

2009

# Evaluation of the Connections High School Multicultural, Environmental, Leadership Program

## Final Report

By Merrill Cooper,  
Guyn Cooper Research Associates Ltd.  
March 2009



**Final Report: Evaluation of the Connections High School  
Multicultural, Environmental, Leadership Program**

Completed for the Connections Education Society by Merrill Cooper, Guyn Cooper Research Associates Ltd.

Funding for this evaluation was provided by The Calgary Foundation and the Government of Alberta, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit, Human Rights, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism Education Fund.



March 2009  
Calgary Alberta

© Connections Education Society

Suggested citation: Cooper, M. 2009. *Final Report: Evaluation of the Connections High School Multicultural, Environmental, Leadership Program*. (Calgary, AB: Connections Education Society).

# CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	i
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION .....	1
3. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS.....	3
3.1 Outcome evaluation.....	3
3.2 Qualitative evaluation.....	4
3.3 Two evaluation cohorts .....	4
3.4 Limitations of the evaluation.....	5
4. 2007-2008 COHORT .....	6
4.1 Diversity/racism .....	7
4.1.1 Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes.....	7
4.1.2 Diversity/racism efficacy .....	8
4.1.3 Diversity behaviour.....	8
4.2 Leadership .....	10
4.2.1 Leadership knowledge/attitudes.....	10
4.2.2 Leadership efficacy.....	11
4.2.3 Leadership behaviour.....	12
4.3 Environment .....	12
4.3.1 Environmental knowledge/attitudes.....	12
4.3.2 Environmental efficacy.....	13
4.3.3 Environmental behaviour.....	14
4.4 Sharing learnings with others and participants' perceptions about program impacts .....	15
5. FALL 2008 COHORT .....	17
5.1 Participant demographics .....	17
5.2 Diversity/racism .....	19
5.2.1 Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes.....	19
5.2.2 Diversity/racism efficacy .....	20
5.2.3 Diversity/racism behaviour.....	21
5.3 Leadership .....	22
5.3.1 Leadership knowledge/attitudes.....	22
5.3.2 Leadership efficacy.....	22
5.3.3 Leadership behaviour.....	23
5.4 Environment .....	24
5.4.1 Environmental knowledge/attitudes.....	24
5.4.2 Environmental efficacy.....	25
5.4.3 Environmental behaviour.....	25
5.5 Sharing learnings with others and participants' perceptions about program impacts .....	26
5.6 Participants' feedback about aspects of the residential program .....	28
5.7 Teacher survey .....	29
6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION .....	31
7. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	35
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRES .....	37
APPENDIX 2: PROMISING PROGRAM ELEMENTS.....	46

## TABLES

Table 1. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes .....	7
Table 2. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism efficacy .....	8
Table 3. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism behaviour .....	9
Table 4. Cohort 1 - Leadership knowledge/attitudes .....	10
Table 5. Cohort 1 - Leadership efficacy.....	11
Table 6. Cohort 1 - Leadership behaviour.....	12
Table 7. Cohort 1 - Environmental knowledge/attitudes.....	13
Table 8. Cohort 1 - Environmental efficacy.....	14
Table 9. Cohort 1 - Environmental behaviour.....	14
Table 10. Cohort 1 - Sharing learnings .....	15
Table 11. Cohort 1 - Participants' perceptions.....	15
Table 12. Cohort 2 - Sex .....	17
Table 13. Cohort 2 - Age .....	17
Table 14. Cohort 2 - Ethnocultural background.....	18
Table 15. Cohort 2 - School.....	18
Table 16. Cohort 2 - Grade .....	18
Table 17. Cohort 2 - Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes.....	19
Table 18. Cohort 2 - Diversity/racism efficacy .....	20
Table 19. Cohort 2 - Diversity/racism behaviour.....	21
Table 20. Cohort 2 - Leadership knowledge/attitudes .....	22
Table 21. Cohort 2 - Leadership efficacy.....	23
Table 22. Cohort 2 - Leadership behaviour.....	24
Table 23. Cohort 2 - Environmental knowledge/attitudes.....	24
Table 24. Cohort 2 - Environmental efficacy.....	25
Table 25. Cohort 2 - Environmental behaviour.....	25
Table 26. Cohort 2 - Sharing learnings .....	26
Table 27. Cohort 2 - Participants' perceptions.....	26
Table 28. Cohort 2 - Participants' feedback about aspects of the residential program.....	28
Table 29. Cohort 2 - Teachers' assessments of individual participants.....	30

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Connections High School Multicultural, Environmental, Leadership Program (“Connections”) is an anti-racism and leadership initiative of the Connections Education Society in Calgary, Alberta. The Connections program seeks to increase high school students’ understanding of cross-cultural understanding, race relations, racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and environmental stewardship, and to help them to develop the leadership and inter-personal skills to change their own attitudes and behaviours and to influence positive change in their own schools and communities.

These are very ambitious goals. Evaluations of anti-racism and anti-discrimination programs show that they sometimes produce short-term changes in attitude, but these changes are rarely sustained over time. In addition, programs virtually never result in long-term behavioural change.

**This comprehensive, quantitative and qualitative longitudinal evaluation revealed that the Connections program fully achieved all of its objectives. Youth who completed the program demonstrated sustained improvements in leadership abilities and behaviours in conjunction with pro-environmental and anti-racist and anti-discrimination attitudes and, most importantly, behaviours. In fact, rather than fading over time, some of the program’s impacts had increased three months after program completion, and statistically significant attitudinal and behavioural changes were sustained one year after program completion. The success of the Connections program may be unique among anti-racism and anti-discrimination programs.**

Comments from participants were consistent with the quantitative outcomes. For example:

- *Connections had a huge impact on my life, and I think the best thing that changed is that I always speak up now when I hear ridiculous things that people say.*
- *Lots has changed for me because I have been standing up for things that I never used to and I have been hearing a change around our school because we do not use any words that can offend someone.*
- *The program made me say something at home...my dad and my brother are always cracking jokes, but some of them were maybe not hurtful to them but to other people they would be.*
- *This program has made me think twice about things, and I believe it has changed who I am as a person and I think I've become a better person because of this program.*
- *This program impacted my life in an incredible way. I have learned to be more accepting and miss it a ton. I have brought the light I saw at Connections back to my school.*
- *This program was amazing! It really made/makes me think and helped/helps me to make better decisions and learn about racism. Plus I made great friends there!!*
- *I could never say enough about this program it was so life changing to me. I learned so much not only about me but about the people around me; this program should be offered to everyone.*

The success of the Connections program appears to be attributable to the following programming features:

- The program is grounded in research and was thoughtfully refined and updated over a 30-year period.
- The program includes multiple, sequenced strategies and active learning activities to simultaneously increase knowledge and awareness and develop the leadership skills and confidence required to put

this knowledge into action—approaches which facilitate learning with any audience about any issue or subject matter.

- The program is delivered in accordance with criteria identified by research as helping to facilitate positive outcomes.
- The full program takes several months to complete, unlike many strategies that involve a single training session.
- The program goes beyond providing information and raising awareness; it also includes practical skills development strategies.
- Strategies used in the program several different theoretical foundations.
- The program does not exclusively target members of the dominant cultural group. In fact, it explicitly includes and empowers participants from all diversity groups.

It is recommended that the Connections Education Society present the findings of this evaluation to the Government of Alberta and seek to have its program reinstated as a high school credit course. It is generally recognized that racism and discrimination create profound problems for those who experience it and for society as a whole, and it is abundantly clear that the results achieved by the Connections program are not and cannot be achieved through other existing programming, including the provincial social studies curriculum. In times of shrinking budgets and fiscal restraint, government and other funding bodies have a heightened duty to make the best use of their limited resources by investing in programs that demonstrate results. Ideally, the Connections program should be a mandatory course for all high school students in Alberta. In the meantime, it is recommended that Connections Education Society seek sustained funding from all possible government and charitable funding sources in order to continue to offer the program to as many high school students as possible.

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

This report provides the results of a comprehensive evaluation of the Connections High School Multicultural, Environmental, Leadership Program (“Connections”), an anti-racism and leadership initiative of the Connections Education Society in Calgary, Alberta.

The Connections program seeks to increase high school students’ understanding of cross-cultural understanding, race relations, racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and environmental stewardship, and to help them to develop the leadership and inter-personal skills to change their own attitudes and behaviours and to influence positive change in their own schools and communities.

An evaluation of the Connections program completed in 2002 revealed a high-quality program that resulted in meaningful and statistically significant changes in participants’ knowledge about and attitudes toward diversity and racism, and encouraged longer-term behavioural changes in these two areas, including the development of leadership skills required to effect broader change. However, attrition from the 2001-2002 study group, resulting in a shrinking number of evaluation participants over time, meant that the longer-term effects of the program, although very promising, could not be conclusively established. These initial findings were tantalizing, as evaluations of other anti-racism and diversity programs have typically revealed few or no enduring changes in attitudes and virtually no enduring changes in behaviour among program participants.

The current evaluation sought to repeat and enhance the 2002 evaluation with a larger sample of participants and over a longer time period to clarify both the immediate and longer-term effects of the Connections program and, if applicable, to identify the factors that contribute to the unique success of the Connections program.

# **2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Connections began in 1987 as a program of the Calgary Board of Education with support from the Government of Canada, Department of the Secretary of State and the Kiwanis Club of Calgary (Downtown). Connections subsequently obtained independent society status and, with financial support from a number of private foundations and government sources, continued to offer a residential program once or twice each school year at Kamp Kiwanis, located in the idyllic foothills of the Rocky Mountains, 25 kilometers outside the city of Calgary. In fall 2005, the program was adopted once more by the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) and delivered by Chinook Learning Services, this time as a provincially-approved, locally-developed four-credit high school course, which allowed the program to hire a full-time teacher/coordinator, offer multiple sessions over the course of the school year, accommodate several hundred students from southern Alberta school districts each year, and include a school-based educational component before and after an outdoor school experience. However, in spring 2008, due to funding restrictions related to credit programs and to perceptions on the part of the Alberta Education and the CBE about overlaps between the Connections curriculum and the provincial Alberta social studies curriculum, Connections lost its CBE status yet again. The program could no longer be offered through Chinook Learning Services and could no longer support a full-time coordinator. The Connections Education Society was able to obtain government and foundation support sufficient to offer one session of the program in fall 2008.

Each session of the Connections program accommodates between 50 and 70 students, typically representing seven to 10 high schools from across the province. A teacher from each of these schools is required to attend the residential program and to organize and supervise associated learning activities with the participants at their own schools.

Teachers from the participating schools select the students who will be invited to participate. The students selected must be willing to work independently and be able to manage their time effectively, as the program is quite time-consuming and operates in addition to their regular school work, requiring four days away from other school classes. Other criteria for consideration include an interest in learning about cross-cultural issues and diversity, a willingness to share thoughts in a constructive manner, and a desire to make a positive difference in the world. Finally, efforts are made to ensure that participants include members of non-dominant ethno-cultural groups.

The key component of the Connections program is an intensive four-day, four-night residential program at Kamp Kiwanis. The residential curriculum consists of multiple, sequenced strategies and highly-participatory learning activities, specifically tailored for adolescent participants and led by program facilitators and guest presenters, that connect issues of culture, diversity, leadership, and the environment. Indoor sessions are interspersed with outdoor sessions, along with evening campfires and recreational activities. Learning strategies and activities include simulations and role plays, cooperative learning and problem-solving activities, journal writing, small- and large-group facilitated discussions, and interactive learning sessions about cultures and diversity issues. Students have opportunities to discuss, debate, and reflect upon the issues in a safe and supportive environment. The strategies and activities are thoughtfully planned to simultaneously increase knowledge and awareness and develop the confidence and practical skills required to put this knowledge into action.

The program also includes pre- and post-residential program work and activities. During the period in which the program was a for-credit high school course of the CBE, these activities were highly structured. Prior to attending the residential program, students completed 16 hours of on-line work with teacher guidance and with the other students scheduled to attend during the same week of residential school. This component focused on race relations concepts and on helping students to develop a sense of the cultural diversity within their own schools. Students also explored and discussed with other students a number of related diversity education and leadership topics. Following the four-day residential component experience, students completed an additional 26 hours of coursework, some of it on-line with their fellow participants and some of it at their schools, including completion of a final project intended to have a positive impact on their own school. As a non-credit program, these activities continue, although they are less rigorous and it is more difficult to encourage participants to complete all of the non-residential program components.



### **3. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODS**

As noted above, the Connections program seeks to increase high school students' understanding of cross-cultural understanding, race relations, racism, discrimination, stereotyping, and environmental stewardship, and to help them to develop the leadership and inter-personal skills to change their own attitudes and behaviours and to influence positive change in their own schools and communities.

This evaluation sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent and in which ways were Connections participants influenced by participation in the program in the short term?
2. To what extent did Connections participants retain knowledge, attitudes, and leadership skills and behaviours acquired during the program three months and one year after the conclusion of the program?
3. To what extent did Connections participants act on or share with others any of the knowledge, attitudes, and leadership skills and behaviours acquired during the program three months and one year after the conclusion of the program?
4. If the Connection programs results in enduring changes in attitudes, knowledge, and/or behaviours, what are the factors that contribute to its success?

To these ends, the evaluation used a mixed-method design that included quantitative outcome measurement and qualitative evaluation.

#### **3.1 Outcome evaluation**

Recognizing the inter-relationships among cultural competency, leadership and, particularly in the context of an outdoor residential program, environmental stewardship, the specific goals of the program are to encourage participants to:

- Work together to combat stereotyping, racism, prejudice, and discrimination
- Foster cross-cultural understanding
- Effectively deal with ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudice
- Develop leadership skills
- Connect with the natural environment

For a better fit with quantitative evaluation, these goals were re-phrased as outcomes, as represented in the logic model below.

