

L2G: LOCAL2GLOBAL

YOUTH DIGITAL STORIES AND COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

Mental Wellness - Life Promotion - Community Empowerment



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada



Sustainable Development
Working Group



ARCTIC COUNCIL



May 2021





Local 2 Global: Bringing an Arctic Council project to Inuvik, NT

Gwich'in Council International (GCI) is a Permanent Participant at the Arctic Council, a forum for cooperation and collaboration in the circumpolar north. GCI works to amplify the voice of the Gwich'in Nation on issues of sustainable development and the environment, and we look for opportunities to connect community priorities and needs with what is happening across the Arctic.

One shared priority is mental health and wellbeing, recognizing the devastating impacts of suicide particularly among youth. Building on the work of the Arctic Council, and its Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG), we wanted to use materials (films) already created as an anchor to wellness events. It was also important that youth be not only involved as participants but central in the design and delivery, and supported in leadership roles.

We partnered with the Western Arctic Youth Collective (WAYC), and contracted them to imagine, plan, and deliver events, as well as document their learnings, share recommendations, and create a guide for other youth groups to take on similar events. We also established an Advisory Committee to support the work.

We are pleased to share the outcomes and materials with the goals of informing and enabling future work. We encourage others to use this delivery model and partner with youth in meaningful ways, which will build capacity, skills, relationships, and partnerships.

This package includes:

- **Program Plan & Event Report**, created by WAYC, detailing planning, activities, delivery, and recommendations for future
- **Event Poster**, created by WAYC
- **Concept Note**, created by GCI, to develop partnerships, interest, and support for the event
- **Guide to Running Events**, created by WAYC, for other youth groups looking to take on similar activities

Key Reflections and Learnings

- Ensure meaningful youth contributions, which includes recognizing youth leadership, valuing their time, and knowing that this is learning for them and you. Hire a youth group. Make sure they have the freedom to be creative and ambitious, as well as support and clear expectations to ensure the project goals are met.
- Communicate more, and earlier, particularly with institutional partners (governments, schools). These partners can influence, support, and communicate about your event.



- Establish an Advisory Committee, for a limited duration, and ensure that there is broad representation from local and beyond-local partners. The Committee will provide a sounding board, guidance, networking, and be champions of the work.
- Make sure that appropriate supports are available when events are delivered, and also available afterwards. Plan to check in, follow up, and debrief with participants, partners, and the delivery team. The topics are tough, and everyone is impacted. Consider Elders, counsellors, peer supports, listing of phone numbers and websites, self care kits.
- Value time and contributions, from speakers to youth panelists, to Elders and peer supports, and provide funding to enable their participation.

Partners, Advisors, and Contributors

We are grateful to our partners, advisors, and contributors, whose guidance and work contributed to the success of the event:

- Alyssa Carpenter, Director, Western Arctic Youth Collective
- Jacey Firth-Hagen, Project Coordinator, Western Arctic Youth Collective
- Holly Jones, Research and Capacity Coordinator, Western Arctic Youth Collective
- Bobbi Rose Koe, Outreach Coordinator, Western Arctic Youth Collective
- Michael Bodnar, Teacher, East Three Secondary School, Inuvik NT
- Sarah Cox, Director, Circumpolar Affairs & Head of Delegation, SDWG, Arctic Council · Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
- Dr. Allison Crawford, Associate Chief, Virtual Mental Health and Outreach, The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and Project CREATeS partner
- Sharla Greenland, GCI Board Member and Territorial Support Team Coordinator, Education, Culture, and Employment Department, Government of the Northwest Territories
- Jennifer Spence, Executive Secretary, Sustainable Development Working Group
- Selma Ford, Inuit Circumpolar Council

We also acknowledge with appreciation the many people, governments, and organizations – speakers, contributors, panelists, Elders, supporters, participants – who were a part of the WAYC programming. In Inuvik, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Town of Inuvik, and the Beauford Delta Education Council are key partners to build relationships with.

We are grateful to the Arctic Council and will continue to look for ways to bring their work to the community level. In parallel, we will amplify the voices of communities and community members to guide the priorities and work of the Arctic Council.

Mahsi' cho

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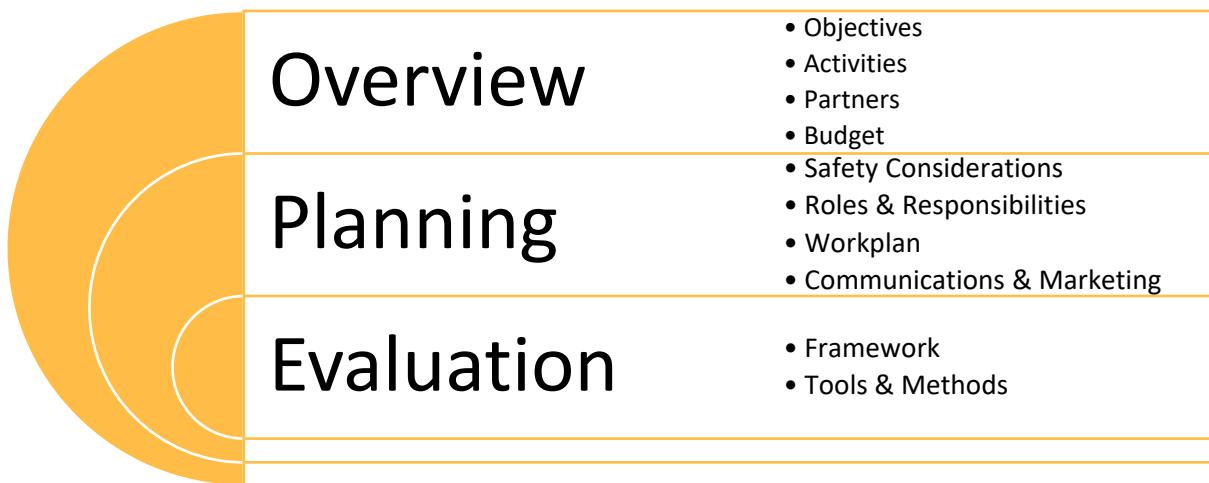
PROGRAM PLAN & EVENT REPORT

CONTENTS

Program Plan	2
Budget	5
Partners	5
Event Report.....	6
Schedule of Events.....	6
Project Creates Film Screening & World café.....	7
VIRTUAL Youth Panels	9
Recognition & Resilience: Reverse Town Hall	10
Panelist Questions	10
Questions for Youth Asked by participants/audience	11
In-Person Events	12
Feedback & Evaluation	12
Engagement.....	16
Recommendations.....	17
Appendix.....	18
Speaker & Artist Bios	18
Partner Organizations.....	23
Participant Package	24

PROGRAM PLAN

Using the WAYC outcome-based program planning template, a program plan was developed for the implementation of the Local 2 Global event by WAYC staff. The planning template includes three main areas:



Completing the program plan template encouraged the WAYC team to answer questions necessary for the implementation of the program and carrying out the events. As guided by the Agreement for Contract Services between MakeWay Charitable Society and Gwich'in Council International (GCI), the program plan was developed to meet 5 main objectives.



Using the completed program plan, Facilitator and Participant packages are compiled for distribution before and upon registration at the event (both are available via link on WAYC's Google Drive).

Participant Package	Facilitator Package
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registration Information• Schedule of Events (overview)• 10 Reasons to Stay Alive - Ullaakkut• Speaker & Artist Bios• Reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Schedule of Events (detailed)○ Project CREATeS Film Screening List○ Emergency Action Plan○ Roles & Responsibilities○ Workplan• Evaluation Questions + Participant Survey• Reflections

The complete program plan is available on the shared [Local 2 Global – Project CREATeS Drive folder](#).

PROGRAM NAME	Local2Global: Youth Digital Stories and Community Exchange			
TARGET INDIVIDUAL/GROUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth ages 18-35 (WAYC demographic) with an interest and/or experience in mental health advocacy. • Inuvik and Western Arctic community members of all ages wanting to learn and connect with others about mental wellness, life promotion, and community empowerment. 			
CONTEXT/BACKGROUND/ISSUE BEING ADDRESSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced and/or exacerbated community struggles with mental wellness. • Youth require more opportunities to lead community discussions on mental wellness and are best situated to lead these discussions while learning from other youth. • Addressing fear, apathy, discomfort, and stigma surrounding mental health and suicide through starting safe discussions. 			
OVERALL PROGRAM OUTCOME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community will be empowered through hosting mental wellness event and have more resources for well-being. • Youth leaders will be encouraged and supported in bringing Arctic Council work to the grassroots level. Youth will be recognized and valued for their voices and leadership. • Documentation of the planning and delivery processes will inform and encourage future collaborative events. 			
PROGRAM OUTCOMES	LONG TERM IMPACT	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS
<p><i>Participants use Project CREATeS videos as a learning and wellness resource.</i></p> <p><i>Participants practice self-care activities using the resilience kits provided.</i></p> <p><i>Participants connect with each other through shared activities (cultural, creative, games) and experiences (film screenings, panel discussions, sharing circles, listening to speakers).</i></p> <p><i>Participants provide remarks and reflections on event themes and community opportunities.</i></p>	<p><i>Increased connection and support between youth.</i></p> <p><i>Increased hope over the winter.</i></p> <p><i>Increased pride across cultures.</i></p> <p><i>Recognition and resilience of youth and community members.</i></p> <p><i>Increased capacity in community organizations.</i></p> <p><i>Increased access to support and resources for mental wellness.</i></p>	<i>Budget breakdown for professional fees, materials, reporting, travel, etc.</i> <i>Panel speakers, workshop facilitators/artists, 3 on-site staff members for registration, facilitation, and set-up/take-down</i> <i>1 remote staff member for virtual facilitation & monitoring</i> <i>Rental of Midnight Sun Complex – Community hall in Inuvik</i> <i>50 participant gift bags</i> <i>50 pre-packaged snack bags</i>	<i>Marketing (WAYC social media)</i> <i>Event registration via emails & messages to WAYC Director</i> <i>Program planning (WAYC to recruit speakers, volunteer support, IT support)</i> <i>Supply shopping (participant gifts & snack bags, COVID supplies)</i> <i>Virtual run-through for film-screenings & panel discussions</i>	<i>~20 participants attend the Inuvik events (film-screenings, panel discussions, creative workshops)</i> <i>~20 participants attend the virtual events (film-screenings, panel discussions)</i> <i>3 days of virtual & in-person events (9 sessions total in morning, afternoon, evening)</i> <i>Program plan for GCI compiled by WAYC</i>

BUDGET

Budget	Anticipated Event Costs	Actual Event Costs
A. Materials and Supplies: <i>(Including, but not limited to, all program/workshop expenses such as program supplies, advertising, hall rental, snacks and drinks, printing, etc.)</i>	10,044.00 CAD	9,190.85 CAD
B. Professional Fees:	9,350.00 CAD	9,490.00 CAD
C. Salaries:	9,344.15 CAD	7,669.15 CAD
D. Report Preparation:	0.00 CAD	650.00 CAD
E. Subtotal (A+B+C):	28,738.15 CAD	27,000.00 CAD
F. Administration (10 % of E):	3,000.00 CAD	3,000.00 CAD
G. Total Anticipated Event Cost (E+F):	31,738.15 CAD	30,000.00 CAD

This budget does not include any travel costs, given the covid restrictions limiting the event. In future, travel should be considered.

