

Evaluation of Hip Hop Workshops in Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit in Pangnirtung, Nunavut.

Tanya Forneris, PhD
University of Ottawa



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary	3
Full Report	4
Background Information	4
Program Overview	6
Evaluation Design	6
Data Analysis	7
Results	7
• Perceptions of the program	7
• Impact of the program on youth	9
• Impact of the program on health behaviour	11
• Impact of the program on the community	12
• Difficulties experienced related to the program	13
• Ideas for program sustainability	14
Conclusions	15
References	16

Executive Summary

This evaluation report provides an overview of perspectives of youth and community members from three communities in Nunavut on the implementation of three Hip Hop projects in their respective communities. The first program entitled “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” was implemented in Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet and the “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” was implemented in Pangnirtung. This evaluation used questionnaires, focus groups, and individual interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of people’s perceptions of the projects, the perceived impact of the projects, and difficulties experienced with the projects.

Overall, the findings from this evaluation indicate that the objectives of “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” were exceeded. The objectives of the program were to: (1) connect with youth-at-risk in physical activity and engage them in discussions and activities about issues such as healthy lifestyles, self esteem, responsibility, and addictions; (2) to create a lasting support network for youth through the common interest of Hip Hop; and (3) to provide a means for youth to express themselves and have a creative outlet for their feelings and energy. Additionally, the findings indicated that the objectives of the “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” which were: (1) to teach leadership skills to youth in order to improve the sustainability of the hip hop and wellness movement that is currently having a positive impact on youth throughout Nunavut; and (2) to use the intense popularity of hip hop to teach youth essential leadership skills that are transferable and will benefit them and their communities long after they lose their interest in spinning on their heads were also exceeded.

The youth and the community members perceived the Hip Hop projects very positively and believe that projects such as these provide important opportunities for youth in Nunavut. It was perceived that the projects have helped youth gain a sense of self and identity, increase their confidence and self-esteem, communicate more effectively, express emotion, develop as leaders, and to have a more positive future outlook. In addition, the projects were perceived to have enhanced the physical health of the youth involved by providing them an opportunity to engage in physical activity that is not sport, to eat healthy snacks and to decrease drug and alcohol use. In addition, the community members felt that the projects helped bring the community together. However, there was some concern whether the projects sufficiently supported Inuit tradition and culture. The difficulties experienced related to the projects included barriers to program sustainability and difficulties related to funding processes. A number of ideas to improve the sustainability of Hip Hop programming also emerged and most of these ideas were in response to the difficulties the communities were facing.

In sum, it appears that these three Hip Hop projects have had a significant impact in the three communities in which they have been implemented. The perceptions of the youth and the community members indicate that they believe that the continuation Hip Hop through ongoing support is important to the development of Inuit youth. The provision of opportunities like the Hip Hop programs is consistent with the Government of Nunavut priorities to ensuring opportunities for fun, recreation and cultural activities outlined in “Tamapta 2009-2013.” Furthermore, the results of the program also suggest that the impact and outcomes of these projects support many of the Inuit societal values including Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (respecting others, relationships and caring for people); Tunnganarniq (fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive.); Pijitsirniq (serving and providing for family and/or community.); Aajiiqatigiinni (decision making through discussion and consensus.); Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq (development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.) and Piliriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtigiinni (working together for a common cause).

Background Information

Well-being and Health of Indigenous Youth

Health is comprised of physical, psychological and social aspects that influence each other (Santrock, 1998). According to Hurrelmann (1990), healthy development involves the acquisition of competencies in each of these three domains. However, adolescence is associated with simultaneous changes in these three domains of health that purportedly place adolescents at increased risk of problems leading to serious health and social repercussions (Gardner & Steinberg, 2005; Jessor, 1987). Specific to Indigenous peoples, the legacy of colonization has negatively affected almost all areas of life including, most profoundly, health, education and economic opportunities (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), 1996). Identified negative health effects of colonization include, but not limited to, compromised physical and mental health such as low levels of physical activity, increased rates of obesity, disproportionately high levels of diabetes, high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, and high levels of youth suicide (Burrows, Geiss, Engelgau, & Action, 2000; Campbell, 2002; Hay & Shephard, 1998; Fagot-Campagna, Burrows, & Williamson, 1999; Health Canada 2008; Jackson, 1993; NAHO, 2005, 2008; Paradis et al., 2005).

