

# Engaging Young Leaders De la Crosse



# The Project

Over the past two years, the North West Metis Cultural Committee (NWMCC), located in Ile a la Crosse, has partnered with STOPS to Violence to establish an active, dynamic youth group. This group is focused on leadership development to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of youth to address interpersonal violence and abuse in their region.

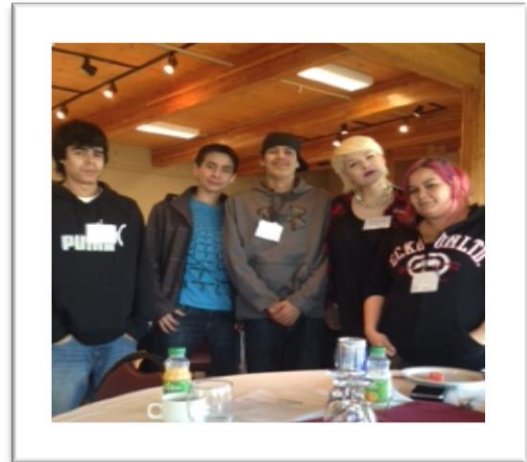
This project has brought together over 30 youth in the area to participate in learning, personal development and community projects. The adult allies with the NWMCC continue to be strategic and intentional in ensuring a youth driven, peer approach to the project. The entire project is based on collaborative input and planning, shared decision making, and active leadership roles for youth, supported by adult mentors.



This project has been delivered in two phases. The first phase focused on developing leadership competencies. The second phase continued this learning through the lens of Indigenous cultural learning approaches and active involvement in the community.

In phase one, youth participated in a series of 9 learning days. These days followed the themes of:

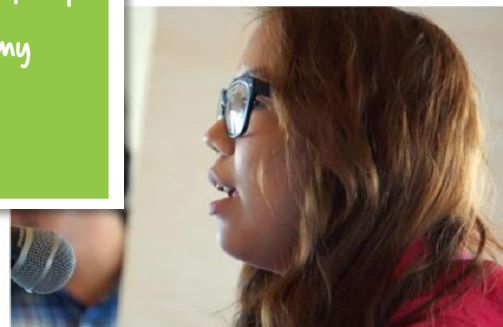
- ❖ All About Me – Identifying Personal Strengths
- ❖ What is Community Leadership?
- ❖ Our Diverse Communities
- ❖ From Bystanders to Upstanders – Addressing Interpersonal Violence
- ❖ The Power of Relationships
- ❖ Digital Citizenship
- ❖ Community Action
- ❖ Getting Things Done – Project Planning
- ❖ Maintaining Momentum – Continuing Your Leadership Journey



In the second phase, youth participated in cultural learning days with a focus on traditional teachings and mentorship. Within the group, several of the youth moved into active leadership roles to participate in and support the delivery of learning, community action and peer mentorship. In phase two, these youth both lead and participated in several community action initiatives including:

- ❖ Participating in community events for National Addiction Awareness Week, Saskatchewan Violence Prevention Week, FASD and others
- ❖ Increasing awareness of interpersonal violence and abuse and available supports through public speaking, presentations, brochures and engaging other peers
- ❖ Securing supplies and funding to create Christmas food and toy hampers for families and Elders
- ❖ Actively engaging in the STOPS to Violence provincial network through participating in provincial meetings

“The mentors believed in me – I felt comfortable and safe to begin learning and growing. This gave me the confidence to speak up and to be active in my community.”  
~ Jayleen





# The Youth

Youth participants and youth leaders come from the community of Ile a la Crosse and surrounding area. Many may be labelled at risk of not fulfilling their potential because of the impact of violence, addictions and unhealthy relationships in their lives.

‘I have learned how to deal with domestic violence and help someone – to tell them there is someone there to help and listen.’

~ Tryson

Through a partnership with Dumont Technical Institute, several of the youth are participating as part of their Adult Basic Education and transition back into the school system. Others are actively attending Rossignol School.

All of the youth involved have demonstrated the wisdom, determination and dedication to establish themselves as resilient, engaged, skilled leaders in their families and in their community.

Through the course of the project, a core group of 5 have participated consistently in both phases and are now mentoring other youth.



# The Results

In Phase 1, we focused on building blocks of leadership development. Our evaluation of phase one demonstrated significant outcome for the youth who participated in the Engaging Young Leaders project:

- 90% indicated they learned more about themselves, their strengths and their values.
- 78% are more confident about their skills and abilities.
- 70% are more confident speaking in a group or in front of others.
- 93% indicated their leadership skills have grown because of this program.
- 87% feel more prepared to step into leadership roles in their community.
- 84% are more prepared to play a role in reducing violence in their community.

‘I have been able to strengthen my relationship bond with my children. I have learned how to recognize when someone is ‘toxic’ in my relationships with others, whether they be a friend or a partner. I have also learned to listen to my children's opinions on the people around them. Through my bond with my children, I am slowly creating a better world for them and myself.’

~ Lorrie

Phase 2 saw further work to strengthen confidence and skills. In Ile a la Crosse, a specific focus was placed on leadership development through cultural teachings. In the community of Ile a la Crosse, an active, consistent group of youth have emerged through our work to date. These youth have demonstrated significant commitment to their personal growth, leadership development and community engagement and are seeking support to continue their leadership development and to expand their impact to surrounding communities.

Of the youth who were surveyed in the Phase 2 program in Ile a la Crosse:

- ❖ 100% reported improved self awareness;
- ❖ 100% stated they have increased confidence;
- ❖ 100% indicated they are better able to be a support and positive influence to their friends and family;
- ❖ 92% reported they are more prepared to play a role in reducing violence in their community;
- ❖ 100% said they are more comfortable participating in community meetings and other large group settings; and
- ❖ 100% credit the Engaging Young Leaders program for significant improvement in their leadership skills and knowledge.

Several of these young people have become active in their community over the past year. This includes participating on boards at local, provincial and national levels, holding fund raising events and mentoring youth and children in the school. Additionally, these youth report applying the skills and knowledge they have developed in personal relationships, parenting approaches and in being a positive role model and peer mentor to other youth in the community.

‘Before I started the program I was always getting into trouble with the law. I’ve seen violence happen through out my life. I saw the opportunity and looked at what I have been through, so I said to myself “if I do this I wonder where this will take me?” To tell you the truth this has made a BIG impact in my life by teaching me all these skills and meeting new people. It has taught me to be a young independent, inspired leader. I thought to myself before I do this I have to fix myself, so I regained my confidence and courage and started talking in groups and getting involved in a lot of programs, speaking up a little more than I used to.’

~ Siyy

*Congrats to all of the youth!*





## Saskatchewan Towards Offering Partnership Solutions to Violence



306.565.3199



[info@stopstoviolence.com](mailto:info@stopstoviolence.com)



[www.stopstoviolence.com](http://www.stopstoviolence.com)



Find us on  
Facebook

[www.facebook.com/stopstoviolence](http://www.facebook.com/stopstoviolence)



Follow us on  
Twitter

[www.twitter.com/stopstoviolence](http://www.twitter.com/stopstoviolence)