Domain	Initial Outcomes (at the end of the residential program)	Long-term outcomes (3 months after program)	Longer-term outcomes (1 year after program)
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased sensitivity/awareness of human impact on the environment</li> <li>increased knowledge about the environment and environmentally friendly behaviours</li> <li>increased sense of efficacy to effect environmental change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased/maintained sensitivity/awareness of human impact on the environment</li> <li>increase in environmentally friendly behaviours</li> <li>increased/maintained sense of efficacy to effect environmental change</li> <li>increased involvement in organized environmental activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>improvements or benefits achieved through participation are maintained one year after participation</li> </ul>
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity about the effects of discrimination and racism</li> <li>increased knowledge about personal strategies to deal with/combat discrimination/racism</li> <li>increased sense of efficacy to address racism and discrimination/promote diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased/maintained awareness and sensitivity about effects of discrimination/racism</li> <li>increased/maintained sense of efficacy to deal with/combat discrimination/racism</li> <li>increased application of personal strategies to address racism and discrimination/promote diversity</li> </ul>	
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased understanding of the concepts of leadership</li> <li>increased understanding of the techniques of leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased sense of efficacy (general)</li> <li>increased leadership behaviour (general and specific)</li> </ul>	

A survey with variables capturing indicators of knowledge, awareness, and behaviours in each of the three domains was administered to participants before the program, at the conclusion of the residential component of the program, three months after the program and, for one of the two cohorts (see below), one year after the program. For one cohort, pre-tests and follow-up tests were administered to two teachers per student from each student's school, one of whom was not involved in the Connections program. Copies of all survey instruments are provided in Appendix 1. The instruments were initially developed for the 2002 evaluation and were adjusted to reflect changes in programming between 2002 and 2008. Data from the surveys were entered in a database and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

### 3.2 Qualitative evaluation

Additional Likert-type variables were included in the immediate post-test and longer-term post-tests to collect qualitative data on students' perceptions of how they were affected by participation in the program, along with their feedback on program components and delivery methods. The qualitative evaluation also included review of all program materials and documentation and observation of one five-day session of the residential program

### 3.3 Two evaluation cohorts

The evaluation included two cohorts, with the data from each cohort analyzed and presented separately:

#### 2007-2008 Cohort

The first cohort included 134 students who participated in six Connections programs in 2007-2008. This cohort was followed longitudinally, with data collected at three months and one year after program

completion, to determine the extent to which the initial benefits of program participation were retained over time. Evaluation of this cohort did not include qualitative evaluation other than the collection of data from participants about their views about the long-term impacts of participation.

### ***Fall 2008 Cohort***

The second cohort included the 53 students who completed the Connections program in fall 2008, including the residential component in October 2008. This cohort was followed longitudinally for three months following program completion only. However, evaluation of the program using data from this cohort includes both teacher survey data and qualitative evaluation components, which helped to identify the features of programming which contribute to the program's success.

There were two reasons for completing two discrete evaluations on the two cohorts: First, the programs in which the two cohorts participated were slightly different, in that in 2007-2008 the program was still a high school credit course which, as noted earlier, meant somewhat more rigorous school-based components with higher levels of student completion of all components; second, a primary objective of the evaluation was to determine the longer-term effects of participation, which would mean following the 2008 cohort until December 2009, well beyond the deadline for this evaluation.

## ***3.4 Limitations of the evaluation***

It should be noted that, for the 2007-08 cohort, the longer-term outcome findings may reflect an element of self-selection bias.

This evaluation is not a research study and does not reflect an experimental design with a control group.

## 4. 2007-2008 COHORT

The 2007-2008 cohort included 134 students who participated in six Connections programs in the 2007-2008 school year.

As part of its regular data collection process, program staff had administered the 2002 version of the participant survey before the program, immediately after program completion, and three months after program completion. As part of the current evaluation, a *fourth* survey, identical to the three-month follow-up test, was administered on-line in November 2008 to all participants who could be located, resulting in self-selected long-term follow-up sample of 37 participants from 2007-08. Almost all of those who completed the fourth test had participated in the residential program in 2007, meaning that about one year had elapsed between the time they attended the program and the time at which they completed the final survey.

Data from the pre-tests (before the program) were compared with data from the follow-up test (three months after the program) to determine if and where statistically significant changes had occurred; data from the three-month follow-up test were compared with data from the one-year follow-up test to determine if and where the benefits of participation had been retained.<sup>1</sup> Data from the tests were compared using the appropriate non-parametric significance tests.<sup>2</sup>

The findings of the analysis are presented according to the three outcome categories: diversity, leadership, and environment. Within each category, the results have been grouped by (i) changes in knowledge and attitude; (ii) changes in efficacy (the belief that one has the power to effect change in the world—a key precursor to behavioural change); and (iii) changes in behaviours.

For easy viewing, changes on each of the indicators of change are presented in table form, with the responses of participants provided as a percentage before the program, three months after the program, and one year after the program, noting significant changes (and the direction of changes) between testing periods.

As shown in the following tables, analysis of the data reveals large and significant improvements on most of the indicators within each of the outcome categories and, most importantly, reveals that these improvements were maintained—or, in some cases, even improved—over time.

---

<sup>1</sup> Data from the second test, the post-test completed at the end of the residential program, were analyzed and revealed statistically significant improvements. However, because these changes are less important than longer-term attitudinal and behavioural changes (especially since behavioural changes would not be captured immediately after the residential program), these findings are not presented for this cohort.

<sup>2</sup> Wilcoxon, in some cases, where appropriate, supplemented with Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis. Significance test scores reflect Wilcoxon.

## 4.1 Diversity/racism

### 4.1.1 Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes

Participants' scores reflecting knowledge about and attitudes toward diversity and racism significantly improved on most of the indicators, and these benefits were maintained one year after the program. Notably, one year later: (i) no participants disagreed that there is too much discrimination against Native people or immigrants, (ii) no participants agreed that it is important for immigrants to dress and act like Canadians; (iii) no participants disagreed that religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than in others; and (iv) 93% of participants agreed that they had friends whose ethnocultural background is different from their own.

**Table 1. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Prejudice, racism, discrimination are different words for the same thing</i>	37.1%	15.5%	47.4%	No signif change	34.8%	18.1%	47.1%
<i>There is too much discrimination against native people</i>	7.1%	16.3%	76.6%	Improved (p<.001)	3.6%	6.4%	90.0%
<i>It is important for immigrants to dress and act like Canadians</i>	77.3%	19.6%	3.1%	Improved (p=.002)	85.7%	12.1%	2.1%
<i>Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than others</i>	1.0%	12.2%	86.7%	No signif change	2.1%	3.6%	94.2%
<i>Some ethnic jokes are actually quite funny</i>	44.3%	28.9%	26.8%	Improved (p<.001)	60.0%	27.1%	12.9%
<i>There is too much discrimination against immigrants</i>	8.2%	22.4%	69.3%	Improved (p<.001)	2.1%	13.6%	84.2%
<i>I would like to learn about the environment from other cultures</i>	4.1%	9.2%	86.7%	Improved (p=.037)	2.9%	5.7%	91.4%
<i>I can learn from people who are different from me</i>	1.0%	5.1%	93.8%	No signif change	0.7%	0.7%	98.5%
<i>I have friends whose ethnic background is diff from mine</i>	9.3%	8.2%	82.5%	No signif change	2.8%	3.6%	93.6%
<i>I'm pretty good at figuring out what someone is like based on by knowing their cultural, ethnic, religious background</i>	62.2%	26.5%	11.2%	Improved (p=.004)	77.7%	14.4%	7.9%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Prejudice, racism, discrimination are different words for the same thing</i>	40.5%	13.5%	45.9%	Maintained	51.7%	17.2%	31.1%
<i>There is too much discrimination against native people</i>	2.7%	5.4%	91.9%	Maintained		17.2%	82.8%
<i>It is important for immigrants to dress and act like Canadians</i>	81.6%	13.2%	5.3%	Maintained	86.2%	13.8%	
<i>Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than others</i>		2.7%	96.3%	Maintained		10.3%	89.7%
<i>Some ethnic jokes are actually quite funny</i>	62.2%	27.0%	10.8%	Maintained	65.5%	24.1%	10.3%
<i>There is too much discrimination against immigrants</i>	2.7%	27.0%	70.2%	Maintained		20.7%	79.3%
<i>I would like to learn about the environment from other cultures</i>	2.7%	5.4%	91.9%	Maintained		17.2%	82.8%
<i>I can learn from people who are different from me</i>			100.0%	Maintained	3.4%		96.6%
<i>I have friends whose ethnic background is diff from mine</i>		5.4%	94.6%	Maintained	3.4%	3.4%	93.2%
<i>I'm pretty good at figuring out what someone is like based on by knowing their cultural, ethnic, religious background</i>	81.1%	5.4%	13.5%	Maintained	72.4%	20.7%	6.9%

#### 4.1.2 Diversity/racism efficacy

Participants' scores significantly improved on two of the three indicators of efficacy with respect to diversity issues, and these improvements for maintained or further improved one year after program. Remarkably, 97% of participants felt that they knew how to stop racist comments without getting into a fight, and 89% felt that they could make their schools better places for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds. There was no change on the indicator: "When people make racist comments I can figure out if they are being mean on purpose or if they are just ignorant." This is not surprising, as it is a very difficult issue. This indicator was dropped in the revised version of the survey used for the second cohort.

**Table 2. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism efficacy**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I know how to stop racist comments without getting into a fight</i>				<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	4.2%	17.9%	77.9%
<i>When people make racist comments I can figure out if they're being mean on purpose or if they are just ignorant</i>	8.1%	34.7%	57.2%	<i>No signif change</i>	12.1%	22.1%	65.7%
<i>I can make school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds</i>	2.1%	21.6%	76.3%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>		8.6%	91.4%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I know how to stop racist comments without getting into a fight</i>	5.3%	10.5%	84.2%	<i>Further improved (p=.033)</i>		3.4%	96.6%
<i>When people make racist comments I can figure out if they're being mean on purpose or if they are just ignorant</i>	13.5%	21.6%	64.9%	<i>Maintained</i>	17.2%	24.1%	58.6%
<i>I can make school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds</i>		8.1%	91.9%	<i>Maintained</i>		10.7%	89.3%

#### 4.1.3 Diversity behaviour

Probably the most important finding of this evaluation is that Connections program participants' behaviours with respect to ethnocultural diversity significantly improved on almost all the indicators and, with one small exception, these improvements were maintained one year after participation. Most notably, from before the program to one year after the program, the percentage of participants who asked someone to stop making a negative comment about people from a particular ethnic group increased from 28% to 45%; those who explained to people why they should not stereotype people from a particular ethnic group increased from 27% to 50%; those who told jokes about a particular ethnic or religious group or who made fun of people based on their looks decreased to 0%. In addition, the percentage of participants who participated in any activities at school intended to stop racism or promote diversity increased from 16% to 31%. There was a decline on this indicator from the three-month test to the one-year test, but this is to be expected given that the students were no longer participating in Connections program-related activities at the one-year mark.

**Table 3. Cohort 1 - Diversity/racism behaviour**

N=134 In the past month, how often have you	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always
asked someone to tell me about their religion, culture	55.1%	30.6%	14.3%	Improved (p<.001)	33.6%	41.6%	24.8%
heard comment about particular ethnic group that made you uncomfortable	19.4%	39.8%	39.8%	Improved (p<.001)	10.3%	33.1%	56.6%
asked someone to stop making a comment about a particular ethnic group	35.7%	36.7%	27.5%	Improved (p<.001)	10.2%	36.5%	53.3%
explained to someone why they shouldn't stereotype people from a particular ethnic group	42.9%	30.6%	26.5%	Improved (p<.001)	14.5%	32.1%	53.4%
comforted someone who was the target of an ethnic or religious joke comment	54.1%	27.6%	18.3%	Improved (p<.001)	35.5%	34.1%	30.3%
made fun of someone based on looks	74.5%	19.4%	6.1%	No signif change	83.9%	13.9%	2.2%
told a joke about a particular ethnic or religious group	89.8%	8.2%	2.0%	No signif change	91.3%	6.6%	2.2%
participated in an event or activity that helped you learn about another other religion or culture	56.1%	27.6%	16.3%	Improved (p<.001)	30.9%	42.6%	26.5%
participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school	62.2%	21.4%	16.3%	Improved (p<.001)	19.1%	33.8%	37.1%
N=37 In the past month, how often have you	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always
asked someone to tell me about their religion, culture	32.4%	37.8%	29.7%	Maintained	27.5%	48.3%	14.1%
heard comment about particular ethnic group that made you uncomfortable	5.4%	37.8%	56.7%	Maintained	17.9%	32.1%	50.0%
asked someone to stop making a comment about a particular ethnic group	8.1%	37.9%	54.0%	Maintained	6.8%	48.3%	44.8%
explained to someone why they shouldn't stereotype people from a particular ethnic group	10.8%	24.3%	64.8%	Maintained	17.9%	32.1%	50.0%
comforted someone who was the target of an ethnic or religious joke comment	35.1%	35.1%	29.7%	Maintained	57.2%		42.8%
made fun of someone based on looks	86.5%	13.5%		Maintained	93.1%	6.9%	0.0%
told a joke about a particular ethnic or religious group	94.6%	5.4%		Maintained	100.0%		
participated in an event or activity that helped you learn about another other religion or culture	27.0%	38.8%	35.1%	Maintained	27.6%	48.3%	24.0%
participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school	10.8%	21.6%	67.6%	Declined (p=.002)	44.8%	24.1%	31.1%

## 4.2 Leadership

### 4.2.1 Leadership knowledge/attitudes

Probably in reflection of the fact that the Connections program correctly focuses on leadership efficacy and leadership behaviours, significant changes emerged on only two indicators of knowledge about and attitudes toward leadership. One of these two indicators is important, however: The percentage of participants who disagreed that “a good leader gets the job done even if other people don’t like it” increased from 38% before participation to 62% one year later, showing that they have a good grasp of at least one of the fundamentals of leadership.

**Table 4. Cohort 1 - Leadership knowledge/attitudes**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I shouldn't have to treat people don't like with respect</i>	93.8%	4.2%	2.0%	<i>No signif change</i>	90.8%	2.9%	6.4%
<i>A person can learn to be a leader</i>	4.1%	5.1%	90.8%	<i>Improved (p=.011)</i>	1.4%	10.7%	87.9%
<i>A good leader gets the job done even if the other people in the group don't like it</i>	37.8%	26.5%	35.7%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	57.1%	15.7%	27.2%
<i>A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do</i>	22.9%	41.7%	35.4%	<i>No signif change</i>	36.4%	25.7%	37.9%
<i>Leadership means getting people to agree with you</i>	79.4%	11.3%	9.2%	<i>No signif change</i>	76.4%	13.6%	10.0%
<i>A good leader can set aside his or her opinions to help the group achieve its goal</i>	3.1%	5.1%	91.8%	<i>No signif change</i>	3.6%	5.1%	91.4%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I shouldn't have to treat people don't like with respect</i>	89.5%	2.6%	7.9%	<i>Maintained</i>	96.6%		3.4%
<i>A person can learn to be a leader</i>	2.6%	7.9%	89.5%	<i>Maintained</i>		10.3%	89.7%
<i>A good leader gets the job done even if the other people in the group don't like it</i>	63.1%	13.2%	23.7%	<i>Maintained</i>	62.1%	24.1%	13.8%
<i>A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do</i>	42.1%	26.3%	31.6%	<i>Maintained</i>	31.0%	38.0%	31.0%
<i>Leadership means getting people to agree with you</i>	81.1%	10.8%	8.1%	<i>Maintained</i>	75.9%	17.2%	6.8%
<i>A good leader can set aside his or her opinions to help the group achieve its goal</i>	5.6%		94.4%	<i>Maintained</i>			100.0%



## 4.2.2 Leadership efficacy

More important than changes in knowledge, participants' scores improved significantly on all indicators of leadership efficacy, which include measures of self-esteem, self-confidence, and general self-efficacy. Although scores were quite high to begin with for a group of adolescents, they had improved at three months and, although the changes were not captured by significance testing, further improved one year after the program. Leadership efficacy scores are intrinsically connected to individuals' ability to change their behaviours in other areas, especially areas in which they are required to stand up for their beliefs in the face of adversity. One year after the program, 100% of participants indicated that they stand up for their beliefs.

