

Engagement in the Canadian Red Cross: Supporting Inuit Youth to Create Change in their  
Community

by

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**Abstract**

This study explored how Inuit youth could be engaged in the development of Canadian Red Cross (CRC) Respect Education programs. While CRC delivers Respect Education programs across Canada, this study focused on service delivery in Nunavut and the involvement of Inuit youth to ensure programming met their learning needs and reflected their current realities. This inquiry utilized action research methodology, specifically photovoice and interviews, to gather data from Inuit youth, Nunavut teachers, and CRC staff. The findings of this inquiry suggested that CRC programs needed to be grounded in Inuit knowledge and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit principles, to be developed through a youth-adult partnership model, and to be informed by ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness. This inquiry adhered to all Royal Roads University (2011) ethical requirements, the Nunavut Scientists Act (1988), and the *Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North* (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003).

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### **Chapter One: Focus and Framing**

The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) is a national humanitarian organization that works as an auxiliary to governments to provide humanitarian services. In Nunavut, the services are laid out in a formal agreement between the territorial government and CRC. These services are primarily focused on the prevention of youth maltreatment and efforts to reduce the rates of youth suicide. CRC trains Nunavut youth, teachers, and community members to deliver violence prevention education, and a number of organizational leaders have identified the need to engage youth in program development to ensure programs reflect their realities.

Working with youth to address issues impacting community wellness has been a focus of my career with CRC, and I have worked in Nunavut for the past 4 years as part of my role as Education Manager, Manitoba and Nunavut. While I am not Inuk and do not speak Inuktitut, I have a deep respect for Nunavummiut and have had the privilege of learning from Inuit youth and adults in numerous communities about Inuit culture and ways of life. As a CRC employee delivering programs in Nunavut communities, my role in this inquiry reflected both an insider and outsider position (Merton, 1972). While my position within CRC allowed me to act as an internal inquirer “immersed in local situations generating contextually embedded knowledge” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014, p. 4), my position as a young adult who lives outside of the territory required ongoing reflection to understand how my experiences influenced the inquiry. With this awareness, I believe my role as an employee of CRC and my experiences of working with youth in various contexts including Nunavut improved the likelihood of CRC implementing the recommendations for program development and delivery in Nunavut and possibly in other Canadian contexts.

In conducting this inquiry I explored the following question: How can CRC improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of Respect Education (RE) programs in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth? I also investigated the following subquestions:

1. How are Inuit youth currently engaged in program development?
2. What do Inuit youth need included in RE programs to meet their learning needs?
3. How do Inuit youth want to be engaged in program development?
4. How can Inuit youth assist in integrating Inuit knowledge and Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit (IQ) principles in RE programs?

While inquiry participants used the term traditional knowledge and some scholars have used it, I want to acknowledge that there are both opponents and proponents of the term within Indigenous communities. For this inquiry, I have primarily used the term Inuit knowledge to be respectful of many different voices.

### **Significance of the Inquiry**

CRC (n.d.-a) identifies both inclusiveness and adaptability as core values, yet the structure of the organization can create barriers to engaging youth in program development. Organizational leaders recognize there is room for improvement to ensure youth see themselves and their cultures represented in RE resources. As highlighted by the Senior Manager for Community Integrated Programming, “the Red Cross has a goal of youth engagement but we do little to meet the group where they are at and we expect them to form to the organization’s processes” (S. Burke, personal communication, February 1, 2016).<sup>1</sup> With the involvement of

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<sup>1</sup> All personal communications in this report are used with permission.

Inuit youth, Nunavut teachers, and CRC staff, I conducted this inquiry with the aim of determining the changes needed to effectively engage Inuit youth in RE program development. In an effort to incite greater support for the recommendations within the organization, I involved national RE staff, who are responsible for program development, in the inquiry process.

Through implementation of the inquiry recommendations, CRC has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the RE program in Nunavut by better meeting the needs of Inuit youth. With a population of almost 36,000 people in Nunavut, young people under the age of 25 currently account for more than 51% of the population (Battle & Torjman, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2017). While many Nunavut youth are proud of their culture and identify numerous benefits to living in their communities, they are concerned about the complex social problems impacting the territory (White, 2014). These young people are navigating life in communities that continue to experience the impacts of settlement and resettlement that began with the arrival of European explorers in the late 1500s and continued with the resettlement by the Canadian government in the 1950s (Healey, Noah, & Mearns, 2016; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, 2004; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994).

Inuit youth have discussed these complex dynamics with CRC staff during program delivery. While it may seem paradoxical, Inuit youth have identified the need for a Starbucks coffee shop and, at the same time, the need for increased land-based activities to teach hunting and fishing skills (M. Smith, personal communication, October, 7, 2015). Youth have reflected the tensions of living in two cultures (Annahatak, 1994) and the disruption to learning Inuit ways of living as a result of colonization. The trauma experienced through settlement practices and the resulting loss of Inuit knowledge and practices are “factors contributing to the mental health

challenges in today's communities" (Healey et al., 2016, p. 95). Suicide is one of the primary mental health concerns for community members and organizations in Nunavut (Healey et al., 2016), as the suicide rate is 10 times the national average (Eggertson, 2015).

In working to reduce the high rates of suicidal ideation, attempts, and deaths, CRC was invited by the Government of Nunavut and Embrace Life Council to deliver humanitarian services that supported strategic priorities within the *Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan* (Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik, Embrace Life Council, & Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2011). As part of an evaluation of the action plan, the territorial government was encouraged to expand their relationship with CRC to increase service delivery and contextualize resources for Inuit communities (Aarluk Consulting, 2015). Recognizing that support from and connection to adults and peers can enable youth to envision a different future for themselves and their communities (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2010), CRC identified the need for involving Inuit youth in the process of resource development in a way that met their needs and could support them in leading positive community change. To learn how CRC might do this, I actively engaged Inuit youth in this inquiry. My hope was that being involved would foster a sense of confidence among Inuit youth participants by practising talking about these issues and foster a sense of control over their lives (Stringer, 2014, p. 28).

### **Organizational Context**

CRC is a national not-for-profit organization that provides humanitarian services to all Canadians. As noted on the CRC (n.d.-a) website,

The Canadian Red Cross Society is part of the largest humanitarian network in the world, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This network includes the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Federation) and 189 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies dedicated to improving the situation of the most vulnerable throughout the world. (Our Network section, para. 1)

The CRC, as part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, is governed by seven fundamental principles—humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality—to ensure immediate assistance is provided to those in need (CRC, n.d.-b). Of particular note is the principle of neutrality, meaning that CRC will not take sides in order to develop and maintain trust in the organization’s delivery of services. The importance of this principle has been identified in conversations with Elders, who shared they had initial scepticism of an external agency delivering a planning workshop in their community, but realized during the workshop that the principle of neutrality allowed CRC to cut across power imbalances within the community and create a safe space for dialogue on issues that are often not discussed (S. Burke, personal communication, June, 16, 2017).

As the national society within Canada, CRC has a unique relationship with governments that includes a “clearly established legislated mandate to act as an ‘auxiliary to public authorities’” (CRC, 2007, p. 1) in providing humanitarian services. These services focus on three strategic areas: preparing and responding to disasters and emergencies, training people to prevent intentional and unintentional injuries, and providing community-based health and wellness programs to improve people’s quality of life (CRC, n.d.-c). Acknowledging the sovereignty of Indigenous nations and recognizing the changing and dynamic needs of communities across Canada, CRC (n.d.-c) has committed to the following: developing a network of strong

relationships; meaningfully engaging with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities; cultivating a strong Indigenous staff and volunteer base; being flexible and adaptable; and being a strong voice for those affected by humanitarian crises (p. 5). As a non-Indigenous organization, CRC works respectfully and collaboratively with Indigenous communities upon invitation. A network of staff and over 20,000 volunteers work across the country to respond to these requests for humanitarian services (CRC, n.d.-c).

In this inquiry, I focussed on the delivery of the RE program in Nunavut. RE is an award-winning national program of CRC that focuses on the prevention of intentional injuries caused by violence and abuse to create safer communities (CRC, n.d.-e). In Nunavut, the delivery of the RE program has involved an integrated and holistic approach to addressing suicide and interpersonal violence in order to encourage positive change that creates safer, healthier communities. CRC was invited in 2012 by the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education and Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqaatigiit Embrace Life Council (n.d.), the territorial suicide prevention organization, to partner in addressing intergenerational trauma and experiences of violence that contribute to suicide as identified in the *Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy* (Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik, Embrace Life Council, & Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2010). The partnerships have continued and included the training of school staff in RE programming across all 25 communities in the territory, as well as training Inuit youth from Grades 7–12 to lead activities and campaigns to promote healthy relationships and address violence.

Delivering humanitarian services in Nunavut is different than other regions in Canada due to the remoteness of the territory and high cost of travel to provide training and resources.

This has challenged the CRC to integrate and adapt services to better meet community needs. The shift toward integrated service delivery was reflected in the CRC's (n.d.-c) 5-year strategic plan, which was developed by the Chief Executive Officer, Chief of Staff, and vice presidents (VPs) of geographical regions and program departments, in conjunction with their staff teams. For the territory of Nunavut, CRC strategic oversight of service delivery is the responsibility of the VP, Manitoba and Nunavut. An organizational chart is provided in Appendix A.

Due to the high level of service delivery in Nunavut, the daily management of strategic relationships and implementation of CRC programs is the responsibility of the Senior Manager for Community Integrated Development. Currently, the Senior Manager for Integrated Community Development (located in Victoria) and I (in Winnipeg) deliver the majority of services without a physical office in Nunavut. To maintain an ongoing presence, CRC has partnered with Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqaatigiit Embrace Life Council (n.d.), and CRC staff have periodically utilized their office space.

Through this inquiry process I intended to improve the CRC's engagement of Inuit youth to create programming that supports positive change in their communities. As documented in CRC's (n.d.-c) 5-year strategic plan, *Strategy 2020*, a unified approach to service delivery and the implementation of best practices across the country is a national priority (C. Sauve, personal communication, June 26, 2015). With the goal of ensuring relevant and quality services for all Canadians (C. Sauve, personal communication, June 26, 2015), CRC articulated the pillars and guiding principles for working in partnership with Indigenous communities to support humanitarian needs (S. Burke, personal communication, May 16, 2017). This framework defined the organization's responsibility to provide services with an understanding of our shared histories

and a commitment to reconciliation, and from a protection lens that follows the principle of “do no harm” (S. Burke, personal communication, May 16, 2017). As the organization works to implement this framework, the mission to “improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world” (CRC, n.d.-c, p. 2) and the values of “respect, dignity, and inclusiveness” (p. 2) will continue to guide service delivery. In this inquiry, I incorporated the perspectives of Inuit youth and Nunavut teachers to put the mission and values of the organization into practice.

### **Systems Analysis of the Inquiry**

Senge (2006) described systems thinking as “a shift of mind from seeing parts to seeing wholes” (p. 69). Following Senge’s advice enables leaders to create change. As the organization seeks to address complex challenges faced by Inuit youth and empower them to create change, in this systems analysis I explore the context for both Inuit youth and CRC.

Inuit youth need to be seen as agents of change and “active participants in shaping their reality” (Senge, 2006, p. 69). Simultaneously, those who seek to provide services need to ensure that these young people are not seen as solely responsible for their circumstances. Inuit youth are not able to address the complex social, cultural, political, and financial problems in isolation. They represent one agent within a complex adaptive system and are connected to other agents by “a common goal, outlook, need, etc.” (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007, p. 299). Other agents include family members, teachers, community members, nonprofit organizations, and government.

Inuit youth live in communities that have experienced “rapid social, economic, and political change” (Condon, 1990, p. 266). Contributing to the level and speed of change among

Inuit society has seen increased involvement by the Canadian government, who currently provide over 90% of the funds for programs and services in Nunavut (Battle & Torjman, 2013, p. 3). This is contrasted by a growing interest by corporations in resource extraction and Arctic sovereignty, which presents both economic opportunities and challenges, as well as impacts on the environment and ways of life (Condon, 1990).

While corporate and government involvement contributed to increased employment opportunities in Inuit communities, the number of jobs has not been sufficient for the growing population and is reflected in the current unemployment rate of 22.5% among Inuit youth (Battle & Torjman, 2013; Condon, 1990). This is further complicated by lack of education and skills to meet job requirements, which has been influenced by low attendance and graduation rates across the education system in Nunavut. This is due in part to “a widespread distrust in public education” (White, 2014, para. 6) as a result of decades of abuse at residential schools.

Along with resettlement and residential school abuses have come a number of social problems that include high rates of interpersonal violence, addictions, substance abuse, children in care, and suicide deaths (Aylward, Giles, & Abu-Zahra, 2013; Battle & Torjman, 2013; Condon, 1990; Government of Nunavut, 2003; Healey et al., 2016; Weber, 2013). In spite of these challenges, Inuit youth continue to demonstrate resilience. The concept of resilience is often connected to the Inuit concept of *niriunniq*, or hope (Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips, & Williamson, 2011; Kral, Salusky, Inuksuk, Angutimarik, & Tulugardjuk et al., 2014). This sense of hope amidst stressful situations often comes through strong relationships with friends and family. Inuit youth have described talking with friends and parents as a primary way

of coping with life stressors, as well as spending time with family engaging in cultural activities (Kral et al., 2014).

As Inuit youth continue to adapt to the changing social environment in which they live, they are demonstrating their resilience (Kirmayer et al., 2011), while being grounded in Inuit societal values. These piqujat (communal laws) “focus on the ways one is expected to behave – how to live one’s life as an Inuk” (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 28) and are reflected, among others, in the Government of Nunavut’s (2009) long-term action plan and Nunavut Department of Education’s (2007) framework. The IQ principles (as cited in Government of Nunavut, 2009) include the following:

- 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: developing skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.
- Piliriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtiigiinni: working together for a common cause.
- Qanuqtuurniq: being innovative and resourceful. (p. 7)

These principles are an important foundation that guide how Inuit people work together and with other organizations, and align well with CRC’s (n.d.-b) fundamental principles.

However, it is necessary for CRC to articulate how the Indigenous principles and values of the communities it is working in are reflected in the organization’s service delivery. This initially began through a focus on developing relationships. In Nunavut, the cost of travel limits the

ability for face-to-face visits. This led to an adapted approach to service delivery by CRC. In order to create a strong relationship with the community, the focus has been to develop a consistent relationship with one CRC staff. That staff person works within the internal system of the organization to support implementation of CRC services as requested by the community (see Figure 1).

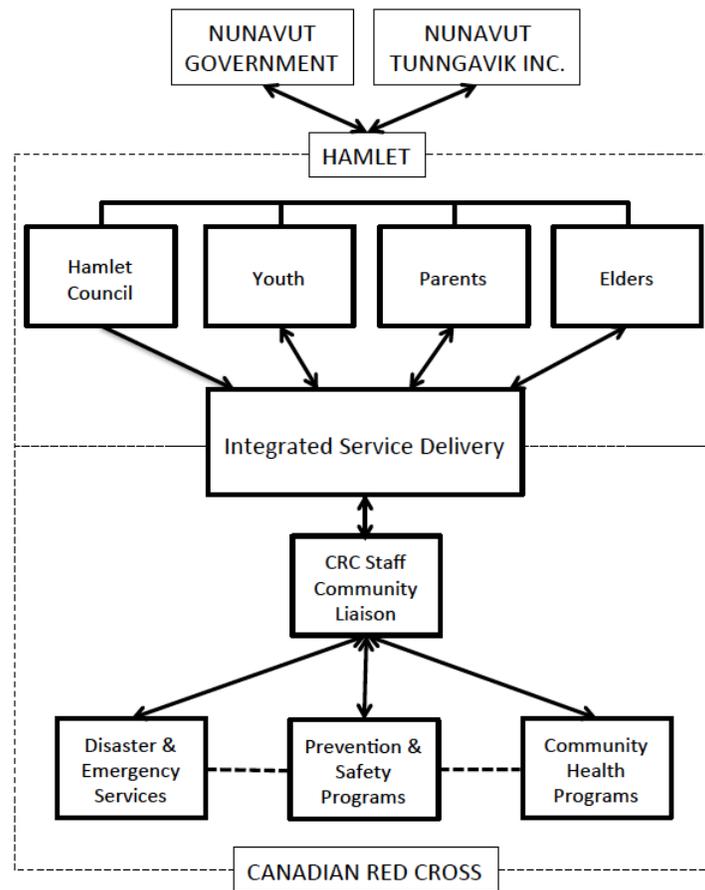


Figure 1. Agents in supporting youth to create community change.

Note. CRC = Canadian Red Cross.

This aligns with CRC’s strategic focus to increase collaboration across departments, as reflected in *Strategy 2020* (CRC, n.d.-c). CRC executives have made a commitment to create national working groups of staff and volunteers to explore opportunities for “leveraging expertise

and maximizing efficiency” (C. Sauve, personal communication, June 26, 2015). At the same time, specific priorities and annual targets continue to be developed for each department. Staff members are evaluated on their ability to fulfill program targets in their regions and to maintain program standards. This creates tension for CRC staff, as they try to respond to both community needs and uphold program standards that may not be aligned.