Research demonstrates that Indigenous youth are disproportionately represented among overweight and diabetes populations (Burrows, Geiss, Engelgau, & Action, 2000; Fagot-Campagna, Burrows, & Williamson, 1999; Jackson, 1993; Paradis et al., 2005). It is well known that physical activity is important for health (Warburton, Nicol & Bredon, 2006). Recent research has shown that the majority of Aboriginal youth do not meet the recommended guidelines for physical activity (NAHO, 2005). According to the 2002/03 First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) (NAHO, 2005), 29.4 percent of First Nations adolescents indicated that they never participate in physical activity and only 19.6 percent reported participating in physical activity four or more times a week (It is recognized that the First Nations Regional Health Survey does not include Inuit populations but given the scarcity of information related to physical activity levels of Indigenous youth this information was to provide a general understanding of physical activity levels within these populations). These statistics are particularly alarming due to the strong link between physical activity and decreased risk of chronic disease such as type 2 diabetes, rates of overweight and obesity, and mental health concerns (Eisenmann, 2004; Haugland, Wold, & Torsheim, 2003; Janssen et al., 2005; Janssen, Katzmarzyk, Boyce, King & Pickett, 2004; Mutrie & Parfitt, 1998).

In addition, Indigenous youth also face a number of psychological and behavioural challenges that have an impact on their overall health and well-being. The most prominent of these concerns include depression, suicide, drug and alcohol use and abuse, and teen pregnancy. The rates of suicide among Inuit youth are eleven times higher than non-Indigenous youth in Canada (Health Canada, 2008; NAHO, 2008). With respect to drug and alcohol use, Aboriginal youth are at two to six times greater risk for alcohol-related problems and are more likely to use solvents and all types of illicit drugs than other Canadian youth (Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 1997, 1999). In addition, drug and alcohol use begins earlier for Aboriginal youth. One third of users are under 15 and more than half of all solvent users begin use before age 11. Furthermore, according to the NAHO (2005), teen pregnancy is 18 times higher in Aboriginal populations compared to the non-Aboriginal Canadian population. Certainly, there is an urgent need for effective interventions.

Hip Hop Programming for Youth.

Hip Hop is a multi-arts based DIY (Do It Yourself) culture, allowing young people a variety of different ways to participate whether through beatmaking, DJing, rapping, writing rhymes, break and hip hop styles of dancing, or graffiti arts. More generally Hip Hop is understood as an oral culture, with a historical political ideology of reclamation, resistance, and emancipation (Marsh in press; Mitchell 2001; Lashua 2005). In his introduction to *Global Noise: Rap and Hip Hop Outside the USA* Tony Mitchell makes the argument that hip hop “has become a vehicle for global youth affiliation and a tool for reworking local identity all over the world” (Mitchell, 2001). In contemporary popular culture Hip Hop continues to be a “constructive and contested space” in which marginalized young people around the world are “both resist[ing] and challeng[ing] social ideologies, practices, and structures that have caused and maintained their subordinate position” (Land and Stovall, 2009). These are some of the reasons why Indigenous youth living in northern Canada are drawn to Hip Hop culture. Hip Hop also offers youth in the north an important sense of connection to the global world. Through programs like *BluePrintForLife*, as well as on-line interactive sites like Bebo, YouTube, MySpace, and Facebook, young people are linked to other youth cultures from around the world. And as Rodríguez argues, “Hip Hop culture is a dialogue with the world - a dialogue between youth and the world in which they operate daily” (Rodríguez, 2009). Through the culture of Hip Hop, young Indigenous people living in Canada create and tell stories about who they are, how they feel, and their hopes for the future. “Hip hop has become a place to begin to dialogue about the current crises within communities—fractures in relationships, social problems including drug addictions, depression, alcoholism, poverty, suicide, crime, cultural trauma, environmental degradation—ongoing legacies of colonialism” (Marsh, in press).

Hip Hop programming for youth is relatively new but appears to be on the rise. The majority of these youth Hip Hop programs, including *BluePrintForLife*, are youth outreach programs that aim to enhance youth well-being in a number of ways, including increasing self-esteem, confidence, leadership skills, physical activity, and community engagement while decreasing prejudice, violence, drug use, and bullying. However, little research has been conducted to evaluate such programs. The purpose of this evaluation was to examine the impact of projects *BluePrintForLife* implemented in three communities of Nunavut: Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet, and Pangnirtung.

