholding dignity. Common ways that one can get embarrassed are having something stuck in one's teeth, and having toilet paper stuck to the bottom of one's shoe.

At one point in the workshop, one of the facilitators put some lipstick in between her teeth. The purpose of the activity was to observe what the group members did when they saw the lipstick in her teeth and how they upheld her dignity. Even before the majority of the group members saw the lipstick, one of the female participants non-verbally communicated with the facilitator that she had something in her teeth so she was able to wipe it off without being potentially embarrassed by the rest of the group. Another example we chose was to have the facilitator walk in with a piece of toilet paper stuck to her shoe and to see how the group would react. Again, some group members quickly communicated non-verbally with the facilitator that she had toilet paper on her shoe so she could remove it without the rest of the group noticing.

We debriefed these activities with the group, asking them if they have ever been embarrassed, and if they had ever experienced someone preserving their dignity just as they had preserved the facilitators dignity.



#### Vigil Planning

After showing the students a few examples of past vigils, they split up into groups and came up with their own ideas for what they wanted the event to look like.

Once all the ideas were laid out, students voted on which ones they liked best in a "dotmocracy" where they assigned a certain amount of dots to the ideas they wanted.

The following day, they broke off into working groups such as food, decoration, and speech planning.



\$ 100 / rosps or by donation VENDE Auditori TIAE 11:00 Ar/ CIAN, MATOR, ROLLIE VELCOMER-IAN · ANK. M.C - PIPER?? . - WHITE RIBBONS .... WHITE ROSES VERE SHOT RED ROSES FOR E KILLED DRUMMING (WOMEN HYRRIOR SONG) BANNOCKIIIII STEHIII 





# 3. Survey Results

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#### **Executive Summary**

Out of the 20 students who participated in the January workshop, 17 surveys were returned. The survey was administered at the end of the workshop. The group breakdown displayed an almost even split between males and females, almost half the students were 15 years old, and there were more Kaska students than non-Kaska students in the group that filled out the survey.

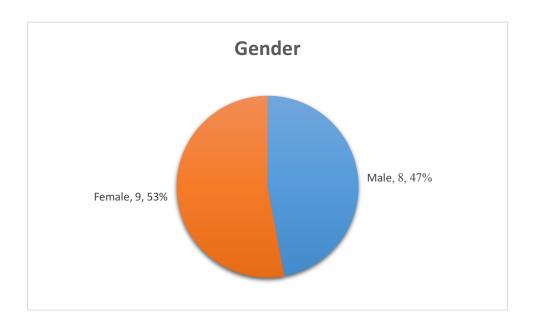
- Females = 9 (53%) Males = 8 (47%)
- Age 15 = 8 (47%) Age 13 = 2 (12%) Age 14 = 5 (29%) Age 16= 1 (5%) Age 17 = 1 (5%)
- Kaska = 11 (65%) Non-Kaska = 6 (35%)

# Who shared? Questions 1-3

A total of 17 youth ages 13 to 17, girls, boys, and Kaska and non Kaska shared their thoughts about safety in their homes, on the streets and at school and about the workshop.

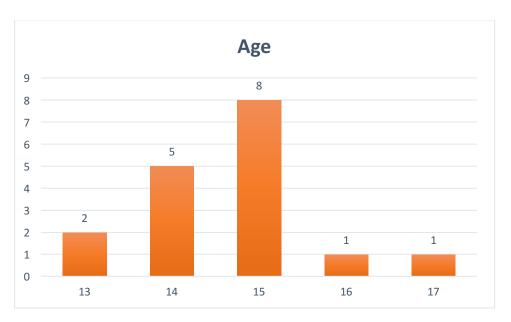
#### Gender

Of the 17 surveys returned, the youth identified as 53% (9) female, and 47% male (8).



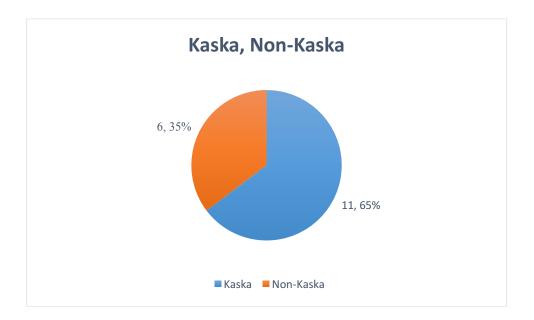
#### Age

Almost half (47%) of the participants who filled out a survey were fifteen. There were two thirteen year olds (12%) who filled out a survey, five (29%) fourteen year olds (29%), eight fifteen year olds (47%), one sixteen year old (5%), and one seventeen year old (5%).



# Kaska/non-Kaska

Most of the youth who returned a survey were Kaska (11 or 65%), while six students identified as non-Kaska (35%).