For CRC staff working in Nunavut, service delivery benchmarks have been set to support the national RE program targets. This is supported by a multiyear funding agreement with the Government of Nunavut. In the short term, this ensures that staff time and resources are allocated to service delivery in the territory. In the long term, it requires CRC to engage Inuit youth and other stakeholders to ensure services are effective in meeting community needs. Through determining meaningful outcomes with Inuit partners and sharing the responsibility for measuring those outcomes, CRC will continue to generate financial support for this work.

### **Overview of the Thesis**

I began this thesis by providing an introduction to the research inquiry and discussing the significance of the inquiry for both CRC and Nunavut communities. I also detailed how the organizational context within CRC will influence the inquiry, and analysis of the internal and external factors of the system for this inquiry.

In Chapter 2, I provide a review of literature that offers a foundation for defining leadership from an Indigenous youth perspective. I also explore the concept of youth–adult partnerships and the factors that contribute to their successful implementation as a guide for data collection and analysis throughout the inquiry.

Chapter 3 follows, in which I detail the methodology of the inquiry. I also outline the project participants, data collection methods, study conduct, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

In Chapter 4, I present the five inquiry findings and four conclusions. I close this chapter with a discussion of the scope and limitations of the inquiry.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I outline the four recommendations for the CRC based on the inquiry findings and literature. In addition, I discuss the organizational and leadership implications of implementing these recommendations, and the potential impact from not implementing the recommendations. I also suggest areas for future inquiry.

In this section, I provided an outline of how my thesis is organized. I will now move into a discussion of the literary concepts that framed this inquiry.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review examines current academic and theoretical concepts that relate to the inquiry question: How can CRC improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of RE programs in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth? In responding to this inquiry question, I explored three interrelated topics in depth. The concept of Indigenous youth leadership is explored first, as this will offer a foundation for understanding how Indigenous youth perceive leadership. This is followed by a discussion of youth–adult partnerships (Y-APs), including the role of adults and the methods for integrating a trauma-informed approach, to establish a rationale for implementing this process into CRC’s program development. Finally, a discussion of the program and organizational factors that support successful implementation of Y-APs are presented to determine the changes needed for effectively integrating Y-AP into CRC’s services.

### **Indigenous Youth Leadership**

This inquiry was focused on involving Inuit youth in a leadership capacity to help guide the development of CRC programs to best reflect their needs and interests. In order to effectively engage young people, it was necessary to understand how they perceived leadership. This section begins by exploring leadership within Indigenous contexts and among youth generally as a framework for the following discussion of Indigenous youth perspectives.

**Indigenous perspectives on leadership.** The majority of research on leadership to date reflects a Western worldview, resulting in leadership theories that are based on the values of Western societies (Julien, Wright, & Zinni, 2010; Zhang et al., 2012). Recently, scholars have identified the need to study leadership in other social and cultural contexts, as “there may be

significant lessons to pass on from one culture to another” (Julien et al., 2010, p. 115) that can support a more comprehensive understanding of leadership. Accordingly, this has included a greater focus on how First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada tell the story of leadership.

While cross-cultural leadership studies have increased, Julien et al. (2010) found that empirical research examining leadership from a North American Indigenous perspective is limited. An additional challenge is that Indigenous peoples within North America are incredibly diverse in their locations, cultures, and traditions. Although there is “no one, single perspective on Indigenous leadership because of the diversity that is evident within Indigenous populations” (Lickers, 2016, p. 14), the literature presented a number of themes.

In gathering stories and through reflection on personal experiences, scholars emphasized the importance of a holistic approach to leadership. Benham and Murakami-Ramalho (2010) described how Indigenous leadership reflects an understanding of systems and is premised on the knowledge that everything is interconnected. Pidgeon (2012) described how “Indigenous leadership is shaped by Indigenous peoples’ cultural knowledge, experiences, connection to place, contexts, and relationships” (p. 147). McLeod (2012) also discussed the interconnectedness of leadership through her intergenerational leadership model. The model consists of the following elements:

- four *domains* of human development: the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual
- four *aspects* of intergenerational philosophy: doing, feeling, knowing, and seeing
- four *dimensions* of leadership: behaviour change through leadership preservation, resiliency through two-world leadership struggles, dual knowledge through

intergenerational circular leadership awareness, and seventh-generation visioning through reliance on the foresight of intergenerational leaders

- *four circles* of influence: self, family, community, and the larger society. (p. 44)

Further to this, Julien et al. (2010) stated, “Leadership does not reside in one person, in one title, or in one position – but rather, it lies within all” (p. 119). Each of these scholars described leadership in a way that extends beyond an individual to recognize how “people and place, past and present, private and public, are all part of the world that affect how one perceives, thinks about and enacts leadership” (Benham & Murakami-Ramalho, 2010, p. 78).

This holistic view is grounded in culture. Although cultural facets can vary between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, culture and spirituality are seen as foundational to developing and guiding Indigenous leaders (Benham & Murakami-Ramalho, 2010; Julien et al., 2010; Wall, 2008). In reflecting on their own leadership practice, scholars identified the substantial role of culture in guiding their attitudes, beliefs, and actions (Archuleta, 2012; McLeod, 2012). Acknowledging that colonization and residential schools dramatically interrupted the teaching of culture to younger generations, Elders noted, “strong Indigenous leadership is developed by empowering people to reclaim cultural values through the investigation of local, living genealogies, oral histories, and reflexive praxis” (Leon, 2012, p. 48). To address the disruption to cultural knowledge transfer and empower Inuit to be grounded in their cultural identity, Elders in Nunavut articulated “how and why *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit* – beliefs, laws, principles, values, skills, knowledge and attitudes – are so well suited to Inuit today” (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 22) and developed the territorial education framework based on IQ to support Inuit in navigating the world today.

This learning of culture happens through intergenerational relationships by providing an opportunity for “watching, listening, doing, and asking questions” (McLeod, 2012, p. 39), emphasizing the value placed on kinship relationships within Indigenous communities. Relations are not only considered to be one’s immediate family and social group, but also include connections to “the world of the ancestors and the world of relations yet to come” (Benham & Murakami-Ramalho, 2010, p. 81). This knowledge that everyone is connected requires leaders to consider what is in the best interests of the community (Aylward et al., 2013) and the consequences for both present and future generations in all decisions (Julien et al., 2010).

Leaders are not expected to make decisions in isolation. Rather, leaders are expected to work cooperatively and towards consensus with those involved, while seeking the wisdom and knowledge of the Elders (Jules, 1999; Milliken & Shea, 2007). Leadership being a shared process is further reflected in the way that Indigenous leaders are identified according to need (Milliken & Shea, 2007) and selected based on the skills required for the current situation (Aylward et al., 2013; Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006; Stewart & Warn, 2016). When a leader’s role is complete, another person addresses the next demand (Julien et al., 2010). At the same time, the values of independence, humility, and noninterference in other people’s lives means that leaders are expected to lead by example and “by taking initiative rather than delegating people to certain tasks” (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 34). Jules (1999) described this as “being capable of directing the people without giving the impression that they are being told what to do—a facilitator” (p. 44).

Indigenous leadership encompasses a holistic worldview that emphasizes “co-operation, relationships, humility, patience, and sharing” (Benham & Murakami-Ramalho, 2010, p. 78).

This offers core values to guide Indigenous leaders, but how does this look in practice? One example of how an organization was able to articulate these expectations for their leaders comes from Pauktuutit, a national Inuit organization. During the 1994 annual general meeting for Pauktuutit, Martha Flaherty presented the “Code of Conduct for Inuit Leaders” (p. 8) and encouraged all Inuit organizations to consider adopting it. The code began with:

Inuit traditions and values include a respect for individuals and a concern for the collectivity, including the family, extended family, community, and Inuit society. Inuit leaders must work on behalf of their people in a way which reflects this tradition of respect and concern. This means putting the good of the people before personal gain, listening to and acting upon the will of the people, and respecting democratic practices by including as many people as possible in decision-making. In giving our leaders the right to speak on our behalf, we urge them not to abuse the trust we place in them. (Flaherty, 1994, p. 8)

This demonstrates one approach to leadership that is grounded in culture, while recognizing the significance of intergenerational relationships and the responsibility to lead with the best interests of the collective in mind. Nevertheless, the complexity of the subject warrants additional study. Further exploration of how Indigenous leadership is responding and adapting to the challenges of today would be of benefit.

**Youth perspectives on leadership.** The discourse about youth leadership has primarily focused on the programs teaching youth about leadership. This has left a significant gap in the clarity and consistency of how youth leadership is defined within the literature (Klau, 2006). As MacNeil (2006) noted,

In much of the literature focused on leadership theory, leadership development, or leadership practice, youth are noticeably absent. For example, in a comprehensive review conducted by Bass of more than five thousand leadership studies, there is nothing about youth as leaders or about leadership development for youth. (p. 29)

As Brumbaugh (2013) concluded, “Youth leadership theory needs to be created” (p. 17).

Research on youth leadership has primarily applied adult leadership theories to youth leadership development (Brumbaugh, 2013; Kress, 2006; Lickers, 2016), and has led to a “failure to conceptualize youth leaders outside an adult model of leadership” (Kress, 2006, p. 53). In addition, youth leadership has become entangled with the theory of youth development. While the youth development field seeks to identify how to support youth in meeting “their developmental needs in productive ways” (Kress, 2006, p. 50), becoming leaders is only one of the potential outcomes for youth as they work towards meeting those needs.

With an emphasis on development, youth leadership literature has tended to focus on “leadership *ability* (skills, knowledge, and talents)” (MacNeil, 2006, pp. 31–32). This implies that youth are developing leadership capacity for the future and excludes them from leadership roles in the present (Kress, 2006; MacNeil, 2006). Kress (2006) attributed this to adults finding comfort in “perceiving youth only as leaders in incubation, particularly when we are unsure of the optimal balance of power and support” (p. 54). While this may be more comfortable for adults, it reinforces a deficit view of youth and results in missed opportunities for youth to contribute to positive organizational and community change (Checkoway et al., 2003).

Kress (2006) offered a definition for youth leadership: “the involvement of youth in responsible, challenging action that meets genuine needs, with opportunities for planning and

decision making” (p. 51). Kahn, Hewes, and Ali (2009) offered a similar definition, describing youth leadership as “young people empowered to inspire and mobilise themselves and others towards a common purpose, in response to personal and/or social issues and challenges, to effect change” (p. 6). Both definitions challenge the perception of youth as future leaders and incorporate youth as exercising leadership in authentic and meaningful ways (MacNeil & McClean, 2006). While this presents a starting point, it continues the theme of adults defining the concept of youth leadership, rather than youth defining leadership from their perspective. As Lickers (2016) found, a challenge in defining youth leadership is that “adults write most of the scholarly articles” (p. 20).

The studies that have included youth in qualitative research present important considerations. Mortensen et al. (2014) found that youth have a unique definition of leadership that contradicts conventional leadership theories focused on individual position or power. Youth described leadership as being available “to anyone in any context” (Mortensen et al., 2014, p. 453) with a focus on working collaboratively to create positive change in communities. Specifically, youth emphasized behaviours such as communication and listening to others, being a positive role model, representing the interests of the group, and helping when asked (Mortensen et al., 2014). This reveals that youth have unique perceptions of leadership and indicates the need for further study in this area.

**Indigenous youth leadership.** Indigenous youth are currently situated between Indigenous ways of living and mainstream societies, which Kenny (2012) described as walking “among many worlds” (p. 4). Annahatak (1994) expanded on this experience and stated,

The tensions that young Inuit, and even we as adults, live through in this time of culture and language contact with another culture are tremendous. . . . There are the tensions related to Inuit values versus institutional values, traditional activities versus current activities, obedience versus originality, Inuit worldview versus mainstream worldview, and modern cultural tools versus traditional knowledge. (p. 13)

This presents a unique context for Indigenous youth to develop and practice leadership, as they are faced with the challenge of making decisions with potentially competing values and beliefs. This was reflected by Inuit youth during a review of an education program in Canada's north. As part of the study, Inuit youth participants were asked to share their perspectives on leadership (Aylward et al., 2013). Participants' responses described leadership as being modelled through actions, rather than directions or commands, which aligns with Inuit values of leadership (Aylward et al., 2013). The second theme was an emphasis on interpersonal competencies including effective communication, which aligns with Euro-Canadian concepts of leadership (Aylward et al., 2013). While adults in the community may see Inuit youth departing from traditional Inuit leadership styles, Inuit youth are defining a new leadership approach that reflects their current social context (Aylward et al., 2013).

In order for Indigenous youth to develop their own approach to leadership, "they must first recognize and comprehend their histories to understand why they are where they are today for the purpose of enriching their future" (Lickers, 2016, p. 22). Indigenous youth need to develop a strong sense of cultural identity, including an awareness of their history (Lickers, 2016). The consequences of not having a strong cultural identity can be seen in the challenges faced by Indigenous youth today. Goodwill (2012) described the cost as "the loss of our youth to

a process that leads them backwards from their potential as our future leaders. Youth end up in gang life, prison life and, sadly, for too many, the afterlife” (p. 226). Additional research attributed lack of cultural identity to “low self-esteem, higher rates of suicide, and erosion of familial support networks” (Aylward et al., 2013, p. 173).

In contrast, Indigenous youth articulated the benefits of developing a strong cultural identity. Increased personal confidence and leadership ability were two benefits attributed to “becoming proud of one’s identity” (Aylward et al., 2013, p. 173). This establishes the importance of integrating cultures into Indigenous youth leadership development. While this provides a starting point, further research is needed to determine how to support Indigenous youth in defining leadership to reflect their present-day reality.

### **Youth-Adult Partnership**

Program development within the organization involves a collaborative process with all stakeholders, including youth as the primary audience. This necessitates a review of Y-AP as an approach for involving youth as critical stakeholders, as well as the role of adults within these partnerships, and considerations for involving youth who have experienced trauma.

**Defining youth–adult partnership.** Scholars and practitioners have identified Y-AP as an effective approach to engaging youth across diverse settings in an effort to promote positive development and support civic engagement (Blanchet-Cohen & Brunson, 2014; Camino, 2000; Halsall & Forneris, 2016; Libby, Rosen, & Sedonaen, 2005; Zeldin, Christens, & Powers, 2013; Zeldin, Krauss, Collura, Lucchesi, & Sulaiman, 2014). By recognizing that young people have the knowledge and skills to assist in addressing issues that impact themselves and their communities, research and practice is shifting away from “seeing youth as problems” (Wong,

Zimmerman, & Parker, 2010, p. 100) to considering them as important stakeholders in creating community change (Blanchet-Cohen & Brunson, 2014; Camino, 2000; Wong et al., 2010).

Involving youth in decisions that impact their lives values their right “to lead their lives” (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006, p. 34) while considering others, a practice valued among Inuit, and emphasizes the importance of not speaking on behalf of others, another valued practice of Inuit (Annahatak, 1994).

Engaging youth in leadership roles, alongside adults, has been found to have numerous strategic benefits both for those involved and for the larger community. Youth participation can support learning, which is viewed by Indigenous peoples as a lifelong responsibility that helps to develop personal abilities and a greater understanding of the world in which we live (Battiste, 2002). It is also seen to contribute to positive development, increased involvement in social justice efforts, and a stronger sense of community (Camino, 2000; Halsall & Forneris, 2016; Mitra, 2009; Ramey, Lawford, & Rose-Krasnor, 2017; Zeldin et al., 2013; Zeldin et al., 2014).

Recognizing the potential benefits of youth participation at individual, community, and societal levels, it is valuable for adults to learn how to effectively cultivate youth participation. This begins with exploring the types of youth participation in youth-adult relationships. Building on the body of research surrounding Y-APs, two very similar typologies have been presented to describe a continuum of youth participation. First, Jones and Perkins (2005) presented the continuum of youth–adult relationships that positions five levels of youth–adult relationships on a continuum from adult-centred leadership, to adult-led collaboration, to Y-AP, to youth-led collaboration, to youth-led leadership. Second, Wong et al. (2010) proposed the typology of youth participation and empowerment pyramid with “five types of participation that delineate

various levels of youth–adult involvement in an inverted V schematic: (1) Vessel, (2) Symbolic, (3) Pluralistic, (4) Independent and (5) Autonomous” (p. 104; see Figure 2).