**Table 5. Cohort 1 - Leadership efficacy**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I have good ideas</i>	3.1%	21.6%	75.3%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	1.4%	7.2%	91.4%
<i>I stand up for my beliefs</i>	2.0%	6.1%	91.9%	<i>Improved (p=.050)</i>		5.0%	95.0%
<i>I am good at making decisions</i>	4.1%	24.5%	71.4%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	4.3%	13.6%	82.2%
<i>Other kids usually listen to me</i>	14.4%	20.6%	65.0%	<i>Improved (p=.001)</i>	5.0%	20.7%	74.3%
<i>There is not much I can do to change things at school</i>	76.5%	20.4%	3.0%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	85.6%	7.9%	6.5%
<i>I can laugh at myself</i>	2.0%	4.1%	93.9%	<i>Improved (p=.016)</i>	2.8%	4.3%	92.9%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I have good ideas</i>	2.6%	13.2%	84.2%	<i>Maintained</i>		6.9%	93.1%
<i>I stand up for my beliefs</i>		2.6%	97.4%	<i>Maintained</i>			100.0%
<i>I am good at making decisions</i>	5.4%	16.2%	78.4%	<i>Maintained</i>		13.8%	86.2%
<i>Other kids usually listen to me</i>	2.7%	16.2%	81.1%	<i>Maintained</i>	3.4%	13.8%	82.8%
<i>There is not much I can do to change things at school</i>	83.8%	10.8%	5.4%	<i>Maintained</i>	89.7%	3.4%	6.9%
<i>I can laugh at myself</i>	5.4%		94.6%	<i>Maintained</i>			100.0%

## 4.2.3 Leadership behaviour

Participants' scores also improved significantly on all indicators of positive leadership behaviour, and these improvements were maintained at one year. Notably, the percentage of participants who regularly or always volunteered to do something extra to help out at school increased from 43% before the program to 75% one year after the program; the percentage of those who were able to get their friends or classmates to listen to them increased from 45% to 72%; and the percentage of those who helped other to resolve a conflict or reach a compromise increased from 41% to 72%.

**Table 6. Cohort 1 - Leadership behaviour**

N=134 In the past month, how often have you	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always
volunteered to do something extra to help out at school	23.5%	33.7%	42.8%	Improved (p=.002)	16.1%	30.7%	53.2%
taken the lead in a group project at school	11.2%	34.7%	54.1%	Improved (p<.001)	13.0%	29.4%	67.6%
worked with others to successfully complete a task	11.2%		88.8%	Improved (p=.020)	1.5%	6.6%	92.0%
said what you think or feel and got your friends or classmates to listen	21.4%	33.7%	44.9%	Improved (p<.001)	8.8%	27.7%	63.5%
helped other resolve conflict or reach a compromise	20.4%	38.8%	40.8%	Improved (p=.004)	13.9%	38.7%	47.4%
N=37 In the past month, how often have you	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always
volunteered to do something extra to help out at school	10.8%	32.4%	56.7%	Maintained	25.0%		75.0%
taken the lead in a group project at school	5.4%	29.7%	64.8%	Maintained	7.0%	31.0%	62.0%
worked with others to successfully complete a task	5.4%	2.7%	91.9%	Maintained		6.9%	93.1%
said what you think or feel and got your friends or classmates to listen	8.1%	27.0%	64.9%	Maintained	3.4%	24.1%	72.4%
helped other resolve conflict or reach a compromise	13.5%	35.1%	51.3%	Maintained	6.9%	20.7%	72.4%

## 4.3 Environment

### 4.3.1 Environmental knowledge/attitudes

The following table shows that participants' attitudes about respect for and protection of the environment significantly improved on every measure and that these improvements were maintained one year after participation in the program. On one indicator, "Jobs are more important than the environment," the percentage of respondents who disagreed continued to significantly decline between three months after the program to one year after the program.

As with attitudes, knowledge about the environment significantly improved on all but one indicator, and these results were maintained one year after the program. Further improvement occurred on one indicator, "Canadians use less energy than people in other countries," with no participants agreeing with the question one year after the program. It should be noted that the one indicator on which scores did not significantly improve is not a good fit for the Connections program and has been dropped from the survey for 2008-09.

**Table 7. Cohort 1 - Environmental knowledge/attitudes**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Jobs are more important than the environment</i>	53.1%	39.8%	7.1%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	63.5%	31.4%	5.0%
<i>Humans must control nature to survive</i>	65.3%	23.5%	11.2%	<i>Improved (p=.006)</i>	72.1%	19.3%	8.6%
<i>The way we interact with environment affects other countries</i>	12.2%	36.7%	52.1%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	2.1%	7.9%	90.0%
<i>The environment is my responsibility</i>	4.1%	23.5%	72.5%	<i>No signif change</i>	4.3%	20.0%	75.7%
<i>I shouldn't have to change my lifestyle for the sake of the environment</i>	66.7%	27.1%	6.2%	<i>Improved (p=.036)</i>	77.7%	9.4%	12.9%
<i>I would like to learn about environment from other cultures</i>	4.1%	9.2%	86.8%	<i>Improved (p=.037)</i>	2.9%	5.7%	91.4%
<i>The main reason for trails and paths is so hikers don't get lost</i>	24.7%	23.7%	51.5%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	40.8%	30.6%	28.6%
<i>Canadians use less energy than people in other countries</i>	74.5%	18.4%	7.1%	<i>Improved (p=.028)</i>	76.4%	18.6%	5.0%
<i>It is okay to pick a few wildflowers in the woods</i>	35.7%	26.5%	37.8%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	44.3%	29.3%	26.4%
<i>Breaking dead branches off a tree can be helpful to the tree</i>	28.6%	48.0%	23.5%	<i>No signif change</i>	31.6%	46.0%	22.4%
<i>The way we interact with the environment affects other countries</i>	11.2%	36.8%	52.0%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>			100.0%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Jobs are more important than the environment</i>	84.2%	15.8%		<i>Further improved (p=.022)</i>	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%
<i>Humans must control nature to survive</i>	86.8%	10.5%	2.6%	<i>Maintained</i>	89.7%	3.4%	6.8%
<i>The way we interact with environment affects other countries</i>		2.6%	97.4%	<i>Maintained</i>			100.0%
<i>The environment is my responsibility</i>	5.4%	18.9%	75.6%	<i>Maintained</i>		24.1%	75.9%
<i>I shouldn't have to change my lifestyle for the sake of the environment</i>	89.2%	10.8%		<i>Maintained</i>	79.3%	17.2%	3.4%
<i>I would like to learn about environment from other cultures</i>	2.7%	5.4%	91.9%	<i>Maintained</i>	3.4%	10.3%	86.2%
<i>The main reason for trails and paths is so hikers don't get lost</i>	47.4%	26.3%	26.3%	<i>Maintained</i>	38.0%	31.0%	31.0%
<i>Canadians use less energy than people in other countries</i>	78.9%	15.8%	5.3%	<i>Further improved (p=.007)</i>	72.4%	27.6%	
<i>It is okay to pick a few wildflowers in the woods</i>	43.2%	29.8%	27.0%	<i>Maintained</i>	48.3%	34.5%	17.2%
<i>Breaking dead branches off a tree can be helpful to the tree</i>	36.1%	41.7%	22.2%	<i>Maintained</i>	34.5%	51.7%	15.8%
<i>The way we interact with the environment affects other countries</i>		2.6%	97.4%	<i>Maintained</i>			100.0%

### 4.3.2 Environmental efficacy

Participants' sense of efficacy with respect to their ability to influence the state of the environment significantly improved on one indicator, "Young people can help stop environmental destruction," with 100% of participants agreeing with the statement. It is not clear why no change occurred on the second indicator, although it may be because participants' scores were already high before they attended the program.

**Table 8. Cohort 1 - Environmental efficacy**

N=134	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
Young people can help stop environmental destruction	2.0%	9.2%	88.8%	Improved (p=.008)		5.0%	95.0%
There is not much I can do to preserve environment	84.7%	10.2%	5.1%	Maintained	87.2%	9.3%	3.5%
N=37	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
Young people can help stop environmental destruction			100.0%	Maintained			100.0%
There is not much I can do to preserve environment	91.9%	2.7%	5.4%	Maintained	86.2%	13.8%	

### 4.3.3 Environmental behaviour

For the most part, participants reported fairly high levels of environmental stewardship before participating in the Connections program, although significant improvements occurred nonetheless on most indicators three months after the program. All improvements were maintained one year after the program.

**Table 9. Cohort 1 - Environmental behaviour**

N=134 <i>In the past week, how often have you</i>	Before program			Change from pre- to 3-month post	3 months after program		
	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always
Left water running when brushing your teeth	72.4%	13.3%	14.3%	Improved (p=.002)	81.7%	12.4%	5.8%
Thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage	72.4%	18.4%	9.1%	No signif change	87.9%	14.0%	8.0%
Recycled things like cans and bottles	5.1%	6.1%	88.8%	Improved (p=.047)	2.9%	2.9%	94.2%
Flushed Kleenex down the toilet	85.7%	6.1%	8.2%	No signif change	81.6%	11.0%	7.4%
Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat	6.1%	12.2%	81.6%	No signif change	4.4%	18.4%	77.2%
Decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging	60.2%	26.5%	13.3%	Improved (p=.021)	50.8%	33.8%	15.4%
(In the past month) Participated in any activities at school intended to protect the environment	60.2%	23.5%	16.3%	Improved (p=.001)	41.9%	33.1%	25.0%
N=37 <i>In the past week, how often have you</i>	3 months after program			Change from 3-month-post to 1-year post	1 year after program		
	Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Never/rarely	Occasionally	Regularly/always
Left water running when brushing your teeth	80.6%	19.4%		Maintained	89.7%	6.9%	3.4%
Thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage	88.9%	8.3%	2.8%	Maintained	92.6%	7.4%	
Recycled things like cans and bottles	2.8%		97.2%	Maintained	6.9%		93.1%
Flushed Kleenex down the toilet	86.1%	11.1%	2.8%	Maintained	82.7%	13.8%	3.4%
Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat	5.6%	11.1%	83.3%	Maintained	3.4%	13.8%	82.7%
Decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging	52.8%	30.6%	16.7%	Maintained	44.8%	37.9%	17.2%
(In the past month) Participated in any activities at school intended to protect the environment	32.4%	43.2%	24.3%	Maintained	31.0%	37.9%	31.0%

#### 4.4 *Sharing learnings with others and participants' perceptions about program impacts*

One year after participating in the Connections program, participants reported that they continued to share their learnings with other students and with their parents. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of participants said that they often or always told other kids and their parents about some of the things they had learned about protecting the environment and about racism.

**Table 10. Cohort 1 – Sharing learnings**

N=37 Since attending Connections one year ago, how often have you...	Never/rarely		Sometimes		Often/always		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment	3	7.7%	10	25.6%	26	66.6%	39	100.0%
Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about racism			8	20.5%	31	79.5%	39	100.0%
Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment	3	7.7%	9	23.1%	27	69.2%	39	100.0%
Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about racism			10	25.6%	29	74.4%	39	100.0%

Consistent with these findings, participants still perceived one year later that they had benefitted enormously from participation in the program. As shown in the following table, most participants agreed or strongly agreed that, because they attended the residential program, they are more aware of the feelings of others (97.4%), get along better with others (71.1%), find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother them (89.5%), feel more comfortable with people from different cultures (84.2%), try harder not say hurtful things (100.0%), see the world differently than they did before (78.9%), have been able to tell their friends about new things (94.7%), find it easier to stand up for their beliefs (89.5%), and think about the impact of their actions on the environment (84.2%).

Moreover, the additional comments offered by participants show that they feel strongly that the Connections program had a meaningful and positive impact on their lives.

**Table 11. Cohort 1 – Participants' perceptions**

N=37 Because I attended Connections Outdoor School...	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
I am more aware of the feelings of others					1	2.6%	21	55.3%	16	42.1%	38	100.0%
I get along better with others					11	28.9%	19	50.0%	8	21.1%	38	100.0%
I find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother me					4	10.5%	20	52.6%	14	36.8%	38	100.0%
I feel more comfortable with people from different cultures					6	15.8%	15	39.5%	17	44.7%	38	100.0%
I have tried harder not to say things that might be hurtful							19	50.0%	19	50.0%	38	100.0%
I see the world differently than I did before					8	21.1%	16	42.1%	14	36.8%	38	100.0%
I have been able to tell my friends about new things					2	5.3%	21	55.3%	15	39.5%	38	100.0%
It is easier to stand up for my beliefs					4	10.5%	19	50.0%	15	39.5%	38	100.0%
I think about the impact that my actions will have on the environment					6	15.8%	16	42.1%	16	42.1%	38	100.0%

The following written comments, provided by participants one year after participation, echo the quantitative findings:

*It opened up my eyes to see how many hurtful things are said at my school, and how I can make a difference.*

*Now I see the world in a totally different way and I really appreciate everything I have. I am more aware of things that are going on and how hurtful some things are to some people. Most people aren't even aware of this.*

*I have personally become more confident and can make people aware of how I am feeling, and I know what is right and what is wrong instead of just guessing and assuming.*

*Coming from a small town, your view of the world is pretty limited, and Connections opens up all kinds of doors for you to see what the world can be, as opposed to what it is.*

*It may be a cliché but my whole life has changed because of Connections. I am like a different person, a better person.*

*Connections was a completely eye-opening experience that made me way more aware of things that were going on around me that I hadn't paid much attention to in the past.*

*The way I look at the world is completely different because of Connections. I really enjoyed going to Connections and think every youth should get a chance to experience it.*

*I am much more aware of the stereotyping and racism that often goes unnoticed around me. Connections made me a better person.*

*I can be more appreciative of everything happen around me; I see more goodness in people than I did before and believe one person can really make a change to a society.*

*I have a lot more understanding and appreciation of other cultures and I want not to be ignorant to others who have different beliefs than me. This program was really great and I think it's very beneficial.*

## 5. FALL 2008 COHORT

The second cohort included the 53 students who completed the Connections program in fall 2008. Due to time limitations on the evaluation, this cohort was followed longitudinally for three months following program completion only. However, evaluation of the program using data from this cohort was enhanced by teacher survey data and qualitative evaluation components, which helped to identify the features of programming which contribute to the program's success, as discussed in the following section of this report. In addition, for this cohort, participant demographic data were collected.

The fall 2008 participant tables reflect changes from before the program to the end of the residential component, and the changes from before the program to three-months after program completion. Again, statistical comparisons reflect those participants who completed the two tests begin compared at each pre-post interval. Only 33 participants completed the three-month follow-up test, probably reflecting the fact that, in fall 2008, the program was no longer a high school credit course.