PARTNERS

Project Partners: Devlin Fernandes (GCI); Jennifer Spence (SDWG); Sarah Cox (Circumpolar Affairs, CIRNAC); Dr. Allison Crawford (Project CREATeS, CAMH), Sharla Greenland (GCI)

Speakers: Shania Young (Jack.org); Annie Buscemi Δᓇᓘ (ullaakkut); Wilfred Johnston; Saba Javed; Ashley Cummings; Amie Charlie (AYDA); Jacey Firth-Hagen (#SpeakGwich'inToMe); Mataya Gillis (Nipatuñuq); Lexis McDonald (Nipatuñuq); Crystal Martin-Lapenskie (NIYC); Melody Teddy (IRC); T'áñcháy Redvers (We Matter); Sharla Greenland (GCI)

Workshop Artists: Bobbi Rose Koe; Brian Kowichuk

Biographies are included in the Appendix.

EVENT REPORT



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Day 1 - March 2

- Project CREATeS Film Screening (AM & PM)
- Wellness & Connections (Virtual Youth Panel)
- Pride Across Cultures (Virtual Youth Panel)
- Beading Workshop
- World Café on Mental Health

Day 2 - March 3

- Project CREATeS Film Screening
- Recognition & Resilience (Reverse Town Hall)
- safeTALK workshop
- S'mores Night at Aurora College

Day 3 - March 4

- Coping During a Pandemic (Virtual Workshop)
- Suicide Prevention Vs. Life Promotion: WE MATTER
- Creating Hope in our Communities (Virtual Youth Panel)
- Closing Words
- Paint Night

PROJECT CREATES FILM SCREENING & WORLD CAFÉ

A total of 10 Project CREATeS films were screened over the course of the event. Films whose creators were present at the event (i.e. Jacey, Bobbi Rose, and Lesli), were prioritized when time was constrained. On Day 1's evening screening, all films were shown.

1. [Finding my Language - Topsy Banksland](#)
 - Topsy reflects on learning her language in different settings, the cultural implications of language learning, and her gratitude for Inuvialuit Elders and knowledge keepers.
2. [Natihthun Gwiintl'oo Choo \[A Whole Lot of Love\] - Jacey Firth-Hagen](#) (TW, CW¹: Addictions, suicide)
 - Jacey explores feelings of confusion, tiredness, gratitude, and happiness while she tells Gwich'in histories and reflects on her role as a Gwich'in language learner.
3. [Missing Pieces - Melody Teddy](#)
 - Melody compares traditional and modern experiences of Sámi and Inuvialuit culture, and the pressures young Indigenous people face as they attempt to balance two worlds.
4. [As I gaze across the contrasts of the valley – Bobbi Rose Koe](#)
 - Bobbi Rose explores her experiences on the land and travelling in Gwich'in country through the stories of her ancestors.
5. [Children, My Hope for the Future - Ooka Calvin](#)
 - Ooka highlights Inuit culture and land while exploring the impact that connecting to community and place can have for young people.
6. [My Story – Lesli Kisoun](#) (TW, CW: Sexual assault, suicide)
 - Lesli reflects on her life and connection with culture, including the impact that intense changes over her recent years have had on her mental health and her vision for the future.
7. [Living - Anne Qammaniq-Hellwiglqa](#)
 - Anne speaks to the environment, both physical and social, that she lives in, and shares her feelings on being connected with others.
8. [Old Memories - Willow Frost](#)
 - Willow shares her community, Old Crow, YT. through images, storytelling, music, and her memories of being on the land.
9. [Coming to my Community - Katriel Reti Villacorta](#)
 - Katriel explores her identity as a Vuntut Gwitchin from Old Crow, YT. and her experiences with urban/traditional life, western education/traditional knowledge, and caribou.
10. [Street Smarts – Simon Coady](#)
 - Simon discusses being in an urban environment as a young Indigenous person and reflects on the resilience and pride of his loved ones.

¹ Trigger Warning (TW), Content Warning (CW) used to describe potentially sensitive content, and/or something that may upset viewers/listeners. During the film screening, films with sensitive content will be preceded by a 1-minute visual & verbal notice of a TW/CW.

World Café Questions

What does wellness mean to me?

What does wellness mean to me?

- Rest; Looking after yourself; Taking care of myself; Self-love; Everything; Balancing in 2 worlds; Being with Elders; Balance; Self-care

What are your strengths or gifts?

What are your strengths or gifts?

- Empathy; I teach; Making people feel comfortable; Artistic; Being vulnerable; Culture, family, love, language; Caring, Communication; Listening without judgement; Super friendly; Encouraging others to try new things

What does healing actually look like?

What does healing actually look like?

- Healthy; Messy; Being on the land; Looking & feeling good; Smiles & healthy community and family; Cultural transmission; Laughter; Everything; Being there; Family

WHAT DO I DO WHEN I MAKE A MISTAKE? ❤️

What do I do when I make a mistake?

- Tell someone; Apologize; Try to figure it out; Forgive & forget; Try to fix it; Be kind to myself; Learn from it; Own up to it, apologize & do better; Reflect & learn; Accountable & responsible; Cry & try again; Improve

What happens when you start healing?

What happens when you start healing?

- Self-compassion; Create opportunities; peace; Cultural transmission; Start a business; Emotions, hard times, learning, good things; You create success & inspire others; Self-worth

VIRTUAL YOUTH PANELS

Wellness & Connections

Virtual Youth Panel #1
Tuesday, March 2
1-2:30PM MT



Shania Young



Annie Buscemi



Wilfred Johnston

Pride Across Cultures

Virtual Youth Panel #2
Tuesday, March 2
3-4:30PM MT



Saba Javed



Ashley Cummings



Amie Charlie

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Shania, Annie, and Wilfred spoke of their experiences of mental health & how they pursue wellness within their communities.

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YOUTH DIGITAL STORIES AND COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

Saba, Ashley, and Amie discussed their journeys through healing and finding self-confidence.

International Youth Panel

Creating Hope in our Communities

Virtual Youth Panel #3
Thursday, March 4
11:30AM-1:00PM MT



Seqininnguaq Qitura Poulsen



Juhán Nikolaus Wuolab Wollberg



Vanessa Oliverio



Kata Kuhnert



Vanessa in Dawson City, YT. (Tr'ondëk Hwéch'in)



Wollberg (he/him) Juhán in Sápmi near Narvik, Nordland.



Kata in Inuvik/Inuvik, NT.



Qitura (they/them) Seqininnguaq from Greenland (Kalaallit).

PANELISTS

Panelists were suggested based on previous collaborations with organizers (i.e. Project CREATEs participants, WAYC program virtual facilitators, BYTE employees) and were approached via social media for this event as a paid opportunity.

Last-minute changes in panelist availability made it important to have a large network of youth speakers to reach out to, and to be flexible for and comfortable with substitutions.

RECOGNITION & RESILIENCE: REVERSE TOWN HALL



- (L-R) Lexis McDonald, Mataya Gillis, and Jacey Firth-Hagen share their thoughts on mental wellness and their work as youth advocates.

○ Social media post for the Reverse Town Hall event, titled Recognition & Resilience (shared on WAYC's Facebook & Instagram).

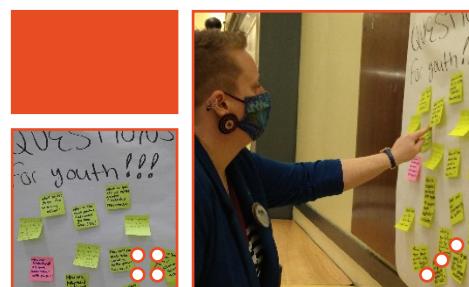
Western Arctic Youth Collective @waycwayc

Recognition & Resilience
Project CREATeS Screening and Reverse Town Hall
In-person at Midnight Sun Complex
and livestreamed on Facebook
Wednesday, March 3
10-11:30AM MT

Jacey Firth-Hagen Mataya Gillis Lexis Macdonald

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○ Inuvik Mayor Natasha Kulikowski listened to the discussion and asked questions of the panelists.

○ Attendees were encouraged to contribute their own questions to the discussion.

PANELIST QUESTIONS

WARM UP

- What barriers do you experience to taking action?
- What are the biggest issues facing your community?
- What solutions to the issues mentioned do you think are promising?

TOWN HALL

- Kenny Kyikavichik (Gwich'in Tribal Council Grand Chief): What do you think are the top 2-3 things that leadership needs to focus on to put in place a better future for youth?
- Natasha Kulikowski (Inuvik Mayor): How can organizations do better to engage with youth?
- Kristine McLeod (Gwich'in Tribal Council Deputy Chief): How can we engage more male-identifying people in mental and wellness programming?
- Ashley Gillis (GNWT Municipal & Community Affairs Representative): How can we help prevent burnout in youth who are constantly "putting their hands up" and being involved?

- Sharla Greenland (GNWT Education, Culture, and Employment & Gwich'in Council International Board Member): What is something you think the schools could do differently to make it more relevant and supportive for youth needs?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH ASKED BY PARTICIPANTS/AUDIENCE

- What barriers do you face to taking action?
- Describe 1 thing that the Minister of Youth can do to improve services for Youth.
- How can leadership at all levels better connect with youth?
- What issues are the youth facing right now?
- What is the most positive take-away you have from L2G?
- Describe 1 thing that you can do to make things better for youth in your community.
- How can Indigenous & non-Indigenous work better together to support youth leadership & initiatives?
- How can you best work with or support our Elders?
- What do you see as the greatest leadership characteristic?
- What motivated you to be a part of this event?
- How will you make the world a better place? How can I?
- What can our community do better?
- What do you feel are the top 3 priorities for community leadership?
- What platform are you most comfortable expressing your voice?
- What do you want to see from your Indigenous leadership?
- What is your greatest concern for your community? What are some solutions?
- Is culture important to/for mental health?



Figure 1: Questions contributed by event participants for the World Café on Mental Wellness and in advance of the Reverse Town Hall (March 3, 2021).

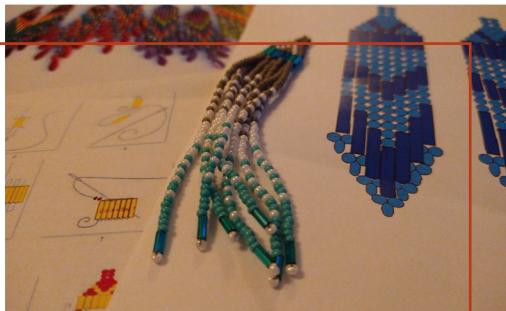
IN-PERSON EVENTS



S'Mores Night at Aurora College



SafeTALK workshop Certification



Beading with Bobbi Rose



Paint Night with Brian

In-person events were delivered in Inuvik, NT., in March 2021, during a time when there were restrictions on gathering sizes, a state of emergency in place, and varying levels of fear and anxiety in individuals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no active cases of COVID-19 in Inuvik during this time. In Inuvik there was, and continues to be, desire for genuine and meaningful in-person connections and conversations. This context informed the in-person events and required thoughtful design of how space would be set up (i.e. limitations on the numbers of participants, registration and collection of information for potential contact tracing, and developing and submitting plans in advance). Due to uncertainty and the potential for restrictions to change, it was very difficult to confirm far in advance what events and set ups would be permitted and approved. Despite the challenges of delivering in-person events during the COVID-19 pandemic, they were assessed to be a valued component and opportunity to connect with youth, have Elders as in-person supports, and celebrate wellness.

