

Exhibit: *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*

Location/Phase: Parts 2/3 Winnipeg

Witness: Sarah Clark

Submitted by: Lillian Lundrigan

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Initials

63

I/D

Entered

14

Peer Victim Support Training Program/Peer Leader Mental Health Training Program

Program Evaluation

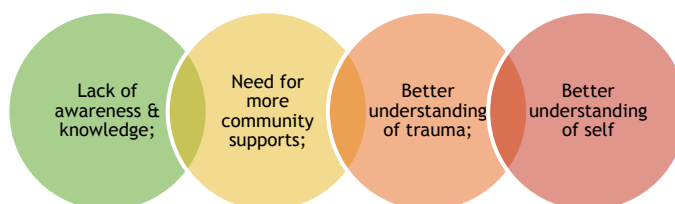


Prepared by Sidney Horlick, B.Sc. and Gwen Healey, PhD.
Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre

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Summary of Findings

- Program content was appropriate to meet program goals.
- A form of the frontline worker panel series was necessary to achieve the goals.
- Iqaluit participants did not receive enough information to familiarize youth with resource people in the community. Therefore, not all goals were achieved in the Iqaluit program session.
- An analysis of the participant and facilitator perspectives produced four key themes:



- Lack of awareness
 - Youth were generally unaware of how to respond to disclosures of harm by their peers
 - Historical context of trauma in Nunavut and how it manifests in modern society in the territory.
- Need for more community supports
 - Youth in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Baker Lake noted that there was a lack of crisis and post-trauma support in their communities
 - Youth began to deliver small activities or facilitate groups that aim to fill gaps in the supports available
- Better understanding of trauma
 - The trauma-informed approach of the program resonated with youth
 - The program strengthened their understanding of the context of trauma within Nunavut, both historically and currently.
- Better understanding of self
 - Through the program content on the effects of trauma on the individual, program participants were able to understand how past trauma may have affected them
 - Youth found comfort in the fact that they are not alone in their experiences of trauma

Recommendations for future evaluations include

1. Use a mixed methods approach
2. Develop evaluation criteria
3. Establish participant baseline knowledge level
4. Conduct pre-tests using sharing circles
5. Record youth perspectives
6. Conduct post-program evaluation surveys

Program Overview

The Peer Victim Support Training Program/Peer Leader Mental Health Training Program grew from consultations with teenagers and young adults who participated in the Umingmak Child & Youth Support Centre (UCYSC) meetings in 2015.

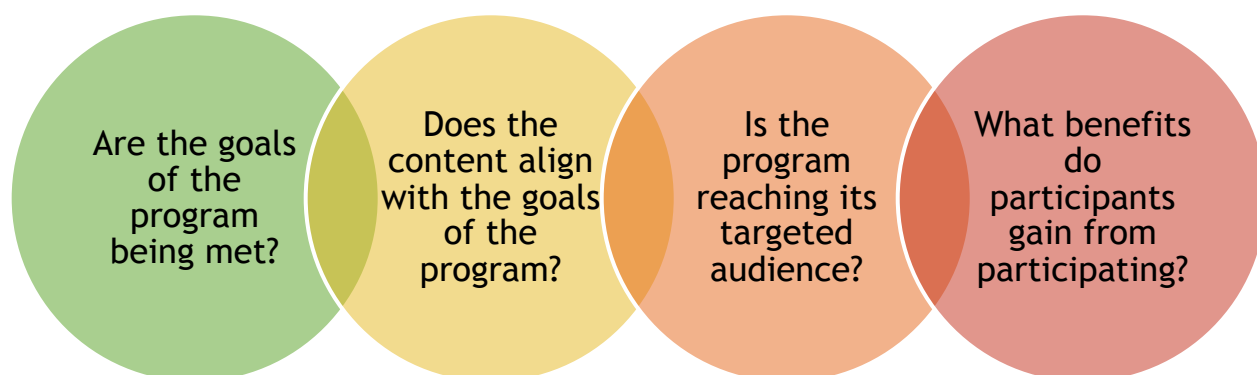
During the consultations, youth indicated they were often the first people peers would turn to with disclosures of abuse from friends or family members. However, the youth did not know how to respond to these disclosures and were unaware of the legal duty to report allegations of abuse against those under the age of 19. They felt ill-equipped to respond to these disclosures without experiencing vicarious trauma.