Although the findings are not quite as strong as those of the 2007-2008 cohort, the following tables showing the results as reflected by analysis of the data from participants' surveys reveal statistically significant improvements on many of the indicators within each of the outcome categories, most of which were maintained three months after the conclusion of the program.

In addition, the results of the teacher survey, administered before the program and three months after the program, are very positive, and the written feedback from participants is compelling.

### 5.1 Participant demographics

As shown in Tables 10 through 14, the 53 participants in the fall 2008 session of the program came from 11 high schools in Calgary and elsewhere in central and southern Alberta, with a fairly even number of participants in grades 10, 11, and 12. Almost twice as many girls as boys participated in this session. About two-thirds of participants were Caucasian, with the remaining third representing Aboriginal and a range of ethnocultural backgrounds.

**Table 12. Cohort 2 - Sex**

	#	%
male	19	35.8%
female	34	64.2%
Total	53	100.0%

**Table 13. Cohort 2 - Age**

	#	%
14	6	12.0%
15	15	30.0%
16	14	28.0%
17	14	28.0%
18	1	2.0%
Total	50	100.0%

**Table 14. Cohort 2 – Ethnocultural background**

	#	%
Missing	1	1.9%
Aboriginal	5	9.4%
African	2	3.8%
Caucasian	37	69.8%
East Asian	1	1.9%
Filipino	1	1.9%
Hispanic	1	1.9%
Middle Eastern	1	1.9%
Portuguese	1	1.9%
South Asian	3	5.7%
Total	53	100.0%

**Table 16. Cohort 2 - Grade**

	#	%
10	18	37.5%
11	14	29.2%
12	16	33.3%
Total	48	100.0%

**Table 15. Cohort 2 - School**

	#	%
Cody	5	9.4%
Murdoch	5	9.45
Olds	7	13.2%
Huntington Hills	5	9.4%
Van Horne	5	9.4%
Chestermere	4	7.5%
Manning	4	7.5%
Bassano	4	7.5%
Pearson	4	7.5%
Central Memorial	4	7.5%
Oilfield	6	11.3%
Total	53	100.0%



## 5.2 Diversity/racism

### 5.2.1 Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes

Participants' scores reflecting knowledge about and attitudes toward diversity and racism significantly improved on most of the indicators from before the program to the end of the residential component, and these improvements were also evident three months after the program. However, after three months—although the percentage changes appear to be large—statistical analysis indicates there were no significant improvements on two variables: (i) there is too much discrimination against Native people and (ii) there is too much discrimination against immigrants.

**Table 17. Cohort 2 – Diversity/racism knowledge/attitudes**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre- to post	End of residential component		
	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/ strongly agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/ strongly agree
<i>Prejudice, racism, discrimination are different words for the same thing</i>	20.3%	32.7%	47.0%	No signif change	36.5%	15.4%	48.1%
<i>There is too much discrimination against native people</i>	4.0%	24.0%	72.0%	Improved (p<.031)	1.9%	15.4%	82.7%
<i>It is important for immigrants to dress and act like Canadians</i>	76.0%	18.0%	6.0%	No signif change	80.8%	17.3%	1.9%
<i>Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than others</i>	2.0%	10.0%	88.0%	No signif change	1.9%	5.8%	92.3%
<i>Some ethnic jokes are actually quite funny</i>	42.0%	38.0%	20.0%	Improved (p<.001)	63.5%	30.8%	5.8%
<i>There is too much discrimination against immigrants</i>	12.0%	24.0%	64.0%	Improved (p<.001)		9.6%	90.4%
<i>I would like to learn about the environment from other cultures</i>		18.0%	82.0%	Improved (p=.034)		1.9%	98.1%
<i>I can learn from people who are different from me</i>		4.2%	95.8%	No signif change		2.0%	98.0%
<i>I have friends at school whose ethnic background is different from mine</i>	4.0%	6.0%	90.0%	No signif change	5.8%	11.5%	82.7%
<i>I'm pretty good at figuring out what someone is like based on by knowing their cultural, ethnic, religious background</i>	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	No signif change	63.5%	28.8%	7.7%
<i>People of all shapes and sizes can be beautiful.</i>		4.2%	95.8%	No signif change		1.9%	98.1%
<i>Gays and lesbians should keep their sexual orientation to themselves.</i>	68.0%	28.0%	4.0%	NA			
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/ strongly agree		Disagree/ strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/ strongly agree
<i>Prejudice, racism, discrimination are different words for the same thing</i>	25.0%	28.1%	46.8%	No signif change	47.1%	8.8%	44.2%
<i>There is too much discrimination against native people</i>		27.3%	72.7%	No signif change	2.9%	11.8%	85.3%
<i>It is important for immigrants to dress and act like Canadians</i>	69.7%	24.2%	6.1%	Improved (p=.010)	84.8%	12.1%	3.0%
<i>Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than others</i>	3.0%	12.1%	84.9%	Improved (p=.039)		3.0%	97.0%
<i>Some ethnic jokes are actually quite funny</i>	39.4%	39.4%	21.2%	Improved (p<.001)	61.8%	32.4%	5.9%
<i>There is too much discrimination against immigrants</i>	6.1%	24.2%	69.7%	No signif change	9.1%	12.1%	78.8%
<i>I would like to learn about the environment from other cultures</i>		21.2%	78.8%	Improved (p=.050)		2.9%	97.1%
<i>I can learn from people who are different from me</i>		3.2%	96.8%	Improved (p=.051)			100.0%
<i>I have friends at school whose ethnic background is different from mine</i>	9.1%	9.1%	81.8%	No signif change	8.8%	14.7%	76.4%
<i>I'm pretty good at figuring out what someone is like based on by knowing their cultural, ethnic, religious background</i>	66.7%	21.2%	12.2%	No signif change	69.7%	21.2%	9.1%
<i>People of all shapes and sizes can be beautiful.</i>		6.5%	93.5%	No signif change			100.0%
<i>Gays and lesbians should keep their sexual orientation to themselves.</i>	69.7%	27.3%	3.0%	No signif change	76.5%	23.5%	

## 5.2.2 Diversity/racism efficacy

Participants' scores significantly improved from before the program to the end of the residential program, and from before the program to three months after the program on two of the four indicators of efficacy with respect to diversity issues. Notably, three months after the end of the program, 100% of participants felt that they knew how to stop racist comments without getting into a fight, whereas only 77% felt this way at the end of the residential program. This suggests (as reflected by the written feedback provided in Section 5.5), that participants had successfully applied what they learned in the residential program at school.

No changes occurred on either of the two indicators reflecting efficacy with respect to sexual orientation, which suggests that participants intention to speak or act out against homophobia did not change as a result of the program. Because these variables were not included in the earlier version of the survey, we cannot compare between the first and second cohorts on this issue.

**Table 18. Cohort 2 – Diversity/racism efficacy**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre-to post	End of program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I know how to stop people from making racist comments without getting into a fight</i>	16.0%	36.0%	50.0%	Improved (p<.001)	1.9%	21.2%	76.9%
<i>I can help to make my school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds</i>		24.0%	76.0%	Improved (p=.001)		13.4%	86.6%
<i>I would still be friends with someone if they told me they were gay or lesbian.</i>		8.0%	92.0%	No signif change		7.7%	92.3%
<i>I would stop hanging around with someone if picked on people who they thought were gay or lesbian.</i>	18.3%	24.5%	57.1%	No signif change	17.6%	33.3%	49.0%
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I know how to stop people from making racist comments without getting into a fight</i>	15.2%	39.4%	45.1%	Improved (p<.001)			100.0%
<i>I can help to make my school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds</i>		21.2%	78.8%	Improved (p=.050)		15.2%	84.8%
<i>I would still be friends with someone if they told me they were gay or lesbian.</i>		9.1%	90.9%	No signif change		5.9%	94.1%
<i>I would stop hanging around with someone if picked on people who they thought were gay or lesbian.</i>	12.5%	31.2%	56.3%	No signif change	15.6%	34.4%	50.0%

### 5.2.3 Diversity/racism behaviour

Although the percentages in the following table indicate improvements on most of the indicators of behavioural change on matters of diversity and racism, improvements were captured by significance tests on only four of the 10 indicators: “In the past month, how often have you: asked someone to tell you about their religion or culture (6.1% vs. 23.5% regularly or always); asked someone to stop making a comment about a particular ethnic group (30.3% vs. 47.1%); told a joke about a particular ethnic or religious group (6.0% to 0%); participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school (15.2% vs. 48.2%). These findings, while very positive, are not quite as strong as those for the first cohort.

**Table 19. Cohort 2 – Diversity/racism behaviour**

<i>In the past month, how often have you</i>	<b>Before program</b>			<i>Change from pre to 3-month follow-up</i>	<b>3 months after program</b>		
	<i>Never/rarely</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Regularly/always</i>		<i>Never/rarely</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Regularly/always</i>
<i>asked someone to tell you about their religion, culture</i>	57.6%	36.4%	6.1%	<i>Improved (p=.023)</i>	44.1%	32.4%	23.5%
<i>heard comment about particular ethnic group that made you uncomfortable</i>	27.3%	30.3%	42.4%	<i>No signif change</i>	9.1%	42.4%	48.4%
<i>asked someone to stop making a comment about a particular ethnic group</i>	33.3%	36.4%	30.3%	<i>Improved (p=.002)</i>	11.8%	41.2%	47.1%
<i>explained to someone why they shouldn't stereotype people from a particular ethnic group</i>	36.4%	24.2%	39.4%	<i>No signif change</i>	24.2%	27.3%	48.5%
<i>stood up for someone who was the target of an ethnic or religious joke/comment</i>	21.9%	37.5%	40.6%	<i>No signif change</i>	17.6%	32.4%	50.0%
<i>made fun of someone based on looks</i>	84.4%	15.6%		<i>No signif change</i>	94.2%	2.9%	2.9%
<i>told a joke about a particular ethnic or religious group</i>	75.8%	18.2%	6.0%	<i>Improved (p=.006)</i>	100.0%		
<i>participated in an event or activity that helped you learn about another other religion or culture</i>	57.6%	9.1%	33.3%	<i>No signif change</i>	39.4%	42.4%	18.2%
<i>participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school</i>	69.6%	15.2%	15.2%	<i>Improved (p&lt;.001)</i>	26.5%	35.3%	48.2%
<i>used a derogatory word to describe someone from a particular group</i>	90.6%	3.1%	6.2%	<i>No signif change</i>	94.1%	2.9%	2.9%

## 5.3 Leadership

### 5.3.1 Leadership knowledge/attitudes

Likely because the Connections program correctly focuses on leadership efficacy and leadership behaviours, significant changes emerged on only two indicators of knowledge about and attitudes toward leadership after three months: “A person can learn to be a leader” (78.8% vs. 94.1% agreed/strongly agreed) and “a good leader can set aside his or her own opinions to help the group achieve its goal” (80.6% vs. 100.0%). On the other hand, the initial improvements on the indicator “I shouldn’t have to treat people I don’t like with respect” were not maintained three months after the program.

**Table 20. Cohort 2 – Leadership knowledge/attitudes**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre- to post	End of program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I shouldn't have to treat people don't like with respect</i>	86.0%	8.0%	6.0%	<i>Improved (p=.002)</i>	96.2%	3.8%	
<i>A person can learn to be a leader</i>	4.1%	16.3%	79.6%	<i>Improved (p=.005)</i>		6.2%	93.8%
<i>A good leader gets the job done even if the other people in the group don't like it</i>	30.0%	24.0%	46.0%	<i>No signif change</i>	30.8%	34.6%	34.7%
<i>A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do</i>	16.0%	36.0%	48.0%	<i>No signif change</i>	13.5%	40.4%	46.2%
<i>Leadership means getting other people to agree with your point of view</i>	56.0%	26.0%	18.0%	<i>No signif change</i>	55.8%	28.8%	15.3%
<i>A good leader can set aside his or her opinions to help the group achieve its goal</i>	2.1%	14.6%	83.3%	<i>Improved (p=.001)</i>	1.9%	3.8%	94.3%
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I shouldn't have to treat people don't like with respect</i>	81.8%	12.1%	6.0%	<i>No signif change</i>	75.8%	15.2%	9.1%
<i>A person can learn to be a leader</i>	3.0%	18.2%	78.8%	<i>Improved (p=.012)</i>		5.9%	94.1%
<i>A good leader gets the job done even if the other people in the group don't like it</i>	42.4%	21.2%	36.4%	<i>No signif change</i>	38.2%	23.5%	38.3%
<i>A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do</i>	15.2%	45.5%	39.4%	<i>No signif change</i>	20.5%	26.5%	53.0%
<i>Leadership means getting other people to agree with your point of view</i>	60.6%	24.2%	15.1%	<i>No signif change</i>	67.6%	20.6%	11.8%
<i>A good leader can set aside his or her opinions to help the group achieve its goal</i>	3.2%	17.2%	79.5%	<i>Improved (p=.002)</i>			100.0%

### 5.3.2 Leadership efficacy

From before the program to three months after the program, participants’ scores improved significantly on two very important indicators: “I stand up for my beliefs” (90.9% vs. 100.0% agreed/strongly agreed) and “When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen” (59.3% vs. 70.6%). As noted earlier, leadership efficacy scores are intrinsically connected to individuals’ ability to change their behaviours in other areas, especially areas in which they are required to stand up for their beliefs in the face of adversity.

Other immediate post-residential program improvements were not maintained after three months, most importantly “There is not much I can do to change things at my school” and “when I see myself in the mirror I think I am about the right weight.” Lack of change on the first indicator is disappointing. The latter indicator, along with lack of change on two others about appearance and self-esteem, suggest, not

surprisingly, that it is very difficult to young people to shift their perceptions about their physical appearance. The addition of this component to the Connections program in recent years may not be effective.