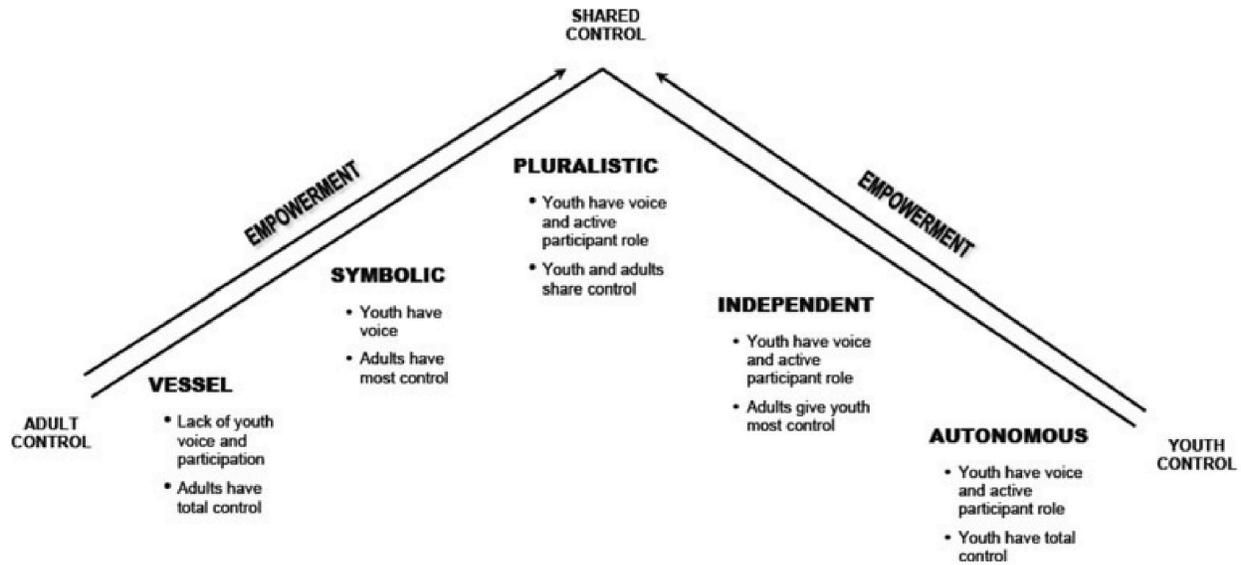


Figure 2. The typology of youth participation and empowerment pyramid.

Note. From “A Typology of Youth Participation and Empowerment for Child and Adolescent Health Promotion,” by N. T. Wong, M. A. Zimmerman, & E. A. Parker, 2010, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 46(1/2), p. 105. Copyright 2010 by Wong et al. Reprinted with permission.

A comparison of Jones and Perkins’s (2005) and Wong et al.’s (2010) typologies is presented in Table 1. The first two types in both typologies could be described as adult-driven modalities (Jones & Perkins, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). The adult-centred leadership or vessel participation type consists of adult-directed activities without any youth input (Jones & Perkins, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). The second type, adult-led collaboration or symbolic, provides opportunities for youth to share their perspectives while adults maintain discretion for final decisions (Jones & Perkins, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). The third type, Y-AP or the pluralistic participation, emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between youth and adults characterized by shared planning and decision making (Jones & Perkins, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). The fourth type, youth-led collaboration or independent, and fifth type, youth-centred leadership or

autonomous, are considered youth-driven participation (Jones & Perkins, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). While Jones and Perkins (2005) suggested that youth-led collaborations involve adults providing the necessary guidance and support, Wong et al. (2010) contradicted this claim, indicating that this participation type has been criticized for lack of adult involvement.

Table 1

*Comparison of Youth Participation and Empowerment Typologies*

Control & Empowerment	Jones and Perkins Typology	Wong et al. Typology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth lack voice</li> <li>• Adults have total control</li> </ul>	Adult-Centred Leadership	Vessel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth have voice</li> <li>• Adults have most control</li> </ul>	Adult-Led Collaboration	Symbolic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth have voice and active participant role</li> <li>• Youth and adults share control</li> </ul>	Youth–Adult Partnership	Pluralistic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth have voice and active participant role</li> <li>• Adults give youth most control</li> </ul>	Youth-Led Collaboration	Independent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth have voice &amp; active participant role</li> <li>• Youth have total control</li> </ul>	Youth-Led Leadership	Autonomous

*Note.* Based upon the works of Jones and Perkins (2005) and Wong et al. (2010).

Jones and Perkins’s (2005) and Wong et al.’s (2010) fourth and fifth types of participation are often predicated on the belief that to shift the power balance to youth, adults need to give up their power. However, research has found that negative consequences can occur when adults give up their power (Camino, 2000, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). Often, youth lack the

skills and experience necessary to be successful, leading to feelings of frustration and inadequacy (Camino, 2000; Wong et al., 2010). Furthermore, Wong et al. (2010) explicitly stated that the fourth and fifth participation types have less potential for empowering youth because of limited adult guidance.

Although Jones and Perkins (2005) stated each participation type on the continuum is equal, Wong et al. (2010) asserted that Y-AP provides greater potential benefits for both young people and their communities. Numerous practitioners support this assertion that Y-AP is the most effective approach to youth participation (Camino, 2000; Libby et al., 2005; Zeldin et al., 2014). However, inconsistencies in defining the concept have created barriers for both research and practice and limited effective implementation within organizations and communities (Zeldin et al., 2013). To create a more comprehensive understanding of Y-AP, and based on a review of the current literature, Zeldin et al. (2013) presented the following working definition:

Youth-adult partnership is the practice of: (a) multiple youth and multiple adults deliberating and acting together, (b) in a collective [democratic] fashion (c) over a sustained period of time, (d) through shared work, (e) intended to promote social justice, strengthen an organization and/or affirmatively address a community issue. (p. 388)

This definition differentiates between Y-AP and other types of youth–adult interactions. It emphasizes the group dynamics of collaboration among multiple youth and multiple adults, in contrast to apprenticeship models involving one youth and one adult (Mitra, 2008; Zeldin et al., 2013). The concept of Y-AP also applies across all settings. It was initially explored within the field of human development, and now has been applied within the field of education as researchers seek to determine effective ways to support student voice within schools (Mitra,

2008). Although limited, initial research has also shown that Y-APs have promising impacts with Indigenous youth, specifically when an emphasis on leadership development is incorporated (Halsall & Forneris, 2016).

By integrating cross-disciplinary research, evaluation, and practice, Zeldin et al. (2013) outlined four core components required for effective implementation of Y-AP: “authentic decision making, natural mentors, reciprocal activity, and community connectedness” (p. 389). Authentic decision making recognizes the right of all children to have their voices heard and considered in all matters affecting them, as outlined in Article 12 of the United Nations (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Natural mentors refer to those adults willing to work collaboratively with youth “without a defined program, and by the mutual consent of those involved” (Zeldin et al., 2013, p. 391). Reciprocal activity, also referred to as colearning, is based on the mutual belief that both youth and adults have something to contribute and learn from one another. Community connectedness identifies how building a larger network and social capital can increase a sense of connection among youth participants, thus leading to a greater commitment to community action.

The four core components can be seen reflected in various aspects of Indigenous pedagogy and Inuit values. Consensus decision making, *aajiqatigiingniq*, typically would provide people with an opportunity to share their perspectives, involve a discussion of the issue, and lead to a compromise that everyone could tolerate (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007; Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). While this may have primarily involved adults in the past, Inuit organizations and communities have demonstrated a commitment to including Inuit youth in matters that affect them (e.g. Government of Nunavut, 2003; National Inuit Youth

Council, n.d.; Nunavut Tunngavik, 2014). Within Inuit ways of working together, the element of natural mentors is present as well. Typically, children observed an Elder or experienced adult completing a task, and then were given the opportunity to practise the observed skills until reaching mastery (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006). This is reflected in the IQ principle of pilimmaksarniq (skills and knowledge acquisition) and continues to be a priority for Elders in Nunavut, who are committed to teaching younger Inuit the skills to live a good life and have identified the need for parents and adults in the community to be involved (Canadian Red Cross, n.d.-d). The component of colearning is reflected in Battiste's (2002) discussion of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy, which examines the lifelong process of learning and how it is in response to "life decisions and situations" (p. 15). Lastly, piliriqatigiiniq is the concept of "working together for a common purpose" (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 33) and emphasizes the importance of collaboration when addressing community issues.

The elements of shared decision making and colearning between youth and adults were also incorporated in Jones and Perkins's (as cited in Mitra, Lewis, & Sanders, 2013) definition of Y-AP (p. 179). Their definition included a third element, to promote positive change within organizations or communities (Jones & Perkins, as cited in Mitra et al., 2013), which Zeldin et al. (2013) described as the intended outcome of Y-AP in their working definition. By including the elements of community connectedness and scaffolding by adult participants, this intended outcome is more likely to be realized.

Libby et al. (2005) also highlighted the importance of "collective learning, and shared power" (p. 112), which aligns with two of Zeldin et al.'s (2013) four core elements identified above. In addition, they referred to the need for mutual respect, which would be necessary to

create a safe environment for natural mentoring and scaffolding to take place and would support stronger connections among participants and to the larger community. Although connections to Inuit values can be made and initial research suggests Y-AP has promising impacts with Indigenous youth, additional research is needed to confirm how the concept of Y-AP can be implemented in a culturally relevant way to support Indigenous youth participation.

**Adult allies in youth–adult partnership.** Adults play an integral role in the implementation of Y-AP, as the concept is founded on relationships. For underrepresented or vulnerable youth, the most important factor for engagement is leadership by adults “with the ability to build authentic relationships” (Erbstein, 2013, p. 113). The importance of relationships is further supported by a study in Igloolik that found “developing stable and secure relationships” (Kral et al., 2014, p. 676) led to increased resilience among Inuit youth. However, developing adult allies can also present one of the greatest challenges in successful implementation of Y-AP (Mitra et al., 2013; Zeldin et al., 2014). Part of this challenge is that “many adults do not have the skill or inclination to share decision making authority with youth” (Zeldin et al., 2014, p. 338).

Recent research has indicated that developmental relationships are key to the success of Y-AP (Erbstein, 2013; Levy, 2016; Li & Julian, 2012). In order to understand and operationalize the concept of developmental relationships, Li and Julian (2012) outlined four criteria for relationships that support the positive development of children and youth across all settings: “attachment, reciprocity, progressive complexity, and balance of power” (p. 158). Spencer and Rhodes (2014) described these four relational processes as: “build warm and emotionally supportive connections, provide developmentally appropriate structure and support, cultivate and respond to youth initiative, and scaffold and propel youth learning and skill development”

(p. 60). By integrating these components into their interactions with children and youth, adults are able to enhance emotional attachment with young people and support their development (Li & Julian, 2012; Spencer & Rhodes, 2014; Levy, 2016).

Building on the components of shared decision making and colearning integral to Y-AP, developmental relationships guide adults in their approach to working with youth (Levy, 2016; Li & Julian, 2012). Throughout the process, adults create an environment in which youth voices are recognized and incorporated into decision-making processes and provide opportunities for bidirectional learning through joint activities. This is further supported by Mitra's (2009) review of Y-AP in schools, which found that the process for developing and maintaining relationships was the greatest factor for predicting success. When relationship development and the process of working together was the priority, school Y-AP projects had greater success than when the group primarily focused on reaching the outcomes (Mitra, 2009).

Although the criteria for developmental relationships are interconnected, the role of adults in supporting youth through increasingly complex tasks is explicitly discussed within the literature. Scholars have referred to this as scaffolding or guided participation (Kirshner, 2008; Larson, Walker, & Pearce, 2005; Mitra et al., 2013; Spencer & Rhodes, 2014; Zeldin et al., 2014). It is understood that adults have a responsibility to provide the level and type of support required for youth to continually develop greater skills and confidence, whether it is related to Y-AP activities or to personal challenges (Levy, 2016). Mitra et al. (2013) described how "enabling youth requires a scaffolding approach to learning in which youth slowly gain the skills to share leadership in a Vygotskian style of apprenticeship" (p. 180). It requires adults to observe and determine the current skills and confidence of youth participants in order to match their level

of support and guidance with the current development of youth participants. As previously noted, this approach aligns with Indigenous pedagogy, which values learning “by observing, listening, and participating with a minimum of intervention or instruction” (Battiste, 2002, p. 18). Through scaffolding, youth are able to move toward greater independence and control and adults create an environment that supports positive development (Li & Julian, 2012).

Adults have not always believed that scaffolding or guided participation is necessary in Y-AP, as many adults were concerned that their involvement perpetuated a power imbalance (Camino, 2005). A growing body of research, as previously mentioned, has indicated that this assumption is incorrect and can actually lead to negative consequences for youth participation (Camino, 2000, 2005; Wong et al., 2010). Although the level of adult involvement may differ due to project complexity, organizational context and goals, and youth’s previous experiences (Kirshner, 2008), researchers agreed that some level of adult guidance is required (Camino, 2000; Spencer & Rhodes, 2014).

**A trauma-informed approach to youth–adult partnership.** As the last few decades have seen an expanding body of literature on the benefits of youth participation and Y-AP, it is necessary to consider how experiences of trauma among youth can impact their participation. Trauma is “the emotional, psychological, and physiological response from heightened stress that accompanies experiences of threat, violence, and life-challenging events” (Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres [OFIFC], 2016, p. 7). Experiences of traumatic events are not uncommon for children and youth and may include child abuse, the loss of loved ones, community violence, or natural disasters (Little, Akin-Little, & Gutierrez, 2009; Little, Akin-Little, & Somerville, 2011). Trauma and violence are global issues and Canada is not immune.

Approximately 33% of Canadian adults report having experienced some form of child abuse, either physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or exposure to family violence (Afifi et al., 2014). For First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, experiences of abuse and violence are even higher (Scrim, 2010).

In discussing experiences of trauma in Canada, it is imperative to acknowledge the legacy of colonization and policies of cultural genocide that were targeted at First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). These policies may have originated in the 1880s, yet they continued to be implemented for over 100 years and their devastating impacts continue to be seen today (Gray, 2011). One of these lasting impacts is the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system. Of the 30,000 children and youth in foster care in Canada, 48% are Indigenous children, yet Indigenous peoples account for only 4.3% of the country's population (Aboriginal Children in Care Working Group, 2015). This long history of colonial policies and ongoing oppressive practices contribute to traumatic events experienced by children and youth today.

In working with children and youth who may have survived abuse or may continue to be experiencing trauma, it is necessary to identify potential symptoms that may be present. The responses of children and youth can be varied, but are often categorized into the following symptoms: "affective, behavioural, cognitive, and physical" (Cohen, Mannarino, & Deblinger, as cited in Little et al., 2009, p. 200). Through training and support, adults working with youth in Y-APs can learn to recognize the signs, symptoms, and potential triggers of trauma and can work to reduce triggers that may further traumatize youth participants (Bulanda & Johnson, 2016).

Actively working to create an environment of physical and psychological safety for participants should be the priority in all settings, and is of particular importance when working from a trauma-informed approach. This was supported by Indigenous students who identified that integrating culture into the classroom and school and “building positive relationships of trust” (OFIFC, 2016, p. 19) with school staff and people in positions of authority was integral to feeling safe at school. Adults must have a deep level of respect and care for youth, “rooted in a belief that the challenges [youth] faced and perhaps continued to face were not reflective of their capacities” (Erbstein, 2013, p. 113). It requires adults to provide support and patience as youth deal with difficult circumstances that may be delaying a young person’s ability to reach his or her full potential. As a youth worker in a qualitative study of a Y-AP program involving Indigenous youth highlighted, consistent attendance was a substantial success as youth faced numerous barriers to involvement (Halsall & Forneris, 2016).

Identifying potential barriers is an important step in supporting youth participation. Organizations need to consider how they can address these barriers, such as transportation, equipment or activity costs, meals and snacks, or lost wages from missing paid work (Erbstein, 2013). Although providing transportation, meals and snacks, or hourly wages for their time could be seen as incentives for participation, Erbstein (2013) identified these material supports as necessary for underrepresented youth to fully participate regardless of their family’s social and economic status.

As youth participants become more consistently engaged, opportunities to take on progressively more control and responsibility can be provided (Halsall & Forneris, 2016). Vulnerable youth have limited opportunities to develop skills that support community change

efforts, such as researching, project planning, facilitating, and writing (Erbstein, 2013), and this is often true for youth who have experienced trauma. This emphasizes the importance of developmental relationships between youth and adults so that youth feel safe to learn and practise skills that can support their individual development and also contribute to the well being of others in the community (Bulanda & Johnson, 2016; Erbstein, 2013; Halsall & Forneris, 2016). On the other hand, adults need to be aware of the ongoing environmental stressors that youth participants may be experiencing and how this impacts youths' perceptions of decision-making opportunities (Ginwright, 2005). In one study, youth participants indicated that they "did not want additional decision-making power and responsibilities in their youth programs because they were required to make difficult decisions in their homes" (Ginwright, 2005, p. 103). This further emphasizes the importance of involving youth in determining their needs in order to best support their development within the program. As adults and organizations integrate knowledge of how stress and trauma impact youth by developing a supportive environment that reflects the needs of youth participants, an increase is seen in "the resiliency and psychological well-being of youth exposed to potentially traumatic conditions" (Bulanda & Johnson, 2016, p. 303).

### **Factors Necessary for Successful Youth-Adult Partnership**

An understanding of the factors that promote successful Y-AP offers insight for assessing the current capacity of the organization and identifying new leverage points for increased success. Factors at a program level and organizational level are both explored in this section.

**Program factors.** Although Y-AP is a process that can be incorporated into programs across all settings, researchers and practitioners have found specific aspects of a program can

support the successful implementation of Y-AP. These factors encompass program quality, recruitment and retention of youth, and training and support for adults.

The quality of a program is central to engaging youth at any level, making it necessary to identify what determines a quality program. Lauver and Little (2005) declared three features to be of utmost importance: “a sense of safety and community, both physical and psychological; committed program staff who develop supportive relationships with youth; [and] challenging, age-appropriate, and fun program activities” (p. 72). The importance of providing an environment that is both physically and psychologically safe for youth participants was previously mentioned, and has been identified as a key component of implementing a trauma-informed approach to Y-AP (Bulanda & Johnson, 2016; Erbstein, 2013). The important role of adults in both program delivery and the concept of Y-AP has also been discussed above, with research indicating that developmental relationships between youth and adults is critical in successful program implementation and to incorporate Y-AP (Li & Julian, 2012). The third feature describing quality program activities has not been previously discussed, yet it strongly aligns with numerous researchers who have emphasized the importance of aligning program activities with youth’s interests, passions, and strengths in a way that reflects historical and current realities (Lauver & Little, 2005; Parent, 2011).

