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Summary Report
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Canada

Problems of urban aboriginal youth

**FINAL REPORT
OF THE RESEARCH TEAM**

**RISK AND RESILIENCY WITHIN THE URBAN
ABORIGINAL \ FIRST NATIONS YOUTH
CONTEXT**

MARCH 29, 1996

Victoria, March 29, 1996

First of all, we would like to thank Libbie Driscoll and Health Canada for making it possible for this project to happen. Without the help of HC this project would not have been carried out.

We would also like to thank Linda Clarkson (Medicine Fire) for putting up with us so long and providing us with a place to stay and made us feel comfortable. Also creating and organizing this project.

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Also thank will go to George, Marina, Lucy, Gene for the friendship and for inviting us to the Big House, and Robert Considine for the Workshop on the Treaty of Waitangi.

The Research Team:

Hi, I'm Carol Cote. I'm a Saulteaux woman from Winnipeg Manitoba. I am currently in grade 10 attending Children of The Earth High School. I am a single mother with one child. My son's name is Caylib Austin Cote, and he is one year old. Because of other duties, I will no longer be involved in this kind of work. As I am a single mother I do not wish to be away from my son, for such a long time. But for the work I have done, I've really enjoyed learning and working with this group.

Carol Cote

Hi, my name is Vern Morrissette and I am 16 years old. I go to school at Children of The Earth High School and am in grade 11 in Winnipeg Manitoba. I enjoy singing and playing music on the guitar. This program has given me new challenges to look forward to in the future. It has given me an opportunity to gain new experiences and use them in the future. I have really enjoyed working with this group and look forward to working in the future.

Vern Morrissette

Hi, my name is Marlene McDougall. I'm from St. Theresa Point, Manitoba. Although I live in Winnipeg. I am 16 years old. I go to school at Children of the Earth High School. The language I speak is Oji-Cree. I'm treaty, my band is from St. Theresa Point First Nation. My spirit name is White Circling Eagle Woman. I participate in traditional women singing and dancing. I love to be involved and participate in projects and issues that deal with aboriginal people. I try to be involved and aware with the issues aboriginal people deal with today.

Marlene McDougall

My name is William Patchinose. I was raised in Winnipeg. I go to school at Children of The Earth High School in Winnipeg Manitoba. I am 18 years old. My hobbies are playing sports, drumming, hanging out with my buddies, and I like having fun. Also like to say that I have a daughter and son and enjoyed working on this project and I also hope to be considered on projects such as this .

William Patchinose

My name is Derek Hotonomi. I was raised in Winnipeg. I go to school at Children of The Earth High School in Winnipeg Manitoba. I am 16 years old. My hobbies are drumming, playing sports, hanging out with buddies, playing pool and having fun. I love being involved with the issues that deal with the aboriginal people. Looking forward to continue the work we started as this is my second year with the

research team I find that the work we do is not only important to natives but Canadians in general.

Derek Hutomoni

My name is Kingsley Nepetaype. My spiritual name is Gichi Bah Whtin and I am from the Bear Clan. My native language is Cree. I am 15 years old and attend Children of The Earth High School for two years and Esquimalt Secondary School in Victoria B.C. I am a Treaty Indian and a member of the Fox Lake First Nation. I moved from Winnipeg to Victoria one year ago. I am heavily into my spiritual background. My favorite sport to play is hockey and my hobbies are going dancing, shopping for gear (clothes), going to Pow Wow's and playing some wicked sega with my brother's. I love being involved with projects that deal with the issues with Aboriginal people. These projects keep on helping me understand more about my culture, and the problems that Aboriginal people deal with today.

Kingsley Nepetaypo

My name is Pamela Richard. I am 14 years old. I currently attend Children of The Earth High School in Winnipeg Manitoba. My favorite things to do are art, dancing, traditional singing and playing sports. I try to be as much involved as I can about the issues and problems that Native youth deal with these days.

Pamela Richard

My name is Georgia Wolfe Kakegamic. I was born in Red Lake, Ontario and now living in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I am 18 years old and doing my grade 11 at Children of the Earth High School. Working in this project gave me a challenge which was pretty good. I am looking forward to working on another project. I had an excellent time working with this group.

Georgia Wolfe Kakegamic

My name is Lucien Spence. I was born in Crane River Manitoba. I recently graduated from Children of the Earth High School, in February '96. I enjoy singing, playing guitar and writing music. I have learned a lot from this programme. It has put more of a knowledge about my culture.

Lucien Spence

My name is Andy Hoard. I am 18 years old and I currently attend Children of the Earth High School. I plan to go on to University after Grade 12. I enjoy Martial Arts, reading writing poetry and hang out with my friends. I have learned a lot from this program and wish it all the best in the future.

Andy Hoard

I'm Clifford Coyne I'm a Ojibway from the the plains people. My friends call me ELMO. My spirit name is Grey Wolf. I was raised in a reserve in Manitoba 2 hrs North of Winnipeg . I moved from my home into Winnipeg about 4 yers now . The reason to get a better education for my future. Since then, I got involved in working with youth: in different projects and programs specifically aimed at youth. I enjoy playing all sports for the competitiveness . I have been the provical champion in Wrestling. I was raised on hockey also. I enjoy hanging around with my friends, shooting pool and going to dry socials. I sing with a drum group and particapte in ceremonies of my people. I've took part in the first study on the mis-use of tobaco and I plan to take part in any future studies concerning my people. I like to mention the groups I'm invovled with: City Kids Winnipeg: Winnipeg is the first city in canada to have an establishment. It's a largeorganization in the States that was encouraged to start a chapter in Canada. Winnipeg Native Alliance: a drop-in Club for youth in general. A safe place in the inner city to come and do all recreatoinal activities. Also to take my grandfather Charles, Meegweech Mishomis. Also all my family I love you all. I also like to thank the creator who watches over all of us.