FEEDBACK & EVALUATION

Both internal and external evaluation activities were undertaken. WAYC staff, GCI staff, and event partners completed an initial debrief right after the event ended (Friday, March 5th, 2021) using WAYC's SWOT evaluation method on an online platform: <https://tinyurl.com/L2G-Team-Debrief>. Further debriefing and evaluation with the project team will address questions raised during initial debrief meeting, and will more thoroughly evaluate each component of the event (i.e. virtual, in-person, panels, film screenings).

WAYC Programming Debrief – S, W, O, Ts

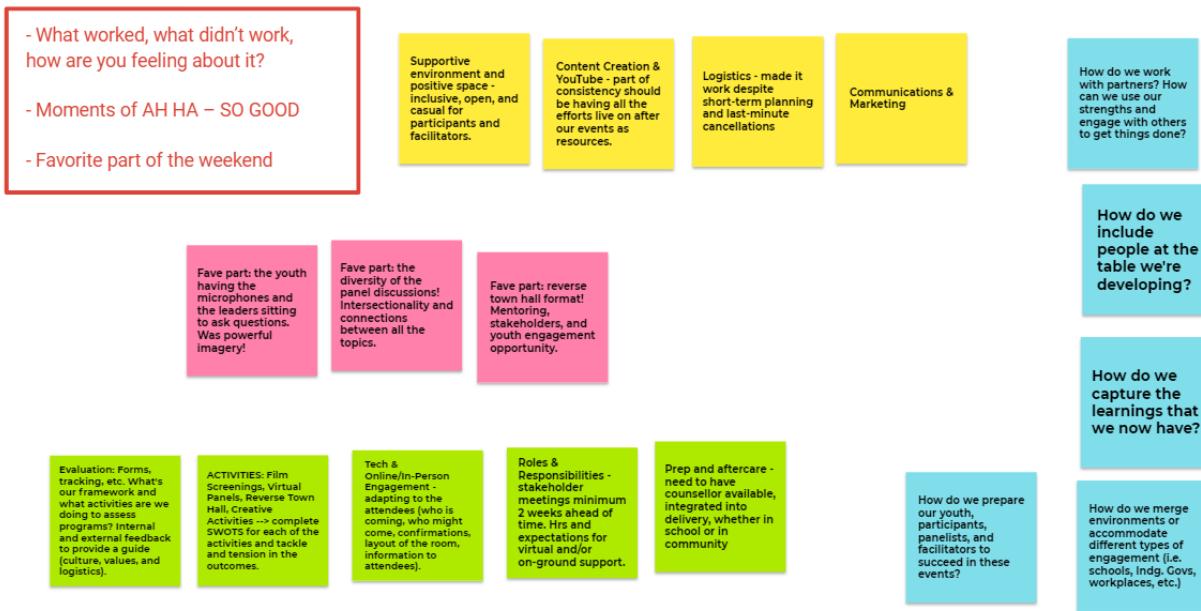


Figure 2: Local2Global event initial debrief, completed on Friday, March 5th, 2021.

Event participants were encouraged to complete an online feedback form (<https://forms.gle/EF7pY5Kyfgas062VA>) following any in-person activity or virtual presentation/panel for the Local2Global - Youth Digital Stories and Community Exchange. The form was emailed to all participants who registered with contact information and was posted to WAYC social media pages.

Of respondents, 75% identified as youth, with 10% identifying as community members. On a scale of 1-5 from not satisfied/relevant to very satisfied/relevant, 53% of respondents were “very satisfied” with the event, and 50% thought the event was “very helpful/relevant”. Youth films had the highest number of “very satisfied” responses, and T’áñcháy Redvers’ presentation had the most “very relevant” responses.

How satisfied were you with the event?

28 responses

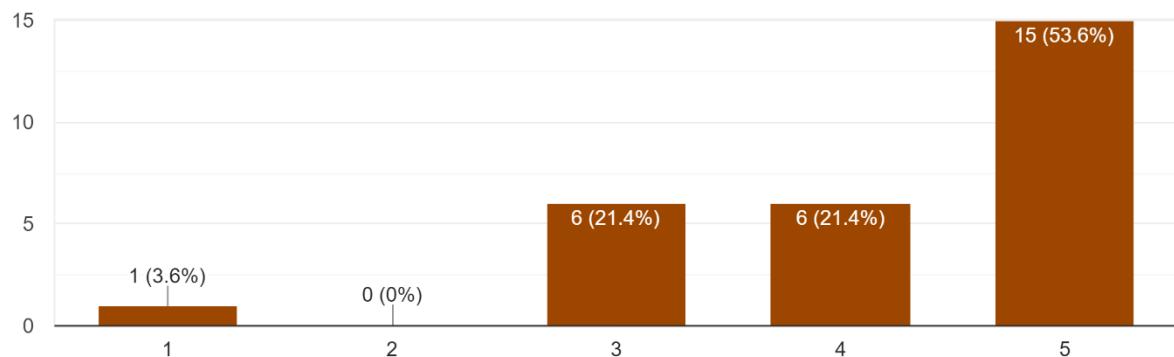


Figure 3: Respondents' satisfaction with the event from 1-5 (1 being not at all satisfied, 5 being very satisfied)

How relevant and helpful do you think this event was?

28 responses

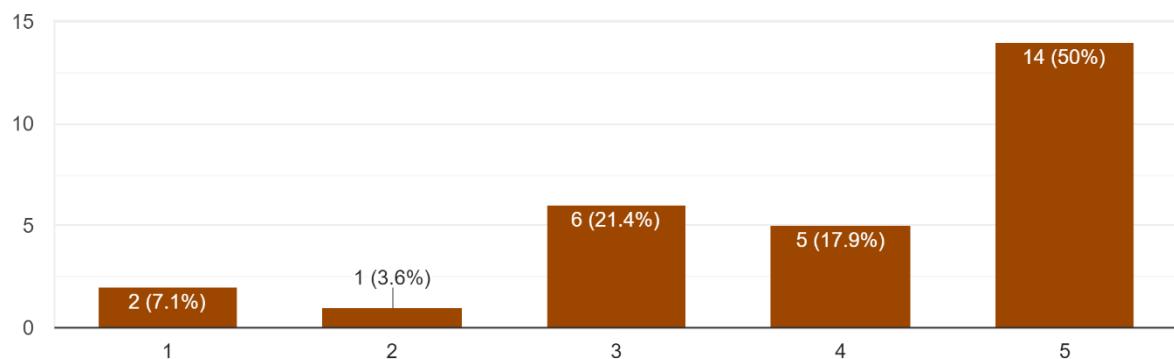


Figure 4: Respondents' thoughts on relevance/helpfulness of the event from 1-5 (1 being not at all relevant, 5 being very relevant)

Below are some selected responses to long-answer questions on the Local2Global event and mental wellness more broadly:

<p>What does mental wellness mean to you?</p> <p><i>"Balancing life ups and downs through intentional learning and actions. Connection at all levels of being."</i></p> <p><i>"Mental wellness is my confidence."</i></p> <p><i>"Feeling supported, rested, and having the energy to be able to navigate daily life and the challenges/stresses that you face in a good way."</i></p> <p><i>"Loving energy inside and outside."</i></p>	<p>What do we need to normalize in our community around mental health/wellness?</p> <p><i>"Being vulnerable, talking about our experiences and supporting others to do so as well."</i></p> <p><i>"Mental health days (taking leave days from work)."</i></p> <p><i>"The effects of 24-hour sunlight/darkness."</i></p> <p><i>"Talking about both strengths and challenges surrounding mental health/wellness, reaching out for help, doing what you need to do to support your mental health."</i></p>
<p>What is a message you have for others that may need to hear it?</p> <p><i>"Always choose the healthiest way to do something positively"</i></p> <p><i>"Don't be hard on yourself when you slip. It took me 8 years from deciding I want to be sober to actually being sober. Anything is possible, even if you need to work on one thing at a time, have to take a break or need to find extra help. Just keep trying."</i></p> <p><i>"Half of what you think isn't true."</i></p> <p><i>"Youth voices are powerful and valuable! Northern youth deserve to be supported and heard."</i></p>	<p>What do life-promoting activities, supports, or programming look like in our region for youth? For community?</p> <p><i>"They enhance or create a sense in pride. They leave you with a small accomplishment (tangible or intangibles). They create personal connections to others that become positive support systems."</i></p> <p><i>"Any opportunity to share and learn from each other and respectful dialogue."</i></p> <p><i>"I think opportunities to connect with other youth are important life-promoting activities for youth."</i></p> <p><i>"Sustained like a marathon, not run like a race"</i></p> <p><i>"Youth have described that there is a desire to connect with their culture."</i></p> <p><i>"we go to the youth center or the arena to skate or in the school gym"</i></p>
<p>What were your key take-aways or learnings from this event?</p> <p><i>"It was inspiring to see and hear so many youth share vulnerability with each other. It felt easy to be open in the space. It also highlighted the knowledge, skills and capacity youth bring to the community."</i></p> <p><i>"Asking youth is the key to engagement. Expecting them to respond without direct communication does not work.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND, VERY PRACTICALLY,</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"To paint."</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>"How qulliqs are used."</i></p>	

ENGAGEMENT

WAYC staff worked to ensure optimal engagement in the event by focusing on these 3 event objectives:

- To engage participants with Project CREATeS films
- To provide a platform for community discussions of mental wellness
- To connect participants with each other and with supporting organizations

WELLNESS KITS & PRIZES

50 “Wellness Kits” and 3 grand prizes were curated by WAYC staff for event participants and included items related to mental wellness, self-care, and land-based activity. These kits and prizes acted both as an incentive for attendance to the events and as a gift to acknowledge the participation and input of attendees. By advertising and providing “swag” to attendees and respondents, organizers attracted a larger portion of the target audience and provided a physical reminder of the event and event themes even after activities were finished.

Wellness Kit Contents

- *Snacks (juice box, tea, hot chocolate, applesauce, granola bar, fruit bar, chocolate heart)*
- *Bear Bell OR Emergency Blanket OR Flashlight*
- *5 Prints from artist Nikita Larter - @kivvaq_draws*
- *Hand/Toe Warmer*
- *Thermal Socks OR Hat OR Thermal Gloves*
- *Tissues*
- *Pen*
- *Tea Light Candle*
- *Toothpaste*
- *Fidget Toy (bubble sticker & pipe cleaner)*

EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT

In working to meet the objectives of the event, the connection between safety/wellness and engagement was highlighted. Importantly, the event had a risk of emotional and mental injuries due to the nature of the films’ themes and content. As a result, virtual and in-person safety measures were required for a responsible and successful event. In addition to having on-site counsellor and Elder support, staff members were safeTALK and/or ASIST trained, and content warning and trigger warnings were used for films and presentations, identified in the participant packages.

Partners and community members highlighted through their participation and feedback the importance of creating space for difficult discussions (i.e. community health, mental illness, suicide, colonialism), which required thoughtful planning to ensure the safety and care of attendees. The event had a continuous narrative, building upon knowledge from each prior activity, and attendees showing up and leaving without all of the context poses a significant risk to the safe delivery of the event. Preparation leading up to the event should include discussing how attendees can be informed about the risks of the event (marketing & communications), and how organizers can support attendees and themselves during event delivery.