BluePrintForLife Programming.

BluePrintForLife is an organization that is founded on the belief that Hip Hop arts practices (including breakdancing, rapping, DJing, and graffiti arts) coupled with social work can enhance the health and well-being of youth. *BluePrintForLife*, led by long-time Hip Hop dancer and social worker Stephen Leafloor, offers programs that bring together highly trained and talented Hip Hop dancers and marginalized/at-risk youth. Hip Hop provides the context for appealing to and reaching youth in order to help them to develop life strategies and survival techniques to live healthier and more productive lives in often complex social situations where health resources and programs for youth may be scarce. *BluePrintForLife* believes that Hip Hop culture is a significant and innovative educational framework that enables youth to enhance physical and mental health, create personal and social change, respect local cultures and beliefs, and connect to a global culture promoting voices for youth around the world. The *BluePrintForLife* programming has been cited as the greatest youth initiative in Northern Canada in the past 20 years (CTV News, n.d.).

Program Overview

Three Hip Hop projects were implemented in three communities. The first program entitled “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” was implemented in two communities (Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet) and the second program “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” was implemented in Pangnirtung for a total of three projects.

Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop

The overall objective of this project was to help address the issue of physical inactivity in youth. This Healthy Living proposal for “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” workshops was to provide on-going support for local community-based hip hop programs in Nunavut by: (1) boosting the leadership capacity of local Hip Hop crew leaders, and assisting them to successfully engage the ongoing participation of youth-in their community programs, (2) facilitating the creation of a regional hip hop community and support network, and; (3) fortifying the wellness and cultural components of the movement.

These workshops use Hip Hop as a means to:

- 1) Connect with youth-at-risk in physical activity and also engage them in discussions and activities about issues such as healthy lifestyles, self esteem, responsibility, and addictions.
- 2) Create a lasting support network for youth through the common interest of Hip Hop.
- 3) Provide a means for youth to express themselves and have a creative outlet for their feelings and energy.

Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit

The overall goal of the leadership summit was to implement a program that teaches leadership, communication, advocacy, facilitation and coordination skills to youth. The two primary objectives of the project were:(1) to teach leadership skills to youth in order to improve the sustainability of the hip hop and wellness movement that is currently having a positive impact on youth throughout Nunavut; 2) to use the intense popularity of hip hop to teach youth essential leadership skills that are transferable and will benefit them and their communities long after they lose their interest in spinning on their heads.

Note: Two of these communities the youth have formed a Hip Hop club which meets on a regular basis (2-3 times per week) to continue to implement what they learned through these Hip Hop projects.

Evaluation Design

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs implemented in Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Pangnirtung, a visit was made to each community and interviews were conducted with a number of members within each community (see details below). The interviews conducted across the communities included:

1. Four individual interviews with the Community Coordinator(s) for each respective community (Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Pangnirtung)
2. Seven individual interviews with youth from the different communities who participated in the Hip Hop program(s) within their community (some of these youth also participated in the leadership summit in Pangnirtung)
3. Two focus groups with youth (N=4-8) involved in the program(s).
4. 10 individual interviews with community members which included social workers, teachers, principals, RCMP, personnel from the Hamlet, parents, elders.

In addition, youth from the “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” in Pangnirtung completed a written feedback/evaluation questionnaire at the end of the program. Furthermore, an online questionnaire was distributed to community leaders involved in the project as well as to the Hip Hop leaders from *BluePrintForLife*.

Data Analysis

The interviews were conducted in English and in Inuktitut with the assistance of a translator. The interview and questionnaire data were downloaded into the software NVivo (Qualitative Solution and Research, 2006, version 7) which was used to assist in the coding and management of the data. A deductive-inductive analysis was performed and the data was analysed by breaking text and segmenting sentences into categories. A portion of the categories that were developed emerged deductively from concepts deemed important for the evaluation while other categories emerged inductively from the participants’ responses.

Results

Six themes emerged from the data analysis. These included:

1. Perceptions of the program
2. Impact of the program on youth
3. Impact of the program on health behavior
4. Impact of the program on the community
5. Difficulties experienced related to the program
6. Ideas for program sustainability

The results are presented in sections by theme. Within each section a general summary of results is provided followed by quotes from the interviews or questionnaires which support the findings.