Clifford Coyne

INTRODUCTION

1. Context and Justification:

The reason we chose to do this study in Victoria and Winnipeg is because of the particular situation that Aboriginal youth are dealing with today. Urban Aboriginal youth in Winnipeg deal with an abundance of issues and concerns. Poverty in the inner city is just one of the many concerns that Aboriginal youth deal with in their community. Violence, gangs and falling into problems such as solvent abuse, drug addiction and/or alcohol abuse, causes a strong concern for Aboriginal youth. Also, discrimination in schools by both teachers and students provides an acceptable atmosphere for problems created by racism. Although these concerns are outside of the home, there are still other issues such as poor housing and overcrowding which youth encounter within the home. Lack of cultural activities through the school system promotes the loss of students cultural teachings and identity. Therefore violence, poverty and the loss of identity are just a few of the issues and concerns Urban Aboriginal youth face in Winnipeg today!

In Victoria urban Aboriginal youth face many of the same issues as the youth in Winnipeg. Violence, racism and cultural identity were some of the concerns experienced by youth in Victoria. Therefore, it can be said that urban Aboriginal youth in both Winnipeg and Victoria need to find solutions for these issues and concerns.

The purpose of this study was to identify the issues and concerns of urban Aboriginal youth. We were aware of the situations that the youth dealt with, however we

wanted to gain insight into the problem. With the information gathered from these two study sites we will be capable of making more effective decisions for Aboriginal youth.

2. Objectives:

The purpose of this study, is to gather and identify the risk and protective factors which are present in the lives of Urban Aboriginal youth. We will present information regarding these issues. Through our group and individual involvement, we are learning and adding to the development of leadership skills in Aboriginal youth. With this, we can focus on making things work in a positive direction.

METHODS

1. The Research Approach:

The focus of the research was the identification of the characteristics of the resilient Aboriginal child, and the Aboriginal child at risk. To produce these profiles, the project gathered information in five main areas:

Exposure to Difficult Circumstances: the type and number of risks that the Aboriginal child is exposed to in their family, school, neighbourhood, and community environment.

Cultural Investment: the degree to which an Aboriginal child is aware of, participates in, and values their Aboriginal identity.

Self Efficacy: the degree to which a person is able to recognise, deal with, and solve his/her problems.

Sense of Coherence: measures the person's ability to understand their environment and their relations with friends or other people.

Emotional Competence: measures the ability to recognise, deal and control positive and negative emotions.

These definitions are important because they can be both cause of risky behaviours (such as drinking, smoking, taking drugs, and involvement in criminal activities) and the effect of other causes such as past experiences, family situation, the role of culture in one person's life. The analysis will follow this scheme of cause and effect.

The approach was to conduct research with Aboriginal youth in schools from a variety of different neighbourhoods and parts of the inner city Winnipeg and Central Victoria.

Our objective was to go to a number of schools and into the classrooms, and interview Aboriginal students, using a variety of tools. Once in the schools, we wanted to set up focus groups ranging from 5 to 15 students to provide another means of gathering information. Counsellors were also asked how we should conduct this survey, and about issues and concerns that Aboriginal students face. Secondly, we

were to interview students in grades 6 through 12 in different educational surroundings. But, in order for us to do this, we needed the participation of the schools and the approval of the school divisions.

2. The Research Team:

The research team consisted of 12 Aboriginal youth. Eight members of the team currently attend Children of the Earth High School (COTE) in Winnipeg, and one is a recent graduate of COTE. There were also two members who attend school in Victoria. Five of the youth researchers are returning members of the team from the first study cycle. Our ages vary from 14-20 years old. The team has been working on this project for the months of January, February and March of 1996.

3. Data Collection Tools:

The tools that were used in the project are the key informants, individual questionnaires, peer directed discussion (focus) groups, and case studies. We used a variety of tools because there are many aspects to the different situations of Aboriginal youth. The key informants was a tool used so we could collect information from both counsellors and principals. With the questionnaire, we were able to gather basic individual perspectives within the schools. Focus groups were used so that students could share opinions openly, and to provide even more information about solutions for urban Aboriginal youth. To get more in depth and to discuss more freely with the students, we used case studies. Case studies were designed for students to provide information in a one-on-one scenario.

FINDINGS

1. Frequencies:

a. Sample Characteristics:

Out of the students surveyed in Winnipeg, 55% are female and 45% male, while in Victoria 52% are female, and 48% are male. Although the difference is very small, one reason for the greater number of females in the sample could be because there are more girls in school, or because they attend school more regularly. The finding could be linked to the fact that males are more easily enticed into gangs, and therefore are more at risk of dropping out of school. This is not to say that girls do not succumb to gangs, but maybe males become more involved with the gangs and the criminal element.

Table 1. Distribution by Age

Age	Freq.	%
12	10	4.3
13	16	6.8
14	26	11.1
15	40	17.0
16	43	18.3
17	44	18.7
18	38	16.2
19	10	4.3
20	8	3.4
Total	235	100

Table 2. Distribution by Gender

Gender	Freq.	%
F	129	54.0
M	110	46.0
Total	239	100

Table 3. Distribution by Nation

Nation	%
Ojibwey / Anishinabe	44.0
Cree	22.6
Dakota / Sioux	6.8
Coast Salish	5.1
Nuu Chait Nulth	
Kwaigulth	1.3
Haida	5.6
Nishga	0.4
Other	

Table 4. Distribution by status

Status	%
Treaty/Status	69.7
Non-status	8.8
Metis	21.4

Table 5. Distribution of respondents from Winnipeg, by school

School	Freq.
C.O.T.E.	51
R.B. Russell	22
St. John	15
Argyle	6
Hugh John	35
Rising Sun	5
Other	36
Total	170

In Winnipeg, 53% of the subjects in the study were Ojibway. We believe the ratio to be so high because Winnipeg is located in the territory and treaty area of Ojibway\Anishinabe people who settled in the southern parts of Manitoba.

26% of the subjects are Cree in origin. This percentage is lower because the Cree now live mostly in the northern parts of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

8% of the subjects in the study were Dakota\ Sioux. This is due to the fact the Dakota and Sioux settled further south into the northern parts of American States.

In Victoria the situation is very different: the major groups are Coast Salish (25%), Nuuchah Nulth (), Haida (), Kwakwaka'wakw (), Nishga (), and others..

Table 6. Distribution of respondents from Victoria, by school

School	Freq.
Central	22
Esquimalt	16
Victoria	12
Total	50

In Winnipeg 56% live with their families while in Victoria the percentage is 78%. We believe the percentage in Winnipeg to be so low that may have come to be due to the following factors:

Table 7. Distribution by Grade.