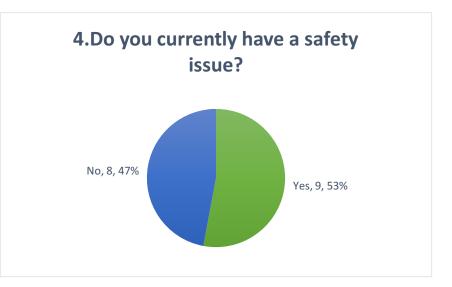


#### 15

16

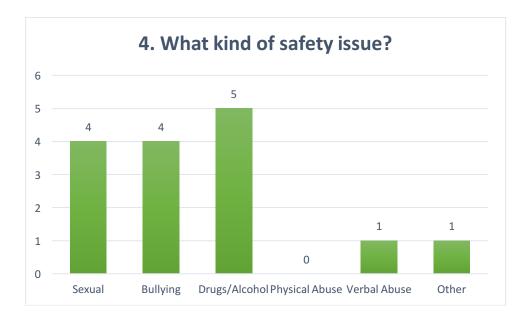
# Question 4. Personal safety issues

Just over half (9 or 53%) of all students surveyed reported having a safety issue in their life. However, two surveys marked "no" to the question but then proceeded to mark down a safety issue, therefore were counted in the "yes" category. This could potentially outline a limitation in the survey question and should be made clearer in the next round.



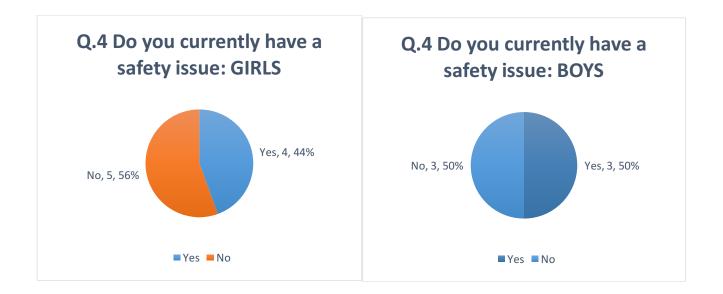
# What kind of safety issue?

Of the surveys that had marked "yes" for having a safety issue, none marked down "physical abuse", one marked "verbal abuse", and one marked "Other" when asked the question "What kind of safety issue?". Five people marked down having a safety issue relating to drugs/alcohol, four marked down bullying safety issues, and four marked down sexual safety issues.



#### By Gender

When divided between genders (9 girls, 8 boys), almost three quarters of the female students (6 out of 9, 67%) reported having a safety issue while 33% (3) reported not having a safety issue. The majority (5 out of 8, 63%) of the males who returned surveys reported not having a safety issue, while 3 out of 8 (37%) reported having a safety issue. These findings echo the broader statistics around women facing more safety issues than men.



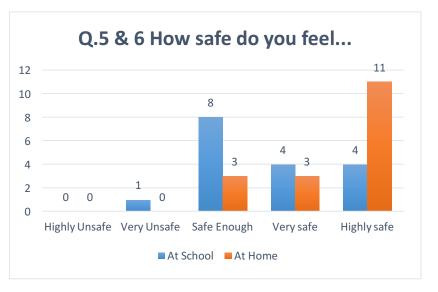
#### By Kaska/Non-Kaska

More Kaska students had safety issues than non-Kaska students (out of 11 Kaska students and six non-Kaska students). 58% (5) of Kaska students had safety issues, while 50% of non-Kaska students reported having safety issues.



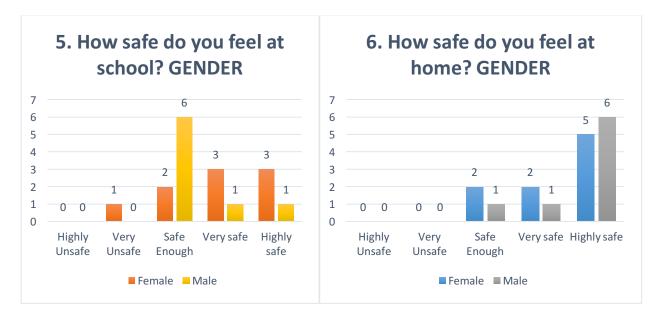
# Question 5& 6- How safe are you feeling at school? At home?

Based on the survey results, it seems as though the students feel a bit safer at home than at school. Almost half (47%) the students (8 out of 17) felt "safe enough" at school, while the majority (67%) of the students (11 out of 17) felt "highly safe" at home. Only one student felt "very unsafe" at school, while no students reported feeling less than "safe enough" at home.