Perceptions of the Program

Overall the program was perceived positive by all of the youth and the majority of community members. The youth and community members believed the program was a great opportunity for the youth to be engaged in the community and that it taught important lessons and values. However, a few community members were concerned about how well the program supports Inuit culture and traditions. In addition, a few community members were concerned that some youth may only be engaging in the Hip Hop aspect of the program without integrating the positive values and skills that *BluePrintForLife* discusses and integrates into their programming.

With regard to positive perceptions a number of community members and youth had a lot of positive feedback about the program in general. Comments shared when discussing their perceptions of the program with the evaluator included:

- “The program is great for the kids, it inspires them to do something different, to generate their energy to positive things.”
- “The program is good, they learn how to respect and listen.”
- “This program (Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop) has been the best bang for the buck so to speak, I have seen lots of workshops, some fail and some succeed but Hip Hop was by far the biggest bang for the buck.”
- “Hip Hop is a positive piece in their life and it is possible that it has decreased the suicide rate although that is not quite known at this point.”
- “The *BluePrintForLife* leaders teach well, they set the values and have expectations of the youth which are more parallel to the Inuit traditional ways of learning.”
- “I would be happy to support Hip Hop in the future, it bears hope for the future.”
- “I feel that since the program , I feel I can connect more with the youth, I can now call the youth and I would not have done that before the program. Because of the program the kids know who I am and I know who they are.”
- “For sure it is a positive experience, kids stepping up, those who seemed to be the shyest. It is a small community, you know everyone, who comes from where, you have your perspectives, to see certain individuals stepping out and overcoming that fear, proving to others that they can do these things, changing other people’s perspective.”

Apart from just having a positive perception of the program in general, many of the community members believed that the program provided an important opportunity for youth to engage which is something that is not provided very often within these communities.

- “I am thankful that there is something like this for our youth.”
- “Another good thing is that parents don’t have money to do things and for this parent’s don’t need money for this program.”
- Allowing kids not interested in sport an opportunity for learning and developing in an area that was not available before – arts, creativity – it is attractive to youth who do not like sports.”
- “From a parental perspective these types of opportunities are important and we need to have these opportunities for all youth.”

- “It’s a positive thing in their lives, something to look forward to every couple of days – the group that gravitates to Hip Hop don’t usually do sports or cadets so this is their own niche, it fulfills creative sensibilities, having that outlet from them.”

-

As stated above, a few community members were unsure whether the program supported Inuit culture and traditions whereas others were concerned that some youth may just pick up on the Hip Hop dancing, like in the media, and not integrate the values and lessons that *BluePrintForLife* teaches in the program. Some responses included:

“I fear that they will develop more of this Hip Hop Gangster identity (from media) which is not in harmony with the Inuit culture – fear that they are not developing their identities as Inuit.”

“Hip Hop is too disconnected with culture.”

“Attitude of Hip Hop (in general and in media) is not always good, can be more like a gang attitude where there is little respect for others.”

“I see now how the younger youth acting like Hip Hop group without learning about the values that *BluePrintForLife* teaches.”

Impact of the Program on Youth

The youth themselves and community members felt that the program has a number of positive effects on the youth which included developing a sense of self and identity, increasing confidence and self-esteem, learning the importance of working together, respecting and helping others, a willingness to communicate about issues with which they are struggling and a more positive outlook for the future. Below are two sections, the first section are quotes directly from the youth in which they discuss the impact of the program on themselves and the second section includes quotes from the community members about their observations of program impact on the youth.

Perceptions from Youth

“It’s unexplainable” – a youths answer when asked how the program has impacted her.

“Getting my confidence up, used to be really shy.”

“I think of more things I can do in the future”

“Hip Hop – it’s really fun, make me feel like I am apart of something even though we have conflicts I like to solve it and help others solve it.”

“I got better more confident and learn about leadership. Lovin’ Hiphop more and more!!”

“At first he was shy and then he got confident, at first he wouldn’t talk or go to the circle but now he is the best.” – youth talking about changes they observed in their peer.

“Being a leader feels good, helping friends.”

“Helps to be more confident, I think it helps with school.”

“I learned how to be a leader.”

“I’m a completely different person. I never thought I would have kids look up to me...now I want to become a teacher, something to do with youth, now have a commitment to youth. It changed how I approach life.”

“It changed me, helping me with my mom, I can talk to her now...I can talk and be open.”

“It game me a positive attitude”

“It taught me to work harder.”