The second factor, recruitment and retention of youth participants, is another important consideration for the successful implementation of Y-AP. Researchers have identified promising strategies for recruiting youth participants, which include matching the program content to the needs of youth participants, demonstrating the future benefits of participation, building on preexisting relationships, and working collaboratively with community members to ensure

barriers are removed for vulnerable and marginalized youth to participate (Lauver & Little, 2005). For retaining youth participants over an extended period of time, researchers indicated the need for meaningful roles within the program (Forenza, 2016; Mitra, 2009; Mitra et al., 2013), clearly defined expectations of participation (Lauver & Little, 2005; Mitra, 2009), a balance between academic and leisure activities (Lauver & Little, 2005), incentives for ongoing participation (Erbstein, 2013; Lauver & Little, 2005), opportunities to develop and grow their social networks of support (Forenza, 2016), and leadership and growth opportunities to continue to develop new skills with adult guidance (Lauver & Little, 2005; Forenza, 2016). Within a school setting, group size was also identified as a factor for participation; specifically, groups with 10–15 students and one or two adults were found to have a better ability to focus on their process and project outcomes (Mitra, 2009).

Training and support for adult allies was identified as the third factor for successful implementation of Y-AP. As previously discussed, adults have an integral role in providing the scaffolding and guided participation of youth participants (Kirshner, 2008; Larson et al., 2005; Mitra et al., 2013; Spencer & Rhodes, 2014; Zeldin et al., 2014). As Mitra (2009) stated, “Youth need adults and peers who can model respectful behaviour in order to learn these crucial skills of how to work effectively in group settings” (p. 417). Identifying the important role of adults in scaffolding youth is the first step. The second step, which may be of greater importance, is ensuring that adults have the capacity to provide this support to youth. Adults working with youth have identified the importance of receiving professional development and training, and believed they had increased competency in their roles as a direct result of this training (Evans, Sicafuse, Killian, Davidson, & Loesch-Griffin, 2010). Youth have also identified the need for

adults to receive training and support, particularly in the area of shared power, to better work with them (MacNeil & McClean, 2006). Common competencies identified in the research include communication, teamwork, and coaching (Camino, 2000), as well as knowledge in youth development and cultural contexts (Mitra et al., 2013). Ginwright (2005) also emphasized the “psychosocial needs of adults” (p. 104) and importance in developing competency in self-care. Limited training and resources were specifically identified in the literature, although time spent sharing successes among colleagues and engaging a capacity-building organization to facilitate staff training were mentioned as examples (Camino, 2000).

Often due to the high rates of staff and volunteer turnover, organizations limit their investment in adult development and training. However, Evans et al. (2010) found development and training opportunities helped retain staff and volunteers within these roles, and Erbstein (2013) noted having more than one adult involved helped reduce the stress on program staff and improved program continuity when an adult left their role. In addition to training for adults, program quality and strategies for recruitment and retention are important factors to consider in the successful implementation of Y-AP within programs.

**Organization factors.** The quality implementation of Y-AP within an organization presents unique challenges, as it is not a specific program, but rather a concept or “method of practice – a set of principles, processes, and interpersonal relationships – designed for application across a broad range of programs” (Zeldin, Petrokubi, & MacNeil, 2008, p. 262). Through integration of research and practice, four organizational factors are presented that can support the quality implementation of Y-AP within organizations.

First, it is necessary to create readiness within the organization. To create an environment that is both welcoming and respectful of youth participation, staff and volunteers need to be given the opportunity to explore their preconceived attitudes and beliefs about youth and become aware of potential biases through structured experiential learning experiences with youth (MacNeil & McClean, 2006; Zeldin et al., 2008). Similarly, youth participants need support to reflect on their beliefs about adults and assumptions of how adults will respond to their involvement prior to engaging in Y-AP (MacNeil & McClean, 2006). At a leadership level, managers within the organization need to develop an understanding and commitment to the practice of Y-AP in order to articulate the connection to the organization's mission and values (Hodge & Turner, 2016), and then embed it within policies and practices (Blanchet-Cohen & Brunson, 2014). By connecting the "purposes of Y-AP with the immediate priorities" (Zeldin et al., 2008, p. 271) of the organization, leaders are able to secure initial buy-in from staff. In a review of a national youth development program, Zeldin et al. (2008) found that it was necessary to provide staff with information about the principles and rationale for integrating Y-AP into the organization, along with providing real-life success stories to help staff see how the concept was applied in practice. The identification of organizational champions can further support the sustained implementation of Y-AP. Organizational champions, those who possess "a strong degree of institutional power, who are willing to harness their capital and resources to move Y-AP forward" (Zeldin et al., 2008, p. 271), can use their influence throughout the organization to promote the benefits of Y-AP and ease the integration of these partnerships into current programs (Hodge & Turner, 2016). In creating organizational readiness among leadership, staff, and community members, Y-AP can become a way of working throughout the organization.

Second, organizations need to make a commitment to provide the financial resources required for sustained quality implementation of Y-AP. As mentioned previously, all youth need to have the opportunity for participation but social and economic factors can create barriers (Erbstein, 2013). Youth who are not able to participate due to these barriers are further marginalized and their voices continue to be excluded from the discourse, so it is imperative for organizations to allocate resources to address these barriers to ensure all youth voices are represented (Erbstein, 2013; MacNeil, 2006). Resources are also required to support staff in implementing Y-AP, as the process is labour intensive. Human resources and allocation of staff time are critical as both the “dissemination and implementation depends, in large part, on creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships” (Zeldin et al., 2008, p. 270).

Third, in order to sustain the implementation of Y-AP within an organization it is necessary to “develop a plan for monitoring and evaluating the integration of youth” (MacNeil & McClean, 2006, p. 102). There is a growing emphasis within organizations, communities, and funders to ensure that delivery of programs is based on research and evidence, which presents significant challenges in measuring the application of Y-AP. Zeldin et al. (2014) described this challenge for organizations, stating, “Professionals must integrate the principles, values, and strategies of Y-AP into existing programs (e.g., after-school, extracurricular), structures (e.g., governance, planning bodies) and functions (e.g., training, communications, participatory research)” (p. 345). One method is to develop a theory of change at the outset of a program to articulate how the concept of Y-AP will be operationalized and ensure consensus on goals and objectives of the program among stakeholders (Camino, 2005; Zeldin, Camino, & Mook, 2005). While the literature provided various definitions and components required for a theory of change,

“identifying the ‘why, what, who, when, and how’ that link each element to the larger intervention” (Stein & Valters, 2012, p. 14) may offer a starting point. In developing a theory of change by aajiqatiginniq (decision making through discussion and consensus), stakeholders would be given the opportunity to share their thoughts on implementing Y-AP (Camino, 2005; Nunavut Department of Education, 2007). This raises the question of who is considered a stakeholder. Stein and Valters (2012) found the literature was often vague, but highlighted the importance of considering how program participants can be involved in the process from the outset. Following program implementation, organizations could measure the success of integrating Y-AP according to two dimensions: youth voice in decision making and supportive adult relationships (Zeldin et al., 2014). As these two relational dimensions are core elements of Y-AP, they should be present regardless of the setting.

Fourth, organizations need to consider how Y-AP can be implemented in a way that reflects the needs and capacities within the communities of which they work. As Hodge and Turner (2016) found, when implementing processes, decision makers need to take the following into consideration:

the needs and capacity of the community and provider, intergenerational trauma in the community, level of complexity for the provider when moving from training to delivery in their workplace, the barriers to provider and community engagement, the availability and nature of the workforce, and the importance of community partnerships. (pp. 193–194)

As organizations are part of a larger community, it is important to allocate time and staff resources to developing relationships with community stakeholders. In Indigenous communities,

stakeholders need to include Elders and community groups to provide local knowledge (Hodge & Turner, 2016). This ensures that community stakeholders, including youth, are involved in clarifying the roles and responsibilities for the youth and adult members involved in the various aspects of the organization. As mentioned, this could be achieved through involving community stakeholders in the development of a theory of change (Camino, 2005; Zeldin et al., 2005). Carefully defining roles for all group members will increase the likelihood of success and members will feel “that they had a meaningful role” (Mitra, 2009, p. 418).

With the benefits of integrating Y-AP into programs, organizations need to consider the factors that can support quality implementation. These factors include organizational readiness, allocation of resources, a monitoring and evaluation plan, and community and cultural contexts.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter offered a review of the literature on Indigenous youth perspectives of leadership, as well as Y-AP as an approach for how adults can work collaboratively with youth. The role of adults was expanded on, emphasizing the importance of developmental relationships, as well as a discussion on incorporating a trauma-informed approach. Finally, key program and organizational factors were identified that could support the successful implementation of Y-AP. In the next chapter, I outline the inquiry methodology, methods, and data analysis and discuss my ethical obligations relating to this research.

### **Chapter Three: Methodology**

In conducting this inquiry project I explored the following question: How can CRC improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of RE programs in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth? In exploring this question, I also considered the following subquestions:

1. How are Inuit youth currently engaged in program development?
2. What do Inuit youth need included in RE programs to meet their learning needs?
3. How do Inuit youth want to be engaged in program development?
4. How can Inuit youth assist in integrating Inuit knowledge and IQ principles in RE programs?

In this chapter I describe the methodology, project participants, data methods, study conduct, and data analysis. I close the chapter with a discussion of ethical issues pertaining to this inquiry.

#### **Inquiry Project Methodology**

For this inquiry, I selected the action research (AR) methodology. AR utilizes a framework that begins with observation, moving to reflection, and then action (Stringer, 2014, p. 9), in order to identify solutions to social or organizational issues (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014, p. 6). Coghlan and Brannick (2014) further emphasized the importance of beginning with a “constructing” (p. 10) stage to engage stakeholders in identifying the change issue. This creates a research process that is both democratic and participatory (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014; Stringer, 2014) by including “all people who affect or are affected by the issue” (Stringer, 2014, p. 6).

More specifically, when conducting this inquiry I followed the AR engagement model (Rowe, Graf, Agger-Gupta, Piggot-Irvine, & Harris, 2013), which delineates the research process into three stages. The first stage focuses on strengthening readiness for organizational change through stakeholder engagement and learning (Rowe et al., 2013), which I facilitated through my role as researcher. The second stage is a transition phase, which involved shifting from my role as researcher to my role within CRC as a manager and team member. In the final stage, the organization becomes responsible for determining if and how the action plan will be implemented. In alignment with AR research, the AR engagement model focuses on developing “a foundation in which researchers engage and create new motivation and learning among a broad sector of organizational stakeholders about the desired change” (Rowe et al., 2013, p. 19). In order to support a readiness for organizational change within CRC, it was important that I involve both internal and external stakeholder groups who are directly affected by RE programs and their development.

This inquiry was also grounded in the principles of participatory action research (PAR) methodology, as PAR has “emerged as a research standard of practice when working with Indigenous communities and populations” (Ulturgasheva, Rasmus, & Morrow, 2015, p. 63). The characteristics of PAR are also reflected in commonly shared characteristics of Indigenous research methodologies, which include “qualitative, collaborative, participatory methods and social justice and empowerment frameworks” (Ulturgasheva et al., 2015, p. 63). I took the characteristics of both of these methodologies into consideration when designing and selecting methods for this inquiry.

The collaborative approach and focus on stakeholder engagement throughout the process of inquiry directly aligned with the values of CRC, specifically the values of respect and inclusiveness. As Stringer (2014) emphasized, by engaging stakeholders in dialogue throughout the process, a “supportive network of relationships” (p. 16) is developed in order to implement the solutions that emerge. As Lewin (as cited in Weisbord, 2012) asserted, “We are more likely to carry out decisions we have helped make” (p. 98). By engaging both staff within the organization and Inuit youth and teachers in the communities in this inquiry process, I gathered perspectives from all of those impacted by RE programs.

AR is grounded in a qualitative research paradigm (Stringer, 2014), and this led to a multiple methods approach for gathering data. Multiple data collection methods is described as triangulation, as it provides the opportunity to validate interpretations of data, but it can also refer to the involvement of “multiple data sources” (Glesne, 2016, p. 45) to support deeper understandings and interpretations of the system. This inquiry included both multiple methods and multiple stakeholder perspectives for increased validity. I began with the arts-based research method of photovoice with Inuit youth, and followed with interviews with Nunavut teachers and CRC staff. Further discussions of the methods utilized in this inquiry project are presented in the “Data Collection Methods” and “Study Conduct” sections that follow.

### **Project Participants**

With the goal of improving Inuit youth engagement in RE program development, I invited three participant groups to be involved in the data collection: Inuit youth, Nunavut teachers, and CRC staff responsible for RE program development. With the intention of AR being to engage “the groups that have a stake in the problem under consideration” (Stringer,

2014, p. 78), it was necessary to involve participants who are internal to the organization as well as external.

For the purpose of this inquiry, Inuit youth were defined as young people currently in Grades 9 to 12, as this reflected the grade levels involved in the RE leadership training delivered through CRC. The first participant group involved 16 Inuit youth, spanning 15–18 years of age, from the communities of Rankin Inlet and Hall Beach in Nunavut. Along with meeting the criterion for age, youth participants needed to have participated in the RE leadership training to ensure they were familiar with both RE content and design. A local staff person from the school shared the invitation to participate with potential participants so that the information was provided in person by someone known to the youth, in order to remove potential literacy barriers and ensure youth were able to ask clarifying questions about the research process. While a teacher could have power-over potential youth participants, I determined the benefits of having a school staff person who had a relationship with the youth, had supported the youth in implementing their RE leadership training in their community, and could describe the inquiry process in person to ensure informed consent offset the disadvantages. In addition, I described the inquiry and confirmed consent with youth participants at the beginning of each photovoice session. This invitation process provided a random purposeful sample that matched the parameters of the inquiry question and purpose while offering stakeholders an equal opportunity to participate (Tracy, 2013, p. 134).

In order to promote collaborative, trusting relationships between the participants and the researcher and amongst the participants, which Coghlan and Brannick (2014) identified as a critical factor in AR, I sought to engage a small group of eight youth participants in each

community. In Hall Beach, 13 Inuit youth expressed interest and were included in the photovoice session. In Rankin Inlet, six Inuit youth expressed interest and three participated in the photovoice session based on availability.

The second participant group included two Nunavut teachers. Along with being established teachers in Nunavut, these participants were required to have implemented the RE program in their schools. I employed a convenience sampling approach to identify teacher participants (Tracy, 2013) who had led the implementation of RE programs in their schools. As I do not have a supervisory role or influence over Nunavut teachers, I sent out the invitation to the participant from Hall Beach. In Rankin Inlet, an inquiry team member from the community sent out the invitation to the participant. Involving a teacher from the schools that Inuit youth participants attend provided a second data source that deepened the understanding of the data provided by Inuit youth (Glesne, 2016, p. 45).

The third participant group included three CRC staff who are responsible for RE program development. Given the limited number of staff responsible for program development, I once again applied a convenience sampling approach (Tracy, 2013). I invited the three CRC staff members to take part in one-to-one interviews, and all three staff members accepted. I selected these staff because they have the authority to implement the recommendations that arise from the findings and could lead further iterations of this inquiry to reconstruct how RE program development involves all youth in Canada. As I do not have a supervisory role or influence over national CRC staff, I sent out the email invitations and arranged interviews with all three participants.

To support this inquiry project, I enlisted the support of an inquiry team representing the stakeholder groups involved in the inquiry. The team included the VP of Manitoba and Nunavut for the CRC, a guidance counsellor from Rankin Inlet, an Inuit Elder, and an Inuit youth. These team members assisted, based on their availability and geographical location, in piloting questions, recruiting participants, analyzing data, and reviewing recommendations. All inquiry team members signed a letter of agreement that outlined the requirements for handling confidential data during and after the inquiry (see Appendix B).

### **Inquiry Project Methods**

In this section I describe the two data collection methods used for this inquiry. I also detail the study conduct and methods for analyzing the data collected.

**Data collection methods.** As previously noted, I gathered data through two qualitative research methods. The first method was the arts-based research method of photovoice that involved Inuit youth, followed by the second method of interviews with Nunavut teachers and CRC staff.

I selected the photovoice method, in which I invited youth participants to take photos in response to two questions (see Appendix C), as the initial method for a number of reasons. The photovoice method reflects the principles of PAR and has been utilized in previous research studies to empower those with less power to share their perspectives (Castleden, Gavin, & Huu-ay-aht First Nation, 2008; Rania, Migliorini, Rebora, & Cardinali, 2015; Wang & Burris, 1997). This approach allows individuals to represent their own “experiences or feelings that may otherwise be difficult to express using more conventional qualitative techniques” (Rania et al., 2015, p. 383). Furthermore, Castleden et al. (2008) found photovoice to be successful at

balancing power between researchers and participants, creating a sense of ownership in the research, fostering trust, building skills and capacity of participants, and Indigenous community members identified it as a culturally appropriate method (p. 1398).