The UCYSC consultations identified several key youth issues for youth regarding the process of handling incidences of harm in their communities. Surveys conducted by consultants for the UCYSC showed that youth did not have confidence in the social services and justice systems, which affected their willingness to report disclosures or personal incidences of abuse. Youth feared retaliation if they did report to the authorities and reported that they believed that reporting to the authorities about abuse or neglect would cause further harm to their family. Youth felt that there were few meaningful mental health and post-trauma supports or referrals for services in their communities.

From this data, the Peer Victim Support Training Program/Peer Leader Mental Health Training Program was developed to equip youth with the tools to respond to disclosures and incidences of harm. The program is delivered as a 3-day workshop using a combination of powerpoint presentations and community resource panel discussions. Using a trauma-informed approach, key concepts related to harm and trauma are shared with youth in an age-appropriate way, and inform and equip youth with tools to cope with disclosures of abuse.

The intent of the program is not to train youth as counsellors, but to inform youth about strength-based approaches, best practices, and local information on victim services and connections with frontline workers. Another goal of the program is to teach youth about potential areas of study in human, child, and youth services should they choose to pursue these professions. In the Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet sessions, community resource panels were organized to inform youth about the resources available to them in their communities.

Evaluation Methodology



Data from multiple sources were collected including an original feasibility study for the UCYSC, program modules for the program, participant surveys, program activity reports, and facilitator interview data.

For the purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the program, two separate analyses were conducted to answer the research questions:

1. An analysis of the program content to determine whether the goals of the program aligned with the program content
2. A thematic analysis to determine whether the goals of the program were achieved, if the target audience for the training is being reached, what program content participants are looking for and whether they are receiving that content, and if any additional materials that would be of benefit to the group could be identified.

Thematic analysis is an important aspect of qualitative research. Themes are found in patterns across data sets and are associated with a specific research question or questions. They are important to the description of a phenomenon, or in the case of this evaluation, the outcomes of a program.

The Piliriqatigiinniq Model for Community Health Research was utilized to guide the thematic analysis process, with the concept of Iqqaumaqatigiinniq (all thoughts, or all knowing, coming into one) paid particular attention.

All documents provided to QHRC by the ACYF were analysed for narratives from the program participants and facilitators, and were coded based on recurring concepts found within the narratives. These concepts were then analysed in the context of the research questions. Four separate categories of narratives emerged from this analysis, and formed the basis for the themes presented in this report.

Findings

Curriculum Content and Goal Alignment

To analyse the program reviewed the teaching materials in the form of a three-day slide deck used by the Arctic Children and Youth Foundation to deliver the program. Slide content was matched with the following program goals: Respond safely to disclosures by other youth; become familiar with resource people in the community; develop coping supports for self and youth; and understand context of historical and ongoing trauma.

Figure 1. Goals of the Peer Support Program



Matching ascertained if the content was sufficiently detailed and informative enough to meet the goals and deliver the key lessons of the program.

Figure 2. Program content aligned with program goals.



The first goal of the program was to equip youth with the tools to respond safely to disclosures by other youth. Content aligning with this goal included child-friendly victim services, vicarious trauma and its signs, and the information on how to properly respond to peer disclosures as a youth. Referrals to training programs for crisis de-escalation also aligned with this goal, as it gave youth knowledge about opportunities to learn more about safely responding to other crisis situations.

The second goal of the program was to help youth become familiar with resource people in the community who can aid when they receive disclosures of harm from their peers. Program content that aligned with this goal included frontline worker panel series and question- and-answer period (Baker Lake), panel presentations by frontline workers (Rankin Inlet), knowledge of the Canadian Victim Bill of Rights, and the role of Community Justice Outreach Workers.

The third goal of the program was about developing coping supports for self and youth. Slide decks included content about coping and resiliency after trauma, leading through appropriate youth-led

activities, self-care and why it's necessary, encouraging youth to identify and advocate for safe spaces, and Peer Leader-led activities, which align with this goal.

The fourth and final goal of the program was to enable youth to understand the context of historical and on-going trauma in Nunavut. The content includes historical and current trauma and its effects on individuals and society. Physical and mental dimensions are also included in the teaching materials. Program content that aligned with this goal included the sections on the definition of trauma, the historical timeline of change, historical and intergenerational trauma, physical reactions to danger, child development and what happens from trauma (attachment, brain development, ACES, trauma tree, FASD, neglect), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and consent (in the sexual context).