Grade	%
6	0.4
7	8.2
8	6.9
9	29.0
10	26.4
11	16.5
12	12.6

67% of subjects in Winnipeg, and 81% in Victoria, are Treaty\Status; 8% in Winnipeg, and 10% in Victoria are Non-Status Aboriginal, and 25% in Winnipeg and 8% in Victoria are Metis. This finding may be because the majority of students are Treaty\Status rather than non-status or Metis youth.

- Parents may not want to assume responsibility because they may have been young or adolescent parents themselves. Thus, not burden themselves with the responsibility of raising a child to pursue the freedoms they desire.

- Without proper guidance from the parents, many of the subjects may fall prey or succumb to the criminal element.

- Many subjects who do not have a good, stable home that provides guidance - structure and rules may end up in group homes, foster care or the youth

correctional centre.

- Some subjects may be students from reserves who have come to the city without their families to attend school.

26% of the respondents in Winnipeg live with other relatives, and 6% in Victoria. This maybe because they may have parents who do not meet the immediate needs, possible abuse, or to escape the rules and/or boundaries of home.

13% live on their own - with a girlfriend, boyfriend or spouse - or family of their own in Winnipeg, and 6% in Victoria.

8% of the subjects in Winnipeg are in foster care, and 6% in Victoria.

39% in Winnipeg, and 38% in declared both parents as primary care givers as a young child. This maybe because more and more parents in these times are becoming divorced, thus, causing subjects to be cared for by only one primary care giver.

In Winnipeg, 32% are cared for by their mother, 52% in Victoria. While in Winnipeg the number of youth being cared for by their mother alone is nearly as high as both parent, in Victoria the rate is much higher. According to our findings, if there is a divorce within the family, the children will more likely go to live with the mother and be cared for, than by any other care giver. Only the 4% of the subjects interviewed live only with their father.

In Winnipeg 13% of the subjects live with their grandparents, only 4% in Victoria. The study suggest that if parents elude their responsibility, the grandparents may take the place of the parents.

b. Opinions and Attitudes:

In Winnipeg, 27% of the people in the study, and in Victoria 23%, identified themselves as having a negative relationship with their care givers.

33% of the people in the study from Winnipeg, and 26% in Victoria, identified their family having no rules. This could explain the deterioration of values amongst youth. This could also explain the involvement in the criminal element and the lack of respect within the family.

40% of the people in the study said that they have no or little involvement in the care of their younger siblings. This could affect the risk factors if the older siblings are primary caregivers. 60% said that they look after their siblings part or most of the time.

24% of the people in the study have families that cannot solve problems that come up. But this is only for Winnipeg. In Victoria only 2% declared so.

In Winnipeg, 86% of the people identified themselves as having their mother respected within the family. The percentage grew to 94% in Victoria. Mothers may be more respected because there is greater tendency for mothers to take care of their children upon separation. Only 69% in Winnipeg and 77% in Victoria of the fathers are respected within the family. Fathers may not be as respected in the family because of lack of presence upon divorce.

In Winnipeg 28% of the people in the study identified themselves as going to no-one when they have a problem, only 12% in Victoria. This could be due to a dysfunctional

home, breached trust by friends, apprehension of counsellors , subjects too afraid to talk about problems. 30% of the subjects in Winnipeg identified their friends as the number one person they go to when they have a problem. In Victoria, the percentage is 47%.

Mother was identified in the range of 13% in Winnipeg, and 20% in Victoria, as being the person subjects go to when they have a problem. This is low, but still higher than the percentage for father (3% in Winnipeg, 10% in Victoria). This is likely because the mother is most often the caregiver.

27% in Winnipeg, and 23% in Victoria, identified themselves as having a positive school experience. 65% of the subjects in Winnipeg, and 74% in Victoria identified themselves as having a sometimes positive, sometimes negative experience. This finding could be for the reason that every experience has its ups and downs. 8% in Winnipeg, and 34% in Victoria, said that their experience was negative.

c. Exposure to difficult situations:

32% of the children interviewed have experienced separation from parents in their first year of life. This percentage is not surprisingly high considering the situation of Aboriginal families in Winnipeg and Victoria, although we think it affects the child a lot. More than 20% stated that they have experienced serious parents illness, which could mean a lot of stress is put upon the youth. This percentage is fairly high possibly because of diabetes, kidney problems, high blood pressure, and different types of illnesses are more common in the native community.

More than 50% are said to have experienced frequent fights in the family. Frequent fights might happen because the

caregivers abuse alcohol or drugs, or because every day stress getting to them. Also the caregivers might not have a good relationship between themselves so they fight often. The impact on the children could be that they experience verbal or emotional abuse. The child could grow up thinking that fighting is right, and could continue their parents pattern in the future.

31% in Winnipeg, and 40% in Victoria have suffered from violence or abuse in the family. We found that these numbers are bad because violence is bad and cruel. Maybe their parents are alcoholics and don't realize what they are doing to the children. It's bad because not everybody wanted to admit it.

Table 8. Experienced Violence or Abuse within the family

Experienced	%
Yes	32,7
No	67.3

42% in Winnipeg and 50% in Victoria said to have been victims of verbal and/or emotional abuse. This is bad because it leads to physical abuse in most cases.

53% in Winnipeg and 47% in Victoria said that they had witnessed violence in the family. This isn't good. Many youths grew up with this. There is violence everywhere. Violence is a serious problem in our society, so this isn't really at all surprising. It happens to many youths and adults.

The father is absent in 58% of the cases in Winnipeg and grows to 62% in Victoria. This is common. Most parents separate and the children are most likely to be left with their mothers.

58% in Winnipeg, and 40% in Winnipeg, and 40% in Victoria, said that their parents were unemployed or occasionally unemployed. This is not surprising because many families may be on welfare. A lack of education has denied many parents of getting a job., but this is sometimes alright because it gives the mothers a chance to stay at home with their children.

In Winnipeg, 53% of the people said that they have changed schools often, 37% in Victoria. This is rather surprising because why would youth change schools unless something was wrong. This is a high percentage that are in trouble or maybe they move a lot. They may be involved in criminal activity or foster homes. Maybe they don't work well in school. This creates a lack of education among the youths.

54% of the children have separated or divorced parents. This is surprising because some people get into a relationship without knowing the person well enough. But it can put a lot of stress on the child because the Mom and Dad make a choice that breaks up the comfortable environment that they live in.