Interviews with Nunavut teachers followed the photovoice sessions in their respective communities to allow the interview questions (see Appendix D) to be guided by the themes identified by youth participants. The themes gathered from Inuit youth and Nunavut teachers were then used to guide the interview questions (see Appendix E) asked of CRC staff members. I selected the interview method because it could “be tailored specifically to the knowledge and experience of the interviewee” (Clifford, n.d., p. 1). Nunavut teachers and CRC staff were purposefully selected to participate based on their knowledge and experience in RE program delivery and development respectively. Nunavut teachers also bring the knowledge of Inuit youths’ learning needs and the experience of adapting resources to meet those needs.

For the interviews I followed a semistructured format by utilizing predetermined questions (see Appendices D and E), which allowed me, as the interviewer, to ask clarifying questions (Doody & Noonan, 2013, p. 30). This allowed for a conversational style that “can make better use of the knowledge-producing potentials of dialogues” (Brinkmann, 2013, p. 21). In addition, it increased the potential for greater depth of responses and new themes to emerge (Doody & Noonan, 2013, p. 30).

**Study conduct.** I secured ethics approval from both Royal Roads University as the initial step. Following ethics approval, I obtained a license from the Nunavut Research Institute (2015) in accordance with Nunavut’s Scientists Act (1988). Upon approval from both institutions, I

gathered signed letters of agreement from my inquiry team members to confirm their roles during the inquiry process and their understanding of data confidentiality (see Appendix B).

Simultaneously, the high school guidance counsellor in Rankin Inlet and a teacher in Hall Beach recruited Inuit youth participants in their respective communities. Youth between 15–18 years of age who had participated in RE leadership training were invited to participate in this inquiry. In an effort to mitigate potential literacy barriers, the guidance counsellor and teacher, acting as the school contact person, described the information included in the invitation letter (see Appendix F) in youth-relevant language and answered clarifying questions. Youth who indicated an interest in participating in the study received a consent form, which was signed by both the participant and the youth's caregiver and then returned to the school contact person (see Appendix G).

The photovoice method took place at the school during school hours, as this is where CRC staff had previously delivered RE leadership training and ensured the space was familiar to youth participants. During the first half of the session, I shared the two questions, ensured each participant had access and knowledge of how to use the cameras, and reviewed the technical and ethical considerations when taking photographs. A key ethical consideration that was discussed was to ensure that no identifying aspects of a person were included in the photographs, as the participants and I did not have permission from those individuals. Then I invited participants to walk through the school and outside in the community to take two photographs, one in response to each question. Participants who were interested in utilizing photographs taken prior to the session were encouraged to do so.

In the second half of the session I asked participants to dialogue about the meaning of their photos and how they represented their perspectives on the inquiry topic (Evans-Agnew & Rosemberg, 2016, p. 1020). Youth participants shared electronic copies of their photographs with me, and I projected the photographs one-by-one onto a screen for all participants to view and discuss. Following the “discussion and construction of photo-texts” (Evans-Agnew & Rosemberg, 2016, p. 1020), the youth participants identified and prioritized the main themes that surfaced from the session. This process engaged youth participants in the initial data analysis and having multiple perspectives validated the main themes identified (Glesne, 2016, p. 154). With participants’ permission (see Appendix G), I audio recorded this portion of the photovoice method.

Youth voices remained central to the inquiry process by guiding the interview questions for Nunavut teachers and CRC staff. Prior to conducting the interviews, I reviewed and pilot tested the questions with an inquiry team member (see Appendices F and G), while ensuring youth voices guided the questions. In Rankin Inlet, the high school guidance counsellor, in his role as inquiry team member, invited the teacher who had supported trained youth in implementing the RE program in the 2015–2016 school year (see Appendices H and I). He provided the teacher with a consent form (see Appendix J) and the interview time was arranged to follow the photovoice session. I received the signed consent form and was able to confirm the arrangements for the interview in-person, following my arrival in the community. In Hall Beach, I invited the teacher who had also supported trained youth in implementing the RE program in the 2015–2016 school year. Due to limited time in the community, I provided her with the consent form and we confirmed an interview time by email.

Following the teacher interviews, I sent out invitations to CRC staff involved in RE program development to participate in interviews (see Appendices E and I). I sent the invitation, consent forms (see Appendix J), and arranged interview times all through email correspondence.

I conducted all interviews in person when possible, or over the phone, and received permission from all five interviewees to audio record the sessions. This process ensured that all interviewees were able to participate in “convenient, available and appropriate locations” (Glesne, 2016, p. 109) even though interview participants live in multiple provinces and territories in Canada.

Following the photovoice sessions and interviews, I sent the audio recordings to a transcriptionist, who created verbatim text documents of the recordings and removed any identifiers to protect participant anonymity. I then shared the interview transcripts with each interviewee for verification. In addition, I invited the sponsor and inquiry team members to review the main themes identified by Inuit youth as well as my initial analysis following the interviews. The CRC staff who participated in interviews are also the stakeholders who will be involved in implementing the recommendations; their active participation was intended to increase a sense of ownership for the recommended activities (Stringer, 2014, p. 31).

**Data analysis.** I conducted data analysis through an iterative approach (see Table 2) to help ensure the study remained relevant (Glesne, 2016, p. 189). The first iteration of data analysis started with Inuit youth during the photovoice sessions. I utilized in vivo coding with youth participants. This was to ensure that their voices were prioritized and honoured, as children’s and youth’s voices are often marginalized (Saldaña, 2009, p. 74). Through the use of in vivo coding, I was able to ensure that the youth’s “cultures and worldviews” (Saldaña, 2009,

p. 74) were represented through their own words. Youth participants identified themes based on the dialogue that had taken place surrounding their photographs, and each participant voted for three to five themes they felt were most important themes in relation to the research questions.

Table 2

*Coding Applications used in Iterations of Data Analysis*

First Iteration	Second Iteration	Third Iteration
In vivo coding and process coding	Pattern coding to group the In vivo and process codes into potential themes	Thematic mapping that reflects themes and their connection to one another based on data and literature

The first iteration continued with the coding of transcribed text from interviews with Nunavut teachers, followed by the coding of transcribed text from interviews with CRC staff. I analyzed the data gathered from each stakeholder group separately, as stakeholders shared different perspectives and experiences (Stringer, 2014).

I placed each transcribed interview text in the first column of a three-column table. This allowed me to place my initial codes, line by line, alongside the text in the second column. As previously noted, in the initial coding of interviews, I also used both in vivo and process codes. In vivo codes use the direct language of participants, rather than the researcher’s wording and phrases. Process codes uses gerunds (“-ing” words) to help “detect processes and stick to the data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 49) by emphasizing actions and interactions rather than static topics.

Following the initial coding of interview transcripts, I began the second iteration. I used the third column of the table to document potential themes as I sorted and collapsed initial codes into broader concepts (Roulston, 2013, p. 12). This led to a comparison between the themes identified by Inuit youth participants, Nunavut teachers, and CRC staff to identify commonalities

across the data set (Stringer, 2014). As I compared and organized the data, I used memo writing to reflect on the potential connections between codes, categories, and themes.

The third iteration involved working with potential themes to “look for patterns, make comparisons, produce explanations and build models” (Gibbs, 2007, p. 78). Using a mind map, I presented the themes and subthemes identified in the initial iterations of data analysis to “assist in making meaning of data, as well as in exposing gaps” (Glesne, 2016, p. 202). I used one-directional arrows to indicate the connections between themes and demonstrate potential cause-and-effect relationships (Glesne, 2016). These themes were used to inform the findings and recommendations of this inquiry.

Establishing authenticity and trustworthiness within the research were integral to ensuring the validity of the data analysis. Coghlan (as cited in Coghlan & Brannick, 2014) described four components to authenticity: “be attentive (to the data); be intelligent (in inquiry); be reasonable (in making judgments); and be responsible (in making decisions and taking action)” (p. 29). In addition, Saldaña (2011) described trustworthiness as providing credibility to the writing by informing the reader of the research process. I upheld authenticity and trustworthiness in this inquiry by having photovoice participants engage in initial theming of data, by interview participants reviewing their interview transcripts as a means of member checking, and by inquiry team members reviewing data and confirming theming as a means of peer review (Glesne, 2016; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). To maintain awareness of my own biases, I documented my experiences and what guided my decisions throughout the analysis (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014).

**Ethical Issues**

Ethical procedures are a part of all research, and of particular consideration in AR due to its participatory nature (Stringer, 2014). The activities within AR inquiry processes “enter cultural settings that are interactional, emotional, historical, and social” (Stringer, 2014, p. 94), which entail a high level of responsibility on behalf of the researcher. I maintained scientific and ethical standards throughout this inquiry with assistance from my academic supervisor and organizational sponsor and by adhering to the Royal Roads University (2011) *Research Ethics Policy*, the Nunavut Scientists Act (1988), the *Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North* (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003), and the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2014). The following subsections describe how I addressed the three core principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014) in this inquiry, while simultaneously adhering to the Nunavut Scientists Act (1988) and *Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North* (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 2003).

**Respect for persons.** The first principle acknowledges the inherent “value of human beings and the respect . . . that they are due” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 6). This includes a person’s autonomy to make an informed decision about whether he or she will participate in the research process. Through detailed information and consent letters, all potential participants received information required to make an informed decision and understand the process to withdraw at any time. Additional measures were taken for Inuit youth

participants, including attaining support from the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education, informing local district education authorities, inviting potential participants through a presentation by a respected adult in the school, and seeking consent from a parent or legal guardian.

**Concern for welfare.** The second principle aims to promote the welfare of participants and ensures all risks and benefits are clearly communicated for people to make an informed decision to participate (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014). Potential risks and benefits to both the individual participants and the community were outlined in the information and consent letters in this inquiry to ensure each participant could make an informed decision, which I made available to potential participants in both English and Inuktitut in an attempt to reduce language barriers. Through CRC's relationships with the schools in both communities, a school staff person shared the invitation with potential youth participants, described the purpose of the inquiry, and answered any questions that arose. Furthermore, I ensured the data collected were securely stored and anonymized to ensure that no individual could be identified during the analysis or final report.

**Justice.** The third principle "refers to the obligation to treat people fairly and equitably" (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 8). This inquiry involved Inuit youth participants, who could be more vulnerable due to their age (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014). As such, I paid special attention to including an Inuk youth on the inquiry team to help determine if inclusion criteria were equitable, and I utilized the first method to ensure the voices of the youth guided the questions of the second method. In addition, an Inuk Elder or recognized knowledge holder was part of the inquiry team to support analysis and

“interpretation of findings in the context of cultural norms and traditional knowledge” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014, p. 130). Although I took steps to ensure equitable representation of study participants, it is important to acknowledge that this inquiry was not community driven; therefore, the study results do not reflect an entirely strengths-based approach. I would recommend that new research with Indigenous communities be community-driven, to support a strengths-based inquiry.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I outlined the methodological approach and further described the data collection methods of photovoice and interviews utilized for this inquiry. This chapter also included a discussion of the participants that were involved in this study and the process for collecting and analyzing the data. I ended this chapter with a discussion of how I addressed the ethical considerations relating to this inquiry.

### **Chapter Four: Inquiry Project Findings and Conclusions**

In this chapter, I outline the five study findings drawn from the data analysis. This is followed by the four study conclusions, which connect the findings of the inquiry with relevant literature. Finally, this chapter describes the scope and limitations of this inquiry.

The findings and conclusions are in response to the inquiry question: How can CRC improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of RE programs in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth? I also considered the following subquestions:

1. How are Inuit youth currently engaged in program development?
2. What do Inuit youth need included in RE programs to meet their learning needs?
3. How do Inuit youth want to be engaged in program development?
4. How can Inuit youth assist in integrating Inuit knowledge and IQ principles in RE programs?

#### **Study Findings**

The findings of this inquiry are reflective of the aggregated data gathered through photovoice with Inuit youth and interviews with Nunavut teachers and CRC staff. The themes identified through data analysis and selected quotes from both photovoice sessions and interviews are referenced to support the inquiry findings, as this allowed for comparisons among participants' perspectives. In order to maintain the anonymity of all participants, I cite quotations using PV1 through PV2 for photovoice and I1 through I5 for interviews. While the photos taken by Inuit youth participants were gathered as part of the data collection, they are not presented in the findings as the consent form (see Appendix G) stated they would not be published. A short

description of the photos (see Appendix K) taken by Inuit youth participants is provided in place of the photos.

As Inuit youth participants led the initial analysis by identifying themes that arose during the photovoice sessions, I have presented their themes first. In discussing their photos and analyzing how they want to work with adults, Inuit youth identified and prioritized the themes of respect, communication, teamwork, learning from one another, having elders involved, being open and welcoming, teaching and modelling for others, and putting in the effort to try even if mistakes are made (PV1; PV2). Inuit youth also discussed the importance of the IQ principles, and identified the principles of inuuqatigiitsiarniq (showing respect and care for others), tunnganarniq (being welcoming, open, and inclusive), pijitsirniq (serving others), pilimmaksarniq/pijariuqsarniq (working together for a common purpose), qanuqtuurniq (being resourceful), and piliriqatigiiniq/ilajuqtigiinni (skills and knowledge acquisition) as guiding how they work (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007; PV1; PV2). The themes are further discussed in the study findings and described in detail in the subsections that follow.

1. Inuit youth can be engaged in leadership roles throughout a project.
2. Inuit knowledge and IQ principles need to be integrated into all programs.
3. Scaffolding by teachers is necessary for Inuit youth to engage in leadership roles successfully.
4. Program resources need to reflect various learning levels and learning styles of Inuit youth.
5. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will support CRC programs in meeting the needs of Inuit youth and meeting the desired program outcomes.

**Finding 1: Inuit youth can be engaged in leadership roles throughout a project.**

Participants identified numerous ways that Inuit youth have and need to be engaged as leaders throughout a project, with both youth and adult participants emphasizing the importance of creating space for Inuit youth to have a voice (PV1; PV2; I1; I3–I5). As one participant highlighted, “if you want to be effective with the target audience, the target audience needs to have a big say in developing and defining that message” (I5). Engaging Inuit youth to ensure their perspectives are incorporated was a consistent theme that arose in all photovoice sessions and interviews.

While participants agreed upon the need to engage Inuit youth (I1, I3–I5), in the past CRC’s program development primarily engaged Inuit Elders and young adults and gathered feedback from Inuit youth as programs were being implemented (I3). Participants identified the opportunity to involve Inuit youth from the beginning of the program development cycle (I3–I5), and examples of successful projects taking place in the communities offers a starting point.

In various projects that participants described, Inuit youth were working collaboratively as part of a team. This was described by Inuit youth themselves as “powerful teamwork” (PV1) and included examples of working with their peers, teachers, parents, and Elders (PV1; PV2). One of the projects described by youth participants involved Inuit youth working with a community adult to deliver after-school programming for younger children. They described how they learned from the adult about how to lead activities for program participants, and then took on the role of teaching younger kids “to calm down” (PV1) so everyone could participate in the activities. Participants shared various examples of how adults and youth were both teaching and learning from one another throughout the projects (PV1; PV2; I2; I3).

Inuit youth have and could hold multiple leadership roles throughout various stages of a project. One participant described how Inuit youth were involved in decision-making roles at the outset of a project. Both youth and adults in the community had agreed that bullying was a key issue, and youth were asked, ““What would you do to make it a higher profile issue and how could we get the message out to the community?’ And they started brainstorming the ideas” (I1) that led to a weeklong awareness campaign in their community. Other participants described projects in which the topic or issue was already determined, so Inuit youth were invited to share “stories of what the experiences looked like . . . in their community” (I3) to guide the project’s activities or were given the leadership role to determine what activities could best meet the project outcomes (I2). Participants also identified the opportunity to involve Inuit youth in evaluating project resources to ensure their effectiveness (I3–I5).

In considering how to connect Inuit youth to leadership opportunities, another theme arose around engaging youth “through their interests” (I2). Participants reflected how adults needed to identify youth “who want to have even further involvement” (I5) and help connect them to those opportunities (I2; I5). In addition to their interests, one participant indicated that a “reward” (I2) was also needed for Inuit youth to accept leadership roles in a project. This was reflected in responses from other participants as well, who described incentives that had been given to youth for participating, which ranged from a pizza party celebration to financial support for a graduation trip to travelling to a youth conference in another community (I1; I2; I4; I5). Overall, participants agreed Inuit youth need to be given leadership opportunities throughout a project based on their interests and passions and that incentives acknowledge their contributions to the project.

**Finding 2: Inuit knowledge and IQ principles need to be integrated into all programs.** Participant responses indicated the importance of having Inuit knowledge and IQ principles integrated into programs in order to meet the needs of Inuit youth (PV1; PV2; I1–I5). Youth participants emphasized, through their photographs and dialogue, how integral Inuit knowledge and IQ principles are to the way they live and that they want to ensure their culture and traditions are kept alive (PV1; PV2). Another participant further highlighted the importance of Inuit knowledge and culture, saying, “We know that culture is a protective mechanism, and we know that culture is a community based strength” (I3).

Participants confirmed the importance of the IQ principles and values (PV2; I1; I2) and discussed how they are integrated into the way that Inuit behave and act (I1), while also identifying that they are not often explicitly discussed within families and communities (PV2; I1; I2). One participant expanded on this by describing how Inuit youth see the IQ principles “in their day-to-day life outside of the school but they’re not really identifying them” (I1). Another participant shared how Inuit youth have been raised with IQ values but may not be mindful of them, so within a school the teacher is able to “bring it to the forefront” (I2) by inviting students to reflect on how their current activities relate to Inuit values.