Participant and Facilitator Perspectives

Analysis of the narratives and text-based data produced four key themes:



Figure 3. Key themes of the analyses

These themes highlight program participant views on community needs, reflections on personal experiences, and self-assessments of personal knowledge of topics related to the program content.

Lack of awareness & knowledge

This theme supports findings outlined in the UCYSC feasibility report, which state that while many Nunavut youth would like to help friends and family get the assistance they need, they feel powerless about how to do so. The report noted that youth did not know where to turn in times of crisis without feeling that they were threatening the family unit or potentially being placed in a more dangerous or uncomfortable home.

Youth participants from Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Baker Lake overwhelmingly indicated there was a lack of awareness and knowledge among youth in Nunavut with regard to trauma-related topics. Specifically, they identified a lack of awareness in two categories:

Don't know how to respond to disclosures

- An informal pre-test indicated that youth generally rated themselves at a 2-3 level, on a scale of 1-10, of knowledge of all program content.
- Participants in Rankin Inlet noted that there was a “need for increased information” in their communities about victimization.
- Program participants were unaware of the available supports and how they could support other youth.

Lack of understanding of Nunavut's trauma history

- Respondents attributed this lack of knowledge to the fact that *“no one ever talks about it [trauma] except us with each other”*.
- Youth in the Iqaluit program commented that *“all youth need this information”* and that it should be taught in high school.

According to the program facilitator, while participants were often aware of the formal roles of many individuals within their communities, they were often unaware of the additional positions or skills that these individuals held that are helpful to youth in times of need. The community panel series sought to address this by connecting participants with these individuals and learn about what they are able to do to help them address trauma and crises. The program facilitator also mentioned that an additional goal of this panel series was “to get youth in the program to conceptualize what they want to see in their communities, starting broadly and whittling down to more realizable goals – this is a way to get them familiar with people who can help them with this”. Regarding existing options for post-trauma support, participants appreciated the information on how to best support youth after trauma through healthy activities.

Need for More Community Supports

The Peer Victim Support Training programs in Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet held a frontline worker panel series, in which youth were familiarized with individuals in their communities who many help them when their peers disclose harm or trauma. During this part of the program, youth were also asked to come up with realizable programs and activities they would like to see in their communities. They mentioned the mental health supports, post-trauma services, and traditional programs and other skill building programs were severely lacking in their communities. In the interview with the facilitator, it was mentioned youth in the communities overwhelmingly wanted help with getting programs run in their communities.

One youth in Baker Lake noted the need for more support for suicide survivors in particular “we really need more mental health supports here for all the kids going through trauma and people who are

hurting because of suicide”. Participants in Baker Lake requested for a grief support group to be started for community members who have lost family and/or friends to suicide.

Lack of support after trauma was mentioned by many youth that were interviewed for the Umingmak Child and Youth Advocacy Centre Feasibility Study. One youth, in particular, disclosed that she had no safe place to go and no one to turn to when she was experiencing abuse:

“I was abused and my mom was the school counsellor and my dad was the social worker...I had no one to turn to...I had to lie to them and say my mom didn’t abuse me”. UCYSC Feasibility Study, page 41

The panel series was not held in Iqaluit, however youth expressed a strong need for more community supports. In Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, youth requested assistance to set up a variety of community-based activities, such as traditional elder counseling supports to identify culturally-relevant coping and resiliency strategies. They also identified a need for parenting supports for young parents, the goal of which would be to stop the cycle of trauma and promote positive child development and family relationships by teaching of effective parenting methods. Two participants in Rankin Inlet took initiative to work together to deliver small activities for youth.

Better Understanding of Trauma

Youth valued the information they were given about historical trauma and its short and long-term effects on individuals and Nunavut society. Youth gained a better understanding about issues outside of their sphere of power. Youth felt the program deepened their knowledge and understanding of trauma in many contexts. One youth in particular highlighted the benefits of the content for herself and her peers:

“All this talk about trauma will make us better peer leaders.”

Baker Lake Peer Leader Report, page 3

Another mentioned the modules on trauma made her more prepared to be a peer leader:

“It helped me understand what I was feeling and how I can help myself and others”.

Baker Lake Peer Leader Report, page 4

According to the facilitator, after the program concluded, youth felt more comfortable with the idea of helping peers during times of need. Many youth mentioned the program helped them understand what their friends were going through more clearly. During the program, some youth indicated that the program had enough information to provide them with a strong understanding of trauma and its context within Nunavut. Conversely, some youth indicated they felt there was too much information about trauma, and wished for more information on other subjects.