Almost 40% are said to have had entry of a step- parent into the household. That is understandable because often after a separation or divorce a step- parent comes in. This may not be good in some cases because the child feels as if the step- parent is trying to take over the place of the departed parent and the child might rebel against the step-parent.

53% in Winnipeg and 37% in Victoria had an older brother or sister who left the family home. This is not at all surprising because the older sibling feels a need for independence but the youth could feel they just don't want to be there anymore, and this may be true, but younger children could suffer from that.

71% in Winnipeg and 81% in Victoria had experienced the

death of a family member or a close friend.

Suicide or attempted suicide of family member or close friend was experienced by 45% of those interviewed. This was found to be bad. Death or suicide in the Native society is very concerning. Some reasons for this high suicide rate are - stress, family problems, pressure, repeated abuse. Many people are not aware of this situation.

Table 9. Experienced suicide or attempted suicide of family member or close friend

Experienced	%
Yes	45.1
No	54.9

Foster home placement was experienced by 34% in Winnipeg, and 21% in Victoria. This could be related to the number of dysfunctional families these days. Not all families are able to keep their children because of other problems that have to be dealt with. Until their problems are solved they are unfit to keep their children.

More than 35% of the kids said to have had alcoholic parents or drinking parties at home. This could be because of the high level of poverty, easy access to alcohol, as well as social pressure from friends and family. This affects the children's education, self esteem, and could lead to violence and abuse in the future.

26% in Winnipeg and 17% in Victoria said to have had parents addicted to drugs. This is common. There is easy access to drugs. The affects on the kids are that they get involved with drugs themselves, lack of respect towards parents, and, worst of all, the parents may not be able to support the children. This could be caused by a low self esteem in the parents, and

could create the same for their children.

This question may have been misinterpreted by the respondents to refer to themselves rather than to their parents. In any case, 20% reported a teenage parent. We would have thought that it would be a higher percentage because teenage parents are quite common. Teenage parents aren't a bad thing but it is hard to be a teenage parent because of the great deal of responsibility. The problem is that teenagers aren't using condoms, or protection.

As we saw before, single parent families are quite common,

21% in Winnipeg and 13% in Victoria have experienced poor housing. This is not good. Kids will feel ashamed, could break down, or end up homeless. Children are affected by this by being teased, emotional breakdown, suffering, living in poverty, and having no clothing.

The over-crowded housing problem is even more common, 31% in Winnipeg, and 25% in Victoria. This is bad as well as surprising. This could be a result of large families. Poverty and unemployment could also be the cause of it, which could lead to arguments and causes problems in the full household.

58% of kids are said to have lived in dangerous neighbourhoods or communities or the presence of gangs. This is very bad because it means that it is unsafe for everyone, and they all have to be aware. It is common, and gangs take advantage and youths get involved. In Victoria the percentage is only at 17.

Almost 40% of the people interviewed in Winnipeg, and 32% in Victoria, said that the family members are or were involved in criminal activities. This is not surprising because of the high number of people involved with crimes. This is not okay for the youths because they could end up in jail, shot, or trapped

37% in Winnipeg, and 46% in Victoria. Separation of parents could be the cause which is not surprising. Things like this happen. This could cause hurt emotions, dysfunction, and possibly no respect for mother or father.

28% in Winnipeg and 17% in Victoria have experienced the imprisonment of parent or sibling. If the children or youth sees this, they may think that it is right, and this can be very negative.

in the criminal activity. The children may look up to their parents as role models, and think that it's okay to be criminally involved.

40% of the kids interviewed in Winnipeg have or had a criminally involved peer group of friends. The percentage should be higher because there is more gang activity, and peer pressure. The fact that there are more Aboriginal youth in the youth centre than non - native confirms these high percentages.

d. Cultural elements:

From the results of the study 45% in Winnipeg and 60% in Victoria of the students surveyed agreed that cultural teachings, such as pow wow's, club's, singing and drumming, as well as sweat lodges, and Aboriginal language programs are very important in the lives of Aboriginal youth. We feel that this percentage should have been higher. More Aboriginal youths should be interested in their culture and more involved. We need to be more aware of our culture.

Out of the students surveyed, 61% do not speak their native

language. We feel this could be a result of lack of language and education in the school and/or in the family.

We feel that speaking your traditional language is very important. The findings show that 46% of youth also agree that it is very important.

In Winnipeg 56% do not participate in traditional cultural activities and 46% in Victoria. This could be a result of not enough programs in and out of school. Students may not want to take part because they're not educated or not interested.

Out of the students surveyed, 80% in Winnipeg and 91% in Victoria of the students responded by saying that it was kind of or very important to participate in cultural activities. This finding shows how important the Aboriginal identity and culture is to Aboriginal youth. This finding was confirmed by the results of the question on preferred identities where 80% of Aboriginal youth in Winnipeg and 95% of First Nation youth in Victoria would rather give up their Canadian identity than their Aboriginal status. This shows that they have pride in being Aboriginal.

e. Risky behaviours:

In Winnipeg, 23% of the female subjects in Winnipeg said that they were pregnant or had a child; in Victoria it was 7%. For the boys the percentage is 31% in Winnipeg and 6% in Victoria. The statistics of teenage pregnancy can be higher than shown. Young people were interviewed at the school, and some girls may be at home watching their children. There are no babysitters, so a large number of girls who are pregnant or have children do not attend regularly. Some boys may not be aware of their girlfriend's pregnancy because of one night stands, and they don't use condoms.

The smoking statistics are straight forward. In Winnipeg, the percentage of youth who smoke everyday is 60%, occasionally 19%, and not at all 21%. In Victoria, the rates are 25%, 34% and 40%. This means that almost three times as many youth in Winnipeg smoke regularly compared to young people in Victoria.

The use of alcohol in Winnipeg is in a serious state. The percentage of youth that drink everyday is 4%. No one in Victoria declared that they drink every day. In Winnipeg, those who drink occasionally are 63%, and those who don't drink at all is 32%. In Victoria, the percentage of those who drink occasionally or not at all are 57% and 43%. This is a serious condition that we have to look into.

Table 10. Smoke, Alcohol and Drugs abuse.

