



A sampling of student and teachers' reflections – Banting Alternative School, Ottawa.

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Blueprint Student Reflection

Please write down what the Blueprint workshop meant to you

The Blueprint workshop meant a lot to me and my peers. There is stigma surrounding the students at alternative school, a lot of us being labelled as drug addicts, and kids when problems. The truth is, some of us do have struggles in our life but we should not be labelled as that. This workshop proved that we are more than that. This workshop showed us that we are on a healing journey, providing us with healthy resources, therefore encouraging us to become the best we can be. I learnt so much about the people around me at this school through Blueprint, and it taught me that people have so much depth to their personalities. Everyone has something to offer, and so much beauty to them. The day of our showcase holds a very special place in my heart because it was so amazing to be apart of something where everyone was so accepting and having so



much fun. The energy that radiated from every student, is what made Blueprint so much more than a course to me. It taught me so much about beauty, and how I see it in every single person I come across. Blueprint is modern, and helps youth due to how current the issues they bring up including drugs, alcohol, pursuing your passions, and anger management. I believe these are real life skills that should be taught to youth, and it promotes important messages that can change people's life. I came into this not expecting the impact that it really did have on me.

What aspect of the workshop did you like best?

The aspect I enjoyed most of the workshop was definitely the dance. I enjoyed it because it was out of everyone's comfort zone and I recall everyone saying before the course that they do not want to dance. Personally, I do not dance and am not good at it but I remember everyone trying so hard and being so energetic! The energy was very positive and really did radiate. Seeing everyone dance really made me happy because we could all come together to create something despite our differences. It was such a positive atmosphere and dance was an amazing outlet to show our creativity and energy. I loved how we all became a family through it, struggled together, and created the showcase together. We did everything together, and dance really brought us together.

Were the topics of the talks relevant? Are there any other topics you would like to see in future workshops?

I believe that the topics were very relevant to the issues youth are experiencing nowadays, and have been for a long time. I found that most of the topics resonated with things I am personally dealing with, along with friends I have who are in my age group. Bullying, respect, drugs, alcohol, self sabotage and health relationships are topics that are very important for teenagers to hear about to apply to their individual lives, and topics that

I feel as if do not get brought up enough in the current school system. This is real life lessons that we are able to take on for the rest **of our life, and that is why I believe this is a very useful course for youth.**

What are your “One mics” that you see yourself using in the future?

There are many one mics that I see myself using in the future. I want to work on a life from now on, that is independent and loving and my one mics will help me achieve this. My biggest passion is acting. I want to be able to pursue it to the fullest extent that I can, and to take any opportunity I can do audition, and work on projects that inspire me. I want to use social media as an outlet to express myself creatively and create content that makes me happy and reach out to others. I want to live a life I am proud of, and happy with.



What disciplines did you participate in?

I participated in dance, DJing, spoken word, singing, drumming and stomping!

I was having the most fun doing singing and dance! I was able to use this as a creative outlet.

Any other comments on the week:



This experience overall was so beneficial and worth more way beyond a credit or any of the certificates or money. Thank you so much Mary for helping us get this opportunity!

“Blueprint was undeniably a moving experience. It was a chance to be free of negativity and judgement and stress for a week. Blueprint taught me the power of positive encouragement and its effect on people. Blueprint was a chance to practice empathy and compassion on people I didn’t even know. I was surprised to receive the same back. Blueprint ultimately changed the way I perceive strangers.”



“I’m still new to Banting and don’t know that many people. Blueprint to me was a great opportunity to meet and connect with new people. I made lots of friends throughout the workshop and I’m very grateful that Blueprint came to Banting.”

“Doing the Blueprint Workshop this week really helped me get out of my comfort zone and express artistic abilities in front of a group of people. As someone who struggles with social anxiety, any action that could come off as embarrassing is a hard task for me to do. This workshop wasn’t something I wanted to do other than for the sole purpose of getting a credit. However, I walked away feeling refreshed and glad I decided to try

something new. I feel like I really gave it my all and am so happy to have experienced such a fun and inspiring program with Banting.”