**Table 21. Cohort 2 – Leadership efficacy**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre to post	End of program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I have good ideas</i>	2.1%	18.8%	79.2%	No signif change	4.0%	14.0%	82.0%
<i>I stand up for my beliefs</i>	2.0%	6.0%	92.0%	No signif change		7.7%	92.3%
<i>I am good at making decisions</i>	12.2%	16.3%	71.4%	Improved (p=.050)	1.9%	21.2%	76.9%
<i>When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen to me</i>	12.2%	34.7%	53.1%	Improved (p=.004)	7.7%	21.2%	71.2%
<i>There is not much I can do to change things at school</i>	68.0%	28.0%	4.0%	Improved (p<.016)	86.3%	11.8%	2.0%
<i>I can laugh at myself</i>	6.1%	4.1%	89.8%	Improved (p=.033)		10.0%	90.0%
<i>I wish I looked more like the girls/guys in magazines and on TV</i>	57.9%	13.1%	29.0%	No signif change	47.8%	32.6%	19.5%
<i>I would consider getting plastic surgery to change the way I look</i>	84.0%	8.0%	8.0%	No signif change	80.8%	15.4%	3.8%
<i>When I see myself in the mirror, I think that I am about the right weight.</i>	42.0%	16.0%	42.0%	Improved (p<.001)	21.2%	26.9%	51.9%
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>I have good ideas</i>		21.9%	78.1%	No signif change		24.2%	75.8%
<i>I stand up for my beliefs</i>	3.0%	6.1%	90.9%	Improved (p=.003)			100.0%
<i>I am good at making decisions</i>	9.4%	18.8%	71.9%	No signif change	5.9%	26.5%	67.6%
<i>When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen to me</i>	9.4%	31.3%	59.3%	Improved (p=.034)	5.9%	23.5%	70.6%
<i>There is not much I can do to change things at school</i>	66.7%	30.3%	3.0%	No signif change	84.4%	12.5%	3.1%
<i>I can laugh at myself</i>	3.1%		96.9%	No signif change		6.1%	93.9%
<i>I wish I looked more like the girls/guys in magazines and on TV</i>	62.5%	16.7%	20.8%	No signif change	50.0%	23.5%	26.4%
<i>I would consider getting plastic surgery to change the way I look</i>	90.9%	9.1%		No signif change	75.8%	18.2%	6.0%
<i>When I see myself in the mirror, I think that I am about the right weight.</i>	42.4%	15.2%	42.4%	No signif change	20.6%	35.3%	44.1%

### 5.3.3 Leadership behaviour

As opposed to the first cohort, where participants' scores improved significantly on all indicators of positive leadership behaviour, change occurred on only one indicator for the second cohort: 55.0% of participants at three months, compared with 42.4% before the program, reported that they had regularly or always taken the lead in a group project at school in the past month.

**Table 22. Cohort 2 – Leadership behaviour**

N=33 In the past month, how often have you	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always		Rarely/never	Occasionally	Regularly/always
volunteered to do something extra to help out at school	36.4%	21.2%	42.4%	No signif change	29.4%	20.6%	50.0%
taken the lead in a group project at school	28.1%	28.1%	43.7%	Improved (p=.045)	20.5%	23.5%	55.5%
worked with others to successfully complete a task	6.1%	15.2%	78.8%	No signif change	3.1%	15.6%	81.2%
said what you think or feel and got your friends or classmates to listen	18.2%	30.3%	51.5%	No signif change	29.4%	32.4%	38.2%
helped other resolve conflict or reach a compromise	15.6%	37.5%	46.9%	No signif change	24.2%	30.3%	45.5%

## 5.4 Environment

### 5.4.1 Environmental knowledge/attitudes

The following table shows that participants’ attitudes and knowledge about respect for and protection of the environment significantly improved on four indicators from before the program to three months after the program: “humans must control nature to survive” (45.5% vs. 61.8% disagreed/strongly disagreed); “the way we interact with the environment affects other countries” (81.8% vs. 91.2% agreed/strongly agreed); “the environment is my responsibility” (54.5% vs. 82.4% agreed/strongly agreed); and “I would like to learn about the environment from other cultures” (78.8% vs. 97.1% agreed/strongly/agreed). In addition, the percentage of participants who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “I shouldn’t have to change my lifestyle for the sake of the environment” increased from 57.6% to 75.8%, but this was not captured by significance tests and may be due to chance.

**Table 23. Cohort 2 – Environmental knowledge/attitudes**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre to post	End of program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Strongly disagree/disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
Jobs are more important than the environment	56.0%	38.0%	6.0%	No signif change	65.4%	34.6%	
Humans must control nature to survive	48.0%	38.0%	14.0%	Improved (p=.016)	69.2%	23.1%	7.4%
The way we interact with environment affects other countries	2.0%	20.0%	78.0%	No signif change	1.9%	13.5%	84.6%
The environment is my responsibility	10.0%	34.0%	56.0%	Improved (p=.046)	2.0%	28.6%	69.4%
I shouldn't have to change my lifestyle for the sake of the environment	66.0%	28.0%	6.0%	No signif change	69.2%	25.0%	5.7%
Canadians use less energy than people in other countries	48.0%	44.0%	8.0%	Improved (p=.029)	60.8%	33.3%	5.9%
I would like to learn about environment from other cultures		18.0%	82.0%	Improved (p=.034)		1.9%	98.1%
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Strongly disagree/disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
Jobs are more important than the environment	45.5%	48.5%	6.1%	No signif change	61.8%	32.4%	5.8%
Humans must control nature to survive	45.5%	42.4%	12.2%	Improved (p=.049)	70.6%	26.5%	2.9%
The way we interact with environment affects other countries		18.2%	81.8%	Improved (p=.018)		8.8%	91.2%
The environment is my responsibility	6.1%	39.4%	54.5%	Improved (p=.010)		17.6%	82.4%
I shouldn't have to change my lifestyle for the sake of the environment	57.6%	36.4%	6.1%	No signif change	75.8%	15.2%	9.1%
Canadians use less energy than people in other countries	51.5%	39.4%	9.1%	No signif change	55.9%	41.2%	2.9%
I would like to learn about environment from other cultures		21.2%	78.8%	Improved (p=.050)		2.9%	97.1%

## 5.4.2 Environmental efficacy

Participants' sense of efficacy with respect to their ability to influence the state of the environment significantly improved on both of the two indicators, notably, not at the conclusion of the residential component but three months after the program, indicating either that the learnings from the residential component took time to "take hold" or that the school-based activities in which they participated enhanced their outlook.

**Table 24. Cohort 2 – Environmental efficacy**

N=49	Before program			Change from pre to post	End of residential program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Young people can help stop environmental destruction</i>		6.0%	94.0%	No signif change		5.8%	94.2%
<i>There is not much I can do to preserve environment</i>	80.0%	16.0%	4.0%	No signif change	90.4%	9.6%	
N=33	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Young people can help stop environmental destruction</i>		9.1%	90.9%	Improved (p=.008)		3.0%	97.0%
<i>There is not much I can do to preserve environment</i>	75.8%	21.2%	3.0%	Improved (p=.013)	94.1%	5.9%	

## 5.4.3 Environmental behaviour

For the most part, participants reported fairly high levels of environmental stewardship before participating in the Connections program, although significant improvements occurred nonetheless on two indicators three months after the program: "In the past week, how often have you: "thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage" (71.9% vs. 87.9% never/rarely) and "decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging" (66.7% vs. 48.5% never/rarely).

**Table 25. Cohort 2 – Environmental behaviour**

In the past week, how often have you...	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Never/rarely	Occasion-ally	Regularly/always		Never/rarely	Occasion-ally	Regularly/always
<i>Thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage</i>	71.9%	18.8%	9.3%	Improved (p=.005)	87.9%	12.1%	
<i>Recycled things like cans and bottles</i>	6.1%	3.0%	90.9%	No signif change		6.1%	93.9%
<i>Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat</i>	9.4%	18.8%	71.9%	No signif change	6.1%	18.2%	75.8%
<i>Decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging</i>	66.7%	24.2%	9.1%	Improved (p=.013)	48.5%	24.2%	25.2%
<i>Decided to walk, cycle, or take public transit rather than driving in a car</i>	6.2%	40.6%	53.1%	No signif change	17.2%		82.7%
<i>Bought (or got your parents to buy) food that was locally grown</i>	54.5%	24.2%	21.2%	No signif change	45.5%	33.3%	21.3%
<i>(In the past month) Participated in any activities at school intended to protect the environment</i>	59.4%	28.1%	12.4%	No signif change	58.8%	14.7%	26.4%

## 5.5 *Sharing learnings with others and participants' perceptions about program impacts*

In stark contrast with the 2007-2008 cohort, participants in the fall 2008 reported that they did not extensively share what they had learned about racism and environmental stewardship at the Connections program. Surprisingly, particularly since their written comments indicate otherwise, only 2.9% of participants said that they often or always told other kids and only 2.9% said that they told their parents about some of the things they had learned about racism. Sharing information about environmental stewardship was better, with 58.8% of participants telling other kids and 23.5% telling their parents about some of the things they has learned about protecting the environment.

**Table 26. Cohort 2 – Sharing learnings**

<i>Since attending Connections three months ago, how often have you...</i>	Never/rarely		Sometimes		Often/always		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment</i>	3	8.8%	11	32.4%	20	58.8%	34	100.0%
<i>Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about racism</i>	33	97.1%			1	2.9%	34	100.0%
<i>Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment</i>	19	55.9%	7	20.6%	8	23.5%	34	100.0%
<i>Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about racism</i>	31	94.0%	1	3.0%	1	3.0%	34	100.0%

On the other hand, three months after its conclusion, participants clearly perceived that they had benefitted enormously—and in the ways intended—from participation in the Connections program. As shown in the following table, most participants agreed or strongly agreed that, because they attended the residential program, they are more aware of the feelings of others (97.0%), get along better with others (78.8%), find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother them (93.9%), feel more comfortable with people from different cultures (90.9%), try harder not say hurtful things (93.9%), see the world differently than they did before (92.6%), have been able to tell their friends about new things (91.0%), find it easier to stand up for their beliefs (93.9%), and think about the impact of their actions on the environment (84.9%).

Moreover, the additional comments offered by participants show that they feel strongly that the Connections program had a meaningful and positive impact on their lives.

**Table 27. Cohort 2 – Participants' perceptions**

<i>Because I attended Connections Outdoor School...</i>	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>I am more aware of the feelings of others</i>			1	3.0%			16	48.5%	16	48.5%	33	100.0%
<i>I get along better with others</i>			3	9.1%	4	12.1%	15	45.5%	11	33.3%	33	100.0%
<i>I find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother me</i>			1	3.0%	1	3.0%	17	51.5%	14	42.4%	33	100.0%
<i>I feel more comfortable with people from different cultures</i>			1	3.0%	2	6.1%	10	30.3%	20	60.6%	33	100.0%
<i>I have tried harder not to say things that might be hurtful</i>			1	3.0%	1	3.0%	11	33.3%	20	60.6%	33	100.0%
<i>I see the world differently than I did before</i>			1	3.0%	1	3.0%	15	45.5%	16	47.1%	33	100.0%
<i>I have been able to tell my friends about new things</i>					3	9.1%	15	45.5%	15	45.5%	33	100.0%
<i>It is easier to stand up for my beliefs</i>			1	3.0%	1	3.0%	17	51.5%	14	42.4%	33	100.0%
<i>I think about the impact that my actions will have on the environment</i>			1	3.0%	4	12.1%	13	39.4%	15	45.5%	33	100.0%



## **Additional comments from participants about the impact of the program**

*Connections had a huge impact on my life, and I think the best thing that changed is that I always speak up now when I hear ridiculous things that people say.*

*Lots has changed for me because I have been standing up for things that I never used to and I have been hearing a change around our school because we do not use any words that can offend someone.*

*The program made me say something at home...my dad and my brother are always cracking jokes, but some of them were maybe not hurtful to them but to other people they would be.*

*This program has made me think twice about things, and I believe it has changed who I am as a person and I think I've become a better person because of this program.*

*This program impacted my life in an incredible way. I have learned to be more accepting and miss it a ton. I have brought the light I saw at Connections back to my school.*

*This program was amazing! It really made/makes me think and helped/helps me to make better decisions and learn about racism. Plus I made great friends there!!*

*I could never say enough about this program it was so life changing to me. I learned so much not only about me but about the people around me; this program should be offered to everyone.*

*I found that the program actually changed how I reacted to different things, and made me more alert of how frequently people are being judged based on looks, race, culture, etc.*

*I got to see the real me again, instead of the person I was before I went to camp.*

*I had so much fun! The other students I met inspired me to be more involved in my school, and I already was the co-president of student council and the Rotary Interact Club.*

*I have noticed so many things that I could have unconsciously said or done that was not necessarily prejudice, but very biased. It makes me rethink the things that I want to say, and put them in more positive language.*

*I loved the people. George was a hoot. And all and all this was a radical experience.*

*I noticed how many times people swear in the hallways, classrooms and other communal areas.*

*I noticed just how many harmful comments in the media like in Family Guy or the Simpsons etc.*

*i wanna go again lol it was pretty fun.*

*Many great things have changed for me. Camp connections made a huge positive impact on my life! =)*

*The nature contact really helped me realize what's important in life.*

*The program has had a huge impact on my life. I am now much more aware of everything going on around me. My mindset about other people has changed and my view of the world is now much different.*

*The program let me open up more, and let me have trust in people. It let me wait until I got to know the person, to see who the person was. It allowed me to be open, and see things in a different perspective.*

*Yes in tons of different ways!*

*Yes, it opened my eyes to cultures that I didn't really understand, and how wrong my old ways of pollution and discrimination were.*

*Yes, it was very helpful in the sense that I now have a better understanding of how to interact positively with others and why our school is the way it is.*

## 5.6 Participants' feedback about aspects of the residential program

At the conclusion of the residential component of the program, participants were surveyed to obtain their feedback about the activities and other aspects of this component. As shown in the following table, and clarified by the comments offered by participants, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

**Table 28. Cohort 2 – Participants' feedback about aspects of the residential program**

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>I had enough time alone to think about things</i>	2	3.8%	3	5.8%			25	48.1%	22	42.3%	52	100.0%
<i>It felt good to help out around the camp</i>					3	5.8%	26	50.0%	23	44.2%	52	100.0%
<i>I had an opportunity to participate in activities of interest</i>							13	25.0%	39	75.0%	52	100.0%
<i>I learned new ways to solve problems</i>			1	1.9%	2	3.8%	15	28.8%	34	65.4%	52	100.0%
<i>I felt like I belonged at camp</i>	1	1.9%			1	1.9%	11	21.2%	39	75.0%	52	100.0%
<i>I could choose not to participate in activities</i>	2	3.8%	3	5.8%	12	23.1%	16	30.8%	19	36.5%	52	100.0%
<i>I had an opportunity to lead a group</i>					6	11.8%	24	47.1%	21	41.2%	51	100.0%
<i>I felt comfortable with the other kids</i>			1	1.9%	1	1.9%	10	19.2%	40	76.9%	52	100.0%
<i>The activities challenged me to think in new ways</i>			1	1.9%	3	5.8%	11	21.2%	37	71.2%	52	100.0%
<i>I felt like my ideas counted here</i>					2	3.8%	15	28.8%	35	67.3%	52	100.0%
<i>I was able to participate in decisions about how my time was spent</i>	2	3.8%	5	9.6%	11	21.2%	19	36.5%	15	28.8%	52	100.0%
<i>I felt that people respected me</i>					3	5.8%	9	17.3%	40	76.9%	52	100.0%
<i>It was important to have the teachers attend</i>					6	11.8%	11	21.6%	34	66.7%	51	100.0%
<i>There were too many activities</i>	20	38.5%	20	38.5%	8	15.4%	4	7.7%			52	100.0%
<i>I felt comfortable expressing my opinions</i>							27	51.9%	25	48.1%	52	100.0%
<i>It felt good to work with other kids to achieve goals</i>			1	1.9%	1	1.9%	12	23.1%	38	73.1%	52	100.0%
<i>I felt safe expressing my opinions in my journal</i>	1	1.9%			5	9.6%	14	26.9%	32	61.5%	52	100.0%
<i>I learned new ways of communicating with others</i>			2	3.9%	5	9.8%	15	29.4%	29	56.9%	51	100.0%
<i>The leaders helped make the camp an enjoyable experience</i>			1	2.0%			8	15.7%	42	82.4%	51	100.0%
<i>Some of the activities made me upset, uncomfortable, or feel excluded</i>	26	50.0%	14	26.9%	6	11.5%	6	11.5%			52	100.0%