Percentage of interviewed which smoke, drink alcohol and take drugs	43 %
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A lack of understanding of question 59 could be reflected in the answers. Subjects could have been responded in a different way. That is, the question is not clear on the type of drugs - prescription or non prescription - that is being referred to. But the results say that 62% in Winnipeg and 36% in Victoria said that they use drugs.

Out of the students that were surveyed, 29% in Winnipeg and 15% in Victoria admitted to being involved in some form of criminal activity. Illegal activities were not clearly described as to which form of illegal activity they were involved in. If the question were more specific, such as gangs, selling drugs, the percentages may have been different.

Risks:

The study shows that if you didn't receive enough positive attention as a child you have a two times higher risk of a low degree of self efficacy. Not receiving enough positive attention as a child probably leads to a series of other problems, as, for example, the ability to recognize and take care of the problems that you have. We think that receiving positive attention is very important in the child's growth in his ability to recognize his problems and also the ability to deal with his emotions. As a result, this could mean that the children who didn't receive enough positive attention would be at risk of low self esteem, lack of education, and negative thoughts, which could lead to misbehaviors.

Table 11. Possible causes for a low score in Self Efficacy

Factor	Risk	95% conf. interval
Not receiving enough positive attention as a child	1.93	1.08 < OR < 3.44
Family unable to solve problems that come up	2.44	1.36 < OR < 4.34

The chart that matches emotional competence with the question on positive attention as a child shows that if you didn't receive enough positive attention, you are at two times the risk of having a low emotional competence, as compared to those who did. By not receiving enough positive attention, you are unable to recognize and deal with your emotions, or to have the ability to control the amount of stress created by your problems. Not receiving enough positive attention could lead to other risks such as low self esteem, feeling unwanted, feeling that you don't belong, and bad behaviours.

On the chart dealing with sense of coherence and family ability to solve problems, it can be seen that if your family is not able to solve the problems that come up, you have two times the risk of having a low sense of coherence as compared to

someone who has a family that is able to solve its problems. There is also a positive relation between the ability of the family to solve problems and the child's level of self-efficacy: in this case, the risk is 2.44. These findings are understandable because both measures are related to the ability to deal with and solve problems.

Table 12. Possible causes of low sense of coherence

Factors	Risk	95% conf. interval
Family not able to solve problems that come up	2.27	1.16 < OR < 4.54
Experienced poor housing	2.42	1.12 < OR < 5.22
Experienced overcrowded housing	2.27	1.14 < OR < 4.54

If you are experiencing poor housing, you have 2.4 times the risk of having a low sense of coherence. Living in poor housing may cause a low sense of coherence. This might occur because the child doesn't feel comfortable in their environment, thereby affecting in their ability to relate to their surroundings. If you have experienced overcrowded housing, you have two times the risk of low sense of coherence as compared to someone who hasn't experienced such conditions. This may occur because the child has a need for privacy which is not there due to overcrowded housing, therefore, resulting in the child's ability to adapt to their surroundings and/or their environment.

If children experience suicide or the attempted suicide of a family member or close friend, they have two times the chance of being emotionally competent. This is an unexpected finding since the literature represents this issue as a major risk for emotional stability. Perhaps this can be a positive experience in a child's life, in the sense that it improves the ability to deal with one's emotions more effectively. Because the seriousness of this topic, children are able to recognize and cope with the emotions that occur.

Table 13. Possible causes for high emotional competence

Factor	Risk	95% conf.Interval
Received not enough positive attention as a child	2.01	1.08 < OR < 3.74
Experienced suicide or attempted suicide of family member or close friend	3.12	1.59 < OR < 6.25
Not experienced parents addicted to drugs	3.13	1.54 < OR < 6.33
Considering participation in cultural activities as very important	2.92	1.41 < OR < 6.14
Considering cultural teachings as very important	2.80	1.45 < OR < 5.44
Having a baby, being pregnant (if female) or having a pregnant girlfriend (if male)	3.42	1.29 < OR < 9.56

If drug addiction is a problem with the parents, children are more likely to have three times the risk of having low emotional competence. It is often a problem that the child cannot handle, it results in struggles within the child's ability to recognize and cope with their emotions.

The chart that matches responses to question 48 with emotional competence shows that people who consider their cultural teachings to be very important have high scores in emotional competence. People who don't consider their cultural teachings to be very important have almost three times (2.8) the risk of having low emotional competence. Not being aware of the importance of culture and tradition is, from these results, related to the ability of the child to recognize and deal with their emotions.

By not considering your background to be important, it could lead to problems in finding your way throughout life. The importance of knowing your language is also linked to emotional competence. This confirms that awareness of cultural background is important to emotional competence. Children that consider it very important to speak their language have two times the chance of being emotionally competent

compared to those that do not.

Also we confirmed this tendency by looking at the results of the chart on Question 52 in which we consider the importance of participating in cultural activities and emotional competence. We found that the importance we give to our traditional background will also affect our ability to deal with our emotions - the risk is 2.9.

We saw that what helps children deal with their emotions is the importance they give to these matters, rather than whether or not they know their traditional language or participate in cultural activities.

We also found out that if you have a low sense of self efficacy, you have 3 times the risk of being a smoker. If you have a high sense of self efficacy you will probably be less exposed to peer pressure. Also, if you have a low sense of emotional competence you have more than 2.5 times the risk of being a smoker compared to someone who's emotionally competent.

Table 14. Possible causes of smoking

Factor	Risk	95% conf. Interval
low self efficacy	2.94	1.30 < OR < 6.67
low emotional competence	2.63	1.04 < OR < 6.67

Table 15. Possible causes of drinking alcohol every day

Factor	Risk	95% conf. Interval
low emotional competence	4.37	1.22 <OR < 16.29

Table 16. Possible causes of criminal involvement

Factor	Risk	95% conf. Interval
low emotional competence	2.70	1.34 < OR < 5.45
not receiving enough positive attention as a child	2.95	1.52 < OR < 5.75

Also, alcohol abuse and criminal involvement are related to levels of emotional competence. If you have a low score in emotional competence, you have almost three times the risk of being involved in criminal activities. So, we can say that emotional competence is the most related to risky behaviours such as smoking, alcohol abuse and criminal involvement.

If you are a female youth who is pregnant or has a child/children, or if you're male with a pregnant girlfriend or with babies of your own, you have more than three times the chance of being emotionally competent. We think that this is because you must grow up and learn to deal with your emotions. The responsibility of being a parent makes you more mature and not so much like a child anymore.