Better Understanding of Self

The need to understand one's history in order to heal and grow was a theme that emerged from the analysis of evaluation data. This theme confirmed findings from the UCYSC feasibility study, which mentioned one particular youth who wanted information about herself, her case, and her back story. She also wanted to know why the Government of Nunavut didn't do more for her as a ward of the state. This youth stated she felt like she was living in a vacuum of silence and it was preventing her from understanding how her past influenced her current mental/emotional state.

Youth in all communities highlighted the important role of knowledge and information in moving forward in self-acceptance and growth. They appreciated that the content broke what they perceived as a silence around trauma and that the participating in the program gave them a chance to speak candidly about their own experiences of harm. The program facilitator noted that none of the youth participating in the program were strangers to trauma; for example, every program participant in every community indicated they had been affected by suicide. Youth discovered they were not alone in their experiences.

The program content reviewed the effects of trauma on an individual, which youth felt helped explain feelings, emotions, and behaviours that they did not understand before participating. Recognizing when they are feeling the effects of trauma – direct or vicarious – was also discussed, as well as practicing self-care. Youth appreciated this content, and youth in Iqaluit mentioned that it should be taught in high school.

One youth in particular mentioned the program helped them recognize what they described as “going down a hurting path”. This youth said through the lesson on naming and appreciating your pain instead of hiding it, they realized they shouldn't be burying their trauma with drugs and alcohol, but instead, acknowledging it and growing from it.

Discussion

Without pre- and post-evaluations of participant knowledge of the program content, inferences were made from narrative data and facilitator reports to determine if the goals were being reached. The original evaluations questions were the following:

- Whether the target audience for the program is being reached;
- What content are the participants are looking for and whether they are getting it;
- If there are any additional materials that would be of benefit to this group.

The findings provide strong evidence that the goals of the program are being reached through the current content and method of delivery.

Goal 1: To equip youth with the tools to respond safely to disclosures by other youth

The program content on child and victim friendly services addressed this goal. The program content that supported this goal included the following:

- Child and Victim-friendly Services
- Providing emotional support to youth
- Recognizing when something is wrong
- Learning about suicidal ideation
- Not dealing with disclosures alone – connecting with professionals

With a focus on teaching how to provide emotional support to youth, recognize cues when something is wrong, and determine peer's level of risk of suicide, the content is sufficient and broad enough to give youth confidence to respond to disclosures of harm. Content that emphasized the importance of engaging professionals when responding to disclosures helps youth to understand how they can safely respond to these disclosures in a way that protects themselves and the person disclosing harm or trauma. Learning to recognize vicarious trauma also helps to ensure youth are safe when they respond to these disclosures. Overall, it appears, through analysis of the program content, that it is diverse and detailed enough to properly instruct youth to respond to peer disclosures safely.

Themes that demonstrated how this goal was achieved and highlighted the experiences of youth in the program were:

- Addressing lack of awareness
- Need for more community supports
- Better understanding of trauma

By addressing the lack of awareness of how to respond to peer disclosures and who to turn to for help in times of need, the program helped youth safely deal with difficult situations involving their peers. The program also equipped youth to identify and address gaps in trauma and harm-related community supports. By giving youth a better understanding of trauma, the program gave youth the knowledge they needed to understand and respond to crisis and disclosures of harm amongst their peers. It is evident that the program facilitated better awareness amongst youth of how they can help their peers and protect themselves by involving others in the process of dealing with a disclosure of harm.

Goal 2: To familiarize youth with resource people in the community

The frontline worker panel series supported this goal in the Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake program sessions. However, in Iqaluit where the frontline worker panel series was not held, it appears that youth did not receive adequate training for the program to familiarize them with resource people in their community, due to insufficient program content pertaining to this goal. However, in the Rankin Inlet and

Baker Lake sessions where the frontline worker panel series was held, it is likely that this goal was achieved through those panels.

Analysis of the participant and facilitator perspectives of the content pertaining to this goal focused on the Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake sessions. Iqaluit was excluded due to lack of sufficient content for analysis.

Themes that emerged from the facilitator and participant narratives that highlight how this goal was reached were:

- Addressing lack of awareness
- Foundation for additional community support.