“It made me get new friends, and learned about leadership.”

“This activity helped me in being stronger in life.”

Community Members Observations

“For many youth, there are limited opportunities to learn about issues that concern their everyday lives, such as bullying, abuse, family violence, suicide, healthy living and methods on how to create healthy anger outlets. *BluePrintForLife* helped to fill these voids...as the participants have already shown significant improvement in their coping abilities as well as respecting their peers, teachers and community members.”

“The kids in the program are more respectful, looking forward to future more, talking about goals, looking forward to things – more hope. The Hip Hop students are also more respectful in school.”

“I have noticed changes in the youth, pride and sense of identity with other Inuit youth, not afraid to talk if feeling suicidal, see Hip Hop as healthy process for dealing with and preventing suicide, also see that the youth have grown up a little, they are taking more initiative in the community.”

“They now have an image of themselves as dancers and as part of a group, a sense of identity.”

The program gives them an identity, a sense of empowerment – the program is a positive life affirming activity and there is always excitement.”

“It is a fact that my niece and her group has something to do, something she believes in and helps her grow, helps her not to be so shy.”

“The youth in Hip Hop are more able to talk about their problems, issues, more supportive of each other, talk with each other a lot, more open in class and willing to share their opinions more, they seem to be more grounded compared to other kids who have issues.”

“I feel that the youth became more confident throughout the week, taking bigger risks and pushing themselves beyond their own expectations.”

“Youth were never adverse to talking but now they initiate a little more”

“Before the Hip Hop program the youth were bullying a lot since *BluePrintForLife* program that have learned more about respect.”

“I have a niece doing the Hip Hop program, I can see that her self-esteem has increased, she has gotten over shyness and going to Hip Hop has helped her be a leader, more self-esteem and take more positive risks.”

“For the Grade 11 wellness project the students from the Hip Hop group decided to work with the younger kids in the elementary school to share what they have learned... and after they fulfilled their hours they kept doing it. They see the importance of this – not just for the school work”

“Just to see a sense of self and security, to see them express their own beliefs, they are strong and not swayed as much by others.”

“The youth also talk more about how they are feeling and you see a positive optimism from them, they are looking forward to more of something.”

Impact of the Program on Health Behavior

The youth and community members also talked more specifically about the impact of the programs on the health behaviors of youth. In particular, the youth talked about how the program helped them quit smoking, eat healthier, to exercise and also to engage in other physical activities outside of Hip Hop practice.

Perceptions from Youth

“Hip Hop helps us stay out of trouble, because of Hip Hop we make new friends and have done other activities together to stay healthy like hiking, walking up the hill for sliding, going for walks, just getting everyone together.

“I have more energy, feel healthier, and more exercise.”

“When I first went to Clyde River I smoked a lot and worked to practice moves but I would get tired and realized I have to quit if I want to keep dancing so thought about it and then realized that I don’t want to look old and also that there were youth looking up to me...I stopped smoking and saw a big difference in the last three years, I’m not tired as much, healthier, not only towards me but others, I am proud to say that I don’t smoke and show those, especially youth, cigarettes and dancing don’t mix.”

“I feel healthier now, when I was a kid I was thinking that I would be an alcoholic but when they came (*BluePrintForLife*) I now know I don’t have to do those things.”

“It is good for us – exercise, we warm up and gets us healthy”

“Helps be in good physical shape”

“I still want to do Hip Hop – not do alcohol.”

Community Members Observations

“The kids are getting more exercise, definitely lots of exercise, it is good for their health and they are practicing a lot.”

“I want the program to continue...keeps them away from drugs and alcohol and other mischief.”

“They have healthy snack in practice, don’t allow them to bring junk food so they are learning that supper does not begin with a bag of chips and a pop.”

“I am seeing changes in values and healthy living attitude of the youth.”

Impact of the Program on the Community

The community members discussed how the program has had an impact at the community level as well. They discussed how the implementation of the program has brought the community together, how the youth are becoming community leaders and how the program has helped connect youth to different services in the communities.

“The whole community was involved in the project; I have not seen the community come together for something like this in the past – lots of people baking muffins, helping out.”

“The community turnout for the program was phenomenal; I have never seen anything like that, for youth and the community...for the dance off at the end of the program the place was packed.”

“The Hip Hop groups does presentations and the community is very proud, there is a lot of pride from the community members”

“The program also helped connect the health centres with the youth because of the community members involved in the organization of the project.”