Focus Groups in Victoria:

The focus groups were positive. The kids were very cooperative. They showed that they were very interested in what we were doing.

Victoria High School was one of the schools to be interviewed. Linda, Kingsley, Lucien and Chris did the focus groups. The focus groups were done very well. Everybody put in a lot of good input, and used a good expression of words. We didn't have time to write everything down because there was too much input. They said that some of the questions were too personal.

At Esquimalt Secondary School - Kingsley, Ryan, and Lucien

ran the focus group. It started off slowly, but by about the third question they started opening up. They ran out of time because of a lot of input. They were very interested and asked a lot of questions. They also asked if we were going to come back. Everything went smooth and there was really nothing negative.

Central Junior High - The kids didn't seem to have much to say and didn't want to say much. They were a young group, and only half of the group shared. One of the students did, however, ask the teacher why they weren't being taught their Aboriginal languages. The teacher was present in the room, and we still managed to get a lot of information.

Winnipeg Focus Groups:

We found that doing the research in Winnipeg was bad because they mixed up the schools, the schedules, and weren't prepared.

At Argyle Alternative School, Lucien and Georgia were given only three Aboriginal students, and a small room to work in. They participated a lot.

At R.B. Russell High School, the students didn't show up at school on time so we had to wait for one hour, and were forced to miss the interviews at St. John's.

The Results of the Focus Groups:

The results showed that the different focus groups had different ideas on what will help Aboriginal youth not to get involved in the major problems. Traditional values like respect for society, Aboriginal cultures, and ones self dignity are considered positive elements. Other values are honour, self confidence and respect for the family and better family

relationships. The involvement with elders and youth is considered important. Elders and youth interacting with one another, and learning about the traditions, would give the youth a sense of belonging and could stop them from falling into peer pressure. Some examples of positive involvements are going to the Big House, vision quests, sweats, pow wows, and other traditional activities involving racism free groups. Some examples of social activities are soccer tournaments, canoe racing, youth conferences, involvement with non-native groups and people. Youth and all people should be aware of problems relating to themselves through education and involvement in their communities.

We can say in general that Aboriginal youth are aware of their cultural background. In some cases, they underline the fact that there is bad talk about traditions, not only amongst white

If they say that their culture is always around them, they still agree on the fact that some don't know much about it. All of the young people are just starting to want to learn and want to be involved. although there is a lot of interest amongst the younger ones. Elders feel that the traditions in their culture should not be shared with young people. This, however, seems to be a problem only amongst some elders, since others seem to play a positive role in the sharing and explaining the traditional culture. Kids expressed, finally, the importance of being Aboriginal.

The main problems that we found is that there is a lot of racism and stereotyping. It is said that our people are drunks and that they live on welfare. An example of racism is the fact that tradition is not considered in the education system. Students that want to participate in their culture have a serious problem in school because traditional ceremonies take part during school time. This could be a reason why there's a lack of participation in traditional activities. Another educational

people but also amongst other Aboriginal people. In one case, a girl said that one tradition was compared to a satanic ritual. Other participants in the focus groups were familiar with this kind of attitude. Aboriginal children are involved mostly in dancing, singing, ceremonies like the age ceremonies held at the Big House, the pot latch, and war canoe racing. Other gatherings, such as pow wows, just just began recently on the west coast. This fact seems to be quite common because the kids say that in some cases they just realized their Aboriginal identity and culture recently. (2 years ago) Another problem of the involvement in traditional ceremonies is due to the fact that they are still too young. Other important things in the awareness of traditional culture are sports, such as soccer and lacrosse.

problem that we found is that in some cases education is being held back because of special classes designed for native kids. There is also a discrimination problem in some schools from teachers towards Aboriginal students: picking them over white students, leaving them out of discussions, and expressing their dislike of native people. Internal problems with native youth seem to be alcohol and drug abuse problems.

As in most places, alcohol, drugs, peer pressure and gangs, play an important role in the lives of the Aboriginal people and this could be linked to a lack of social and tradition gatherings. Aboriginal youth have very few places to go other than hanging out on the streets. Children should be taught earlier because there's a lack of role models. The children could easily be involved in gangs. Amongst younger kids, violence outside and within the families seem to be the largest concern, while amongst older kids, racism seems to play a major role. Problems with in the family seem to be child abuse - emotional and physical, sexual abuse, and violence in general. People

don't look at suicide as with drugs and violence - it mostly is overlooked. Also, in looking at the frequencies, what the kids say about the fact, it is certainly true that the suicide problem is overlooked. From a racist view, if it doesn't affect white people they don't care.

There is a division amongst the people on the reserves because of the disbursement of money and goods. It gives all power to the chief and the chief's family, which in turn causes bad politics within the bands. Organizational problems may be linked to the educational problem we discussed before. The fact that Aboriginal people are not united makes them weaker. The fact that there is not sufficient control on the money given to the chief makes them very powerful and creates divisions and corruption amongst the families.

The participants in the focus groups think that we can help Aboriginal youth avoid getting into risky behaviours by talking to them, taking them away for periods of time from their present environments or by keeping them busy, and not letting them hang out on the streets. We can help them by teaching them how to stand up for themselves. Ways to keep kids off the streets may be by having evening clubs, programs, school programs, and youth facilities run by the youth. Other focus groups underlined the importance of having Aboriginal stores, dances and places where you can eat traditional food, to raise money to give employment and to have places to go for the youth to hang out.

Access to elders for positive influence and guidance, and to young Aboriginal counsellors, seems to be the solution expressed by the focus groups. Hanging around with people with their own age, helps to avoid getting into risky behaviours, although some kids expressed the opinion that certain people already have their mind set and there are no possibilities of changes.

Programs and activities that will benefit native youth, such as sports and traditional activities, are considered to be important to Aboriginal youth. One group considered it important to go visit new places and meeting new people. Aboriginal youth are moving to the city because they think it would benefit their education. Education is a serious problem on the reserves.

The Case Studies:

Case studies were held only in Victoria, and only at Esquimalt Secondary school where three interviews were done because of the high interest of the students there. The experience of interviewing resilient native children from Victoria must be taken as a particular thing, especially because of the different cultural activities and environment in which Aboriginal youth's are involved with respect to the youth in Winnipeg.

