



Canadian
Race Relations
Foundation

Fondation
canadienne des
relations raciales

Event Report for CICS Youth Network Workshops

Part 1: Workshops in York Region

- 1. Number of workshops:** A total of 8 sessions were conducted in York Region from November 2018 to February 2019
- 2. Date and Location(s) of workshop:**
 - 1) November 28th, 2018 ,Welcome Centre Markham North (8400 Woodbine Ave, Unit 102-103, Markham, Ontario)
 - 2) February 1st, 2019, Immigrant Youth Centre (5284 Highway 7 E, Unit 2, Markham, Ontario)
 - Be the Change Conference: one key-note presentation and six workshops
- 3. Brief Description of the workshop(s):**
 - **BE the Change: Presentation by LOVE (Leave Out Violence Toronto)**
 - The presentation was a combination of knowledge and experience sharing to enable youth to be effective leaders in promoting inclusion, raising awareness, influencing attitudes and effecting change amongst their peers. It also inspired positive actions
 - **The Power of Storytelling (conducted twice)**
 - Facilitator created a space where youth explored and discussed the topics of racism and how storytelling can be a tool to address these topics on a personal and collective level. Youth also had the opportunity to learn about indigeneity.
 - **Stereotypes, Bias in Culture & Media Arts**
 - The interactive workshop invited a slow-down process of analyzing representations or implicit assumptions of the cultural minorities.
 - **Game of Life**
 - The goal of this workshop was for youth to identify & understand their privileges. Youth brainstormed on ways to drive social change within their own communities upon understanding the terminologies of equality, equity and privileges.
 - **Power Flower**
 - Participants had the opportunity to identify who they are (and who they aren't) as individuals and as a group in relation to those who wield power in our society. The workshop highlighted discrimination as a process for maintaining dominant identities.
 - **Name Story**
 - The Name Story activity allowed youth to navigate and understand the meaning behind their names. Students shared stories and meanings behind their names and their experience in their immigrant journey..
 - **Building Resiliency**
 - Youth were able to reflect their thoughts and feelings after attending anti-racism and anti-oppression workshops. Youth participated in a mindfulness and grounding activity. Participants were able to create an action plan in regards to becoming an agent of change in promoting diversity and inclusion within their communities.
- 4. Speakers & Moderators:**
 - Nicole Williamson, Youth & Community Worker, Leave Out Violence Toronto
 - Sarmini Vettrivelu, Youth Settlement Worker at CICS
 - Vivian Chow, Youth Settlement Worker at CICS

- Wajiha Afaq, Youth Settlement Worker at CICS
- Brenda Shin, Youth Settlement Worker at CICS
- Sarmini Vettrivelu, Youth Settlement Worker at CICS
- Alison Cheng, 3rd Year Family and Social Services Student at the University of Guelph Humber

5. Audience:

a. Number of the attendees: 368

b. Who were the main audience? (e.g. students, teachers, educators)

The audience included immigrant youth between the ages of 14-22 who are currently enrolled in full-time elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools.

c. What generic demographic information can be provided about the audience (geographic location, age cohort)

Out of the 368 participants:

- 6% of the participants are between the ages of 18 and 22, and 94% are between the ages of 13 and 17.
- 1% of the youth is from the Toronto Region (North York), and 99% of the youth are from York Region (Markham & Richmond Hill).
- The country of origin of the youth participants: 6% – Syria, 11% – Philippines, 85% – China, 4% - Hong Kong, 2% - Panama, 2% - Canada.

6. Strategic Impact

Recognizing the agency, power, and passion youth bring to working on issues of diversity and inclusion, the CRRF's National Youth Network seeks to work with high school students across the country to empower them to take action on issues of diversity and social inclusion within their local communities.

These workshops are meant to provide youth with the skills and knowledge to understand and address issues of diversity and inclusion in their community. Participants will learn about:

- What do terms like race, racism, bias, and prejudice mean*
- A general history of issues of race and racism in Canada*
- What and how do we take action*

a. How well were these objectives met in the workshop series?

The workshop series were developed in alignment with CRRF National Youth Network's objectives. The objectives of our workshops include:

1. To educate newcomer youth on anti-oppression and racism related topics. An emphasis was placed on understanding terms: prejudice, privilege, racism, oppression, stereotypes, bias, equity, equality, and resilience
2. To encourage the youth to become agents of social action by encouraging youth to take the initiative to make a difference in their communities
3. To increase participants' awareness of the marginalized and oppressed
4. To become more aware of how media representation causes stereotypical behaviour
5. To empower youth in identifying their indignities

The objectives were met through the workshops provided. Participants were asked to express their understanding of racism and oppression at the start of each workshop, majority of the participants were observed to display a minimal knowledge of the topics. After attending the workshops, the participants had completed a take-home assignment that prompted the youth to create small changes in their community based on the new knowledge gained from the workshops. The reflections that were shared illustrated an increase of the youth participants' resiliency and awareness of oppressive and racist behaviours in their communities.

b. Do you consider the events to be successful, and why?