As mentioned in the facilitator interview, youth are largely unaware of the [program name] content. This includes the resources available in their communities to help address gaps in programming or to help youth handle disclosures of harm or times of crisis. The frontline worker panel series, as analysed through the program report data and the interview with the facilitator, appears to be sufficient to equip youth to become familiar with the formal and informal roles of resource people in their community. This aspect of the program encouraged youth visualize the programs they would like to see in their communities and presented them with the individuals who might help kick-start those programs. The panel series also kick-started programming in both Baker Lake and Rankin Inlet, in which youth held activities that addressed gaps they noticed in their communities. Therefore, it can be inferred that in the communities where the panel series was held, program participants became familiar with the resources available in their communities.

Goal 3: To enable youth to develop coping supports for self and other youth

This goal was supported by a broad variety of program content. Program content that supports this goal are the lessons on:

- Concepts of self-love, self-esteem, and self-awareness
- Community connectivity through leadership and advocacy
- Finding positive role models for oneself or others

The diversity of approaches used to teach this concept increased the likelihood that youth will identify with and adopt one or more coping support presented, and encourage their peers to do the same. Further, including content that familiarizes youth with community resource people provided a starting point for the development of healthy coping and healing activities for youth.

Themes that highlighted how this goal was achieved were:

- Lack of awareness and knowledge
- Foundation for additional community supports
- Better understanding of self

The frontline worker panel series familiarized youth with resource people in their community. After the panel, the facilitator helped youth identify areas of strength and weakness within the local community support network. Youth then came up with ideas of how they could address the weaknesses, which led to the development of additional external coping supports for themselves and other youth.

The theme, 'better understanding of self', highlighted how youth developed self-coping supports through both the program content and activities. As a result of the program, youth felt they had a better understanding of themselves and how they feel as a result of the trauma they experienced in the past. That itself was a coping support; youth found comfort in knowing that there is a reason for the way they feel. The program also provided many self-care tips, which allowed youth to own their feelings and deal with them in non-destructive ways. By gaining this knowledge surrounding trauma and its profound effects on the individual, youth developed coping supports for themselves – thus this aspect of the program goal was achieved.

Goal 4: To help youth understand the context of historical and on-going trauma

The program content on trauma is diverse and detailed. It explains the many forms of trauma in detail, but clearly enough that it is comprehensible. Breaks when delivering heavy content such as the sections on historical and intergenerational trauma were rated as beneficial by the youth. With the inclusion of the breaks, youth in the program found the information was more easily understood. The various forms of trauma were explained over several slide decks, forming the basis for the trauma-informed approach of the program. Youth felt that this approach prepared them well to be “peer leaders”.

Themes that demonstrated how this goal was achieved were:

- Better understanding of trauma
- Better understanding of self

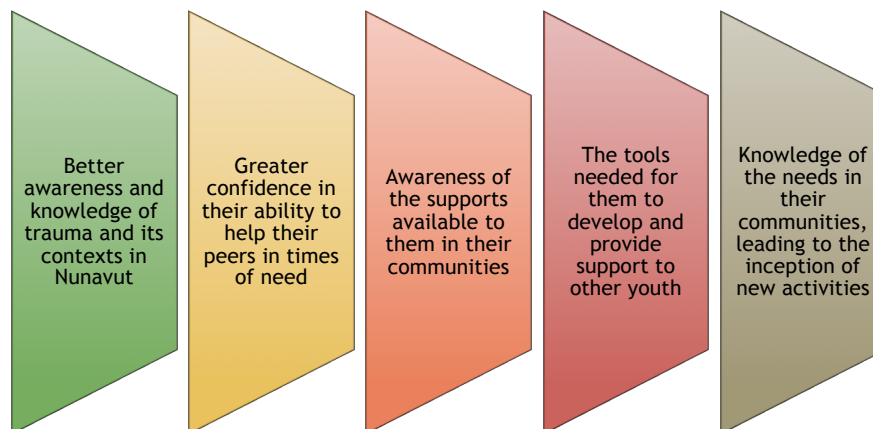
It was clear from the analysis of the participant and facilitator perspectives that youth gained a better understanding of trauma as a result of the program. The trauma-informed approach the program took resonated with youth. As a result, youth felt prepared to support their peers.

Youth were also able to understand how the effects of trauma sometimes manifest in ways they cannot control. The theme better understanding of self refers to how youth gained a better understanding of themselves and the effects trauma can have on them. This was extremely beneficial to the youth, and many expressed appreciation of how the trauma informed approach of the program allowed them to better understand how their past has affected their future. Youth found comfort in these facts, and it allowed them to grow as individuals and peer leaders throughout the program. In fact, it appears that this was one of the greatest take-aways from the program for the youth. Therefore, it is evident that this goal was achieved by the program.