**If any of the activities made you feel uncomfortable, which ones? Please explain.**

*Body imaging because I have a problem with how I see myself.*

*Body imaging. I kind of think I'm a little overweight but I don't skip meals or starve myself or anything I deal with who I am.*

*The body image presentation did make me feel uncomfortable because I wasn't thinking about my weight or my looks for a long time but now it's bothering me again like it did before.*

*I am very shy, sometimes I found myself being left out of conversations, and a lot of the time I walked alone to activities.*

*I felt uncomfortable and excluded for the first day and a half during free time and meals but I opened up and made some friends.*

*I included myself in many activities just because I'm usually a shy and quiet guy who can switch to being this more open and loud person.*

*The role play because I'm shy and I guess I was too shy and I got told to speak up and it made me choke cause I was already scared and yeah...*

*Probably the group activities- with all 50 of us because not one person can attend to every person. I felt like this during the belly dancing session.*

*The Islam 101 made me upset because of how people treated Muslim after 9/11.*

*The Russian Dance because I felt like we were forced to do it even though I understand it was for a learning purpose.*

*The only small thing that made me feel uncomfortable was when at campfire one night they did a song poking fun at Swedish people. I am quite Swedish and we had a man from Sweden live at our house for a month and I don't think that song was funny. Plus it's supposed to be a multicultural week and that made fun of my heritage. I don't think that was right.*

*I learned a lot from each activity but for "slang revolution" I felt little uncomfortable listening to all the words yet I learned from it.*

*It was only the derogatory terms. It was only shocking to have less discretion but it brought the point across as to why it had none.*

*Only one made me feel uncomfortable and that was the bad words but I do realize that it has to be topic to address to and it's a growing concern.*

*Slang revolution because a lot of the words mentioned were used on me.*

*The only reason I was upset at any time was that I was kind of stunned to see all of the horrifying things that people have to go through, e.g., Nan's 911 comment and Slang Revolution.*

*The slang revolution made me feel a little uncomfortable because I do not swear. Some of the words shocked me but in a good way. It didn't really bother me though.*

*The slang revolution made me uncomfortable because I already don't use these words, I expect to hear them at school, but I didn't want to hear it here.*

*When we were discussing words that we hear every day at school. Some of them I don't hear but a few that others hear all the time hurt, especially the people would respect them so much while we were doing the activity.*

## **5.7 Teacher survey**

A survey was administered to two teachers about each of the fall 2008 participants before they participated in the Connections program and three months after the program. Unfortunately, much of the data collected from the teachers was unusable: Two pre- and post-surveys were not completed for every student, a few teachers did not include their names on the survey, in some cases different teachers completed the pre- and post-tests, and in some cases the teacher was unable to answer many of the questions asked about the student, in which case the data from their surveys was discarded. In the end, there were usable pre-post matches for 27 participants, although not every question was answered by every respondent teacher.

That being said, the results of the teacher survey, as presented in the following table, indicate statistically significant improvements on almost all of the indicators, even though the pre-test scores were quite high to begin with. The only indicators on which no significant changes emerged were: “works with others to get things done,” “says we shouldn’t do certain things because they harm the environment,” “takes action based on his/her beliefs rather than being influenced by others,” “participates in group activities at school intended to protect the environment,” and challenges things that he/she thinks are unfair or unjust” (although the percentage of those who do so in respectful ways increased significantly).

**Table 29. Cohort 2 – Teachers’ assessments of individual participants**

<i>N=20-27, depending on the variable This student</i>	Before program			Change from pre to 3-month follow-up	3 months after program		
	Disagree/strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree		Strongly disagree/disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree/strongly agree
<i>Works with others to get things done</i>	3.7%	7.4%	88.8%	No signif change			100.0%
<i>Knows that it's okay to be different</i>	11.5%		88.5%	Improved (p=.002)			100.0%
<i>Says we shouldn't do certain things because they harm the environment</i>		34.8%	65.2%	No signif change		4.0%	96.0%
<i>Takes the lead in a group</i>	23.1%	15.4%	61.5%	Improved (p=.003)		3.7%	96.3%
<i>Makes fun of people based on how they look</i>	88.9%	3.7%	7.4%	Improved (p=.005)	100.0%		
<i>Is willing to compromise</i>		14.8%	85.2%	Improved (p=.001)			100.0%
<i>Comes up with ideas about how to improve the community or school</i>	13.6%	31.8%	54.6%	Improved (p=.030)			100.0%
<i>Treats others with respect</i>		11.1%	88.8%	Improved (p=.011)			100.0%
<i>Can laugh at himself/herself</i>	12.0%	8.0%	80.0%	Improved (p=.009)		3.6%	96.4%
<i>Assesses ways in which his/her own lifestyle may have an impact on the environment</i>	10.5%	52.6%	36.8%	Improved (p=.029)		8.3%	91.7%
<i>Listens to what other people are saying</i>		7.4%	92.6%	Improved (p=.001)			100.0%
<i>Develops plans to do things and then carries them out</i>	14.8%	18.5%	64.7%	Improved (p=.001)		3.6%	96.4%
<i>Relates well to people who are different from him/her</i>		22.2%	77.8%	Improved (p=.001)			100.0%
<i>Says what he/she thinks and gets other people to listen</i>	11.5%	23.1%	65.4%	Improved (p=.001)		7.4%	92.6%
<i>Has friends whose ethnic background is different from his/her own</i>		31.6%	68.4%	Improved (p=.038)			100.0%
<i>Stops other kids from arguing or fighting</i>	4.5%	54.6%	40.9%	Improved (p=.025)		15.4%	84.6%
<i>Tries new things even when he/she doesn't feel confident doing them</i>	11.1%	14.8%	74.1%	Improved (p=.001)			100.0%
<i>Tries to do what is best for everybody</i>		29.2%	70.8%	Improved (p=.004)		3.6%	96.4%
<i>Says negative or sarcastic things about people with respect to their religious or ethno-cultural background, sexual orientation, or disability</i>	64.6%	11.5%	3.8%	Improved (p=.027)	100.0%		
<i>Takes action based on his/her beliefs rather than being influenced by others</i>	18.2%	9.1%	72.7%	No signif change	3.5%	3.6%	92.8%
<i>Participates in group activities at school intended to protect the environment</i>	5.9%	47.1%	47.0%	No signif change	9.1%	13.6%	77.3%
<i>Participates in group activities at school intended to combat racism or promote diversity</i>	9.5%	23.8%	66.7%	Improved (p<.001)		3.6%	96.4%
<i>Challenges things that he/she thinks are unfair or unjust</i>	4.3%	17.4%	78.2%	No signif change		3.7%	95.3%
<i>Challenges things that he/she thinks are unfair or unjust in respectful ways</i>	3.8%	30.8%	65.4%	Improved (p=.007)		3.5%	96.4%

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

As clearly shown in this evaluation, the Connections program fully achieved all of its objectives. Youth who completed the Connections program and, particularly those in the 2007-08, demonstrated sustained improvements in leadership abilities and behaviours in conjunction with pro-environmental and anti-racist attitudes and, most importantly, behaviours. Each of the four evaluation questions is answered in turn below.

### ***Question 1: To what extent and in which ways were Connections participants influenced by participation in the program in the short term?***

From before the program to the end of the residential component of the program, participants' knowledge about and attitudes toward non-dominant cultures and other diversity groups improved significantly. Participants' scores on a wide range of indicators revealed that the key messages imparted by the program were grasped and internalized by almost all of the participants. Likewise—although it is a more subtle aspect of residential program—participants' respect for the environment increased. Finally, although their actual knowledge about the concepts of leadership did not increase dramatically, their awareness and understanding about how to be effective leaders significantly improved.

Moreover, participants' sense of efficacy on matters relating to racism and diversity, leadership, and environmental efficacy also improved significantly. Sense of efficacy, or the belief that one has the power to effect change, is a vital precursor to behavioural change. In other words, people must have sufficient self-confidence and self-esteem to believe that they are capable of influencing change, rather than simply continuing as well-informed bystanders.

### ***Question 2: To what extent did Connections participants retain knowledge, attitudes, and leadership skills and behaviours acquired during the program three months and one year after the conclusion of the program?***

Follow-up at one year with participants from the 2007-2008 cohort confirms that the benefits of participation were retained and, in some cases, strengthened over time. Although the results may be somewhat weakened by self-selection bias among those who completed the one-year follow-up survey, these findings are remarkable and may be unique to the Connections program among all other anti-racism, anti-discrimination programs. There appear to be no other programs that can boast results of this magnitude and duration.

Both cohorts of participants retained most of the benefits of the Connections program three months after its conclusion, but scores were higher for the 2007-2008 cohort than the fall 2008 cohort. At three months, issues of self-selection bias do not apply for the 2007-2008 cohort because survey completion was a requirement of the high school credit course. There are at least three possible explanations for the differences between the two cohorts:

- First, there may have been differences among the participants in the two cohorts. For example, the 2007-2008 cohort may have included older (i.e., more mature) or more enthusiastic students than the fall 2008 cohort, there may have been variations in the degree to and ways in which the participants' schools supported their learning, or there may be cultural differences around the province that influence students' attitudes and behaviours. It is not possible to explore these possibilities due to

data limitations. However, both cohorts included participants from many schools in Calgary and around Alberta. Therefore, it is unlikely that there were notable differences between participants in the two cohorts.

- Second, there may have been differences in the quality of the sessions in which the two cohorts participated, leading to different outcomes. This, too, is unlikely, as the program follows a structured curriculum and both cohorts were facilitated by the same individuals.
- Finally, and most likely, the differences between the two cohorts may be attributable to the stronger school-based learning components delivered before and after the residential component when the program was a high school credit course. It is probable that, in a credit course, more attention is paid by both students and teachers to the satisfactory completion of all components of the course. These findings indicate that all the parts of the Connections program collectively contribute to the positive results. The findings also suggest that the activities that occur at the participants' schools following the residential component serve to reinforce the learnings that occur during the residential component of the program and give participants opportunities to practice and “solidify” their behavioural changes, leading to better outcomes.

***Question 3: To what extent did Connections participants act on or share with others any of the knowledge, attitudes, and leadership skills and behaviours acquired during the program three months and one year after the conclusion of the program?***

The quantitative results indicate a large discrepancy between the two cohorts on the extent to which they shared their learnings with others. Between two-thirds and three-quarters of the 2007-2008 cohort reported that, one year later, they often or always told other kids and their parents about some of the things they had learned about protecting the environment and about racism. Conversely, only 2.9% of the fall 2008 participants said that they often or always told other kids or their parents about some of the things they had learned about racism. Sharing information about environmental stewardship was somewhat better, with 58.8% of participants telling other kids and 23.5% telling their parents about some of the things they had learned about protecting the environment, but still very different from the 2007-2008 cohort.

On the other hand, participants in both cohorts, whether at three months or one year after participating in the program, clearly perceived that they had benefitted enormously—and in the ways intended—from participation in the Connections program. Almost all participants agreed or strongly agreed that, because they completed the program, they are more aware of the feelings of others, get along better with others, find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother them, feel more comfortable with people from different cultures, try harder not say hurtful things, see the world differently than they did before, have been able to tell their friends about new things, find it easier to stand up for their beliefs, and think about the impact of their actions on the environment. Also, the additional comments offered by participants in both cohorts suggest that their behaviours have changed due to program participation.

There are no obvious reasons for the differences between the two cohorts on the extent to which they have shared their learnings with others. Again, this may be attributable to the fact that the first cohort participated in a credit course, as discussed above.

***Question 4: If the Connection programs results in enduring changes in attitudes, knowledge, and/or behaviours, what are the factors that contribute to its success?***

A comprehensive discussion of the research on leadership, environmental, and anti-racism programming is beyond the scope of this report. Briefly, however, the research indicates that the success of the Connections program is quite unique. Few anti-racism programs and initiatives have been thoroughly evaluated. Most anti-racism programs have been assessed only in terms of immediate post-program feedback from participants about program content, performance of leaders and instructors, and perceived value of the program. There are many possible reasons for the dearth of evaluations in the anti-racism field. As observed by Pedersen, however, there are probably many examples of failed programs that go unreported because “studies that do not result in significant findings are often not published.”<sup>1</sup>

Of the programs that have actually been evaluated, most have focused on the short-term impacts of the program and, for the most part, on changes in participants’ attitudes upon completion of the program. The few evaluations where participants have been followed longitudinally, usually three months after the program, have generally revealed few or no enduring changes in attitudes and virtually never any changes in behaviour. This is true of programs targeting children, youth, or adults.<sup>2</sup> In addition, “the limited effects produced do not generalize across situations and groups.”<sup>3</sup>

The Connections program appears to be doing all the “right things” and avoiding the “wrong approaches and tactics” as demonstrated or suggested by the limited research that exists.