AUDIENCE

While the identified target audience for WAYC programming is youth ages 18-35, it was also considered appropriate and important to include school-aged youth in the discussion of the Project CREATeS films. As such, students from East Three School in Inuvik were invited to attend the in-person viewings of the films and discussion panels. Two classes of grade 8 students were in attendance during “Suicide Prevention vs Life Promotion”. Counsellor Sharla Greenland discussed the themes of the presentation with the students afterwards, and noted that topics such as suicide, which can be emotionally difficult, require preparation beforehand.

To attract school-aged youth, especially for events happening during the school day, sufficient time to integrate mental health & wellness topics into teachers’ lesson plans is needed. Ideally, event organizers will connect with school administrators and potential school-led attendees 1 month prior to the event. Getting schools to buy-in to the event will require clearly demonstrating the value and relevance of the event activities and topics to teachers and administrators and providing preparation and support before and during the event.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To best expand the reach of this event and increase the potential benefits to community, the following recommendations for future planning are made:

Duplicate daytime event offerings in evenings, whenever possible

Send formal invitations to community leadership / schools min. 1 month ahead of event start

Redefine target audience for communications prior to marketing (see Program Plan)

Confirm counsellor and Elder attendance at all in-person events; provide mental health resource list for online participants

Identify content creation opportunities to maximize impact of single events

APPENDIX

SPEAKER & ARTIST BIOS

ANNIE BUSCEMI

Annie Buscemi (she/her) is a Kimmirut-born apprentice electrician, currently residing in Iqaluit, NU. Annie is an advocate for mental health and women in trades and is the creator of the @ullaakkut Instagram and TikTok accounts. [Ullaakkut](#) (good morning) delivers daily life-affirming messages and reasons to stay alive for supporters on social media and highlights aspects of Inuit culture that build strength. Annie was recently recognized by Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada as the organization's first Young Inuk Woman of the Year award!

SHANIA YOUNG

Shania Young (she/her) is a Tłı̨chǫ advocate born and raised in Yellowknife, NT. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Aurora College/University of Victoria and is a speaker for [Jack.org](#). Shania has a deep passion for mental health, that stems from personal experience and growing up in Northern Canada, where there are few mental health resources. With the high prevalence of mental illness and addictions in the North, Shania hopes to get people talking about these issues and see all generations embrace their mental health. When she is not out advocating for change, you can regularly find Shania talking about her three dogs - Tikka, Stella, and Loki - way too much.

AMIE CHARLIE

Amie Charlie (she/her) was born and raised in Inuvik, NT. She is the eldest of three girls and is a member of the Gwitch'in and Kaska First Nations. In 2019, she graduated from Trinity Western University with a BA in International Development. Amie is passionate about building community, sustainable business, and advocating for Indigenous rights. Over the years Amie has worked with various non-profits, and organizations, and in February of 2020 launched her own non-profit, [Arctic Youth Development Agency \(AYDA\)](#), AYDA is an Indigenous-led organization dedicated to building next generation leaders through holistic development for a better and stronger north. Amie is currently learning more of her Gwitch'in language and is planning on returning to school in pursuit of a master's degree in counselling.

JACEY FIRTH-HAGEN

Jacey Firth-Hagen (she/her) is a Gwich'in woman and was born, raised, and is currently residing in Inuvik, NT. Jacey, or Tsuk Tsal (Little Marten), is the creator of the social media language revitalization initiative [#SpeakGwich'inToMe](#). She is a graduate of Yukon College and is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts at MacEwan University. Jacey currently works as the Project Coordinator for the Western Arctic Youth Collective and says, "haii, shidrii shoh iinhlii, mahsi cho" (Thank you for this platform. My heart is happy. Thank you). Jacey previously participated in a Project CREATeS workshop in Inari, Sápmi (Finland), where she produced her film "Natiithun Gwiintl'oo Choo".

T'ÁNCHÁY REDVERS

T'áncháy Redvers (she/they) is a Dene/Métis queer/2spirit social justice warrior, writer, and wanderer originally from Hay River, NT. Currently, based out of Tkaronto (Toronto), T'áncháy has a masters of Indigenous social work and has dedicated years to the youth empowerment and non-profit world. She is the co-founder of [We Matter](#), a national Indigenous youth life promotion organization. Her advocacy and writing work tend to focus on intergenerational trauma, LGBTQ and two-spirit rights, youth and womxn's empowerment, and the decolonization and indigenization of identity, mental health, and healing.

TOPSY BANKSLAND

Topsy Banksland (she/her) is from Uluhaktok, NT., and is a member of the Inuvialuit Regional Youth Advisory Group as the Uluhaktok Representative. She also represents youth as a part of the [Uqarluta Inuinnaqtun](#) project of the Pitquhirnikkut Ilihautiniq / Kitikmeot Heritage Society. Topsy studied Multimedia Communications at Yukon College and is currently pursuing a career in Speech Language Pathology through the University of Saskatchewan. She hopes to be a part of language revitalization across the Arctic and loves traveling, learning, and creating art. Topsy previously participated in a Project CREATeS workshop where she produced her film "Finding my Language".

MELODY TEDDY

Melody Teddy (she/her) is from Tuktoyaktuk, NT., and holds the position of Chair of the Regional Youth Advisory Group for the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC). She has also served as the Inuvialuit representative on the National Inuit Youth Council. Melody works as the Student and Family Support Worker in the Health and Wellness division of IRC. She is a proud Inuvialuit and values learning her culture and traditions as well as those of the places she travels. Melody previously participated in a Project CREATeS workshop where she produced her film "Missing Pieces".

LESLI KISOUN

Lesli K. J. Kisoun (she/her) is a northern resident with both Inuvialuit and Vuntut Gwitchin ancestry, and spends her time in communities like Inuvik, NT., Fort Good Hope, NT., and Old Crow, YT. She loves spending time on the land and hearing stories from her elders. Lesli has been a Community Activator with the FutureXChange Program of the Youth Climate Lab, and in 2019 she gave a speech on Parliament Hill during the [Daughters of the Vote](#) event where she spoke of the impacts of climate change to food security. Lesli previously participated in a Project CREATeS workshop where she produced her film "My Story".

ALYSSA CARPENTER

Alyssa Carpenter (she/her) was born and raised in the Western Arctic region of the Northwest Territories and identifies as Inuvialuit and Dene. She calls Inuvik, NT. and Sachs Harbour, NT. her home. She is a northern social worker currently residing in Whitehorse, YT. with her partner and daughter. She works as a Special Projects Manager for [BYTE: Empowering Youth](#) and is the founder and Project

Director of the Western Arctic Youth Collective (WAYC), a project of MakeWay Charitable Society. Alyssa also serves as the youth representative for Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada and is a current [Jane Glassco Northern Fellow](#).

WILFRED JOHNSTON

Wilfred Johnston (he/him) is Tlingit (Lingít) from Teslin, YT. and currently lives in Whitehorse, YT. Wilfred, called Táaklawéix in Tlingit, from the Dakl'aheidí Clan, is passionate about learning and sharing his language. He grew up learning to navigate and harvest wild game from his grandfathers and uncles, and to care for and preserve what was harvested from his grandmothers and aunties. Wilfred has received recognition as the National Aboriginal Achievement Role Model from the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO). Wilfred says, "Yeexsíxán. Sh tóogaa xat ditee woothxán yéi haa wdateeyí. Yéi kghwatée. Chush x'éináx tsú x'anaxtool.aat. Yee gu.aa yáx x'wán!"

SHARLA GREENLAND

Sharla Greenland (she/her) is Ehditaat and Vuntut Gwich'in and was raised in Aklavik, NT. Sharla has been an educator in Inuvik, NT for the past 10 years and currently volunteers on the [Board of Directors of Gwich'in Council International](#). She is passionate about youth wellness and is an advocate for reconnecting and strengthening cultural practices as the foundation of community health and identity. She completed a Master of Education from Acadia University and worked as the school counsellor for East Three Secondary School. She recently moved to Yellowknife, NT. to take on the role of Territorial Based Support Team Coordinator with the Student Support and Wellness Division of Education, Culture, and Employment with the Government of the Northwest Territories.

CORRINE BULLOCK

Corrine Bullock (she/her) is an Inuvialuk with a passion for community and connection and brings a creative flair to whatever she sets her sight on. Corrine and her husband Logan who is also Inuvialuk, grew up together in Inuvik and continue to call it home. Their lineages transcend borders and span the Inuvialuit and Gwich'in Settlement Regions, the Kitikmeot, Alaska and Sapmi Norway. Corrine sits as co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Western Arctic Youth Collective, and currently works

SABA JAVED

Saba Javed (she/her) is a university student, writer, and a Yukoner. She is currently studying Peace, Conflict and Justice at the University of Toronto. With school being online, Saba has returned home to the embrace of the mountains of Whitehorse. Growing up in the Yukon as the child of immigrants, Saba was surrounded by a community of adults and peers who supported her throughout her entire life - no matter how far away she's moved, she always found herself coming back home. In her free time, Saba is usually frantically writing articles, making playlists and documenting the world around her. She cares deeply about community building, compassionate public policy, and the stories that connect us.

ASHLEY CUMMINGS

Ashley Cummings (she/her) is a proud Inuk youth from Pangnirtung, NU., currently living in Whitehorse, YT. As a member of the Prime Minister's Youth Council, Ashley advises the Prime Minister on issues that have included (but are not limited to) rural and northern health/well-being, supporting ethical and Indigenous-led tourism, mental health and other issues affecting youth across Canada. Her colourful background living in Nunavut, Yukon, Nova Scotia, Quebec and New Brunswick has given her a comprehensive perspective on life for Indigenous young people from coast to coast to coast.

ARSANIQ KEELAN

Arsaniq Keelan (she/her) is a traditional tattoo artist, painter, and illustrator from Quaqtaq (ᖃᖅᑕᖅ), Nunavik, QC. Surrounded since birth by an artistic family, creativity was always fostered and encouraged and depictions of Inuit women, myths and legends remain favourites of Arsaniq's. Arsaniq was introduced to the practice and history of traditional Inuit tattooing while studying at [Nunavik Sivunitsavut](#). Taught by renowned tattoo artist, Hovak Johnston, Arsaniq has taken her intrigue in traditional tattooing from interest to reality. From beginnings in drawing and painting to now tattooing, she is carving out an exciting path in art.

SEQININNGUAQ QITURA POULSEN

Seqininnguaq Qitura Poulsen (they/them) is an Inuk Indigenous rights activist from Greenland (Kalaallit) and a member of the [Global Indigenous Youth Caucus](#). They currently work at the local art museum and spend their free time on activism. When they are not working or doing activism, they are creating art, writing poems, singing, and spending time with friends and family. They are most passionate about Indigenous rights and art and wish to be an activist who uses art as their platform.

MATAYA GILLIS

Mataya Gillis (she/her) is Inuvialuit from Inuvik, NT. At 17 years old, she is currently finishing her last year of high school and is the co-founder and editor in chief of [Nipatuřuq](#) magazine. Mataya loves to learn about her culture and share that knowledge with as many people as possible. She wants to learn about her home territory and the many Indigenous groups throughout it so that she can represent them as a future NWT Member of Parliament. Mataya says, “as youth, we see first-hand that our voices are overlooked and unheard, and we need that to change. We believe that Nipaturuq magazine will be this change for the youth!”