“In the community we have different events planned on holidays like Aboriginal Day, Canada Day and the Hip Hop group performs on these special occasions like these and they are very willing to perform and it helps get the younger kids excited – the younger kids want to be part of the Hip Hop.”

“Youth are also becoming leaders in the community and this is changing attitudes towards volunteerism – community members are seeing that you can do things in the community.”

“I observed that youth are respecting themselves more and that they are respecting others – they are teaching other community members through things like posters about how people should behave and the attitudes that we should have – e.g., being nice to others, helping others.”

Difficulties Experienced Related to the Program

The youth and the community members talked about difficulties they experienced related to the sustainability of the program in the community. Much of the difficulties discussed were related to ongoing supervision and guidance for the program as well as funding requirements and timelines. The community members recognized that some of the youth involved in the Hip Hop club have taken on leadership roles and are doing a great job in those roles but that they need a community member, preferably someone who is Inuit and a young adult to be their to mentor and guide the youth. The youth talked about a leader from another community who is Inuit and leads the Hip Hop group in her community. They discussed that this person was a role model to them and how they hoped that they could have someone like her in their own community. In the communities most of the program organization is being facilitated by non-Inuit community members. The difficulties related to program sustainability were partially attributed to the community history and the difficulties overcoming divisions within the community. The youth also recognized the need for more space, equipment and resources (e.g., stereo, CD's, videos).

“The mentoring/supervising is an issue. The consistency of these roles is an issue, as it is a big commitment. We have the youth leadership but need someone more committed to the Hip Hop program specifically.”

“We need 10 (name of member from different community) – she helps us understand things other people can't understand. (name of person) is my inspiration, her commitment, dedication and openness.”

“The only problem we are having is follow-through.”

“Need the funding process to be easier, it needs to be more streamlines and to have easier final reporting requirements.”

“Difficulties experienced is funding, not enough funding and deadlines are not effective, it would be better if it was more open because Hip Hop is not seasonal it is ongoing on a daily basis.

“Hip Hop is important and we want to continue but we need more people involved and need equipment.”

“Need someone to continue the program, right now they hang out in the gym in the evenings doing activities...but needs to be a leader to continue on with the Hip Hop.”

“It is a small community with so many divisions and lots of history between families which is a barrier to getting things going.”

“The funding comes from third party which is difficult o top of the normal workload responsibilities and the start and end dates for a lot of the funding does not work well for the school year. I wish that the funding was more ongoing, not just year to year.”

“We need more resources – Hip Hop CD’s and videos.”

Ideas for Program Sustainability

The youth and the community members had a number of ideas to help sustain the Hip Hop programming. The most consistent idea across the communities was the development or initiation of continued Hip Hop events for the youth to work towards (e.g., more leadership summits or smaller trips to other communities to share and learn from other communities) and increased communication between the communities. Also related to the difficulty discussed above regarding funding, some members discussed ideas for easing the funding process. Furthermore, some community members discussed the idea of incorporating more traditional Inuit practices into the Hip Hop program.

“Provide more ongoing programs in the communities so youth may have more opportunities to learn from the *BluePrintForLife* staff and to have opportunities for youth to learn from other youth in other communities.”

“To improve the program, getting a better place to practice, better music set-up, and also opportunity to travel to another community, to learn from others as everyone has different styles, so to learn from them and meet new friends.”

“We need more events – a leadership summit or going to other communities.”

“Need more leadership summits.”

“Need to maintain more communication between communities – need to support each other. Regular face to face meeting or telephone meetings between communities would be good.”

“Communities need to learn from each other – e.g., having a supervisors meeting without funders involved so they feel free to talk about the difficulties they are experiencing.”

“A process for streamlining the funding process is needed e.g., simpler final reports, I think that this would decrease difficulty of applying and therefore would get more applications which would provide more opportunities for youth.”

“Youth from other communities are combining throat singing with Hip Hop, good idea, melding some traditional practices with Hip Hop.”

“If traditional culture was incorporated more it could strengthen the community and empower the youth, provide them with a stronger Inuit identity.”

“It can easily be done where Elders come in to share stories and advice to live a good life and that would be one way.”

“For continued success we need somehow to empower those in the community, the parents and adults to buy into it.”