- The program includes multiple, sequenced strategies and active learning activities to simultaneously increase knowledge and awareness and develop the skills and confidence required to put this knowledge into action—approaches which facilitate learning with any audience about any issue or subject matter;
- The program is delivered in accordance with criteria identified by research as helping to facilitate positive outcomes (for example, participants experience sense of belonging and safety, participants are exposed to other cultures, participants feel that their views are respected, participants who are members of diversity groups are not placed in a position of “answering” for their group, and participants have opportunities to practice new skills in a safe, non-judgmental setting – please refer to Appendix 2 for a more comprehensive list).
- The full program takes several months to complete, unlike many strategies that involve a single training session. Pedersen comments: “[C]learly a [one-off session] cannot reverse racism; the best one can hope for is that the session will be a stimulant for ongoing change.”<sup>4</sup>
- The program goes beyond providing information and raising awareness; it also includes practical skills development strategies. Most anti-racism programs focus on increasing knowledge and awareness (e.g., dispelling false stereotypes) and/or changing attitudes (e.g., increasing empathy for those who experience racism). As noted by Pate in 1981 and since echoed by scores of other researchers, “knowledge alone will not reduce prejudice; knowledge is something of a prerequisite to prejudice reduction, not the sole means.”<sup>5</sup>

The research is clear that additional methods are generally required to motivate and support people to make the transition from understanding to behaving differently. Perhaps most important, participants need tools to act on their newfound knowledge;<sup>6</sup> that is, practical skills, learned through discussion, role plays, and active exercises where participants take the perspective of another, for dealing with racism when it is encountered.<sup>7</sup> Learning how to effectively deal with racist talk is crucial.<sup>8</sup>

Pedersen states: “[A]ttitudes have only a tenuous relationship with behaviours, and attempts to change behaviours by inducing prior changes in attitudes are ineffective and inefficient. Thus, it may be more useful to focus on changing of racist behaviours directly. It is likely that nonracist behaviour is not only more achievable than are nonracist attitudes, but social psychological research suggests that altered behaviour change can lead to altered attitudes.”<sup>9</sup>

- The Connections program uses a variety of strategies based on several different theoretical foundations, which the research indicates is the most effective approach.<sup>10</sup> Many anti-racism programs rely on one approach, such as bringing members of different cultural groups together (“contact hypothesis”), working to increase empathy for people who are subject to discrimination, or providing factual information to dispel false beliefs. The shortcomings of these approaches are as follows:
  - Allport’s seminal “contact hypothesis” from 1954<sup>11</sup> argues, at risk of oversimplification, that inter-group tensions can be reduced by bringing members of the groups together, providing that certain conditions are met: The groups must have equal status; there should be no competition along group lines; the groups must seek superordinate goals; and the relevant authorities (in this case the program providers) must be supporting a reduction in intergroup tensions. However, failure to ensure that these conditions are met can increase, rather than reduce, prejudice.<sup>12</sup>
  - Research shows that people who can empathize with the victims of racism are less likely to have racist views.<sup>13</sup> However, increasing empathy without increasing awareness among participants that they themselves are part of the social forces responsible for racism has little effect on attitudes.<sup>14</sup> An important feature of successful programs includes a focus on power and oppression, and a distinction between personal prejudice and institutional or systemic racism.
  - On the other hand, inducing strong feelings of personal discomfort and guilt among participants can lead people away from examining their own beliefs and actually prevent changes in attitude.<sup>15</sup> Some anti-racism programs are premised on the idea that people from the dominant racial group are inherently racist (i.e., through “internalized dominance” and “white privilege”).<sup>16</sup> This may well be true but, in some cases, these programs feature a confrontational approach to teaching which, as observed by some educators, may “shut some people down, leaving them feeling blamed, guilty, angry and powerless.”<sup>17</sup>
  - While providing accurate information about members of other ethnocultural groups is important, the research indicates that lectures are less effective than open and frank discussion: “If participants feel that they cannot speak about negative experiences, they are less likely to pay attention, and less attitude change is likely.”<sup>18</sup>
- The Connections program does not exclusively target members of the dominant cultural group.<sup>19</sup> In fact, it explicitly includes and empowers participants from all diversity groups. Anti-racism initiatives are now receiving attention in the U.S. as a youth development strategy for ethno-racial minority youth to help them to develop a personal identity, a sense of responsibility, feelings of belonging, and a range of competencies, along with effecting concrete changes in their communities or in society.<sup>20</sup> American research has shown that “[t]he process through which youth develop a critical analysis of their circumstances and then develop both a personal and collective response can be deeply empowering.”<sup>21</sup> Ginwright observes that the capacity to confront, resist, and challenge racism requires quite different skills from those ordinarily associated with youth development processes. “Confronting racism, for example, in police practices, school policies, and other aspects of life, provides a way for youth to engage in civic life that matters to them. As a result, young people develop a sense of agency to change things and foster a sense of purpose and future.”<sup>22</sup>



## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is customary in program evaluations to offer recommendations for improving the program based on the findings of the evaluation. In this case, however, the evaluation revealed no real flaws in the Connections program. In fact, had the Connections program been evaluated using an experimental or quasi-experimental design (i.e., had included a control group), it could probably be designated as a “model” or “exemplary” program.<sup>23</sup>

That being said, two suggestions arise from the evaluation:

1. The body imaging component of the program does not appear to have lasting benefits for participants. Although it seems to be a very good exercise that reaches participants, it may not be possible to counter the ongoing societal pressures faced by adolescents to “measure up” to impossible physical standards set by media and the fashion industry in a single session. Therefore, the Connections Education Society may wish to give some more thought as to whether this component is the best use of its resources.
2. The second recommendation arises from the differences in outcomes between the two participant cohorts. Although the outcomes were excellent for both cohorts, they were stronger for the cohort that completed the program when it was a high school credit course. Therefore, it is recommended that the Connections Education Society present the findings of this evaluation to the Government of Alberta and seek to have its program reinstated as a high school credit course. It is generally recognized that racism and discrimination create profound problems for those who experience it and for society as a whole, and it is abundantly clear that the results achieved by the Connections program are not and cannot be achieved through other existing programming, including the provincial social studies curriculum. In times of shrinking budgets and fiscal restraint, government and other funding bodies have a heightened duty to make the best use of their limited resources by investing in programs that demonstrate results. Ideally, the Connections program should be a mandatory course for all high school students in Alberta. In the meantime, it is recommended that Connections Education Society seek sustained funding from all possible government and charitable funding sources in order to continue to offer the program to as many high school students as possible.

---

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30, p. 27.
- <sup>2</sup> See, for example, Hill, M. E.; Augoustinos, M. 2001. "Stereotype change and prejudice reduction: Short- and long-term evaluation of a cross-cultural awareness program." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11, 243–262; Bigler, R. 1999. "The use of multicultural curricula and materials to counter racism in children." *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 687–707.
- <sup>3</sup> Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30, p. 24.
- <sup>4</sup> Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30, p. 27. See also, for example, Hill, M. E.; Augoustinos, M. 2001. "Stereotype change and prejudice reduction: Short- and long-term evaluation of a cross-cultural awareness program." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 11, 243–262.
- <sup>5</sup> Pate, G. S. 1981. "Research on prejudice reduction." *Educational Leadership*, 38, 288–291, p. 288.
- <sup>6</sup> Abell, J. P.; Havelaar, A. E.; Dankoor, M. M. 1998. "The documentation and evaluation of anti-discrimination training activities in the Netherlands." *International Migration Papers*, 16.
- <sup>7</sup> Culhane, S.F. 1995. Responding to racism: Measuring the effectiveness of an anti-racism program for secondary schools. (Master's Thesis, Department of Curriculum Studies, University of British Columbia); McGregor, J. 1993. "Effectiveness of role playing and antiracist teaching in reducing student prejudice." *Journal of Educational Research*, 86, 215–226.
- <sup>8</sup> Guerin, B. 2003. "Combating prejudice and racism: New interventions from a functional analysis of racist language." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 13, 29–45.
- <sup>9</sup> Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30, p. 28.
- <sup>10</sup> Bigler, R. 1999. "The use of multicultural curricula and materials to counter racism in children." *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 687–707.
- <sup>11</sup> Allport, G. 1954. *The nature of prejudice*. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley). See also, for example, Pettigrew, T. F.; Tropp, L.R. 2006. "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751–783; Pettigrew, T. F. 1998. "Intergroup contact theory." *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49, 65–85; Wright, S. C., et al. 1997. "The extended contact effect: Knowledge of cross-group friendships and prejudice." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 73–90;
- <sup>12</sup> A meta-analysis of contact studies showed that in real-life situations (such as different cultural groups living in proximity), inter-group tensions can sometimes be reduced by exposure alone, regardless of these four conditions. (Pettigrew, T. F.; Tropp, L.R. 2006. "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751–783.) However, there are other studies showing that exposure can actually exacerbate rather than diffuse prejudice. (See, for example, Connolly, P. 1999. "Reconsidering multicultural/antiracist strategies in education: Articulations of 'race' and gender in a primary school." In M. Griffiths & B. Troyna (Eds.), *Antiracism, culture and social justice in education* (pp. 1–19). (Oakhill, UK: Trentham Books) and Tilbury, F. 1999). "Some of my best friends are Maori but...": *Cross-ethnic friendships, ethnic identity and attitudes to race relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), both cited in Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30.
- <sup>13</sup> See, for example, Finlay, K. A.; Stephan, W. G. 2000. "Improving intergroup relations: The effects of empathy on racial attitudes." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30, 1720–1737.
- <sup>14</sup> Finlay, K. A.; Stephan, W. G. 2000. "Improving intergroup relations: The effects of empathy on racial attitudes." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30, 1720–1737.
- <sup>15</sup> Iyer, A.; Leach, C.W.; Pedersen, A. 2004. Racial wrongs and restitutions: The role of guilt and other group-based emotions. In M. Fine, et al. *Off white: Readings on power, privilege, and resistance*, pp. 345–361. (New York: Routledge).
- <sup>16</sup> See, for example, Miner, B. nd. "Taking multicultural, anti-racist education seriously: An interview with Enid Lee." In *Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice. Volume 2*; Ladson-Billings, G. 2001. "Teaching and cultural competence: What does it take to be a successful teacher in a diverse classroom?" *Rethinking Schools*, 15(4). Articles available at <http://rethinkingschools.org>; Williams-Shreve, T. (1991) "Multicultural education versus anti-racist education." In *A Report on Sessions. Building Bridges, Not Walls Conference on Multiculturalism/Anti-Racism*; DeRosa, P. (1996) "Diversity training: In search of anti-racism." Available at <http://www.sabes.org/b2divers.htm>.
- <sup>17</sup> DeRosa, P. 1996. "Diversity training: In search of anti-racism." Available at <http://www.sabes.org/b2divers.htm>.
- <sup>18</sup> Pederson, A.; Walker, I.; Wise, M. 2005. "Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action." *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–30, p. 27. See also Guerin, B. 2003. "Combating prejudice and racism: New interventions from a functional analysis of racist language." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 13, 29–45.
- <sup>19</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion on this point, see Cooper, M. 2008. *Overcoming barriers to the positive development and engagement of ethno-racial minority youth in Canada*. Completed for Canadian Heritage, Alberta Division. (Calgary, AB: Government of Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage).
- <sup>20</sup> Mohamed, I.A.; Wheeler, W. 2001. *Broadening the Bounds of Youth Development: Youth as Engaged Citizens*. Chevy Chase, MD: The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and The Ford Foundation); Roach, C.; Yu, H.C.; Lewis-Charp, H. 2001. "Race, Poverty and Youth Development." *Poverty & Race*, 10(4), 3-6; Roach, C.; Sullivan, L.; Wheeler, W. 1999. *Youth Leadership for Development: Civic Activism as a Component of Youth Development Programming*. (Chevy Chase, MD: Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development). See also The Forum for Youth Investment. 2004. "Youth Act: Community Impact." *Forum Focus*, 2(2); Fulbright-Anderson, K., et al. 2004. *Structural Racism and Youth Development: Issues, Challenges, and Implications*. (New York, NY: The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change); Ginwright, S. 2001. "Critical Resistance: African American Youth and US Racism." *Youth Development Journal*, 3; Ginwright, S.; James, T. 2003. "From Assets to Agents of Change: Social Justice, Organizing, and Youth Development." *New Directions for Youth Development*, 96, 27-46; Quiroz-Martinez, J.; HoSang, D.; Villarosa, L. 2004. *Changing the Rules of the Game: Youth Development & Structural Racism*. (Washington, D.C.: Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity).
- <sup>21</sup> Mohamed, I.A.; Wheeler, W. 2001. *Broadening the Bounds of Youth Development: Youth as Engaged Citizens*. Chevy Chase, MD: The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development and The Ford Foundation).
- <sup>22</sup> Ginwright, S. 2006. "Racial Justice Through Resistance: Important Dimensions of Youth Development for African Americans." *National Civic Review*, 95(1), 3-9.
- <sup>23</sup> Clear standards for model and promising programs, best and promising practices, and evidence-based practice have been developed by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), [www.modelprograms.samsha.gov](http://www.modelprograms.samsha.gov); The University of Colorado's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV), [www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints](http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints); The Society for Prevention Research, [www.preventionsscience.org](http://www.preventionsscience.org); and the U.S. Department of Education, [www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/sdfs](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/sdfs).

# APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRES

## CONNECTIONS OUTDOOR SCHOOL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE (1)

Today's date: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M F

Date of birth: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ How old are you now? \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnocultural background: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you strongly disagree, 2 if you disagree, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, or 5 if you strongly agree. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. People's jobs are more important than the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I shouldn't have to treat people I don't like with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
3. A person can learn to be a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The way that we interact with the environment in Canada affects other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I see myself in the mirror, I think that I am about the right weight.	1	2	3	4	5
6. It is important for immigrants to learn to dress and act like Canadians.	1	2	3	4	5
7. A good leader gets the job done, even if other people in the group don't like it.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Canadians use less energy than people in most other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have good ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
11. If we get involved, young people can help to stop the destruction of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know how to stop people from making racist comments without getting into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I stand up for my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
14. In order to survive, humans must control nature.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I'm usually pretty good at figuring out what someone is like just by knowing their cultural, ethnic, or religious background.	1	2	3	4	5
16. There is too much discrimination against Native people.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am good at making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I would like to learn about respecting the environment from other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Leadership means getting other people to agree with your point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I would still be friends with someone if they told me they were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
21. People of all shapes and sizes can be beautiful.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Some ethnic jokes are quite funny.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I can learn a lot from people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I wish I looked more like the girls/guys in magazines and on tv.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The environment is my responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have friends at school whose ethnic background is different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
27. When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Prejudice, discrimination, and racism are different words for the same thing.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Gays and lesbians should keep their sexual orientation to themselves.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
30. There's not much I can do to preserve the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than in others.	1	2	3	4	5
32. A good leader can set aside his or her own opinions to help the group achieve its goal.	1	2	3	4	5
33. There's not much I can do to change things at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
34. You shouldn't have to change your lifestyle for the sake of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
35. There is too much discrimination against immigrants.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I can laugh at myself.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I can help make my school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I would stop hanging around with someone if they picked on people who they thought were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I would consider getting plastic surgery to change the way I look.	1	2	3	4	5

**Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you've never done it, 2 if you've rarely done it, 3 if you've sometimes done it, 4 if you've often done it, or 5 if you've always done it. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.**

<b>In the past WEEK, how often have you...</b>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
40. Thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage?	1	2	3	4	5
41. Recycled things, such as cans or bottles?	1	2	3	4	5
42. Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat?	1	2	3	4	5
43. Decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging?	1	2	3	4	5
44. Decided to walk, cycle, or take public transit rather than driving in a car?	1	2	3	4	5
45. Bought (or got your parents to buy) food that was locally grown?	1	2	3	4	5

<b>In the past MONTH, how often have you...</b>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
46. Asked someone to tell you about their religion or culture?	1	2	3	4	5
47. Volunteered to do something extra to help out at your school?	1	2	3	4	5
48. Told a joke about a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
49. Participated in an event or activity that helped you learn more about another culture or religion?	1	2	3	4	5
50. Taken the lead in a group project at school?	1	2	3	4	5
51. Heard a comment about a particular ethnic or other group that made you feel uncomfortable?	1	2	3	4	5
52. Worked with others to successfully complete a task?	1	2	3	4	5
53. Asked someone to stop making a negative comment about a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
54. Participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school?	1	2	3	4	5
55. Said what you think or feel and got your friends or classmates to listen?	1	2	3	4	5
56. Explained to someone why they shouldn't stereotype people from a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
57. Stood up for someone who was the target of a joke or comment based on their belonging to a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
58. Helped others resolve a conflict or reach a compromise?	1	2	3	4	5
59. Made fun of someone because of the way he or she looks?	1	2	3	4	5
60. Participated in any activities at school intended to protect the environment?	1	2	3	4	5
61. Used a derogatory word to describe someone from a particular group?	1	2	3	4	5