#### By Gender

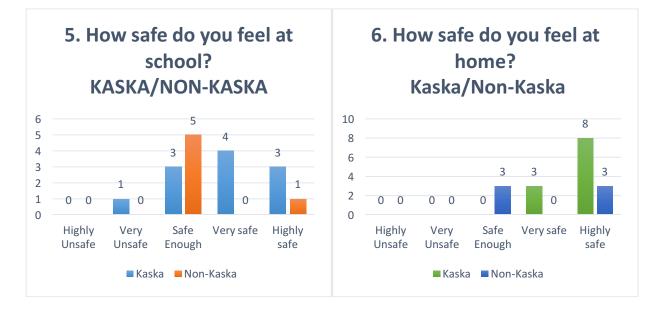
The majority of males (6 of 8, 75%) reported being "safe enough" at school. A third of the females reported being very safe and highly safe (3 of 9) at school respectively. The majority (6 of 8, 75%) of males and just over half of females (5 of 9, 56%) felt "highly safe" at home. One male (13%) reported feeling "very safe" at home, while one other (13%) reported feeling "safe enough". Two females (22%) reported feeling "very safe" at home, while two others (22%) reported feeling "safe enough".



# By Kaska/Non-Kaska

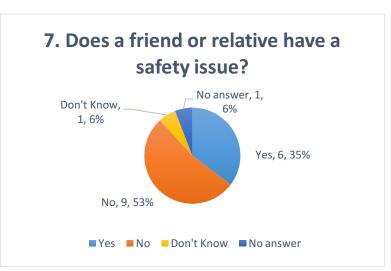
The majority (5 of 6, 83%) of Non-Kaska students felt "safe enough" at school, while there was a more spread out result from Kaska students. There was an almost even split between Kaska students feeling "safe enough" (3 of 11, 27%), "very safe" (4 of 11, 36%), and "highly safe" (3 of 11, 27%) at school. Only one (17%) Non-Kaska student reported feeling "highly safe" at school.

Kaska students reported feeling slightly more safe at home than Non-Kaska students. The majority of Kaska students (8 of 11, 73%) felt "highly safe" at home, while three (27%) felt very safe. The Non-Kaska students had reported an even split (3 of 6, 50%) between feeling "safe enough" and "highly safe" at home.



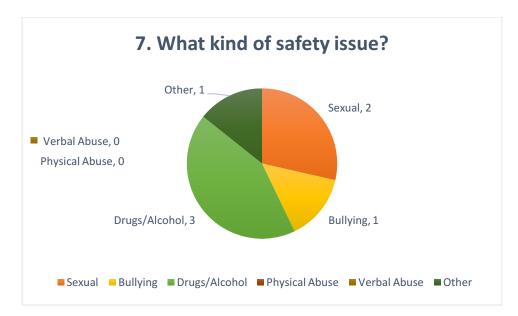
# Question 7 - Friend or relative with a safety issue

A slight majority (9 of 17, 53%) of students did not have a friend or relative with a safety issue. 35% (6 of 17) of students reported having a friend or relative with a safety issue. One student (6%) did not answer, and one replied "Don't know".



#### What kind of safety issue?

The most prevalent safety issue for friends or relatives was "drugs/alcohol" (3 of 6 responses, 50%). Of the students who reported having a friend or relative with a safety issue, two students (2 of 6, 33%) marked having a safety issue of a sexual nature. One of six (17%) reported having a friend or relative with safety issue related to bullying, and one (17%) marked an "other" safety issue.



# Question 8: What does safety look like to you?

Many of the responses to this question outlined an absence of danger as what safety looks like, while other chose to use descriptive words such as "acceptance", "caring", "respecting dignity", "respect", "equality" and "effort". Some of the longer responses "outlined acting like a team", having "people who care and want to protect you", and "walking in the hall happy".

- People being safe (2)
- Respect (2)
- Equality and no disrespect
- I don't know (4)
- Respecting dignity
- Acting like a team
- Not being in danger
- No violence
- Fearlessness in the face of danger

- > A safe place
- > Acceptance
- ➢ Caring
- ➢ Effort
- People who care and want to protect you as well as a place where you can go to stay away from danger
- Walking in the hall happy

# Question 9: What do you think needs to happen to help make our community safe?

The themes that emerged from the survey responses were surrounding drugs and alcohol, having a respectful support system for youth as well as a trusting relationship with RCMP, and increased awareness of safety issues.

- No drinking/drugs (3)
- I don't know (3)
- Security guard at the hospital (2)
- Make others feel safe
- Support our youth and make sure they have people to talk to
- Legal weed

- Less alcohol/drugs
- The community needs to become aware of what goes on
- We need police who believe the people (youth), and who will patrol more
- > A lot of things

# Question 10: Why did you join the Youth for Safety (YFS) projects?

An interesting result that emerged from this question were that many of the responses highlighted the interest the youth have in helping the community become a safer place. Other reasons were that the program was fun, that there was food, and that the youth got to miss class.