In developing program resources, participants emphasized the importance of Inuit values being thoroughly integrated throughout the program so that Inuit youth see their culture directly reflected within the program (I3–I5). As one participant explained, by integrating IQ principles into program curriculum, “it actually takes curriculum and says this is really important, and it’s so important that it’s like this value. It’s so important because our values are our foundational guidelines for how we live life” (I3). Another participant highlighted the influential role of the

facilitator in effectively integrating the IQ principles throughout a program, saying, “It has to start from the facilitator, because if the facilitator doesn’t believe in the IQ values or IQ principles, then they’re not gonna be really shown through the project” (I2).

Participant responses acknowledged that colonization and historical trauma have impacted the sharing of Inuit knowledge and IQ values (I1; I3), while youth participants emphasized their interest in learning more about their culture and traditions (PV2). In order to effectively integrate Inuit knowledge and IQ principles into programs in a way that meets the need of Inuit youth, two participants highlighted the importance of involving Inuit youth in integrating IQ principles into program resources (I3; I5). As one participant described, “There are particular things that within Inuit culture are fast changing. They’re fast changing for Inuit youth, but they’re not understood by Inuit adults or Elders” (I3). This is reflected in Finding 1 and further reinforced by another participant, who said, “If they don’t identify with the messaging, then their learning is not going to be very good and they’re not going to be able to then make changes in the community that they want to make” (I5). In order to meet the needs of Inuit youth and effectively integrate Inuit knowledge and IQ principles, Inuit youth need to be involved.

**Finding 3: Scaffolding by teachers is necessary for Inuit youth to engage in leadership roles successfully.** Participants described scaffolding within youth–adult collaborations as a requirement for Inuit youth to experience success in leadership roles (PV1; PV2; I1–I4). Inuit youth shared examples of working collaboratively with adults in both classroom settings and in learning Inuit traditions and skills (PV1; PV2). Youth participants described how working with adults allowed Inuit youth to “learn from [the adult’s] experience”

(PV2) and to learn important skills “step by step” (PV2) and identified how “some adults help us get a voice and get involved” (PV1), highlighting the value Inuit youth place on adult support.

Adult participants also provided examples of scaffolding youth to develop leadership skills in various projects. In reference to a particular project, one participant described how Inuit youth were involved in leading activities for their peers at school. In order to develop a sense of confidence, Inuit youth facilitated the same activity three times throughout the day to different groups of students. The teachers expected that “the first time would be more teacher-led, and by the third one they should be running the show” (I2). The teaching staff considered it a success, as students were able to take on a greater facilitation role throughout the project, and they attributed this to providing students with a “slow, gradual release” (I2) toward independence. Another participant echoed this sentiment and described how this model of gradual release could build a sense of confidence in Inuit youth by putting the “supports in place that kind of push them, nudge them onto the next level, and then the momentum starts to gain and they see that they can pull it off” (I1).

In exploring how scaffolding supports Inuit youth in being successful in leadership roles, participants described key components that are required for a framework of support. This included providing the necessary information at the outset of the project, defining the intended outcome, modelling by adults, and applying what was learned from the successes and failures of previous projects (PV1; PV2; I1; I2; I4; I5).

The role of adults in providing the necessary information at the outset of a project to effectively meet the expected outcomes was emphasized through various participant examples. Youth participants described this as “being prepared” (PV1), while another participant referred

to this as “frontloading and giving them all the information” (I2). Participants outlined several methods for providing this information, whether through classroom lessons, specialized training, or project meetings (I1; I2; I5). In the project described above, Inuit youth participated in a bullying prevention training provided by CRC prior to being invited to cofacilitate with teachers. This training provided Inuit youth with content knowledge and facilitation skills to prepare them for the leadership opportunity (I2).

As previously suggested, Inuit youth can be involved in various leadership roles within a project. If the project outcome is already determined, participants emphasized the need for adults to clearly define the project outcomes so that Inuit youth can effectively contribute to meeting those outcomes (I1; I2; I5). One participant related this to a current focus within education on student-centred learning, in which students are invited to decide how to reach the predetermined learning goal (I2). A project shared by another participant demonstrated how this can be done successfully. The project outcome was for older students to teach younger students about an IQ principle during a school assembly. The classroom teacher explained what was expected of the older students, and the teacher and students worked together to brainstorm different ideas of how to teach one of the IQ principles. With support from the teacher, the older students took the lead and decided to use video as the method for sharing the information at their school assembly (I1). By having a clear understanding of the desired outcome, students were able to take a leadership role and the project was successful.

Modelling by adults was also described as an important component for scaffolding Inuit youth. Youth participants presented photographs during the photovoice sessions that portrayed parents, teachers, Elders, and other adults in various teaching roles (PV1; PV2). Youth and adult

participants shared examples of modelling within formal classroom settings or through teaching Inuit skills and activities such as sewing and hunting (PV1; PV2; I2; I4).

Lastly, learning from the successes and failures in previous projects can increase the likelihood of success moving forward. Youth participants discussed the responsibility to take time to learn from previous mistakes, whether it was their own or someone else's mistake (PV2). As one participant stated, "Only by working together, do we learn not to repeat someone else's mistakes" (PV2). Participants also identified that adults have a role in supporting Inuit youth to apply the learning from previous projects when starting a new project (PV2; I1). In reflecting on a successful project, one participant described how the success of the current project could help youth in future projects because they could "relate to what they had accomplished in the past . . . and . . . bring those skills forward into the next thing" (I1). Even though the expected outcome of the next project might be different, the youth participants were developing transferable skills and experiences that could apply to their next project. There was strong alignment among participants about the importance of learning from previous experiences (PV2; I1; I3; I5). However, participants identified a gap in applying this learning, as CRC does not have a system that captures what youth and adults have learned in implementing the program previously (I4; I5). As one participant described, without a system for gathering and sharing the successes and lessons that have been learned in previous projects, it is not possible to apply that learning in the next project (I5).

**Finding 4: Program resources need to reflect various learning levels and learning styles of Inuit youth.** Participant responses conveyed the need for adapting program resources for multiple learning levels and learning styles, in order to meet the needs of Inuit youth (I1; I2;

I4; I5). When interview participants were asked to describe how program resources currently met the needs of Inuit youth, a dominant theme emerged around the need for adapting resources for various literacy levels (I1; I2; I4). One participant noted current resources provided to support the education curriculum are often “over their entry level, their literacy” (I1), and another interviewee indicated, “It’s really too high level” (I4). In addition, participants also identified how program resources do not reflect “their reality” (I4) or their preferred learning style (I1; I4; I5).

Teachers have the challenging role of trying to meet all of the varied learning needs of their students. As one participant described,

We have such a broad range of students. . . . I’ll have some kids who could meet that outcome, and then some kids that are beyond the outcome. So you’re looking at such a broad range of what you need to do. So the one lesson you think you’re gonna do on the board is never one lesson. (I2)

Another participant shared how “a lot of resources might be geared towards the top end of what students are capable of . . . so, you must differentiate it to whatever level that they can handle. You are constantly reworking material” (I1). In order to support teachers in meeting the range of learning needs, one participant suggested that program resources be developed with three or four different ways of teaching the same topic (I2). Although only one participant suggested this, I found strong agreement among participants that program resources needed to be easily adaptable for a range of learning and literacy levels (I1; I2; I4).

Also prevalent in participants’ comments was the need for program resources to reflect the way that Inuit youth learn. Youth participants offered various examples of learning by doing

tasks alongside someone, whether it was baking bread or sewing mittens or being safe out on the land (PV1; PV2). As one participant highlighted, “Putting something together and seeing it with your own eyes helps you create it” (PV2). Participants stressed the importance of having an experienced mentor teach youth “how to do it step-by-step instead of trying to do it without asking for help” (PV2). Adult participants affirmed this. As one participant indicated, Inuit youth “are much more oral” (I1) and “more visual, more kinaesthetic . . . better at learning hands-on and doing things or through seeing it through media” (I1). Similarly, another participant described how Inuit youth prefer “hands-on learning” (I2) and building their skills “through watching and trying rather than sitting and taking notes about how to do it” (I2). This strongly aligns with IQ principles of teaching Inuit youth to have “respect for the process” (I2) and “showing resourcefulness” (I2). By providing Inuit youth with information about methodologies used in teaching and asking them “what’s gonna work for them” (I4), program resources can be developed based on their insights into “how they like to learn” (I4).

In reflecting on how to adapt program resources to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth, participants reiterated the importance of having Inuit youth involved to ensure resources reflect their realities (I1; I3–I5). One participant offered an example of a previous project that engaged Inuit adults and Elders in developing program resources for their communities. At the beginning of the project, those involved were asked to share stories “of what the experiences looked like that had to do with a particular topic in their community” (I3). Program resources were developed to reflect those stories and then shared with them for feedback and approval (I3). Although a singular example, numerous participants reflected the importance of having program resources that are relevant to the situations of Inuit youth (I1; I3–I5). As one participant indicated,

program resources “have to be very specific to their realities in their communities” (I4) and Inuit youth are the most qualified to provide this information.

**Finding 5: Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will support CRC programs in meeting the needs of Inuit youth and meeting the desired program outcomes.** Participant responses indicated there is a current gap in the monitoring and evaluation of CRC programs, resulting in an absence of information for measuring whether the programs are meeting the needs of Inuit youth and leading to the intended outcomes (I3–I5). As discussed in Finding 3, identifying the successes and failures of previous projects is necessary so that Inuit youth can apply what has been learned in future projects. Similarly, participants asserted that CRC needs to formally gather the successes, failures, and lessons learned during program implementation in order to guide program development in a way that will better meet the needs of Inuit youth. One participant stated that a monitoring system would capture “what has worked and what hasn’t worked” (I5) to identify the lessons learned, but acknowledged “we don’t have that system in place. We don’t share that” (I5) currently within the organization.

In discussing how to improve the monitoring and evaluation of CRC programs, two themes emerged. The first theme was the need for effective tools for gathering feedback and input from Inuit youth, and the second theme was the need to identify what could best support successful program implementation.

Participant responses indicated that gathering feedback and input from Inuit youth could be challenging. One participant shared this example:

The people who were running the interagency meeting . . . did a presentation to the entire high school pretty much. . . . They were asking for input from them, at that time. Once

again, we got the mountain to Mohammad, but the mountain didn't want to speak. So I gave everybody a piece of paper and I said, "Write it. Don't write your name on it if you don't want to, but just put down your ideas for what you'd like to see happen in the community." I think, how do you support them in telling them that they have a voice that counts? (I1)

This participant's story demonstrates that providing an opportunity for sharing feedback does not guarantee that Inuit youth will be willing to share. One suggestion for gathering input, demonstrated in this participant's example, is to create opportunities for Inuit youth to share their perspectives anonymously. Other suggestions for anonymous sharing included using technology, whether through surveys or virtual communities, to gather feedback (I1; I3). In addition, inviting Inuit youth to share their ideas and feedback through guided conversations, sharing circles, or individual interviews was suggested (I3). A third suggestion was to bring Inuit youth together to share the social actions they have taken within their school and community to create positive change, both as an opportunity to gather feedback and to celebrate their successes (I3).

In addition to gathering feedback and input from Inuit youth, participants identified the need for consistent program implementation. Yet, participant responses also identified a number of challenges and barriers to ongoing program implementation. Participants identified that one of those challenges is the level of staff turnover within schools and communities (I1; I2; I4). Another challenge is the limited staff time to allocate to program implementation. As one participant articulated,

I think my thing is just how to make it broad. I know that you're kinda relying on us to facilitate the program, but how do we make it so that we're targeting as many youth as

possible? . . . If this is the program that we're using for prevention, we need to know, we need to be facilitating it, and we need to be doing it constantly. I know that's adding more stress to us, but even if we said, "Okay, one of your health units has to be RespectED," . . . because I just don't know how impactful it's going to be over the long term if we don't really utilize the program. (I2)

One suggestion for addressing these challenges was to have CRC programs identified as a requirement within the Nunavut curriculum. As one participant described, this would help create consistent implementation because the program becomes "just part of the curriculum, or ingrained in what we do" (I2). It would also increase the number of Inuit youth engaged in learning about interpersonal relationships, social and emotional well being, and social justice. As another participant identified, the potential benefits of having these conversations with more Inuit youth is that "they would be seeing the possibility in getting involved . . . so they can understand that they have the power to make a change themselves" (I1).

### **Study Conclusions**

Based on the themes identified through analysis of the data and review of the literature, I reached four conclusions. These conclusions begin to answer the inquiry question and subquestions, as well as provide a basis for the recommendations presented in Chapter 5.

The following conclusions are described in detail in the subsections that follow:

1. Programs for Inuit youth need to be grounded in Inuit culture and values.
2. Programs for Inuit youth need to be developed through partnerships between youth and adults.

3. Effectively engaging Inuit youth in program development requires multiple layers of support within organizations and communities.
4. An ongoing process of reflection and evaluation needs to inform the development of programs.

**Conclusion 1: Programs for Inuit youth need to be grounded in Inuit culture and values.** As outlined in Finding 2, participants in both photovoice sessions and interviews indicated the importance of integrating Inuit culture and IQ principles into programming for Inuit youth. Participants viewed this integration of culture, principles, and programming as a way to foster strong cultural identity and pride among youth (I1; I2–I5). Numerous scholars have also emphasized the importance of culture in supporting both the leadership development (Aylward et al., 2013; Leon, 2012; Lickers, 2016; McLeod, 2012; Wall, 2008) and positive personal development of Indigenous youth (Aylward et al., 2013; Parent, 2011). Specifically, Inuit youth shared how a strong cultural identity supported their self-confidence and leadership capacity (Aylward et al., 2013) and Indigenous youth identified the integration of culture as key to supporting school success (OFIFC, 2016). Program development, guided by cultural teachings and values, was found to “help youth understand who they are, where they come from, and what their cultural heritages can teach them about their present realities” (Parent, 2011, p. 42).

In particular, participants reported the role of applying cultural teachings to the current realities for Inuit youth to be both an important and complex process (I1–I5). As one study participant identified, “There are particular things that within Inuit culture are fast changing. They’re fast changing for Inuit youth, but they’re not understood by Inuit adults or Elders” (I3).

This was also reflected in Aylward et al.'s (2013) finding that Inuit youth experience “rapid cultural changes and new social problems” (p. 175).

Inuit youth are faced with the complex process of integrating cultural values into a changing environment. As one Indigenous youth described, her learning is taking place in three worlds:

the world of my First Nation traditional family teachings, the changing world of today's teachings, and the world of my mainstream teachings. The greatest challenge in the way that I learn is to validate my First Nation ways of knowing in a changing world.

(McLeod, 2012, p. 42).

While the literature offered examples of how youth were able to adapt and integrate learning from both cultures to support their development and leadership capacity, it also presented challenges (Aylward et al., 2013).

Although not mentioned by any of the study participants, scholars found that adults and Elders within Inuit communities may not be supportive of the ways youth have adapted traditions to meet their current context and “may marginalise and even alienate many young Inuit” (Aylward et al., 2013, p. 174). Simultaneously, the Inuit Qaujimatugangit Education Framework stated, “Elders are not advocating a return to the past, but a grounding of education in the strengths of the Inuit so that their children will survive and successfully negotiate the world in which they find themselves today” (Nunavut Department of Education, 2007, p. 22). This was supported by youth participants, who emphasized the importance of learning about their culture and traditional skills from adults and Elders (PV1; PV2). This suggests an interest among Inuit youth to develop a greater depth of understanding about how and why things were

done in the past, in order to effectively apply them now. This also indicates a model that involves youth, adults, and Elders in developing programs grounded in cultural teachings and values would be ideal, as it contributes to increased relevance and community support.

**Conclusion 2: Programs for Inuit youth need to be developed through partnerships between youth and adults.** Involvement of Inuit youth in leadership roles during program development is necessary to ensure their needs and perspectives are met and that programs are not based solely on adult theories. This is the belief of both study participants, as outlined in Finding 1, and scholars, as presented in the literature review (Brumbaugh, 2013; Kress, 2006; Lickers, 2016). This is not to suggest that Inuit youth would be expected to take the lead or work in isolation.

The successful participation of Inuit youth may include a Y-AP approach that incorporates the four components of “authentic decision making, natural mentors, reciprocal activity, and community connectedness” (Zeldin et al., 2013, p. 389). Of these four components, participants explicitly mentioned the importance for youth to have choices and be involved in decisions, the role of adults to provide support, and the community connections that develop from working as part of a team. Youth participants also identified the importance of both learning and teaching (PV1; PV2), which reflects aspects of reciprocal learning, and one interviewee’s story of youth asking, “You didn’t know that?” (I1) and then offering additional information suggests it is occurring naturally through respectful and trusting relationships. While study participants indicated that the different components of Y-AP were of value and acknowledged that youth had been invited to share their feedback to support program

development previously, they also indicated potential for greater participation from Inuit youth (I3–I5).