Is the target audience being reached?

All themes identified during the analysis of the participant and facilitator perspectives show how the youth targeted by the program are being reached through the program content and delivery. It is evident that the program has affected the youth in many positive ways.

Youth who participated in the program gained:



Therefore, from the analysis of the participant and facilitator perspectives, it appears that the target audience is being reached through the program delivery.

What content are participants looking for and are they getting it?

Themes that highlight the content youth wanted the most were:

- Need for more community supports
- Better understanding of trauma
- Better understanding of self

Many of the program content aligned with what youth were looking for in the program, however there were a few suggestions where improvements could be made.

Content most appreciated by youth	Suggestions for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community resource panel series • Historical and intergenerational trauma • The effects of trauma on the individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information on starting and running community programs • Videos with more youth-focused content and language

Need for more community supports highlighted the participant's wishes for more program-focused content. Youth recognized the lack of supports in their communities and wanted help to address the issue. Youth expressed to the facilitator that one of the main areas of content they want is more information on how to get programs started in their communities. It is evident that youth participating in this program are looking for guidance on how they can start initiatives that will help others.

Though the frontline worker panel series portion of the program provided a way for youth to learn more about how to get programs started, the series was not held in all the communities where the program was delivered. Since there is no program content in the slides that make up for the absence of the frontline worker panel, it is important to ensure this piece of the Peer Victim Support Leader training program is provided in all future sessions to ensure youth are receiving content they want pertaining to this subject. Additionally, youth may benefit from a general guide on the steps to starting a program in their communities.

The themes better understanding of trauma and better understanding of self show how appreciative youth were of the content on trauma and its context within Nunavut. This content resulted in many personal admissions from the participants on how the information provided to them helped them recognize the current and past effects of trauma on their lives. This content also produced the most responses from youth pertaining to its ability to equip them to become peer leaders. Youth in the program overwhelmingly expressed that this content prepared them to help their peers in times of crisis.

However, youth expressed that the videos shown to them did not appear to cater to their level of knowledge on the subjects being taught. Youth mentioned to the facilitator that they wanted more youth-focused videos, with less jargon and complicated language. Additionally, videos with more youth-focused content and language would be better suited to reach them. It is more likely the videos will convey what they are intended to when youth can understand and connect with the content.

Are there any additional materials that would be of benefit to this group?

The theme need for more community supports identifies additional material that may be of benefit to the youth. Throughout the program, youth mentioned a need for more community support and expressed a wish for more content on how to get programs running. Therefore, content that explains how programs can be started in their communities may be of benefit to this group.

Recommendations for future evaluations

As outlined in the previous sections, there is strong evidence that the goals of the program are being reached through the program content and delivery, that the target population is being reached, and that the program participants are getting most of the content they are looking for in regards to responding appropriately to disclosures of harm from their peers. However, there is no evaluation plan built into the program, which impedes the ability of evaluators to objectively assess whether the program has achieved its objectives.

Therefore, the ACYF should develop an evaluation plan for future sessions that considers the following recommendations:



1. Evaluate the program with a mixed methods approach
 - This should involve the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data.
2. Develop evaluation criteria based on the program content
 - These should measure the participant's pre-program comfort and ability to respond safely to disclosures by other youth, familiarity with community resource people, understanding of and ability to develop coping supports for self and other youth, and their level of knowledge of the context of historical and on-going trauma.
3. Establish the baseline knowledge level of the participants
 - This can be done by conducting pre-tests at the beginning of each program session
4. Conduct pre-tests in a "focus-group"-style sharing circle
 - This is to avoid intimidating youth entering the program with a formal pre-test. This approach will reduce the likelihood that participants will feel like they are being tested.

The results should be recorded during the discussion, and reviewed by the facilitator as soon as possible after the discussion to fill in any missing information.

5. Record youth perspectives that emerge during the program
 - For use in the program report. these will help provide evaluators qualitative insight into the experiences of youth during the program that may not necessarily be recorded by the post-program participant evaluation
6. Conduct post-program surveys from the participants.
 - Questions should measure the participant's perceptions of whether the program content and delivery met the goals associated with that content. The questions asked should be similar to the ones asked during the initial sharing circle, and should measure the same variables. Additionally, the post-evaluation should encourage youth to share their feedback on the program in their own words. This will inform the qualitative portion of the evaluation.