- > A friend told me to
- To miss class (3)
- You get to help
- I want to help people
- To make difference for even one person who needs help
- > My mom made me join
- > Food

- Because it's fun (2)
- I thought it'd be/looks fun (3)
- Cause I don't have to do work
- To stop all sorts of assault
- To make people know that rape and other abuse is wrong
- To do other activities to make others feel safe and comfortable

# Question 11: What would help you stay involved in the YFS project?

Similar to last year, food was a big motivator in keeping youth involved in the project. Many of the responses highlighted youth either not knowing, or saying that they like it how it is. As some the responses surrounded a respectful environment, maintaining the group agreements and building trust within the group will be important in keeping the youth involved.

- > Discussions
- ≽ Gym
- I don't know (3)
- To participate
- > Listen
- > Respect
- Did expectations

- Everything were doing is good enough
- > Nothing it's good
- Food/better food (4)
- Knowing that we're contributing to making a difference
- Not sure

# Question 12: What are your ideas for youth campaigns this year?

Not many youth reported having campaign ideas, perhaps due to the early implementation of this survey. It will be interesting to see the results of this question later in the program.

- Cold hard facts (posters?)
- I don't know (7)
- None (2)
- Help people in need

- An animated short
- ➤ Good things
- It's a secret
- It's really cool

# Question 13: What types of topics do you want to talk about?

The main topics that youth wanted to talk about during this program included gendered violence, drugs and alcohol, social justice, crafts, art, and activities such as games and stick gambling.

- Crafts, art
- Everything we're talking about is good
- I don't know (4)
- Anything
- Men standing against violence against women
- Rape/sexual assault prevention
- Stick gambling

- > Hockey
- Drugs/alcohol
- ▶ Rape
- White people getting the bad life
- Good social responses
- > Dignity
- > The same stuff
- ➤ Games

# Question 14: Please share any other comments:

Consistent with other previous years and verbal statements from the youth, food continues to be an important part of the programming. Otherwise, students reported that they would like games, and some replied that they were satisfied with the program. The lack of responses could be due to it being the last question in a series of long answer questions and that the youth were tired of writing.

- ➤ Games
- Need more food like tacos
- > It's chill
- > I like hugs

- Nah it's good
- Having fun, yummy food!
- ➤ Food!

# 4. Reflections

#### Engagement

Similar to last year, the engagement was varied throughout the workshops. Some youth appeared comfortable with sharing verbally in a large group, while others seemed more comfortable to share in smaller groups. Some students did not seem to be engaged much during the workshop. Facilitators acknowledged to the group that there are many ways to participate and that it is not expected that everyone is comfortable sharing in large groups. It was also noted that if the students do not appear to be engaged at all or if they do not want to be in the group they are welcome to go back to class. Overall, it seemed the returning students were able to stay engaged with the material and agenda, perhaps as a result of being more used to it.

One struggled felt was the disruption caused by the scheduled breaks in the student's timetable. Every time the students went on break, it was difficult to get them back in the room and engaged on time. To address this, we played the videos right after break so that it would grab the students' attention. Occasionally some students would leave the workshop and go wander in the halls causing a disruption for some of the other teachers.

To address this, this year the teachers and workshop facilitators communicated a strategy to provide some consistency on when students were allowed to go back to classes during the workshops. This was to address some of the students wandering in and out of the workshops and the teachers and facilitators not being sure when a student was in class or in the halls. An agreement was reached that the facilitators would communicate with the teacher directly if a student wanted to go back to class for a block.

A struggle that was noticed this workshop was keeping the students in the room at the end of the day during their advisory period. Some of the students used disrespectful language aimed at some of the adults in the room at the end of the day and will be addressed next workshop. Clear communication with them during the following workshop will revisit the schedule and group agreements that the youth

came up with, and outcomes of what happens if a group agreement is breached. In addition, there will be a discussion of maintaining dignity for everyone in the room.

The varied nature of the workshop's activities appeared to help in keeping the youth motivated throughout the day, with a mixture of large and small group discussion, games, contests, videos and teambuilding exercises.



#### Food

Food continues to play an important role in keeping the youth engaged with the program. We provided a mixture of healthy foods and treats at the breaks and throughout the day. The food table gives the youth a chance to have a mini-break during the workshops to go and grab a snack and return to the group.

#### Space

The workshops were held in the Kaska Language room. The youth also had access to their laptops and the computer lab next door. The space works well for accommodating the elders as well as the students.

#### Looking ahead...

The next workshop will be primarily focused on the finishing touches of the December 6<sup>th</sup> vigil, executing the vigil, and then celebrating the youth's hard work. In addition, developing outcomes to breaches in the group agreement will be established as a group in order to continue to build a safe and respectful dynamic.



# THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR ANOTHER AMAZING WORKSHOP!