One of the barriers to increased participation is the process being utilized for program development, as it is part of a larger organizational system and does not consider Indigenous pedagogy. As identified in Finding 4, the wide range of learning levels and learning preferences of Inuit youth requires adaptations from mainstream materials. Without consideration of Indigenous pedagogy, it is difficult to involve Inuit youth in shared decision making and collective learning (Libby et al., 2005; Mitra et al., 2013; Zeldin et al., 2013). While these systemic and organizational barriers may not be unique to CRC, Erbstein (2013) stressed the need for a critical stance that believes systems can be improved. These systemic and organizational barriers can be identified and begin to be addressed with a commitment to fully implementing the approach of Y-AP grounded in Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning.

**Conclusion 3: Effectively engaging Inuit youth in program development requires multiple layers of support within organizations and communities.** Inuit youth participation in program development is contingent on support from the school and community, as well as within CRC. At the school and community level, the emphasis was on having relationships with adult allies that could scaffold and guide Inuit youth in their roles. As described in Finding 3, photovoice participants indicated the critical role of adults in modelling for youth and interview participants shared examples of scaffolding in formal and informal teaching environments. While various scholars identified that developmental relationships support positive youth development (Levy, 2016; Li & Julian, 2012; Spencer & Rhodes, 2014) and are integral in the successful implementation of Y-AP (Erbstein, 2013; Levy, 2016; Li & Julian, 2012), it is important to note

that colonizing practices including a Eurocentric approach to education have interrupted Indigenous ways of learning through family and intergenerational relationships (Annahatak, 1994; Battiste, 2002; Kral et al., 2014). As one scholar described, by participating in a structured school system, Inuit youth have learned to “wait to be taught and on the other hand elders are also waiting to be watched as models” (Annahatak, 1994, p. 17).

To support adults in guiding youth, Evans et al. (2010) found training and support increased a sense of competency among adults and contributed to greater success in implementing Y-AP. While study participants did not specify the need for training adults, they did identify areas for support. Participants highlighted the value of external organizations providing training to develop advocacy and leadership skills among Inuit youth (I1; I2) and emphasized the importance of having programs integrated into education curriculum to promote consistent and sustained delivery (I2). Organizations need to be working collaboratively with adults in the schools and communities to ensure that local adults are supported and have the capacity to scaffold and guide Inuit youth using a Y-AP approach.

At the organizational level, engaging Inuit youth through a Y-AP requires a commitment from those in leadership positions to support the implementation. Blanchet-Cohen and Brunson (2014) stressed the importance of “a clearly articulated youth engagement philosophy at the organizational level that . . . had to be embedded in organizational policies and practices” (p. 227). Similarly, one participant described how organizations wanting to engage youth “need to have a system in place where we translate that knowledge over and over, down or up, all the various levels, so it does make the impact that we would envision” (I5), and these organizations must ensure that youth see their involvement contributing to action. This level of commitment

can also support the financial and human resource investment required for effective implementation.

As Zeldin et al. (2008) identified, integrating Y-AP into programs is labour intensive and requires human resources to support relationship building. Participants also indicated the importance of human resources to support youth engagement, primarily noting the current challenges of too few staff and high levels of staff turnover (I1; I4; I5). Additionally, financial resources to retain youth and address social and economic barriers to youth participation were emphasized in the literature (Erbstein, 2013; MacNeil, 2006). This was also noted by study participants, who referred to the importance of providing rewards or incentives for youth (I1; I2; I4; I5). The examples offered by study participants aligned with the material supports that Erbstein (2013) identified as vital for ensuring full participation of underrepresented youth, acknowledging how social and economic factors impact youth participation and require consideration by organizations.

**Conclusion 4: An ongoing process of reflection and evaluation needs to inform the development of programs.** In an effort to improve the engagement of Inuit youth and ensure that programs are meeting their needs, both reflection and evaluation need to be part of the development process. As outlined in Finding 5, participants identified the need for monitoring and evaluating CRC programs. This is supported by the literature (MacNeil & McClean, 2006; Zeldin et al., 2014). Participants also identified current gaps, particularly the lack of effective feedback tools and implementation strategies that could be applied across communities. While these specific challenges were not discussed, Zeldin et al. (2014) did acknowledge that

evaluating the impacts of youth participation was very challenging because it applied across multiple settings and required an evaluation tool that was not setting specific.

In considering how to implement a process for ongoing reflection and evaluation, the complex system involved in implementing CRC programs requires consideration. Camino (2005) found, in an evaluation of a complex national initiative, that a theory of change crafted by youth and adults from various communities moved stakeholders from confusion about how to implement Y-AP within programs to collective clarity. In developing a theory of change, assumptions initially held by youth and adults were uncovered and a consensus was achieved on the goals and objectives of the program (Camino, 2005). Recognizing that CRC programs also involve multiple stakeholders, engaging Inuit youth, adults and CRC staff in the collaborative development of a theory of change would determine realistic outcomes and provide a foundation to evaluate the impacts of the program.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Inquiry**

This inquiry focused specifically on the engagement of Inuit youth in the development of CRC's RE programs for implementation in Nunavut. While focusing on the program development phase, this does not consider the implementation and evaluation phases of the program cycle. Although CRC and other organizations may be able to draw connections to engaging youth in other settings, this inquiry was intended to provide conclusions and recommendations specific to service delivery in Nunavut.

The limitations of this inquiry are reflected in the design, which only involved Inuit youth from two communities within the territory. While the two communities selected were diverse, in an attempt to gather a range of perspectives from Inuit youth, study findings and conclusions are

not representative of all Inuit youth. Additionally, an unexpected limitation of this inquiry was the low participation in one of the photovoice sessions. While participants had confirmed their attendance, various personal and community factors arose that were unexpected and reduced the number of participants. This further reduced the diversity of Inuit youth perspectives reflected in the analysis.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I outlined the findings, conclusions, and scope and limitations of this inquiry. The findings and conclusions identified valuable insights for increasing engagement of Inuit youth, building on a history of stakeholder engagement in CRC's program development. The findings and conclusions presented in this chapter provide a basis for the recommendations that are outlined in the following chapter.

### **Chapter Five: Inquiry Implications**

This chapter outlines the literature, findings, and conclusions that led to the inquiry recommendations for how CRC can effectively engage Inuit youth in the development of RE programs. First, the four recommendations are presented in order of priority for implementation, followed by the organizational implications for implementation and the implications for future inquiry.

Through conducting this inquiry I studied the following question: How CRC can improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of RE programs in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth? I also considered the following subquestions:

1. How are Inuit youth currently engaged in program development?
2. What do Inuit youth need included in RE programs to meet their learning needs?
3. How do Inuit youth want to be engaged in program development?
4. How can Inuit youth assist in integrating Inuit knowledge and IQ principles in RE programs?

#### **Study Recommendations**

The recommendations consider the current program development process of the CRC and changes that can improve the participation of Inuit youth within that process. Based on the inquiry findings and conclusions, I put forward four recommendations for CRC:

1. Develop a framework for integrating Y-AP into existing RE programs.
2. Build adult capacity for scaffolding youth in a Y-AP.
3. Implement a Y-AP approach to developing program resources.
4. Establish an evaluation framework.

**Recommendation 1: Develop a framework for integrating Y-AP into existing programs.** Study participants expressed a strong commitment to have youth and adults working together in program development. The challenge is determining how to integrate the model of Y-AP into the current infrastructure of the organization. Zeldin et al. (2005) described this early implementation stage as “a period of experimentation through which innovative ideas are incrementally translated into good practices” (p. 128) and suggested three guidelines to support this process: “construct theories and stories of change, . . . address issues of role and power, . . . [and] institutionalize new roles for youth” (pp. 128–130). Each of these guidelines can support CRC in developing the framework for implementing a Y-AP approach into program development and delivery.

By collaboratively creating a theory of change, CRC and Inuit youth will be able to articulate “the means and strategies for implementing the innovation” (Zeldin et al., 2005, p. 128) of Y-AP into the program development process. As the organization has a long history of developing programs, the current traditions and assumptions could become a barrier to increased engagement of Inuit youth. This can be addressed through the theory of change, as it will “lay bare the program logic, the connections between assumptions, resources, activities, and desired program outcomes” (Camino, 2005, p. 81) to develop consensus among stakeholders about how a Y-AP approach will be integrated.

Study participants voiced concerns about the hesitation of Inuit youth to share their ideas, yet also expressed concern that substantial adult involvement could influence Inuit youth perspectives (I1; I3). This reflects the importance of addressing issues of role and power within Y-AP, as well as the often-held misconception that adults need to abdicate their power to youth

to create equality in the partnership (Camino, 2005; Zeldin et al., 2005). CRC staff involved in integrating Y-AP into program development will need to understand that “there will always be asymmetrical power between youth and adults in organizations because, bottom line, adults have fiduciary and fiscal responsibility for the organizations” (Zeldin et al., 2005, p. 129). However, the organizations with the greatest success in implementing Y-AP are continuously working to accommodate the interests and skill sets that both youth and adults bring to a project (Zeldin et al., 2005). This demonstrates the value of clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of CRC staff and Inuit youth, along with any other stakeholders involved, and outlining the decision-making processes. While CRC staff and Inuit youth may not have equal power, ensuring Inuit youth “voice and competency are respected by adults” (Zeldin et al., 2015, p. 129) will strengthen their commitment to the work.

**Recommendation 2: Build adult capacity for scaffolding youth in a Y-AP.** Study participants identified the importance of scaffolding youth in leadership roles, and shared various examples of how adults had offered that guidance in past projects. This was also reflected in the literature, which placed an emphasis on providing youth with the level of support needed to effectively participate in decision-making opportunities (Mitra et al., 2013). While the responsibility of adults to guide and scaffold youth was clearly identified by both inquiry participants and scholars, the literature highlighted a common gap in Y-AP implementation (Mitra et al., 2013).

Research found that adults involved in programs utilizing a Y-AP approach were not adequately prepared or supported to successfully transition from their typical role as teacher or program leader to a facilitation role that guided cooperative decision making (Mitra et al., 2013).

Zeldin et al. (2008) identified three leverage points to support quality implementation: developing the knowledge of stakeholders, providing opportunities for personal experience with Y-AP, and incorporating reflective practice to collaboratively identify organizational best practices (p. 272).

Given the vast geographical distances between communities in Nunavut and the substantial cost of travel, utilizing video conference technology may be of benefit. A recent initiative utilized video conference technology to host a meeting of teachers to discuss the best practices for implementing RE programs within their grade levels, and it was well received. A similar video conference session could be held with the teachers involved in the RE youth programs to introduce the concept and principles of Y-AP as an opportunity to develop the knowledge of those stakeholders involved in the implementation. A second video conference session could involve both youth and adults from the school teams to collaboratively plan their program goals for the school year. This session would provide an experience of Y-AP in practice, with modelling and facilitation by CRC staff.

To further demonstrate the Y-AP model and create space for reflection on best practices, CRC could host youth conferences in each of the three regions in Nunavut. This would provide the chance for youth and adults to build stronger relationships with each other and among communities, while also serving to “express their hopes and aspirations, articulate standards of quality, and share successes” (Zeldin et al., 2008, p. 273).

As CRC program delivery is through a partnership with the Government of Nunavut’s Department of Education, one study participant highlighted the importance of having curriculum integration to demonstrate territorial level support (12). In sharing the results of this inquiry with

the Education Department, CRC could discuss the possibility of integrating RE programs into curriculum to support broad implementation. This would offer support for Nunavut teachers to allocate their time to program implementation and help address the impact of high staff turnover, thus increasing the likelihood of sustained delivery (Hodge & Turner, 2016).

**Recommendation 3: Implement a Y-AP approach in developing program resources.**

While it is necessary to begin by developing an organizational framework for implementing Y-AP, as outlined in Recommendation 1, action is required to begin shifting organizational processes. As one study participant reflected, “I have sat in so many meetings where there is a philosophical discussion and there is no action taken. It doesn’t make any change” (I5). This participant went on to describe the importance of involving youth in actions, not just in dialogue.

In order to effectively involve Inuit youth in program development, CRC will need to formalize the responsibilities and expectations for each role in the development process. It will be important to identify multiple roles that Inuit youth could hold to appeal to their diverse interests, as study participants and scholars found youth were engaged through their interests and passions. Study participants specifically identified the importance of Inuit youth being involved in assessing current program resources, sharing their experiences with core issues reflected in the program content, and identifying preferred learning styles. While this presents a starting point, ongoing dialogue with Inuit youth needs to occur to ascertain other potential roles not currently identified.

In this inquiry, youth participants indicated their interest in working with adults on projects and emphasized the importance of learning as part of those experiences (PV1; PV2). This demonstrates the importance of offering opportunities to learn through the program

development process. Libby et al. (2005) found that it is ideal for youth to receive training at the beginning of a project to have the greatest chance for successful participation. Inuit youth involved in RE programs currently receive training in facilitation and public speaking skills, along with content on specific community issues. This provides a foundation; however, CRC could incorporate culturally relevant resources that educate Inuit youth in group meeting procedures, decision making, writing, and project planning to further support their involvement. Furthermore, CRC could develop a communication plan for sharing territorial and national opportunities with both youth and adult members of school teams. This could lead to an increased sense of program ownership among Inuit youth and a stronger relationship between Inuit youth and CRC as well as reduce the risk of adults becoming information gatekeepers (Mitra, 2009).

**Recommendation 4: Establish an evaluation framework.** Study participants identified the need for developing an evaluation framework (I2; I5). This reflects CRC's commitment to ensure programs are evidence based and is important for sustaining support at a leadership level within the organization. To build this framework, I suggest starting with the collaborative development of a theory of change with CRC staff and Inuit youth, as described in Recommendation 1. This will ensure that program outcomes have been clearly established with involvement from Inuit youth, the intended program participants, and, therefore, can be measured.

As discussed in Chapter 2, I found limited research defining how to evaluate a Y-AP approach. Zeldin et al. (2014) offered an evaluation measure that incorporated the dimensions of "youth voice in decision making . . . and supportive adult relationships" (p. 338). While CRC

could consider utilizing the measure developed by Zeldin et al. (2014), it would be important to examine how these two dimensions were evaluated regardless of the tool selected. Furthermore, it would be valuable to consider how Inuit youth could be engaged in developing the evaluation framework and how their experiences of participating in Y-APs could be represented.

In evaluating the integration of the Y-AP model into RE program development with Inuit youth in Nunavut, CRC can determine which components offer the greatest impact for all stakeholders involved. This presents an opportunity for reflection and development of promising practices within the organization, which could guide the involvement of youth in program development processes in other settings and across other departments within CRC.

### **Organizational Implications**

The focus of this inquiry reflected a broad challenge within CRC to effectively engage youth within the organization. The organizational sponsor identified the need to explore how CRC could improve youth participation, specifically with Inuit youth, as they have not been engaged in the past. As the organizational sponsor leads the delivery of CRC services in Nunavut, this was within her scope of influence and allows her to champion the recommendations both internally in the organization and externally with territorial partners. This is integral, as the recommendations require the support of both the national leadership team for RE as well as the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education.

The organizational sponsor and an Inuk Elder, who was a member of the inquiry team, were engaged in discussion to reflect and guide the recommendations for the organization based on the study findings. This helped to ensure that the recommendations could be implemented by

CRC, while respecting the partnership with Nunavut communities and seeking to collaborate on recommendations that reflected Inuit wisdom and knowledge.

The study findings, conclusions, and recommendations will also be shared with study participants through various approaches. First, Inuit youth participants and Nunavut teachers will receive a newsletter in English and Inuktitut to thank them for their participation and share what CRC has learned through the process. During my next visit to the communities of Hall Beach and Rankin Inlet, I will invite all participants to a short meeting where I will share what has been recommended to CRC and how the organization is integrating the findings of the study into program delivery in Nunavut. This will be an opportunity for discussion and to respond to any questions or feedback that participants provide. Second, CRC participants will be invited to a webinar presentation to discuss the findings, recommendations, and implications for implementation.

Along with support from leadership, financial and staff implications will need to be considered. The implementation of these recommendations will require allocation of personnel with the appropriate knowledge and skills. This may require current members to be seconded or additional staff to be hired for the implementation phase. In addition, financial resources will need to be identified to support meetings, incentives for youth participation, resource development, dissemination of resource materials, and training for those using the resources.

Overall, the recommendations emphasize the implementation of a Y-AP approach to RE program development. The increased participation of Inuit youth will help ensure that RE programs are meeting their cultural, literacy, and learning needs in an engaging way. Additional benefits, as discussed in Chapter 2, are that Y-APs have been found to promote positive youth

development, increased engagement in social justice initiatives, and a stronger sense of community (Camino, 2000; Halsall & Forneris, 2016; Mitra, 2009; Ramey et al., 2017; Zeldin et al., 2013; Zeldin et al., 2014). These benefits align with the mission of CRC and the aim of RE programs to develop leadership among youth.

In my current role with CRC, I will be directly involved in the implementation of these recommendations in partnership with my organizational sponsor. Building on successful change initiatives that have taken place within the organization, the focus will be to “start with a demonstration of success to reduce the internal barriers we create for ourselves and help show how it can be integrated into the organization” (S. Burke, personal communication, May 10, 2017). Implementing the recommendations in program development with Nunavut is a first step. Through reflection and evaluation, the opportunity to learn and adjust the RE program development process in other settings and within other CRC programs is presented, thus creating the potential for greater involvement of youth in decision-making roles within CRC.