**THANK YOU!!**

## CONNECTIONS OUTDOOR SCHOOL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE (2)

Today's date: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you strongly disagree, 2 if you disagree, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, or 5 if you strongly agree. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. People's jobs are more important than the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I shouldn't have to treat people I don't like with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
3. A person can learn to be a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The way that we interact with the environment in Canada affects other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I see myself in the mirror, I think that I am about the right weight.	1	2	3	4	5
6. It is important for immigrants to learn to dress and act like Canadians.	1	2	3	4	5
7. A good leader gets the job done, even if other people in the group don't like it.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Canadians use less energy than people in most other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have good ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
11. If we get involved, young people can help to stop the destruction of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know how to stop people from making racist comments without getting into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I stand up for my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
14. In order to survive, humans must control nature.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I'm usually pretty good at figuring out what someone is like just by knowing their cultural, ethnic, or religious background.	1	2	3	4	5
16. There is too much discrimination against Native people.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am good at making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I would like to learn about respecting the environment from other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Leadership means getting other people to agree with your point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I would still be friends with someone if they told me they were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
21. People of all shapes and sizes can be beautiful.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Some ethnic jokes are quite funny.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I can learn a lot from people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I wish I looked more like the girls/guys in magazines and on tv.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The environment is my responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have friends at school whose ethnic background is different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
27. When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Prejudice, discrimination, and racism are different words for the same thing.	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
29. There's not much I can do to preserve the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than in others.	1	2	3	4	5
31. A good leader can set aside his or her own opinions to help the group achieve its goal.	1	2	3	4	5
32. There's not much I can do to change things at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
33. You shouldn't have to change your lifestyle for the sake of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
34. There is too much discrimination against immigrants.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I can laugh at myself.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I can help make my school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I would stop hanging around with someone if they picked on people who they thought were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I would consider getting plastic surgery to change the way I look.	1	2	3	4	5

**Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you strongly disagree, 2 if you disagree, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, or 5 if you strongly agree. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
F1. I had enough time alone to think about things.	1	2	3	4	5
F2. It felt good to be able to help out around camp.	1	2	3	4	5
F3. I had an opportunity to participate in all activities I found interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
F4. I learned new ways to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
F5. I felt like I belonged at the camp.	1	2	3	4	5
F6. I could choose not to participate in activities.	1	2	3	4	5
F7. I had an opportunity to lead a group.	1	2	3	4	5
F8. I felt comfortable with the other kids at camp.	1	2	3	4	5
F9. The activities challenged me to think in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5
F10. I felt like my ideas counted here.	1	2	3	4	5
F11. I was able to participate in decisions about how I spent my time.	1	2	3	4	5
F12. I felt that people respected me.	1	2	3	4	5
F13. It was important to have the teachers attend the camp.	1	2	3	4	5
F14. There were too many activities.	1	2	3	4	5
F15. I felt comfortable expressing my opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
F16. It felt good to work with other kids to achieve goals.	1	2	3	4	5
F17. I felt safe expressing my opinions in my journal.	1	2	3	4	5
F18. I learned new ways of communicating with others.	1	2	3	4	5
F19. The leaders helped make the camp an enjoyable experience.	1	2	3	4	5
F20. Some of the activities at camp made me feel upset, uncomfortable, or excluded.	1	2	3	4	5

F20a. If any activities made you feel upset, uncomfortable, or excluded, which ones?  
Why did they make you feel this way?

---

---

---

---

F21. What was the most outstanding feature about this camp and why?

---

---

---

---

---

F22. What other comments would you like to share about this camp?

---

---

---

---

---

***THANK YOU!!***

# CONNECTIONS OUTDOOR SCHOOL STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE (3, 4)

Today's date: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you strongly disagree, 2 if you disagree, 3 if you neither agree nor disagree, 4 if you agree, or 5 if you strongly agree. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. People's jobs are more important than the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I shouldn't have to treat people I don't like with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
3. A person can learn to be a leader.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The way that we interact with the environment in Canada affects other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I see myself in the mirror, I think that I am about the right weight.	1	2	3	4	5
6. It is important for immigrants to learn to dress and act like Canadians.	1	2	3	4	5
7. A good leader gets the job done, even if other people in the group don't like it.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A group can accomplish more if someone takes charge and tells people what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Canadians use less energy than people in most other countries.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I have good ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
11. If we get involved, young people can help to stop the destruction of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I know how to stop people from making racist comments without getting into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I stand up for my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
14. In order to survive, humans must control nature.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I'm usually pretty good at figuring out what someone is like just by knowing their cultural, ethnic, or religious background.	1	2	3	4	5
16. There is too much discrimination against Native people.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am good at making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I would like to learn about respecting the environment from other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Leadership means getting other people to agree with your point of view.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I would still be friends with someone if they told me they were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
21. People of all shapes and sizes can be beautiful.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Some ethnic jokes are quite funny.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I can learn a lot from people who are different from me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I wish I looked more like the girls/guys in magazines and on tv.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The environment is my responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I have friends at school whose ethnic background is different from my own.	1	2	3	4	5
27. When I say what I think or how I feel, other kids usually listen.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Prejudice, discrimination, and racism are different words for the same thing.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Gays and lesbians should keep their sexual orientation to themselves.	1	2	3	4	5



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
30. There's not much I can do to preserve the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Religion plays a bigger role in some cultures than in others.	1	2	3	4	5
32. A good leader can set aside his or her own opinions to help the group achieve its goal.	1	2	3	4	5
33. There's not much I can do to change things at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
34. You shouldn't have to change your lifestyle for the sake of the environment.	1	2	3	4	5
35. There is too much discrimination against immigrants.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I can laugh at myself.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I can help make my school a better place for kids from ethnic minority backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I would stop hanging around with someone if they picked on people who they thought were gay or lesbian.	1	2	3	4	5
39. I would consider getting plastic surgery to change the way I look.	1	2	3	4	5

**Please respond to the following statements by circling 1 if you've never done it, 2 if you've rarely done it, 3 if you've sometimes done it, 4 if you've often done it, or 5 if you've always done it. PLEASE CIRCLE ONLY ONE ANSWER PER STATEMENT.**

In the past WEEK, how often have you...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
40. Thrown newspapers or magazines in the garbage?	1	2	3	4	5
41. Recycled things, such as cans or bottles?	1	2	3	4	5
42. Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat?	1	2	3	4	5
43. Decided not to buy something because of unnecessary packaging?	1	2	3	4	5
44. Decided to walk, cycle, or take public transit rather than driving in a car?	1	2	3	4	5
45. Bought (or got your parents to buy) food that was locally grown?	1	2	3	4	5
In the past MONTH, how often have you...	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
46. Asked someone to tell you about their religion or culture?	1	2	3	4	5
47. Volunteered to do something extra to help out at your school?	1	2	3	4	5
48. Told a joke about a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
49. Participated in an event or activity that helped you learn more about another culture or religion?	1	2	3	4	5
50. Taken the lead in a group project at school?	1	2	3	4	5
51. Heard a comment about a particular ethnic or other group that made you feel uncomfortable?	1	2	3	4	5
52. Worked with others to successfully complete a task?	1	2	3	4	5
53. Asked someone to stop making a negative comment about a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
54. Participated in any activities intended to promote diversity or stop racism at your school?	1	2	3	4	5
55. Said what you think or feel and got your friends or classmates to listen?	1	2	3	4	5
56. Explained to someone why they shouldn't stereotype people from a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
57. Stood up for someone who was the target of a joke or comment based on their belonging to a particular ethnic or other group?	1	2	3	4	5
58. Helped others resolve a conflict or reach a compromise?	1	2	3	4	5
59. Made fun of someone because of the way he or she looks?	1	2	3	4	5
60. Participated in any activities at school intended to protect the environment?	1	2	3	4	5
61. Used a derogatory word to describe someone from a particular group?	1	2	3	4	5

*The next questions are about things that have happened in the three months since you went to Connections Outdoor School.*

<b>Since attending Connections Outdoor School three months ago, how often have you...</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
62. Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment?	1	2	3	4	5
63. Told other kids about some of the things you learned at camp about racism?	1	2	3	4	5
64. Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about protecting the environment?	1	2	3	4	5
65. Told your parents about some of the things you learned at camp about racism?	1	2	3	4	5
66. Have you been involved in any group activities related to the environment? If yes, please describe: _____			Yes		No
67. Have you been involved in any diversity-related activities? If yes, please describe: _____			Yes		No

*These final questions are about whether you think that Connections made a difference in your life.*

<b>Because I attended Connections Outdoor School...</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
68. I am more aware of the feelings of others.	1	2	3	4	5
69. I get along better with others.	1	2	3	4	5
70. I find it easier to speak up when people say things that bother me.	1	2	3	4	5
71. I feel more comfortable with people from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
72. I have tried harder not to say things that might be hurtful.	1	2	3	4	5
73. I see the world differently than I did before.	1	2	3	4	5
74. I have been able to tell my friends about new things.	1	2	3	4	5
75. It is easier to stand up for my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5
76. I think about the impact that my actions will have on the environment.	1	2	3	4	5

77. Is there anything else that has changed for you? Did the program have an impact on your life?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU!!**

# CONNECTIONS EDUCATION SOCIETY: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Today's date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_(month/day/year)      This is a:  pre-test     post-test

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the appropriate response for the following statements. Circle ? if you do not know the answer.

<i><b>This student...</b></i>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
1. Works with others to get things done.	1	2	3	4	5	?
2. Knows that it's okay to be different.	1	2	3	4	5	?
3. Says we shouldn't do certain things because they harm the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	?
4. Takes the lead in a group.	1	2	3	4	5	?
5. Makes fun of people because of how they look.	1	2	3	4	5	?
6. Is willing to compromise.	1	2	3	4	5	?
7. Comes up with ideas about how to improve the community or school.	1	2	3	4	5	?
8. Treats others with respect.	1	2	3	4	5	?
9. Can laugh at himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5	?
10. Assesses ways in which his/her own lifestyle may have an impact on the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	?
11. Listens to what other people are saying.	1	2	3	4	5	?
12. Develops plans to do things and then carries them out.	1	2	3	4	5	?
13. Relates well to people who are different from him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	?
14. Says what he/she thinks and gets other people to listen.	1	2	3	4	5	?
15. Has friends whose ethnic background is different from his/her own.	1	2	3	4	5	?
16. Stops other kids from arguing or fighting.	1	2	3	4	5	?
17. Tries new things even when he/she doesn't feel confident doing them.	1	2	3	4	5	?
18. Tries to do what is best for everybody.	1	2	3	4	5	?
19. Says negative or sarcastic things about people with respect to their religious or ethno-cultural background, sexual orientation, or disability.	1	2	3	4	5	?
20. Takes action based on his/her beliefs rather than being influenced by others.	1	2	3	4	5	?
21. Participates in group activities at school intended to protect the environment.	1	2	3	4	5	?
22. Participates in group activities at school intended to combat racism or promote diversity.	1	2	3	4	5	?
23. Challenges things that he/she thinks are unfair or unjust.	1	2	3	4	5	?
23. Challenges things that he/she thinks are unfair or unjust in appropriate and respectful ways.	1	2	3	4	5	?

**THANK YOU.**

## APPENDIX 2: PROMISING PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Programming elements or criteria specific to the positive outcomes in the areas of environmental, diversity, and leadership education have been identified as follows: (It should be noted that some of the sources are dated, although a brief review of the literature revealed nothing new.)

### ***Increasing responsible environmental behaviour***<sup>3</sup>

- Camp experience should allow unstructured time for participants to enjoy and take notice of the outdoors, sometimes in solitude
- Knowledge and skill strategies should be emphasized
- Environmentally-related behaviour changes should be incorporated into the daily camp routine
- Environmental education should include some form of personal reflective activity
- Participants should take an active role in and made to feel a sense of ownership in maintaining a healthy environment at camp

### ***Developing cultural competency***<sup>4</sup>

- Participants experience sense of belonging and safety
- Participants are exposed to other cultures
- Participants feel that their views are respected
- Participants who are members of diversity groups are not placed in a position of “answering” for their group
- Opportunities to practice skills in a safe, non-judgmental setting
- Facilitators include members of diversity groups.

### ***Developing leadership competencies***<sup>5</sup>

- Opportunity to lead a group
- Opportunity to work in teams
- Opportunity to engage in problem solving
- Opportunities to practice communication and decision making

### ***Develop a sense of efficacy***<sup>6</sup>

- Ownership in the decision-making process
- Settings which develop a sense of community and commitment
- Settings which are challenging and stimulating
- Autonomy and flexibility in activities

### ***Elements required to maximize the benefits of experiential education in general***<sup>7</sup>

- Opportunity to take an active role
- Responsibility for making decisions
- Engaging in tasks that challenge and strengthen thinking
- Engaging in group efforts toward common goals
- Choosing projects worthwhile to participants and the community
- Learning skills in relation to actual situations
- Having others depend on actions
- Opportunity for reflection on the experience

---

<sup>3</sup> Strickland, M.A. 1991. *The use of residential summer camp for promoting responsible environmental behaviour through environmental education*. (Masters' Thesis, Dalhousie University) (Master's Abstracts International, 31-02, 0550).

<sup>4</sup> Including but not limited to: Cugali, J. (ed) 2001. *The "No Racism Here" Project. Supplementary Activities and Follow-Up Activities Guide*. (Guelph: Guelph and District Multicultural Centre Inc.); B.C. Human Rights Commission et al. 1998. *Youth Awareness in Action*. (Victoria: B.C. Human Rights Commission); Culhane, S. "Responding to racism workshop." (From *Responding to racism: A guidebook for students and teachers*. (Vancouver: North Vancouver Teachers' Association)); Anselmo, C. "An anti-racism, multicultural camp or conference." Both excerpts provided in *A Report on Sessions. Building Bridges, Not Walls Conference on Multiculturalism/Anti-Racism*. Vancouver, B.C. October 23-24, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> Private/Public Ventures, *Public/Private Venture Scales*. Obtained through personal correspondence with and used with permission from Amy Arbreton, P/PV Senior Research Fellow. (Philadelphia: Private/Public Ventures)

<sup>6</sup> Strickland, M.A. 1991. *The use of residential summer camp for promoting responsible environmental behaviour through environmental education*. (Masters' Thesis, Dalhousie University) (Master's Abstracts International, 31-02, 0550).

<sup>7</sup> Strickland, M.A. 1991. *The use of residential summer camp for promoting responsible environmental behaviour through environmental education*. (Masters' Thesis, Dalhousie University) (Master's Abstracts International, 31-02, 0550).