



**UAKN Western Research Centre:
Exploring the Process and Outcomes of Partnering with Urban Aboriginal Partners to
Promote Physical Activity for Young Children**

KEY FINDINGS:

- Physical activity helps develop habits that track into later childhood, adolescence and adulthood and helps prevent many chronic health issues.
- Culturally appropriate resources created met a strong need brought forth from the urban Aboriginal communities.
- The collaborative process in this study had an emotional impact on the participants; location was also an important factor in adding strength and meaning to the process.

INTRODUCTION:

This research brief examines the project titled, *Exploring the Process and Outcomes of Partnering with Urban Aboriginal Partners to Promote Physical Activity for Young Children*. This research project collaborated with urban Aboriginal organizations and urban Aboriginal individuals working in the local school districts. A community-based, participatory action research method was used to explore the process and outcomes of developing and implementing culturally sensitive physical activity resources for young urban Aboriginal children (ages 3-8).

Objectives of this project were to engage with Aboriginal stakeholders to identify strategies to develop and implement culturally appropriate and relevant physical activity resources and to review the processes undertaken with the communities to learn from them.

PARTNERSHIPS:

Island Metis Family and Community Services Society
 WSA NEC School Board
 Victoria Native Friendship Centre
 University of Victoria

METHODOLOGY:

This was a qualitative study based on interviews with participants asking the following interview questions:

- What did you do to develop this cultural, physical activity resource?
- What made the process easier?
- What were the challenges that arose?
- How did you implement, or how do you plan to implement, the contextualized resource?
- Having gone through the process what advice would you give another community embarking on the tasks?
- What are the next steps in this process for you?
- How did the development of this resource influence your practice?
- How did this process influence your relationships?

The data was analyzed through a combination of grounded theory, content analysis and constant comparative methods to provide conceptual categories and linkages among them. The results were depicted in data displays to highlight key themes and findings that arose out of the study.

MAIN FINDINGS

Researchers worked with three communities to ask the outlined research questions but another key outcome of this project was the actual production of resources that communities could put to use. The notion of giving back to the community was emphasized in this reciprocal exchange. Each community had valuable input on what they needed and on how this collaborative process should look like.

SENĆOTEN LE, NONET SCUL, AUTW community contributed by the translation of an existing, evidence-base physical activity and literacy resource that was adapted and implemented.

Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) developed a resource based on an animal theme. Having previously created cultural language and literacy booklets (titled, *Let's Talk with Bear* and *Let's Walk with Bear*) they extended the series with a booklet incorporating physical activity. It is titled *Let's Move with Bear & His Friends*.

Island Métis Family and Community Services Society (IMFCSS) was interested in developing a resource based on the iconic Métis Red River Cart story. The cultural resource (with physical activity, literacy and art activities) that was developed is titled *The Journey of the Métis Red River Cart*.

This research suggests that physical activity helps develop habits that track into later childhood, adolescence and adulthood and helps prevent many chronic health issues.

The following data displays depict the results of the research from the interviews with participants.

Figure 1



Figure 1 – Data display of basic concepts or codes. The larger words have larger counts. *Time* (the lack of it and the ability to work with different groups and people's schedules, concepts of time and pacing) was the factor that came up the most often. The participants experienced the process as *creative, rooted* (in culture context and existing practices) *supported and relational*. *Ownership* of the resources and the many plans for implementation situates the process and outcomes within the communities. *Expertise* refers to the community's, the universities, the knowledge keepers and Elders.

Figure 2

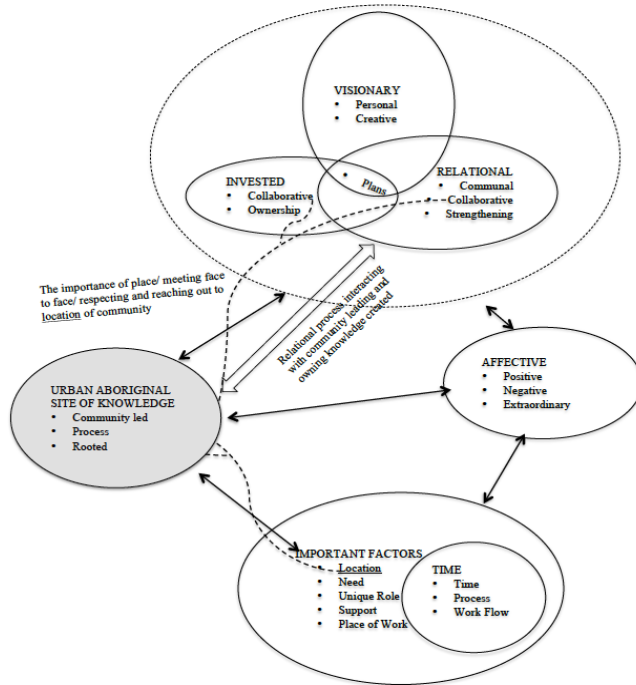


Figure 2 - The second display illustrates the categories and sub-categories formed from analysis of the codes and interview concepts. Findings include the importance and benefit of the category *URBAN ABORIGINAL SITE OF KNOWLEDGE* that indicated subcategories: *community led*, *process* (creative and iterative) and *rooted* (both in culture and practice). THE LINKS BETWEEN THE 'SITE OF KNOWLEDGE' and *VISIONARY – INVESTED – RELATIONAL* highlight the importance of face-to-face meetings and of the meetings occurring in community. *VISIONARY – INVESTED – RELATIONAL* describe the impacts. Participants had impacts that were *VISIONARY: personal* and *creative*; *INVESTED: collaborative* and in terms of *ownership* and *RELATIONAL: collaborative, communal* and strengthened. These relationships were between the university and community, partners and elders, among co-workers, etc.

IMPORTANT FACTORS identify factors that influenced the development of the project:

- *location* (was important in strengthening and imparting meaning to the process)
- *need* (an urgent need for cultural resources was felt)
- *unique role* – filled by the collaborators
- *support* (support for the project and its participants by different stakeholders and by the partnerships)
- *place of work* (informed the work)

- **TIME:** (conceptual category of time encompasses the ways in which participants in the process interact with the subcategories: *time*, *process* (including the creative iterative process) and *workflow* (including the unique role of Elders))

An important theme that emerged was identified as *AFFECTIVE: positive, negative and extraordinary*. The collaborative process had an emotional impact on the participants. It was mostly *positive* (e.g., confidence), mildly *negative* (e.g., change of staff) but also *extraordinary* and spiritual.

CONCLUSION:

Through this project an authentic partnership has emerged that includes researchers from the Centre for Early Childhood Research and Development at the University of Victoria, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, the WSANEC school board, the Aboriginal principals of Aboriginal Education in the Victoria, Sooke and Saanich school districts, the Island Métis Family & Community Services Society and others. Partnerships such as these highlight the unique and collaborative approach to community-based research.. The creation and implementation of culturally relevant resources that communities can work with are instrumental in building valuable relationships and ensuring that the needs of communities are being met through research.

For more information on this project, visit:

<http://uakn.org/research-project/exploring-the-process-and-outcomes-of-partnering-with-urban-aboriginal-partners-to-promote-physical-activity-for-young-children/>

About Us:

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The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, the UAKN, is a community driven research network focused on the Urban Aboriginal population in Canada. The UAKN establishes a national, interdisciplinary network involving universities, community, and government partners for research, scholarship and knowledge mobilization. For more information visit: www.uakn.org



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