Conclusions

Overall, the findings from this evaluation indicate that the objectives of “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” and the “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” were met and were exceeded. As stated above the primary objectives of the “Hip Hop and You Don’t Stop” project were to (1) connect with youth-at-risk in physical activity and also engage them in discussions and activities about issues such as healthy lifestyles, self esteem, responsibility, and addictions; (2) create a lasting support network for youth through the common interest of Hip Hop; and (3) provide a means for youth to express themselves and have a creative outlet for their feelings and energy. The two primary objectives of the “Leadership Youth Hip Hop Summit” project were: (1) to teach leadership skills to youth in order to improve the sustainability of the hip hop and wellness movement that is currently having an incredibly positive impact on youth throughout Nunavut; and (2) to use the intense popularity of hip hop to teach youth essential leadership skills that are transferable and will benefit them and their communities long after they lose their interest in spinning on their heads.

The youth and the community members perceived the Hip Hop projects positively and believe that projects such as these provide important opportunities for youth. It was believed that the projects had a positive impact on the development of youth. More specifically, it was perceived that the projects helped youth gain a sense of self and identity, increase their confidence and self-esteem, communicate more effectively, express emotion, develop as leaders, and to have a more positive future outlook. In addition, the projects were perceived to have enhanced the physical health of the youth involved by providing them an opportunity to engage in physical activity that is not sport, to eat healthy snacks and to decrease drug and alcohol use. In addition, the community members felt that the projects helped bring the community together. They discussed how the youth are engaging more in their community and that the community is

providing support in return which in many cases has brought the community together more than other events in the past.

The difficulties expressed related to the sustainability of the projects. The youth and the community leaders discussed the need for supervisors who are committed to the Hip Hop programming and who can act as a mentor of the youth as well. All of the youth and community members expressed that they believe that having a young Inuit adult member of the community who is willing to talk about ongoing issues in the community with the youth, help youth further their leadership skills, and supervise while they practice Hip Hop would be ideal. A second difficulty that was often discussed was the issue of funding and how the funding process is often a challenge as a result of the requirements and timelines and what is needed is more streamlined long-term funding as opposed to year to year funding that does not align with the ongoing nature of the Hip Hop clubs.

A number of ideas to improve the sustainability of the projects emerged and most of these ideas were in response to the difficulties the communities were facing. The youth and the community members involved in the Hip Hop clubs believed that it is important to continue to have events for the youth to work towards. The youth expressed that having events such as a leadership summit or other opportunities to go to the communities would enable them to learn from youth in other communities, to make new friends, and to develop their leadership skills. The community members also felt that these types of ongoing events would be important in sustaining the motivation and positive impact of the Hip Hop program. The community members believed that having opportunities to interact with youth from other communities provides a greater sense of connection for the youth and it provides them with new experiences and new perspectives. In addition, the community members felt that incorporating traditional practices such as throat singing and drum dancing are important and would help the youth develop their identity as Inuit. The incorporation of such practices would also help in response to the concerns of some community members that the program is too disconnected from Inuit culture.

In sum, it appears that these three Hip Hop projects have had a significant impact in the three communities in which they have been implemented. The perceptions of the youth and the community members indicate that they believe that the continuation of Hip Hop through ongoing support is important to the development of Inuit youth. The provision of opportunities like the Hip Hop projects is consistent with the Government of Nunavut priorities to ensuring opportunities for fun recreation and cultural activities outlined in “Tamapta 2009-2013.” The results of this evaluation also suggest that the impact and outcomes of these projects support many of the Inuit societal values including Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (respecting others, relationships and caring for people); Tunnganarniq (fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive.); Pijitsirniq (serving and providing for family and/or community.); Aajiqatigiinniq (decision making through discussion and consensus.); Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq (development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.) and Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtiigiinniq (working together for a common cause).