JUHÁN NIKOLAUS WUOLAB WOLLBERG

Juhán Nikolaus Wuolab Wollberg (he/him) is 21 years old and lives on the Norwegian side of Sápmi around Narvik, Nordland. He works as a Junior Reindeer-herder apprentice at his family's herding district and also works part-time as a North Saami teacher. Juhán is passionate about taking back cultural practices regarding handcrafts, reindeer herding, and just how to survive in the Arctic, "Saami Style"! Juhán practices mental wellness by taking care of himself and feeling connected with the languages, practices, and knowledge of his ancestors. Juhán says, "the world is moving so fast nowadays that I

often find myself feeling a bit lost -- nothing anchors me more than eating traditional foods or making handicrafts with materials that I have collected and prepared myself."

BOBBI ROSE KOE

Bobbi Rose Koe (she/her) is Teetł'it Gwich'in from Teetł'it Zheh (Fort McPherson) in the Northwest Territories. Bobbi Rose was raised by her grandparents and community on the banks of Teetł'it Gwinjik (Peel River). In 2015, she paddled the Wind River with CPAWS Yukon and four other youth. Inspired by the journey, Bobbi Rose and two of her fellow paddlers created the [Youth of the Peel Society](#), an organization that leads canoe trips in the Peel Watershed to show and share the land with other youth. Bobbi Rose is an Indigenous guide and the Owner/Operator of Dinjii Zhiu Adventures and Tours, and she practices traditional sewing and beading.

BRIAN KOWICHUK

Brian Kowichuk (he/him) is an arts advocate as well as an artist, based in Inuvik, NT. He teaches classes in painting in his community and works with The Artist's Hub in Inuvik where he intends to build community resiliency through arts programming. Brian grew up watching his mother draw flowers and was always inspired to create art. Although he now prefers to work in acrylic paint, he began to explore art in high school by sketching portraits and has worked in charcoal, oil paints, watercolour, and digital paint apps.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

GWICH'IN COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL

The [Gwich'in Council International](#) (GCI) represents 9,000 Gwich'in in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Yukon, and Alaska as a Permanent Participant in the Arctic Council; the only international organization where Indigenous peoples have a seat at the decision-making table alongside national governments. GCI supports Gwich'in by amplifying our voice on sustainable development and the environment at the international level to support resilient and healthy communities.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

The [Sustainable Development Working Group](#) (SDWG) is one of the six [working groups of the Arctic Council](#) and has a mandate to protect and enhance the environment, economies, culture, and health of Indigenous peoples and Arctic communities. One of its thematic areas is Human Health, and the Local to Global (L2G) Project is the fourth iteration of a project focused on building circumpolar connections and collaborations – between youth, Indigenous Peoples, health practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and others – towards effective action that reduces suicide and fosters mental wellness.

NIPATUÎUQ

Nipatuîuq (“having a loud voice” in Uummarmiutun) is an Inuvialuit youth-led magazine that works to create a larger platform for Inuvialuit youth voices to be heard. In 2019, Inuvik teens Mataya Gillis and Cassidy Lennie-Ipana created [Nipatuîuq](#) to highlight issues and themes of significance to Inuvialuit youth. The Nipatuîuq team published their third issue in October 2020 with a focus on mental health and featuring cover design by digital artist Lexis McDonald. Most recently, Nipatuîuq founders received the Ministerial Youth Learner Literacy Award from the Government of the Northwest Territories.

ARCTIC YOUTH NETWORK

The [Arctic Youth Network](#) (AYN) is a youth-founded and youth-led non-profit organization supporting a global network of youth through international cooperation and capacity-building. The AYN provides a platform that connects young change-makers from different backgrounds and enables them to build their leadership capacity, and works to amplify youth voices to address Arctic issues through learning, collaboration, and action.

PARTICIPANT PACKAGE

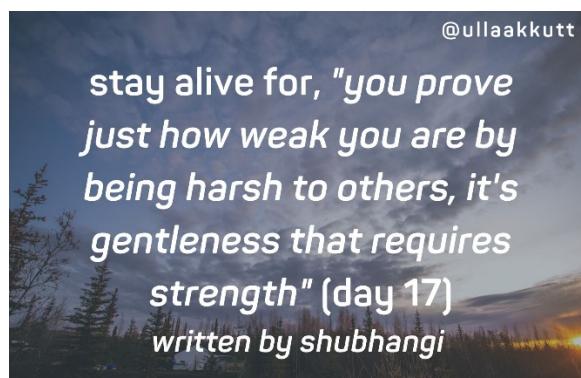
10 REASONS TO STAY ALIVE – ULLAAKKUT



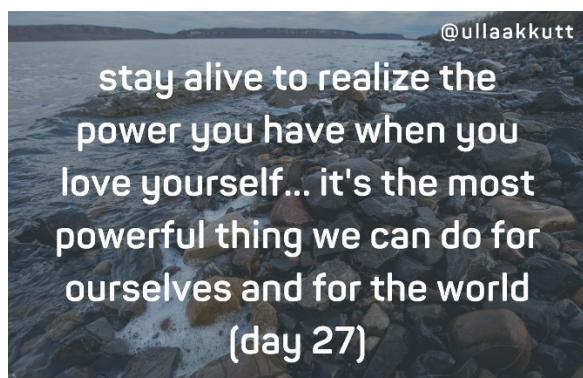
Inuk-specific reasons to STAY ALIVE from Annie Buscemi with ULLAAKKUT



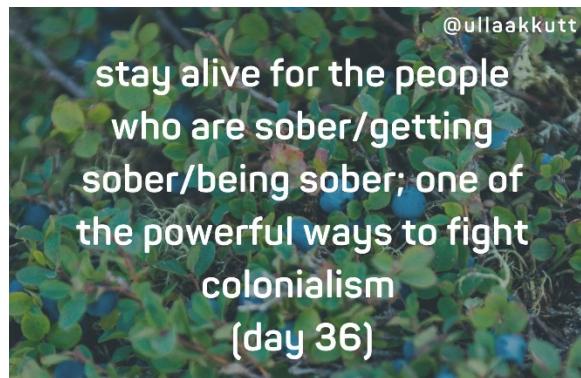
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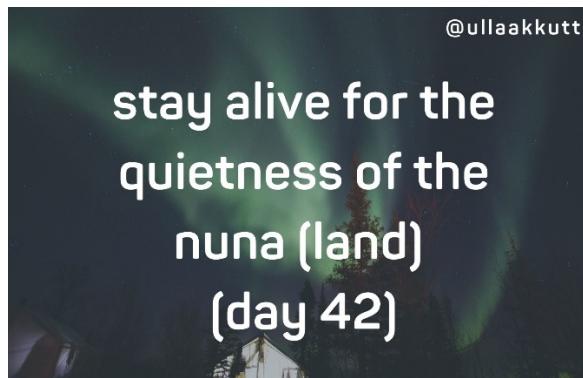
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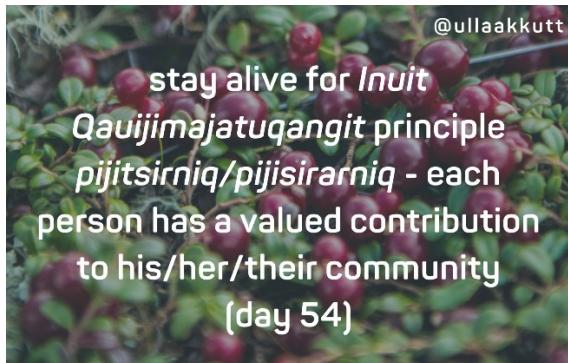
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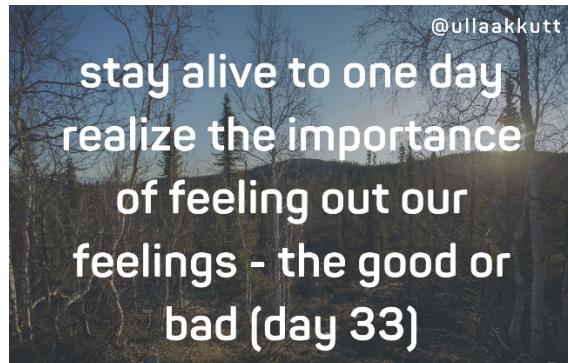
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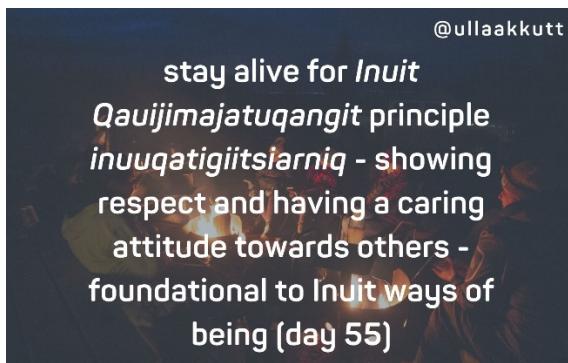
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L2G: LOCAL²GLOBAL

YOUTH DIGITAL STORIES AND COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

Mental Wellness - Life Promotion - Community Empowerment



INUVIK, NT MARCH 2-4, 2021

For more information: email director@wayc.ca

Project CREATeS

Screenings of Project CREATeS digital stories and short films

Regional youth stories

Community engagement activities on creating hope and wellness initiatives in the region

Virtual Presentations

Suicide Prevention vs Life Promotion

Presented by: T'áncháy Redvers

Arctic Youth Panel: Creating Hope in our Communities

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

In-Person Activities

safeTALK workshop, sponsored by Inuvialuit Regional Corporation

Paint workshop
Beading workshop
Bonfire and stories

MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!

Hosted by the Western Arctic Youth Collective, in collaboration with
Gwich'in Council International

Gwich'in Council
INTERNATIONAL



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada



Sustainable Development
Working Group



ARCTIC COUNCIL

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada



Seeking Expressions of Interest

Gwich'in Council International (GCI) is looking for partners to help design, contribute to, and deliver a piece of work this winter. Originally envisioned as a mini film festival (pre-COVID!), the idea is morphing to meet changing circumstances. Please consider how you or someone in your network could be involved. Some of the parameters and partners are established, some are known and need more work and thought, and some elements are unknown and require others' ideas and expertise.

Concept

- Organize an event to bring the Project CREATeS films to an audience in Inuvik, NT as an anchor to a dialogue about pride, resilience, suicide prevention, and youth empowerment.
- Create the space for such viewing and dialogue in a supported way, being mindful of potential triggers and trauma.
- Engage youth and community partners in the design, development, and delivery of the event to leverage and elevate their ideas, networks, and objectives.

Background

The Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) is one of the six working groups of the Arctic Council and has a mandate to protect and enhance the environment, economies, culture, and health of Indigenous peoples and Arctic communities. One of its thematic areas is Human Health, and the **Local to Global (L2G) Project** is the fourth iteration of a project focused on building circumpolar connections and collaborations – between youth, Indigenous Peoples, health practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and others – towards effective action that **reduces suicide and fosters mental wellness**.

Under the banner of Project CREATeS a number of digital stories, or films, were created by youth engaged in dialogue about suicide prevention. With the project Local to Global (L2G), work continues on facilitating international collaboration as well as youth and community capacity building. A number of project partners (Arctic Council member states, Permanent Participant organizations, and Observers) are involved in different ways. Gwich'in Council International, committed to health and wellness and recognizing the devastating impacts of suicides, was interested in advancing this project and proposed bringing some of the films to local audiences.