“As a student who goes to Banting, I and everyone around me understand the struggles of being a teenager. We made a choice to make an improvement in our lives and come to an alternative School. I believe it was super important to talk about things we did and it was inspiring to hear others struggles and how they cope with it. I can’t think of anything else I would want to discuss in the future.”



“ Blueprint meant so much to me because I felt like they were part of my family and being able to open up to them about my past life.”

“ The Blueprint workshop was genuinely one of my best experiences at Banting. It helped me push to get out of my comfort zone, meet new people and just have fun. It didn’t even feel like I was doing a school activity. I learned so much about the staff, my peers and myself.”

“It was an awesome experience and I would recommend it to anyone, no matter how much they think they will hate it or what they think of Hip-hop. I learned a lot about myself.”

Blueprint workshop meant positivity. It meant feeling the mood, feeling yourself, while connecting with others.”



“The Blueprint workshop gave me a lot better sense of being able to trust people and how sometimes working together can create bigger and better things than just working alone. It also raised my confidence on how I express myself as well as gave me more knowledge about teens around the world and how different yet similar they are to us here at Banting.”

“Buddha said a lot of heart whelming things that has helped many people including myself.”

“ I came for the credit but stayed because of the amazing people at Banting and Blueprint. They made school feel like home and even if it was only for a week I am forever grateful for that.”



“ I think every school should have Blueprint come. If everyday could feel like last week did I would be so much healthier and probably graduated.”

“ It meant the world to me and honestly blew my expectations out the roof. It has helped me find a sense of direction and strength.”

“I enjoyed the talks and the open mic time the best. I felt like it was an extremely safe place. I definitely

took away the most from those two aspects of the workshop.”

“This was by far the best week at school I’ve ever had.”

“Today’s youth have a lot of issues and talking about it as well as figuring out resources and ways to help ourselves really helps to show people the light at the end of the tunnel.”



“Blueprint was very important to me. I was very hesitant to participate at first. The first few days were hard and scary for me. Blueprint provided a supporting and comfortable environment to step out of my comfort zone. By the time we reached the third day I was actually having fun. The mental health talks were also very important to me. They discussed topics that aren’t often talked about and things I feel I needed to hear.”

“Being around my peers and connecting with new people. Feeling like I was a part of something.”

“I honestly loved the drumming and the heavy group discussions we had.”

“It made my self-esteem go up and I was able to

talk to people more freely and confidently.”

“Best week ever.”

Teacher reflections

“The energy in the gym was so positive. The vibe was very electric and the entire mood of the school, from students to staff was affected in a positive way.”



“Blueprint helped me to recognize/remember the need to look for organizations that can bring new and unique experiences and skill sets to my students. Anytime my students can connect with a caring adult is a special and welcomed opportunity. Alternate students are often marginalized in their home schools. They aren’t the students participating in extracurricular or unique learning situations. It was truly heartwarming to watch them take part in something bigger than the classroom. Their smiles said it all.”

“Wonderful experience for the students!! They loved it!. Stepped into their “Fear Circles”, and overcame!! The sense of optimism and personal strength they all felt at the end was infectious and uplifting !! “

“ It was truly an amazing week. It gave the school a great vibe that will last for months to come. Students also really benefited from having such direct and positive connection with the blueprint team. It truly changed their outlook on themselves and their place here at Banting. Thank you Blueprint !!”



“The blueprint program was so encouraging. When I would pop into the program and check to see if my students were there I would see students engaged, challenging themselves outside the box of a regular classroom. I can only see positive benefits for our youth and would love to see this program yearly at our Alternate program at Fredrick Banting. I also think it would be great somehow if all staff could participate even in a mini workshop for a day. Maybe a PD event for the day. Thank you Blueprint for coming to our school and helping our students become themselves.”

“Meeting the Blueprint staff was amazing. I feel that their work lends credibility to our efforts to push students toward their potential. They’re real, and that’s what matters to kids.”