### **Implications for Future Inquiry**

Through conducting this study I uncovered two areas that would benefit from further inquiry to support the successful engagement of youth in organizational processes. One area is to understand how Y-AP can support effective participation of Indigenous youth and Inuit youth, specifically. While review of the literature identified emerging research on the impact of Y-AP with Indigenous youth, I found no research that evaluated the application of Y-AP with Inuit youth. This identifies a void in the understanding of how to successfully implement Y-AP, as Inuit youth and their communities are diverse and distinct from other communities in Canada.

This knowledge would benefit both CRC, as a national organization that serves all provinces and territories, as well as other organizations working with Inuit youth and communities.

While research has indicated that incorporating a Y-AP model into programming is an effective way to engage youth, there are still a number of questions regarding the aspects of successful integration. Of particular interest is the implementation of Y-AP in complex settings. In the case of CRC, programs are delivered across multiple sites within a national organization and program delivery is facilitated in partnership with local organizations such as schools and after-school recreation programs. This presents an opportunity to identify how larger organizations can effectively support the ongoing Y-AP at a local level and provide the necessary scaffolding of local adults within those programs. In addition, strategies for integrating a Y-AP approach at the highest levels of an organization need to be explored. As youth participation and decision-making roles increase at local and national levels within organizations, the CRC staff's understanding of successful Y-AP will begin to reflect both adult and youth perspectives.

### **Chapter and Thesis Summary**

In weaving together the current literature on Indigenous youth leadership and successful Y-AP with the voices of Inuit youth, Nunavut teachers, and CRC staff, recommendations for CRC emerged. In presenting the inquiry recommendations, I have suggested realistic actions that can be taken to promote the increased engagement of Inuit youth in program development, while assisting adults in scaffolding and supporting youth involvement in decision-making roles. Through evaluating the impacts of these changes and identifying successful practices, CRC can identify opportunities for engaging youth in other settings and within other program areas.

While shifting an organization to create room for youth can be challenging, it is necessary. As one participant summarized, “Nothing about us without us” (I4)—this needs to be the foundation to developing programming for youth. Through engagement of Inuit youth, CRC programs will integrate Inuit culture and values through experiential learning that reflects the current realities of growing up in Nunavut. Ultimately, programming will better meet the needs of youth, teachers, and their communities.

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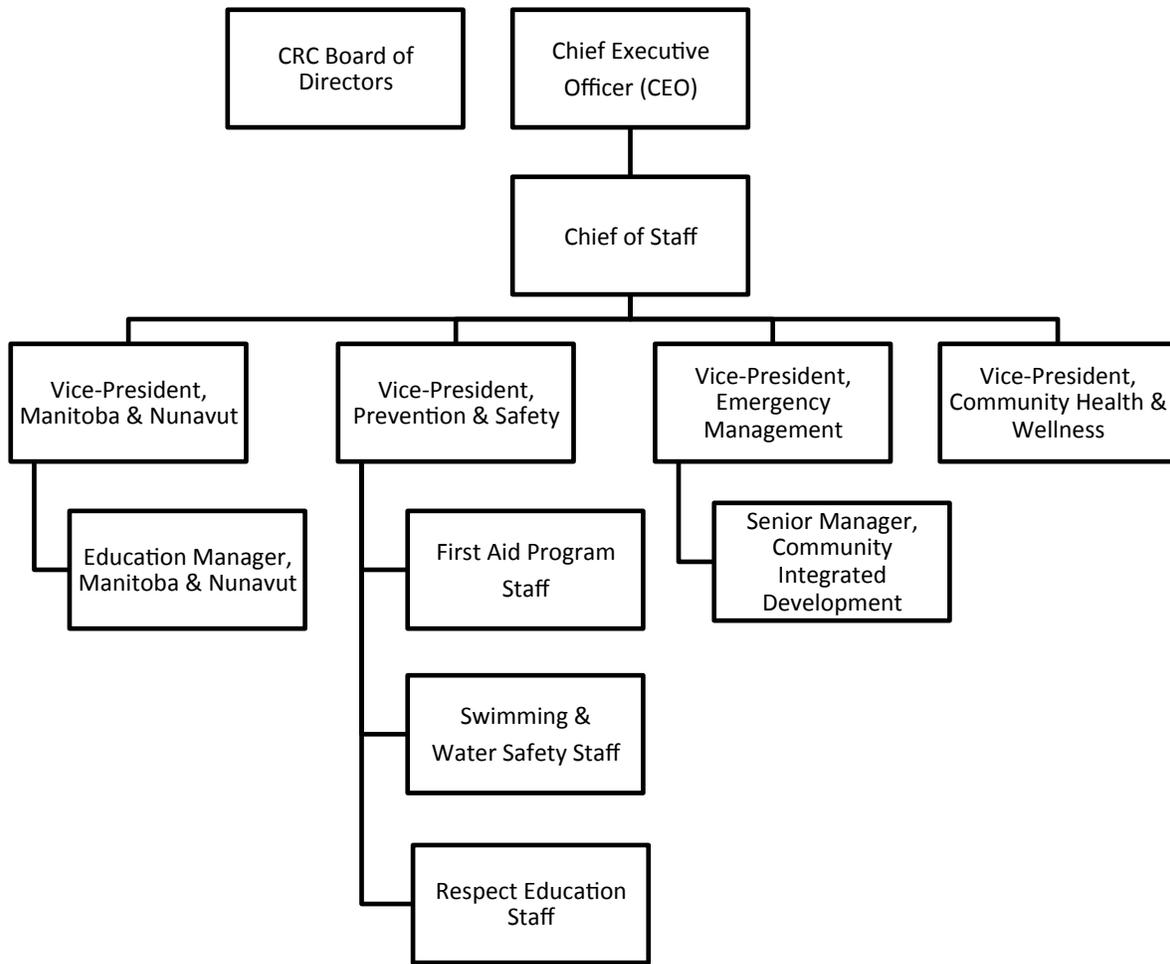
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**Appendix A: Canadian Red Cross Organizational Structure**



*Note.* CEO = Chief Executive officer; CRC = Canadian Red Cross.

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**Appendix B: Inquiry Team Member Letter of Agreement**



In partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership Degree at Royal Roads University, Rebecca Ulrich will be conducting an inquiry research study with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) to learn how the CRC can improve Inuit youth engagement in the development of Respect Education programs, in order to meet the learning needs of Inuit youth. The Student’s credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by calling Dr. Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership, at [telephone number] or email [email address].

As a volunteer Inquiry Team Member assisting the Student with this project, your role may include one or more of the following: providing advice on the relevance and wording of questions and letters of invitation, supporting the logistics of the data-gathering methods, including observing, assisting, or facilitating an interview or photovoice session, taking notes, transcribing, or reviewing analysis of data, to assist the Student and the CRC organizational change process. In the course of this activity, you may be privy to confidential inquiry data.

In compliance with the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Policy, under which this inquiry project is being conducted, all personal identifiers and any other confidential information generated or accessed by the inquiry team advisor will only be used in the performance of the functions of this project, and must not be disclosed to anyone other than persons authorized to receive it, both during the inquiry period and beyond it. Recorded information in all formats is covered by this agreement. Personal identifiers include participant names, contact information, personally identifying turns of phrase or comments, and any other personally identifying information.

Personal information will be collected, recorded, corrected, accessed, altered, used, disclosed, retained, secured and destroyed as directed by the Student, under direction of the Royal Roads Academic Supervisor.

Inquiry Team Members who are uncertain whether any information they may wish to share about the project they are working on is personal or confidential will verify this with Rebecca Ulrich, the Student.

**Statement of Informed Consent:**

I have read and understand this agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix C: Questions for Photovoice**

1. Take a photo that shows what it feels like to be fully included by adults in a project.
2. Take a photo that shows how you feel IQ principles apply to your life.

**Appendix D: Questions for Interviews with Nunavut Teachers**

- Think about a time when a student was involved in developing a new project. Tell me about how the student became involved and the roles they had.
- What helps keep students engaged over time?
- How do these projects integrate Inuit knowledge or IQ principles?
- Do you adapt resources for your classroom? If so, how?
- When teaching sensitive topics, what worked well for your students?
- When teaching sensitive topics, what hasn't worked well?
- Is there anything else you want to add about engaging youth in program development?

**Appendix E: Questions for Interviews with CRC Staff**

- Do you believe that Inuit youth should be involved in designing RE programs intended for Inuit youth audiences?
- Reflecting on previous experiences developing resources, can you tell me about how youth were involved and the roles they had?
- How could Inuit youth be engaged in RE program development?
- How could Inuit youth be engaged in defining program outcomes?
- How can Inuit youth be involved in defining the program delivery approach?
- How can Inuit youth be involved in evaluating whether the program has met the stated outcomes?
- How are culture and Inuit knowledge integrated in RE programs currently?
- How can RE programs integrate Inuit knowledge and IQ principles? And, how can Inuit youth be involved in this process?
- Is there anything else you want to add?

**Appendix F: Invitation Letter for Photovoice**

To [Prospective Participant],

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project. My name is Rebecca Ulrich and this project is part of my master's degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. To confirm that I am a student with Royal Roads University, you can contact Dr. Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies: [email address] or [telephone number].

The focus of my research project is to find ways of involving Nunavut youth in the development of programs with the Canadian Red Cross. As youth living in Nunavut, you are the experts and I'm looking to learn from you. For this project you would participate in Photovoice, which asks you to take photos that answer three questions. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to come to two meetings at the school outside of school hours.

What I learn from you, and interviews with teachers and Red Cross staff, will be put in a final report for Royal Roads University. I will share the findings with you in a presentation at school and in a one-page newsletter. The final report, results, and/or recommendations will also be shared with the Red Cross and may be presented at a conference, or published in a newsletter, journal, or article.

As a participant in the research, you will have a chance to share your ideas and possibly change how Respect Education programs are developed in the future. Due to the small number of youth participants, I can't guarantee complete confidentiality of what you share.

Your photos and what you talk about during the Photovoice sessions will be audio recorded and summarized in a final report and one-page newsletter. I will not quote you directly and all of the information that you share will be kept strictly confidential. The audio recording will be transcribed and all electronic data will be stored on a password-protected external hard drive, which will be stored in a locked cabinet. All data will be destroyed after one year, a date no later than April 30, 2018.

You do not have to participate in this research project. If you decide you want to, you can stop at any point. If you choose to stop participating, the information you shared will be destroyed immediately.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Name: Rebecca Ulrich

Email: [email address]      Telephone: [telephone number]s

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Ulrich

**Appendix G: Informed Consent for Photovoice**

By signing this form, you agree that you have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

- I commit to respect the confidential nature of the Photovoice by not sharing identifying information about other participants.
- I consent to the audio recording of the Photovoice session.
- I consent to my photo being captured for documentation purposes only. I understand that these images will not be used for marketing or publication purposes. I understand that I will be contacted again in the future should the researcher wish to use any image of mine for a secondary purpose.

-OR-

- I do NOT consent to my photo being captured for documentation purposes.

Youth Name: (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent for your \_\_\_\_\_ [child's name] to participate in this project.

Parent/Guardian Name: (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix H: Interview Information Letter**

### **Engaging Inuit Youth in the Canadian Red Cross**

To [Prospective Participant],

My name is Rebecca Ulrich and this research project is part of the requirement for a Master of Arts in Leadership at Royal Roads University. My credentials with Royal Roads University can be established by contacting Dr. Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies: [email address] or [telephone number].

#### **Purpose of the study and sponsoring organization**

The purpose of the research project is to learn how the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) can engage Nunavut youth in Respect Education program development to ensure their learning needs are met. Through a participatory action research process, I hope to determine how CRC can best engage Nunavut youth in program development through dialogue with youth, teachers and CRC staff. The project is sponsored by Sarah Burke, Senior Manager of Community Integrated Development with the Canadian Red Cross.

#### **Your participation and how information will be collected**

The research will consist of one-on-one interviews using videoconference technology, which are anticipated to last 45 to 60 minutes. With the permission of the interviewee, the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed for the purposes of data analysis. During the interview, the interviewer may take additional notes. The interview questions will seek to learn how Nunavut youth are currently engaged in program development, along with understanding what approaches would support Nunavut youth in being engaged.

#### **Benefits and risks to participation**

As a participant in the research, you will have an opportunity to share your perspectives and potentially influence Respect Education program development processes in the future. There are additional benefits to both the CRC and Nunavut school partnerships, as this research could support increased youth engagement in program development and revised program resources that better meet the needs of Nunavut students.

Due to the nature of the interview process and the small sample size, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

#### **Inquiry team**

I will be the sole interviewer. All responses will be transcribed and then coded to create an anonymous data set that will be analyzed by me. Analyzed data will also be reviewed by the inquiry team.

#### **Real or perceived conflict of interest**

While I have no power over you as a participant, it may be perceived that as an employee of CRC I stand to gain from this research. This potential conflict of interest will be addressed by engaging the inquiry team to review the analyzed data collected through the interview process and member checking, which is the process of checking data analysis with participants. I disclose this information here so that you can make a fully informed decision on whether or not to participate in this study.

### **Confidentiality, security of data, and retention period**

I will work to protect your privacy throughout this study. All information I collect will be maintained in confidence with hard copies (e.g., consent forms) stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office. Electronic data (such as transcripts or audio files) will be stored on a password-protected external hard drive and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office. Information from the interview will be recorded in hand-written and audio format and, where appropriate, summarized, in anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual. All raw data will be destroyed after one year, a date no later than April 30, 2018. If you withdraw from the study and choose to withdraw your identifiable contributions before they become part of an anonymous data set, the transcription of your identifiable contributions will be destroyed immediately.

### **Sharing results**

Following the interviews, the transcription of your interview and related analysis will be shared with you through a presentation during a follow-up visit to the community and in a one-page summary. The information obtained will inform my thesis for Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, and will be published. I will also be sharing my research findings in a final report with my Project Sponsor, Sarah Burke, and the Respect Education leadership team of the CRC. The findings may also be submitted in a journal article or conference presentation.

### **Procedure for withdrawing from the study**

You may withdraw from the study at any time by contacting me by email or telephone. Your contributions will be removed from the transcription of the audio recordings, as stated above.

You are not required to participate in this research project. By signing the consent form, you indicate that you have read and understand the information above and give your free and informed consent to participate in this project.

Please keep a copy of this information letter for your records.

**Appendix I: Teacher and Staff Interview Invitation**

Hello [Prospective Participant],

I would like to invite you to be part of a research project that I am leading as part of my master's degree in Leadership at Royal Roads University. The focus of this research is to find ways to involve Nunavut youth in the development of Red Cross Respect Education programs to meet their learning needs. The first stage of research involved working with Nunavut students through Photovoice to gather their thoughts, feelings and ideas about being involved in projects with adults.

Building on the themes identified by Inuit youth, I am interested in interviewing Nunavut teachers and national Red Cross staff to gather your perspectives and expertise. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes, and take place by phone or videoconference technology. With your consent, the interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The interview transcription will be shared with you following the interview to give you the opportunity to review it for accuracy.

I have attached an information letter that provides additional details, along with a consent form. If you are willing to be involved, please sign and return the consent form to me. Upon receiving your signed consent form, we can confirm an interview time that works for your schedule.

Thanks for considering this request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions:

Email: [email address]      Telephone: [telephone number]

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Ulrich

**Appendix J: Informed Consent for Interviews**

By signing this form, you agree that you are over the age of 18 and have read the information letter for this study. Your signature states that you are giving your voluntary and informed consent to participate in this project.

I consent to the audio recording of the one-on-one interview.

-OR-

I do NOT consent to the audio recording of the one-on-one interview.

Name: (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix K: Description of Photos**

Photo 1: A teacher standing at the front of a classroom speaking with students. Youth participants described how this photo reflected the importance of communication and learning from adults. Youth participants also described how this showed an Elder teaching Inuit culture.

Photo 2: The outside of the community wellness centre. Youth participants explained how this space was used for after-school programming that was led by youth for younger students, with the support of a community staff person. This photo represented youth teaching, as well as receiving support from adults. Participants described how adults helped them get a voice and be involved.

Photo 3: A small wooden model of a qamutiik (sled), which is used for travel in the Arctic, was placed on top of a blue wall hanging that had felt images of polar bears, seals, and flowers sewn on to the fabric. Youth participants reflected on the importance of being prepared and bringing the right gear to go out on the land to hunt and fish, and how that could be applied to working on other projects together.

Photo 4: A pair of sealskin mitts. Youth participants described how the mitts represented a lot of hard work, invention and innovation, and warmth. Youth participants also described how mitts are often made by mothers or grandmothers for their family members and that this represented helping and serving others.

Photo 5: A person sewing together a pair of sealskin mitts. Youth participants described this photo as showing an Elder still practising a tradition she was taught, and that youth were learning by observation. Youth participants talked about the importance of seeing it with their own eyes.

Photo 6: A banner in the hallway outside of a classroom that reads, “Keep yourself workin’ like a Hunter.” Youth participants described how this represented the responsibility to work hard, to keep trying, and not give up if you are not successful the first time.

Photo 7: A young person is walking through the snow, and beside her are the footprints of another person. Youth participants shared how this represented the importance of learning from other people’s mistakes, independence, and being able to follow the path or take your own way to get there.