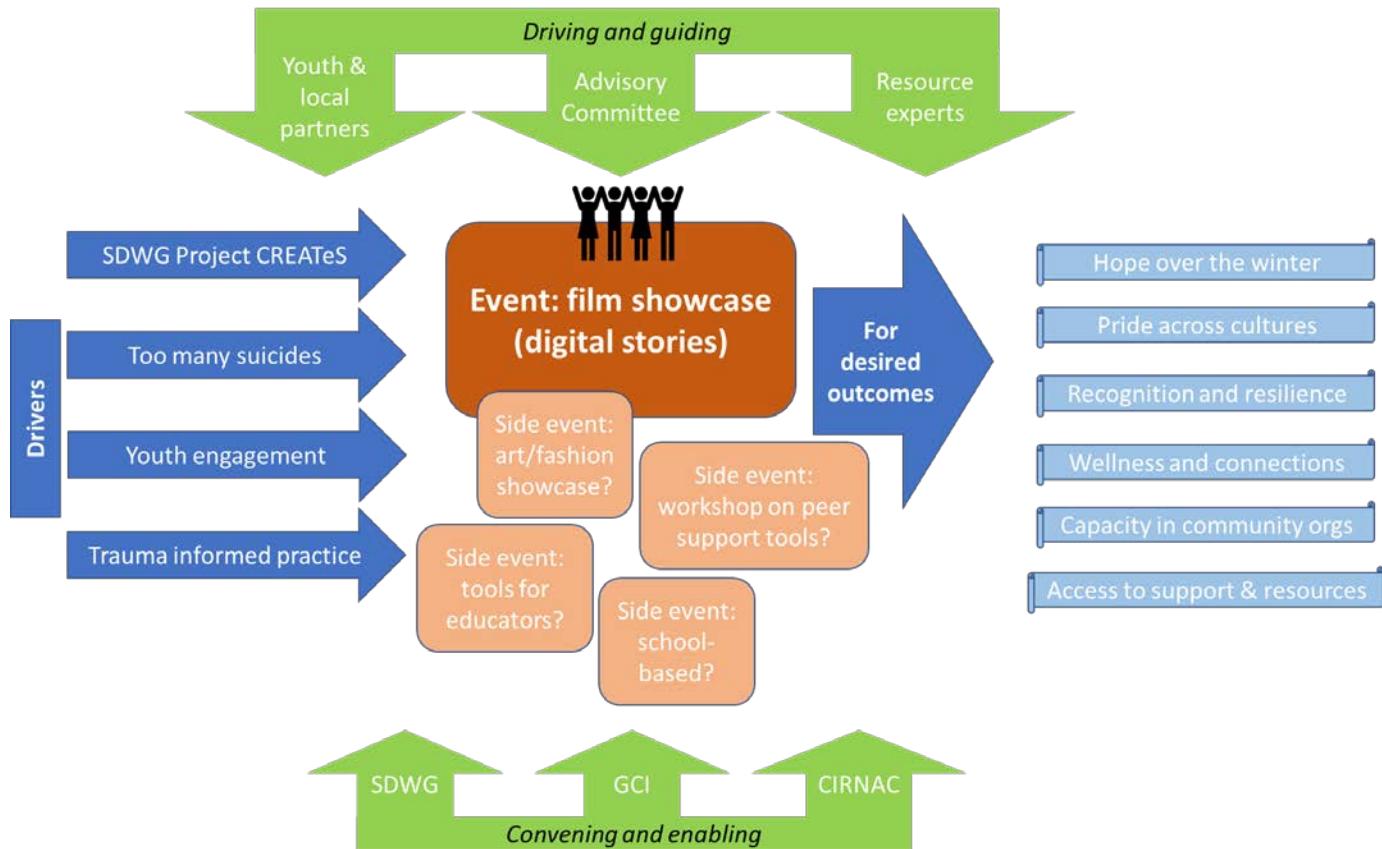
Audience

- Youth – across cultural backgrounds
- Educators
- Practitioners – those who work in community, with youth, in education, with families

We want to run this in Inuvik NT, and as part of the project include a reflection and compilation of how-to lessons so it could potentially be run in other places in the future.



Draft visual of concept:



Drivers

- Existing materials and resources compiled under SDWG projects (Rising Sun, Project CREATEs, Local to Global), on suicide prevention and trauma informed practice
- We are going into the winter, during a global pandemic. Suicide impacts Arctic Indigenous communities disproportionately.
- Need to engage youth in the work and solutions, recognizing them as the current and future leaders

Desired outcomes

If we are successful, we will:

- Increase awareness of, and access to, resources aimed at preventing suicide and fostering wellness
- Give people something to engage in and look forward to during the winter
- Increase the awareness of local organizations and increase their capacity to connect with audiences and deliver programming
- Increase pride and resilience
- Enable mentoring relationships and connections



Partnerships

We envision different roles which individuals and organizations can take on. I have spoken with some people and organizations already, brainstormed and not talked to others, but recognize that we might be missing some. The partners listed are not confirmed though we hope to have confirmation from interested parties and MOUs and contracts in place by December 4, 2020.

Role(s)	Responsibilities	Potential partner
Primary delivery organization(s)	<p>Explore options for delivery in Inuvik and create proposed plan</p> <p>Get feedback from advisory committee on approach</p> <p>Organize event(s) to showcase films in topic & culturally sensitive manner</p> <p>Generate a list of resources that can be provided to those attending/ interested for follow up and support</p> <p>Hire and mentor a local youth to be involved in development, logistics, communications, recruitment, documenting event (photos)</p> <p>Write a reflections report on what went well, what was tricky, and what should be changed for next time that can be shared with others who want to do something similar</p> <p>Participate in a debrief call</p>	Western Arctic Youth Collective (WAYC) Arctic Youth Development Agency (AYDA)
Advisors/ Advisory Committee	<p>Monthly calls to receive project updates and provide feedback, linkages, and guidance</p> <p>Willingness to share information with networks</p>	Jacey Firth-Hagen Sharla Greenland Sarah Cox Dr. Allison Crawford
Resource experts	<p>Identify and share resources for youth, educators, and practitioners which can accompany the films</p> <p>Suggest and, if desired/feasible, run side or partner events (eg training, webinars, discussions)</p>	Dr. Allison Crawford School(s) GNWT Hotìì ts'eeda
Secondary delivery organizations	<p>Depending on what the “event” looks like, there may be different ways for organizations to be involved. Host a side event? Provide resources for a print or web-based resource listing? Give a talk about your services and supports? Other?</p>	Gwich'in Tribal Council Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Inuvialuit Communications Society Beauford Delta Education Council
Convener(s)	<p>Work with delivery organization(s) on draft project plan</p> <p>Ensure financial resources for delivery and be available to navigate challenges</p> <p>Connect delivery organizations with people and resources from the Arctic Council projects/work</p> <p>Organize Advisory Committee calls</p>	Gwich'in Council International – Sharla (Board - advisor), Devlin (staff)



Questions and unknowns

- Can this be delivered in partnership with the high school?
- With COVID-19 restrictions, is it possible to bring people together in a physical space or must this be done virtually?
- How to build in some of the other Project CREATEs and Local 2 Global resources, e.g. practitioners on trauma-informed practice, suicide prevention around the Arctic, Indigenous ways of knowing and being?
- How to include youth who were part of the digital storytelling films? Can one or more be invited to be part of the Advisory Committee, be part of the event, share their experience?
- How can culture be celebrated through this? Fashion show?
- Given the potential for triggers and trauma, what needs to be available during and after event(s)?
- Can this happen again?

Timing

Confirm primary delivery organization(s) and advisory committee members by **December 4th, 2020**

Week of **December 7th, 2020** with final date to be confirmed, host first Advisory Committee call to introduce project partners, brainstorm, discuss ideas

Event delivered by **March 1st, 2021**

Debrief call and completion of deliverables (reflections report & how-to guide) by **March 14th 2021**

Links for more info

Project Local to Global: <https://sdwg.org/what-we-do/projects/local-2-global/>

Project CREATEs and access to digital stories: <https://www.projectcreates.com/>

Gwich'in Council International: <http://gwichincouncil.com/>

Next steps

Please indicate your interest and how you envision being able to be a part of this work.

Share with your network, or advise us who we should reach out to.

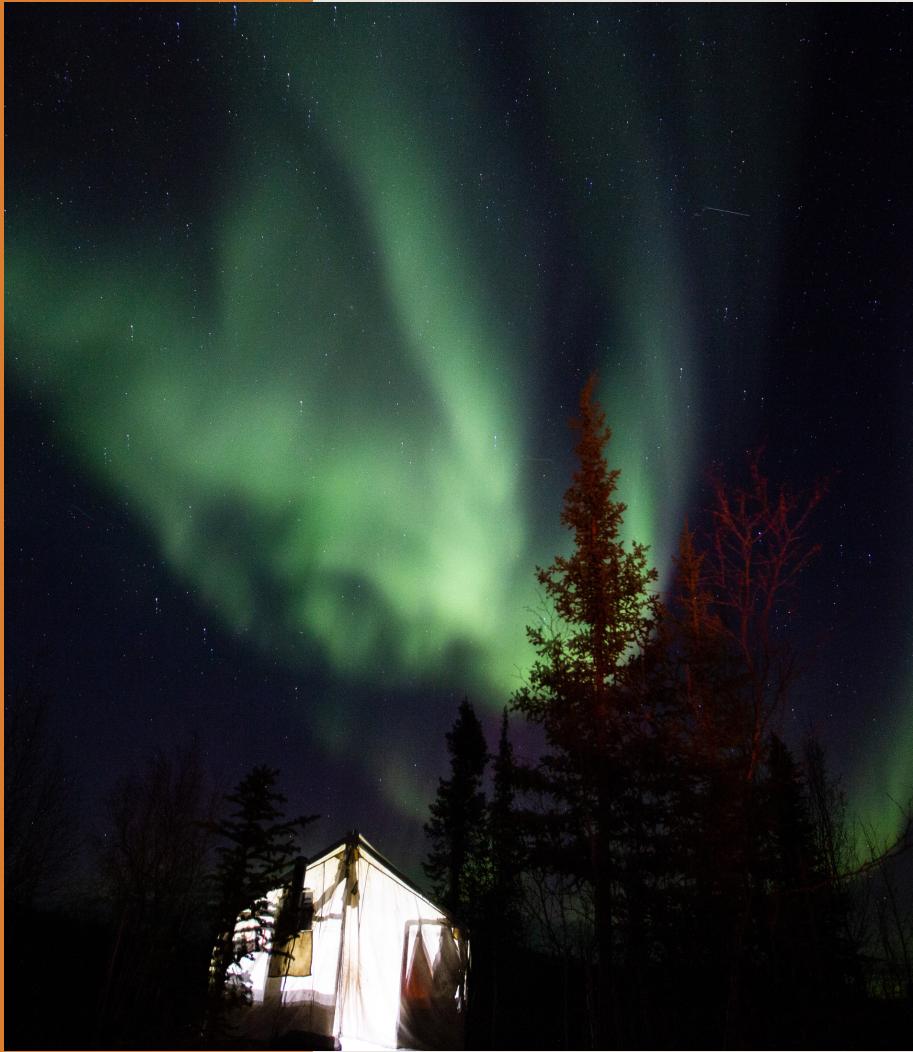
Contact

Devlin Fernandes

Executive Director, Gwich'in Council International

(+1) 778-884-0152

gci.executivedirector@gmail.com



WAYC

How to Host Your Own Event

*A Toolkit for Youth Groups
and Community Organizations*

Created by:

Western Arctic Youth Collective

Prepared Spring 2021 for:

Gwich'in Council International

Drin Gwiinzii, Uvlumi

WAYC's focus areas are:

- *Mental Wellness*
- *Cultural Values and Knowledge Exchange*
- *Community Empowerment*
- *Collective Mentorship and Education*

The **Western Arctic Youth Collective (WAYC)** is created by Gwich'in and Inuvialuit youth for youth with connections to the Western Arctic. Our purpose is to empower our northern youth to be changemakers by providing a platform of youth-led collaborative initiatives and partnerships in their communities, and to partner with other like-minded groups in the North. WAYC is a project on MakeWay Charitable Society's Shared Platform as of March 2020, which supports on-the-ground efforts to create uncommon solutions for the common good.