References

- Burrows N., Geiss, L., Engelgau, M., & Action, K. (2000). Prevalence of diabetes among Aboriginal Americans and Alaska Aboriginals. 1990-1997: An increasing burden. *Diabetes Care*, 23, 1786-1790.
- Campbell, A. (2002). Type 2 diabetes and children in aboriginal communities: The array of factors that shape health and access to health care. *Health Law Journal*, 10, 147-168.
- CTV News (n.d.) *Arctic Hip Hop Project by BluePrintForLife*. Retrieved November 10th, 2008, from <http://www.blueprintforlife.ca>
- Eisenmann, J. C. (2004). Physical activity and cardiovascular disease risk factors in children and adolescents: an overview. *Canadian Journal of Cardiology*, 20(3), 295-301.
- Fagot-Campagna, A., Burrows, N., Williamson, D. (1999). The public health epidemiology of type 2 diabetes in children and adolescents: A case study of American Indian adolescents in the Southwestern United States. *Clinical Chimica Acta*, 286, 81-95
- Gardner, M., & Steinberg, L. (2005). Peer influence on risk-taking, risk preference and risky decision making in adolescence and adulthood: An experimental study. *Developmental Psychology*, 41, 625-635.
- Haugland, S., Wold, B., & Torsheim, T. (2003). Relieving the pressure? The role of physical activity in the relationship between school-related stress and adolescent health complaints. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 74, 127-35.
- Hay, J., & Shephard, R. J. (1998). Perceptions and patterns of physical activity: A comparison of Mohawk/Cayuga and Non-Native Adolescents. *American Journal of Human Biology*, 10, 629-635
- Health Canada (2008). First Nations, Inuit and Aboriginal health. Retrieved October 15th 2008 from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/promotion/suicide/index-eng.php>.
- Hurrelmann, K. (1990). Health promotion for adolescents: Preventive and corrective strategies against problem behavior. *Journal of Adolescence*, 13, 231-250.
- Jackson, M. (1993). Height, weight, and body mass index of American Indian school children, 1990-1991. *Journal of American Dietetic Association*, 93, 1136-1140.
- Janssen, I., Katzmarzyk, P.T., Boyce, W.F., King, M.A. & Pickett, W. (2004). Overweight and obesity in Canadian adolescents and their association with dietary habits and physical activity patterns. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 35, 360-367.
- Janssen, I., Katzmarzyk, P. T., Boyce, W. F., Vereecken, C., Mulvihill, C., Roberts, C., et al. (2005). Comparison of overweight and obesity prevalence in school-aged youth from 34 countries and their relationships with physical activity and dietary patterns. *Obesity Reviews* 6(2), 123-132.

- Jessor, R. (1987). Problem behavior theory, psychosocial development, and adolescent problem drinking. *British Journal of Addiction*, 82 331–342.
- Land, R. and Stovall, D. (2009). Hip Hop and Social Justice Education: A Brief Introduction. In *Equity and Excellence in Education*. 42, 1, 1-5.
- Lashua, B. (2005). *Making Music, Re-making Leisure in The Beat of Boyle Street*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Alberta.
- Marsh, C. (in press). Representation, Identification, and Citizenship: The Politics of Hip Hop Culture in Nunavut. *Musicultures: The Canadian Journal for Traditional Music*.
- Mitchell, T. Ed. (2001). *Global Noise: Rap and Hip Hop Outside the USA*. Wesleyan University.
- Mutrie, N., & Parfitt, G. (1998). Physical activity and its link with mental, social and moral health in young people in Biddle, S., J. Sallis, and N. Cavill, (Eds) *Young and Active? Young people and health-enhancing physical activity - evidence and implications*.
- National Aboriginal Health Organization (2005). *First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) 2002/03: Results for adults, youth and children living in First Nation Communities*. Retrieved September 24, 2006 from http://www.naho.ca/firstnations/english/documents/RHS2002-03TechnicalReport_001.pdf.
- National Aboriginal Health Organization (2008). *Overview of Inuit Health*. Retrieved October 24, 2008 from <http://www.naho.ca/inuit/e/overview/>.
- Paradis, G., Levesque, L., Macaulay, A. C., Cargo, M., McComber, A., Kirby, R., Receveur, O., Kishchuck, N., & Potvin, L. (2005). Impact of a diabetes prevention program on body size, physical activity, and diet among Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) children 6 to 11 years old: 8 year results from the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project. *Pediatrics*, 115 (2): 333-337.
- Rodríguez, L. (2009). Dialoguing, Cultural Capital, and Student Engagement: Toward a Hip Hop Pedagogy in the High School and University Classroom. In *Equity and Excellence in Education*, 42, 1, 20-35.
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer.
- Santrock, J. W. (1998). *Adolescence*. (7th Edition). New York, NY. McGraw-Hill.
- Warburton, D.E.R., Nicol, C.W., & Bredin, S.S.D. (2006). Health benefits of physical activity: the evidence. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 174(6), 801-809.