The event/workshops were considered to be successful. This was indicated through the post-evaluation provided by the participants who reported: (1) an enhanced understanding of anti-oppression terminologies, (2) an increased capacity to share the personal experiences of racism and oppression, and respond to racism and oppression in healthy ways. 100% of the youth expressed that they enjoyed the workshops and hoped to see more workshops of such topics in the future.

The event/workshops also provided an outlet for newcomer youth to share their personal experience of being bullied or witnessing others that have been bullied. For example, one participant mentioned that he never realized that his friends continuously racialized him and stereotyped him. Being a new immigrant to Canada, he assumed that it was just the way Canadian communicated. After attending the conference, the participant realized that he was actually being bullied. He shared that he learned more about resiliency & anti-oppression/racism techniques, and would bring awareness to his friendship circle.

c. How can this initiative be improved in the future?

Some clients in one-time workshops might need more time to warm-up and feel comfortable sharing their personal experience. Workshops running in series maybe helpful which allow enough time to build the trust.

7. What feedback from participants has been received to date?

The majority of the youth enjoyed sharing their own experience through interactive activities that were embedded in each workshop. Please refer to 6b above regarding positive feedback that has been received from the participants

The attendees had shared that they would like to explore further and learn about diversity and inclusion. Youth appreciated the safe-space created by the facilitators and found the topics shared very interesting and helpful in understanding different ethnicities and races.

8. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Please refer to the event photos attached in the email.

Part 2: Workshops in Toronto

1. Number of workshops: 2

2. Date and Location(s) of workshop:

- December 5, 2018 at Newtonbrook Secondary School
- February 6, 2019 at Newtonbrook Secondary school

3. Brief Description of the workshop(s):

• **Anti-oppression and Storytelling**

- The purpose of this workshop was to promote anti-racism through story telling. The students were given the opportunity to share their thoughts/experiences about prejudice and discrimination, while learning about the Aboriginal people's culture/experiences.

• **Healthy Well-being and Building relationships**

- This workshop was delivered to help the participants widen their knowledge about social inclusion, diversity and violence prevention.

4. Speakers & Moderators: Speaker:

Sarmini Vettrivelu- Youth Settlement Worker of CICS
Blaise Cabanban – School Settlement Worker of CICS

5. Audience:

a. Number of the attendees: Total 47 attendees for two sessions

b. Who were the main audience? (e.g. students, teachers, educators) High school students of diverse cultural background.

c. What generic demographic information can be provided about the audience (geographic location, age cohort): They were all students of Newtonbrook Secondary School who live in North York between the ages of 15 and 19 years old.

6. Strategic Impact

Recognizing the agency, power, and passion youth bring to working on issues of diversity and inclusion, the CRRF's National Youth Network seeks to work with high school students across the country to empower them to take action on issues of diversity and social inclusion within their local communities.

These workshops are meant to provide youth with the skills and knowledge to understand and address issues of diversity and inclusion in their community. Participants will learn about:

What do terms like race, racism, bias, and prejudice mean

-A general history of issues of race and racism in Canada

-What and how do we take action

a. How well were these objectives met in the workshop series?

Students were given the information to understand the Aboriginal culture and the Indigenous people's experiences in discrimination and prejudice. The students' knowledge about cultural diversity was increased, and learned how to prevent stereotyping not only in schools but also in communities.

All the workshop activities were designed based on the listed objectives, and the students reflected that their awareness on racism and cultural issues had been raised through the workshops. They were also involved in discussion about actions on helping the other newcomers in schools and community feel welcome.

b. Do you consider the events to be successful, and why?

Yes, both events were successful because all participants were actively engaged in the interactive activities that allowed them to positively work/interact with each other in the group. They were very open in sharing their thoughts on topics about diversity, inclusion and acceptance of others' from different cultural background.

Over 90% of the participants reported that their knowledge about anti-racism and inclusion was increased. Many of them indicated willingness to take actions to foster healthy and safe school environment, and promote respect in school and community.

c. How can this initiative be improved in the future?

More workshops on the topics of diversity, inclusion and anti-racism should be arranged on a regular basis.

7. What feedback from participants has been received to date?

- The participants reflected that they gained a thorough understanding about the experiences of indigenous people in racism and discrimination
- The students reported that they learned strategic ways to prevent different forms of oppression
- The students enjoyed the opportunity to talk freely and openly about their opinions and experiences
- The majority believed that building good relationship and connection with peers in schools could make a difference in the community.
- 100% of the clients enjoyed the activities
- Over 90% of the clients reflected enhanced interpersonal and leadership skills.

8. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

N/A