Since 2018, WAYC had this idea of youth coming together to support and prioritize building collaborative relationships; strategize and be forward thinking about community-based goals and solutions; and organize creative and relevant programming for young people in their region. In 2021, WAYC was recognized as one of the Youth Category recipients of the Arctic Inspiration Prize.



Table of Contents

- Page 3: Introduction
- Page 4: Getting Started
- Page 5: Getting Started - WAYC Example
- Page 6: Creating Your Program Plan
- Page 7: Program Plan - WAYC Example
- Page 8: Creating a Budget
- Page 9: Budget - WAYC Example
- Page 10: Implementation and Evaluation
- Page 11: Implementation and Evaluation - WAYC Example
- Page 12: Recommendations and Resources

Introduction

In March 2021, WAYC hosted a **Local2Global Youth Digital Stories and Community Exchange** in Inuvik, Northwest Territories in collaboration with Gwich'in Council International (GCI).



The objectives of the **Local2Global** event were:

- To engage participants with Project CREATEs films
- To provide a platform for community discussions of mental wellness
- To connect participants with each other and with supporting organizations
- To inform future Arctic Council collaborations with youth-led initiatives
- To support youth-led organizations in event planning and facilitation

We heard other youth want to host similar events in their regions. This toolkit is to help youth groups and community organizations share ideas, get others involved and connected, and make a plan to use the Project CREATEs films as an anchor to create space on talking about suicide prevention and life promotion efforts in our communities.

Key Findings of Project CREATEs:

Storytelling was an effective way of eliciting personal experience related to both suicide and resilience

Youth want to be meaningfully involved on suicide prevention efforts

Youth want culturally safe spaces to talk about suicide

Youth value circumpolar exchanges with other youth

About Project CREATEs:

Project CREATEs is a project of the Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG) of the Arctic Council. The SDWG co-leads on this project included the Inuit Circumpolar Council, Canada, Finland, Kingdom of Denmark, and Sweden. Youth, invited by Permanent Participants of the Arctic Council, were invited to engage in a dialogue about suicide prevention by telling their own stories, and were supported to make these stories into digital stories, or short films.

Getting Started

1) Reflection - WHY?

Ask yourself and others involved:

- Why is this important or needed?
- Have there been other events like this? If so, what worked well? What would you change, or want to avoid?
- Are there particular sensitivities or recent events to be mindful of in the community? On your team?
- What do you hope to achieve? What does success look like?
- Do you have the resources to do this?

5) Creating Positive Impacts!

To improve you must monitor, debrief, and evaluate your efforts individually and collectively. Talk about lessons learned and obstacles or conflicts that arose. Remember to celebrate what you did well! Questions to consider:

- Will there be a follow up to this event? If so, what does that event look like?
- How will results be shared? How will lessons learned or feedback be shared?
- What else interests you and your team?
- How do you align values, passion, and strengths in these activities moving forward?

4) Let's Get Planning!

Time to get moving! When you have a plan, remember to stay positive, communicate, and work together.

- What could this event look like?
- Who is the target audience?
- What are your team goals? Is everyone on the same page?
- What are the roles of the team? Who is responsible for what task?
- What are additional supports needed to make this event successful?
- What is your budget? Do you need more resources or partnerships?

2) Get Others Involved!

Time to approach others to contribute to your event. Good team work and communication are key!

- What empowers you that can empower and motivate others to get involved?
- Who do you need on your team? Early in planning stages? For delivery and implementation stages? To help promote and publicize? To be there during the event?
- What strengths does your team have? Where is help needed and what supports are available to you?

TIP: Build an Advisory Committee!

- Make sure to have a range of representation, diversity, and experience on this committee; ie. consider having someone from local government; education sector; grassroot sector; someone who's been involved in a similar event in the past; and maybe partners/other youth groups. These will be your community champions and people who can connect you to resources
- Set check in times and realistic deliverables within an agreed timeline
- Have clear expectations that it is a supportive and collaborative environment to share and contribute ideas and receive feedback

3) Power of Networking!

You may discover new ideas, have access to knowledge, and get support for your idea. There is a range of knowledge and support existing within your community!

TIP: Do it LOTS, OFTEN, and EARLY!

- Be clear when you're at the brainstorming and ideation stage and need feedback, help, people, or connections
- Be clear and encouraging if you need people to amplify your message and spread the word of your idea or vision
- Be clear and inviting whether you need people to help, implement and/or attend

Getting Started: WAYC

1) Reflection - WHY?

WAYC determined that using the Project CREATeS films would help create space for meaningful conversations and reflections on the reality and loss of suicide in community.

From 2018 to 2021, youth have shared with WAYC that:

- *Youth want to be meaningfully involved on suicide prevention and life promotional events and activities in their communities and regions*
- *Youth want culturally safe and appropriate spaces to talk about suicide without judgement and stigma, along with voicing concerns on other challenging topics and contributing factors to suicide that youth face, such as addictions, violence, bullying, depression and anxiety*
- *Youth want to learn from others and gain knowledge and skills on self-regulation and healthy coping mechanisms*

5) Creating Positive Impacts!

This event aligns with WAYC focus areas and values of youth-led engagement and participation within community on the topics of mental wellness and life promotion, community exchange and knowledge sharing, and capacity building activities and workshops. Our team focused on long term and positive impact efforts that were captured in the following themes with virtual and in-person activities, panels, and workshops:

- Increased connection and support between youth
- Increased hope over the winter
- Increased pride across cultures
- Recognition and resilience of youth and community members
- Increased capacity in community organizations
- Increased access to support and resources for mental wellness

2) Get Others Involved!

WAYC was supported by a Advisory Group of professionals and supports from GCI and other stakeholders connected to the Project CREATeS development over the years. WAYC also was supported by community champions with experience in the mental wellness and education sectors in the region.

WAYC participated in 3 Advisory Group meetings:

- Pre-planning stages and brainstorming of activities, topics, and workshops connected to the themes of the Project CREATeS films
- Interim check-in on progress and offering support with remaining tasks prior to the event
- Debrief event and activities, with lessons learned and reflections of the overall efforts

3) Power of Networking!

WAYC has strong relationships in our communities and throughout the region because of our networking skills. As shared - do it lots, often, and early in your planning process. From 2018-2021, WAYC has collaborated and partnered with community champions and allies, grassroot groups, not-for-project organizations, local and territorial governments, and other organizations outside of the region.

4) Let's Get Planning!

WAYC had clear objectives agreed with GCI to implement the program and carry out the event:

- To engage participants with Project CREATeS films
- To provide a platform for community discussions of mental wellness
- To connect participants with each other and with supporting organizations
- To inform future Arctic Council collaborations with youth-led initiatives
- To support youth-led organizations in event planning and facilitation

Creating Your Program Plan

TIP: Break down all of the different groups you are trying to engage and strategize on how your team will engage each one specifically!

Remember that different individuals and groups will require different styles and forms of engagement and timelines to meaningfully participate

Remember that different individuals and groups will require multiple weeks to months of notice to participate within their schedules

Remember that different individuals and groups will range on what form of communication works best for them, ie. phone, virtual meeting, email, in-person, social media, etc.

Program Name: What is your event called? Be clear and consistent for when you promote it!

Creating a Team: Team work is everything when you have a group of people working together!

- Be open and transparent of what you can offer the team and where support is needed to make this event a success
- Discuss your communication style, ways of sharing and absorbing information
- Be clear and assertive of what your boundaries are when you are a part of a team and sharing tasks

Target Individual/Group: Who is the target audience? Who are we trying to engage? Who do we need to invite to participate?

- Share with youth, Elders, youth support workers, cultural support workers, teachers, social workers, counsellors, leaders, politicians, and other community members
- Reach out to schools, local groups and other organizations, local governments, territorial governments, and organizations outside of your region

Context/Background: Why is this important to address in your community? Have there been other events like this? If so, what worked well? What would you change, or want to avoid? Are there particular sensitivities or recent events to be mindful of in the community? On your team?

Timeline: Is it scheduled at a good time? Is the event overlapping with other events? Is there enough notice for people to attend? How much time does your team need per task to make this event happen?

Program Outcomes: What are your objectives? What are short term and long term impact will this event/activity have on participants? What are possible obstacles or threats?

Contributors: Do you have presenters? Speakers? Moderators? Facilitators? Create an agreement form and confirm expectations on time commitments and payment before the event.

Promotion: How do we make individuals and groups aware of this event? What promotional and advertisements will your team use?

Resources: What resources are required to make this event/activity successful? (ie. money for venue/food, salaries, honoraria, equipment rentals, workshop supplies, etc.)

Program Plan: WAYC

Program Name: Local 2 Global: Youth Digital Stories and Community Exchange

Creating a Team: Our core team consisted of 4 staff that shared a range of tasks from brainstorming and offering ideas, logistics and finance support, promoting the event, recruitment of presenters, on-site preparation, evaluating and reporting. Our team was supported by an Advisory Group.

Target Individual/Group: Our focus areas are youth ages 18-35. Our target group was engaging and creating space for youth ages 15-35 to share their perspectives, insight, and ideas for community solutions on life promotion, mental wellness, and community empowerment in the region and across similar northern and circumpolar regions.

Context/Background: High suicide rates among youth, specifically Indigenous youth in remote and isolated communities and across similar northern and circumpolar regions. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone's mental health and wellness as well.

Timeline: Our timeline was mid-January to end of March to host the event and complete a report.

- *January:* Familiarize our team with objectives and deliverables; Participate in advisory pre-planning and brainstorming sessions; Outline tasks for team and create program plan; Book venue; Start approaching contributors and other supports in the community; Submit COVID-19 Safety Plan
- *February:* Participate in check-in Advisory meeting; Purchase supplies for wellness kits; Send save-the-dates to promote event; Create promotional content for social media; Confirm supports and presenters;
- *March:* Last minute tasks and logistics; Host the event; Debrief with the team and Advisory Group; Finalize report and feedback from all participants; Finalize expenses

Program Outcomes: We hoped community would feel empowered coming together virtually and in-person on a subject that impacts all our communities. We hoped youth would feel heard and valued to share their perspectives, insight, and ideas by creating a safe space to discuss fear, stigma, discomfort, apathy, and other contributing factors to suicide we see in community. Below are some outcome examples:

- Participants practice self-care activities using the resilience kits provided
- Participants connect with each other through shared activities (film screenings, paint workshop, safeTALK workshop, and beading workshop)
- Community exchange opportunities (world cafe, youth panels, reverse town hall, suicide prevention vs. life promotion presentation)

Contributors: We had over 15 youth participate in virtual panels and a live reverse town hall. We had Elders making opening remarks and be supports on site. We hired local facilitators to deliver workshops and youth wellness advocates to present on the topic of suicide prevention vs. life promotion and moderate the panels.