In case study question #1, the youth's said that it was important for them to take part in their culture. The things they take part in are pow wows and canoe racing that are held in the summer. Another important tradition for them is the Big House. Some others, such as bone games, which are just recently being accepted into the Big House, singing, and grass dancing are traditional activities as well.

In the winter the Big House is more sacred because of the dances that are meant only for the winter. Another important gathering is the Pot Latch, where people from all nations meet.

In case study question #2, we covered the role that Aboriginal backgrounds played in the youth's life. Their main traditions are grass dancing, singing, pow wow's and canoe racing keep them interested in their culture. Tradition to them is something to be proud of because it makes them feel strong minded, and better about themselves inside. A big part of their tradition is

the Big House. This is a strong part of their tradition because they participate in the dances and sacred ceremonies. The Big House is very sacred to them. Sometimes they feel as if they don't belong with the tradition, partially because while they have friends that follow the way, but there are others who don't. This influences the youths interests. Another part that influences their choices is the fact that drinking and smoking is present in their lives and so their participation in the Big House is decreased.

By having Aboriginal role models it makes the youth want to achieve their goals. The study shows that Aboriginal youth say that being Aboriginal doesn't stop them from achieving their goals. The study also shows that it is hard for Aboriginals to finish school due to the result of participating in traditional activities. We feel that it is very important to us. According to elders and other people from the reserve, education is the school system is not fundamental in the growth of ones self, if there is tradition or culture. And, being Aboriginal provides us with the feeling of importance. The majority of the Aboriginal youth feel proud when other people are interested in and want to learn about our culture.

According to the study cases, the most relevant problem in their life are the lack of money, sexual abuse, racism in school, separation of parents, drinking alcohol, drugs, gangs, violence and crime. Another topic that was brought up dealing with education was that the teachers always gave attitude towards only the Aboriginal students. As an example, when a student stood up to confront a teacher for putting down her and our people, she was sent out of the class. Another issue was that the teachers put the Aboriginal students into one classroom and taught them as though they had learning disabilities., which most of them didn't have and were capable of doing the same work as everyone else. By being discriminated against, it was hard for the youth to educate themselves. If they were at a grade ten level the teachers gave them work at a grade six

level. Education was a problem to be focused on because of participation in tradition. The majority of the youth are trying to get away from gangs, violence and crime because they want more in their lives.

In relating to the youth's Aboriginal status, there appeared to be a lot of racism in the school environment. Eight out of ten Aboriginal students were put in disability classes after moving on from kindergarten. Since then the Aboriginal students were forced to stick together because they were isolated in one classroom. One Aboriginal teacher is trying to get the Aboriginal students out of the disability class rooms and put them into regular classrooms, so they are able to have a better education. The white people feel that Aboriginal people can't learn anything but, instead, all they do is drink, use drugs, and commit crimes. The Aboriginal students have lost their self confidence, and this is driving them towards the streets of crime, and bringing white people to see that they could be a good connection on the streets. As crime is easily linked to drugs, many Aboriginal kids also face the possibility of drug addiction.

The resilient children interviewed in the case study think that family plays an important role in helping them with their problems. Belief in the Big House could help to learn about yourself and healing the wounds that were caused growing up as Aboriginal youth. Aboriginal students continue going to the Big House because they feel wanted and secure about themselves. Feeling the pain of racism in the white education system and schools is very hard on Aboriginal youth. Some students have gone for counselling, which may have helped a little but the pain still lies in their souls. Most students stick to their friends because there they have a friend instead of a person that judges them for the colour of your skin. There are a lot of wise and gifted Aboriginal students, but white people continue to push them towards counselling as though they're

stupid or something. Aboriginal youth think that to be involved in sports and youth groups helps them to set goals to reach and achieve. This way they find interest in sports and other activities instead of resorting to drugs. The Aboriginal youth are

Tradition is part of Aboriginal cultures that should be taught to the youth's so that they can find the right path to take in life. More and more Aboriginal people are starting to believe in their culture because feeling the hatred from others make them insecure about their abilities to do things. A problem is the fact that we don't have enough Aboriginal teachers for role models for support. This is especially apparent in Victoria, where the children have no people to talk to.

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS

1. The field experience:

As a team we are motivated, but under the circumstances due to the lack of participation within the schools, not enough questionnaires were completed, and we were not given enough students. Therefore, we had to make the most of what we had to work with. Due to lack of participation within the schools, we were unable to come up with a solution, therefore achieving our goals in Winnipeg were not possible at this time.

The time arrangements were un-organized, therefore, we had a hard time to accomplish our task at hand. It was hard to get to the place we were scheduled at due to lack of transportation. Schools would also cancel without giving proper notice, and we would spend time going there for nothing.

In the beginning we did not view ourselves as a group, or as a team. We soon overcame these negative feelings and began communicating amongst each other, which in turn positively

gaining respect for themselves. Sports are also a good way of staying away from drugs, alcohol and smoking.

affected our co-operation levels. The reason for these communication problems are linked to the differences we had, and the levels of responsibility we put on each other.

The downfall is due to our lack of experience as researchers.

The experience with the schools:

R.B Russell School: the staff were not made aware of what was going on and that we would be going there to do this study. Eventually we were lead to a classroom by a counsellor. The classroom we were able to go into did the questionnaires with few problems, and any problems that did arise were quickly dealt with.

When we were allowed to do the focus groups, we encountered problems. Although we had 12 students we were unable to get the group flowing which resulted in poor response.

Children of the Earth: welcomed us in. Most classes averaged in size, the range was from 5-20 students per room. Being in a good atmosphere, and the interest of the students made doing this study easy and very informative. The teachers here did less butting in and gave us more support in making this project run smoother.

St.John's: there was two classrooms we had to do. One class went well but, the other class consisted of only one student. When we did the questionnaires they only allowed us to go into the remedial class. We feel this action was due to the lack

of interest in what we were trying to accomplish.

Argyle School: had a friendly atmosphere and was tolerant to the groups tardiness. We had reasonably sized classes considering the size of the school. Students were cooperative and informative. However, most of the students were not Aboriginal. There was an extremely low Aboriginal ratio of students in the school.

Hugh John Macdonald: the school was a junior high and had a very large student population from grades 6 through 9. The school was very culturally and racially mixed. The school's principal was very unhelpful. We were scheduled for 10:30 and the principal moved our time to 11:15. He had also not informed the teachers of the work that we were doing or even the fact that we were going to be there that day. Classes were a reasonable size and the kids were generally cooperative. The grade seven students that were surveyed were complaining that the survey was too complex in vocabulary. Some of the questions were also inappropriate for a grade seven classroom. All around the surveys were done, and it turned out okay.

Rising Sun: the teachers were cooperative, nice and interested in our work. The students participated even though they said it was too much. The teacher divided the classroom into two because there were only 16 students. Everything went smoothly.

Victoria High: the school provided us with lots of students that gave us a lot of good information. We started off with the questionnaire that went perfect. We only had to explain one or two questions. They said that the survey was straight forward. They felt comfortable with counsellor in and out of the room. Sure they spoke but they also got the survey done. What they told us was that it looked long but didn't seem long to do.

In the Focus Group, they could not stop talking. Each and every one of them spoke a lot: they told us about their feelings. Once again they didn't care if the counsellor was in the room. They spoke with positive and powerful words that amazed us. We even got the counsellor involved in the group but the students didn't care, they wanted us to hear what he had to say. We could have kept on going on but the students had one last block to go to. After the focus group is when they asked us if we were coming back again to do another survey.

Esquimalt Secondary: we were able to interview half of the Aboriginal students because our project coincided with a ceremony at the Big House, so one-half of the students were away from school. We were unable to contact the rest of the Aboriginal students. But for the students we did have the privilege of talking with, there was an extreme involvement and interest.

In the Focus Group it was nice to hear from a girl that "It's more fun than my teacher's class!". The students involvement and curiosity made this not only a pleasurable and informative session but a very educational one too. The only problem we experienced was over involvement and shortage of time.

So, in conclusion, the questionnaire and the rest of the tools proved to be not only written well, but very understandable. Therefore, the research at Esquimalt School showed to be a great success.

Central Junior Secondary: The only problem we encountered there was that we had too much time to do the questionnaire. Most of the students were able to complete the questionnaire in a very short period of time. We only had a few students who had trouble with some of the questions. Out of these questions, the only real problem was related to

instructional error on the survey. As for the focus groups, we experienced having the teacher present with younger students and it resulted in a slow and cautious response. Although the teacher was present we managed to get a fair response from the students involved.

We weren't able to attend Niji Mahkwa, Gordon Bell, Churchill, and Eagle Circle. The reason for this was that the schools cancelled out on us. Everything was arranged and scheduled, and some of the schools cancelled without even informing us. The reasons that we were given for their cancellations were that they were busy that day, or that we weren't welcome. Gordon Bell said that they would reschedule, but they never did. Otherwise all the other schools that were involved were surveyed.

For the interviews that we did outside of the schools, we went at public places such as Portage Place, Dry Socials and around our neighborhoods. The reason for us having to do interviews elsewhere is because we didn't get enough from the schools. This has been a good experience because we had to go up to people and ask them to participate. Some would say no, some would quit in the middle because of the survey being too long and personal, and others would be glad to do our survey because it was interesting.

2. Positive Elements:

Being in this study has led us to understand that you can get things accomplished. By participating and working with different groups of youth, we can expand our knowledge. We feel that if we get more involved with groups such as the Native Youth Movement, City Kids, and groups within the school, we can achieve this. The purpose for involvement is, again, to share the information and to reach more Aboriginal

Us as Aboriginal youth, have gained knowledge and experience about how to conduct this type of research. We also learned the correct way to create a questionnaire. Our ability to speak to others, to groups, and on personal levels, have also greatly increased as a result of involvement in this study. Once the problems were cleaned up in our group, we never experienced any more difficulties with each other. The other lesson learned, and probably the most important, is that we are now capable of organizing ourselves in a group so that we can achieve our maximum potential. In conclusion, as a group we hope that we will be considered for involvement in any projects this might eventually lead to.

STRATEGY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Our strategy:

One of our objectives is to remain together as a group upon finishing this project. In order to remain a group, we will continue to spread the results of the two study cycles. One way in which we shall share this information is by contacting the schools and the students involved in the study. Another way, is to circulate the package which contains the findings of our study to different organizations including both Aboriginal, and non-Aboriginal. For the exclusive use of bettering the lives of urban Aboriginal youth, our purpose is to reach local and national levels of government organizations.

youth.

With the training we received, we can make it available for use with students youth groups and organizations who wish to further this kind of study. Because of the amount of knowledge we have gained, we feel we can make more use by offering our services to these people when the need arises.

Our part hopefully will be to share and conduct other training in the near future on the method that was used.

One of our first projects will be to educate ourselves on the Treaties between Aboriginal nations and Canada. The way of doing this will be through researching libraries, Canadian archives, universities and, of course, elders in our communities. We want to find out about the type and amount of information on the Treaties that youth are aware of - what kind of information they have been made aware of. The purpose of this is to inform Aboriginal youth on how to use their Treaty/Status appropriately and to avoid the misuse of their Treaty/Status rights.

In conclusion, we can say that what we wish to do will depend also on the amount of help and cooperation we get from people, schools and of course Aboriginal, and non-Aboriginal organizations including local and National levels.

2. Possible actions at a local level:

With the knowledge we now have, possible actions at the local level could be the following. To have a project for families and parents, because from the results we've found that most problems start off at home. We can help these youth's if we can help their parents to have more knowledge of their family's problems. We need to be aware of suicide attempts and people who face suicide in their lives. Our study shows that there are many suicide attempts by Aboriginal youth who need the help.

We need more cultural activities. The youth could benefit from these activities, and by getting more knowledge by having more opportunities to listen to the elders.

The education system is a big problem for Aboriginal youth

because our studies show that there is a lot of racism from the teachers towards Aboriginal youth. We need more flexible schools where the teachers allow their students to participate in their culture both in and out of school.

Aboriginal youth want more Aboriginal teachers and counsellors so that they can teach their children and other young people about their culture. Our youth need the knowledge of their culture, because it will bring them pride and strength. Having more Aboriginal teachers could also help in giving the youth role models to look up to.

Youth conferences can help youth to speak up for what they believe in and for what they want and deserve.