Promotion: Our team used Facebook and Instagram advertisements to promote the event. We also circulated save-the-dates within our networks and our partners' networks 2 weeks prior to the event.

Resources: WAYC had a budget of \$30, 000 to cover all expenses associated with the event.

Creating a Budget

Category and Budget Examples:

Salaries: Salaries and benefits for staff

Honoraria: Honoraria for individuals contributing their time and knowledge, such as youth, guest speakers, artists, volunteers, Elders, knowledge keepers, etc.

Professional Fees: Contracted work, such as counselors, photographers, consultants, designers, facilitators, instructors, extra hands, etc.

Materials/Supplies: Prizes, medicines, sewing supplies, swag, facilitation materials, camping needs, art materials, etc.

Venue: Venue rentals, equipment rentals, catering, etc.

Food: Meals, snacks, drinks, per diems, etc.

Travel: Flights, mileage, car rentals, shuttles, taxi, etc.

Accommodations: Hotels, Airbnb, or gifts for hosts and billets (if staying at someone's home)

Communications: Printing, Canva subscription, internet fees, Facebook and Instagram ads, audio/visual rentals, etc.

<i>Budget for film screening with world café engagement activities:</i>		<i>Anticipated Event Costs</i>
A. Materials/Supplies (local prizes and facilitation materials):		\$100 CAD
B. Honoraria/Professional Fees (counselor and Elder):		\$500 CAD (\$250 each)
C. Venue (with equipment rental):		\$300 CAD
D. Food (snacks and drinks):		\$100 CAD
E. Total Anticipated Event Cost:		\$1000 CAD

<i>Budget for film screening with beading workshop and sharing circle:</i>		<i>Anticipated Event Costs</i>
A. Materials/Supplies (beading supplies):		\$350 CAD
B. Honoraria/Professional Fees (Beading instructor, counselor, and Elder):		\$750 CAD (\$250 each)
C. Venue (with equipment rental):		\$300 CAD
D. Food (snacks and drinks):		\$100 CAD
E. Total Anticipated Event Cost:		\$1500 CAD

<i>Budget for film screening with youth panel on life promotion and wellness:</i>		<i>Anticipated Event Costs</i>
A. Materials/Supplies (local prizes):		\$100 CAD
B. Honoraria/Professional Fees (3 youth, counselor, Elder, and moderator):		\$1500 CAD (\$250 each)
C. Venue (with equipment rental):		\$300 CAD
D. Food (snacks and drinks):		\$100 CAD
E. Total Anticipated Event Cost:		\$2000 CAD

Budget: WAYC

WAYC had a budget of \$30, 000 to cover all expenses associated with the event. This covered salaries of WAYC staff (with an administration fee), venue costs and equipment rentals, professional fees and honoraria for youth and other community presenters and facilitators, supplies for wellness kits, and prizes for engagement.

Salaries: WAYC paid 4 staff to make this event a success. This cost also included an overhead/administration fee.

Honoraria: WAYC paid two Elders to make opening remarks for the event and to be a support person onsite for the film screenings and activities. WAYC also hired a youth helper for the days of the event to help with the COVID-19 requirements (ie. sign consent forms and tracking details for in-person activities).

Professional Fees: WAYC hired over 15 youth, ages 17-32, to contribute to the event activities. Youth participated in the virtual panels and the reverse town hall. Youth lead a beading and painting workshop. Youth contributed to content and resource development for the wellness kits (ie. Ullaakkut stay alive messages and Nikita Larter images) and a youth presented as a keynote (T'ánchez Redvers)

Materials/Supplies: WAYC supported local businesses whenever possible. This mainly covered the wellness kit purchases, shipping costs, and prizes for engagement and participation.

Venue: WAYC rented the local community hall to host the event. This included equipment rentals.

Food: WAYC covered meals and snacks for staff and other contributing participants (ie. youth helper) during the event. WAYC also ordered some quality snack items (ie. popcorn, beef jerky, teas and coffees).

Travel: There were no travel or mileage related costs for this event.

Accommodations: There were no accommodation costs for this event.

Communications: WAYC used Facebook and Instagram ads to promote the event online.

	Budget	Anticipated Event Costs	Actual Event Costs
A. Materials and Supplies: <i>(Including, but not limited to, all program/workshop expenses such as program supplies, advertising, hall rental, snacks and drinks, printing, etc.)</i>	10,044.00 CAD	9,190.85 CAD	
B. Professional Fees:	9,350.00 CAD	9,490.00 CAD	
C. Salaries:	9,344.15 CAD	7,669.15 CAD	
D. Report Preparation:	0.00 CAD	650.00 CAD	
E. Subtotal (A+B+C):	28,738.15 CAD	27,000.00 CAD	
F. Administration (10 % of E):	3,000.00 CAD	3,000.00 CAD	
G. Total Anticipated Event Cost (E+F):	31,738.15 CAD	30,000.00 CAD	

Implementation & Evaluation

Creating a Positive Impact:

- *What outcome are you most proud of?*
- *Do you wish you approached some outcomes differently?*
- *Do you have recommendations and advice for other youth groups and community organizations that try to do similar events?*

Creating Safe Spaces: How are you designing the safe space? Is the venue appropriate, accessible, and welcoming? What formal and informal perimeters are your team considering to support the space? Do you have aftercare considered?

Possible Obstacles: What are challenges you may face in implementing your team plan? Can you think of solutions? What could you do to overcome obstacles in a future project?

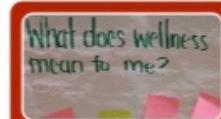
Media Release: Are you planning on taking any photos, videos or interviews?

Consent Forms: Do you have youth that need parent's consent to participate?

Evaluating your event: What do our indicator of success look like? What tool will you use to receive feedback and rate participants overall experience?

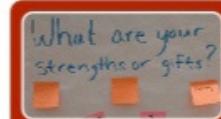
Unexpected Outcomes: What surprised your team? Did things happen, either in a good way or that was tricky, that you weren't expecting? Were the negative factors outside your control or were they risks that could have been avoided?

Team Debrief: What worked? What did not work? What were the lessons learned and areas for growth? What skills were developed? What kept the team motivated and focused?



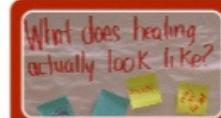
What does wellness mean to me?

- Rest; Looking after yourself; Taking care of myself; Self-love; Everything; Balancing in 2 worlds; Being with Elders; Balance; Self-care



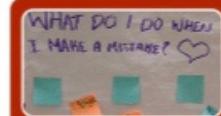
What are your strengths or gifts?

- Empathy; I teach; Making people feel comfortable; Artistic; Being vulnerable; Culture, family, love, language; Caring, Communication; Listening without judgement; Super friendly; Encouraging others to try new things



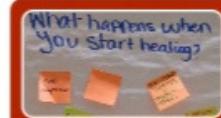
What does healing actually look like?

- Healthy; Messy; Being on the land; Looking & feeling good; Smiles & healthy community and family; Cultural transmission; Laughter; Everything; Being there; Family



What do I do when I make a mistake?

- Tell someone; Apologize; Try to figure it out; Forgive & forget; Try to fix it; Be kind to myself; Learn from it; Own up to it, apologize & do better; Reflect & learn; Accountable & responsible; Cry & try again; Improve



What happens when you start healing?

- Self-compassion; Create opportunities; peace; Cultural transmission; Start a business; Emotions, hard times, learning, good things; You create success & inspire others; Self-worth

Implementation & Evaluation: WAYC

Creating Safe Spaces: We asked for an Elder to join for in-person activities, as well as a counsellor and other support workers in our community to be on site at all times for the event. We tried to open each event in a good way (ie. Qulliq lighting and prayer). We offered information on supports and aftercare options (ie. counselling, crisis lines, information on coping, etc)

Possible Obstacles: COVID-19 realities, triggering moments, and delays or issues with technology and/or poor WI-FI connections.

Media Release: All contributors and presenters signed a media release with their participation agreement. Participants that attended the in-person events signed a media release.

Consent Forms: Our COVID-19 Safety Plan called for tracking of participants for the in-person events. Consent forms were signed as well.

Evaluating your event: Our team used google forms to evaluate the event and provide feedback. Here is a sample of questions:

- What does wellness mean to me?
- What are your strengths and gifts?
- What does healing actually look like?
- What do I do when I make a mistake?
- What do we need to normalize in our community around mental health/wellness?
- What is a message you have for others that may need to hear it?
- What do life-promoting activities, supports, or programming look like in our region for youth? For community?

Unexpected Outcomes: Our team experienced some issues with technology and the equipment rented from the venue. We also had some last minute changes due to some availability of contributors and presenters.

Team Debrief: Our WAYC team used a SWOT analysis approach (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) following the event to debrief. Our team also had a final debrief and review of the event success, lessons learned, takeaways, and ideas for other opportunities with the Advisory Committee formed.

Creating a Positive Impact:

- *We were proud to bring youth and community together on a tough subject during pandemic times*
- *There are some areas that were out of our control and we wished we had more time further enhance the quality and impact of the event, and the value is we know more for future events*
- *Our team gained valuable skills and lessons that we will continue to grow and nourish to offer our community moving forward*

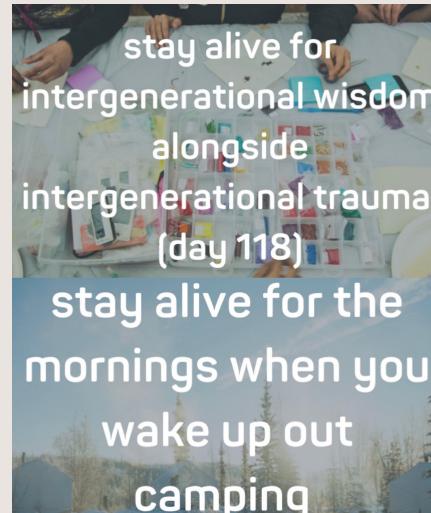
WAYC Programming Debrief – S, W, O, Ts



Recommendations

To best expand the reach of future events and increase the potential benefits to community, our team recommends the following for future planning for other youth groups and community organizations:

- Strong communication with your team
- Duplicate daytime event offerings in the evening, whenever possible
- Send formal invitations to community leaders, schools, and other sector well in advance
- Be creative with promoting your event, ie. networking, radio, community channels, etc.
- Confirm counsellor, Elder, and other forms of support to attend all in-person events, and provide mental health and aftercare resource lists for online participants
- Identify content creation opportunities to maximize impact of single events
- Support local business and community members as much as you can



Resources

Western Arctic Youth Collective:

Facebook @waycwaycwayc

Instagram @waycwayc

Project CREATEs, including links to all films: <https://www.projectcreates.com/>

Arctic Council's Sustainable Development Working Group:

<https://sdwg.org/>

Gwich'in Council International:

<https://gwichincouncil.com/>

YouTube links to 2021 events:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqqfqgqgOsv9jRm_f-E9tcCQ/featured