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On April 1, 2009, AHS brought together 12 formerly separate health entities in the province: nine geographically based health authorities (Chinook Health, Palliser Health Region, Calgary Health Region, David Thompson Health Region, East Central Health, Capital Health, Aspen Regional Health, Peace Country Health and Northern Lights Health Region) and three provincial entities working specifically in the areas of mental health (Alberta Mental Health Board), addiction (Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission) and cancer (Alberta Cancer Board).

Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS) Summative Evaluation

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Note: In 2009, the Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS) was revised to be more aligned with resiliency, empowerment and holistic wellness approaches, which are more culturally appropriate in addressing risk factors of Aboriginal youth. The strategy is now called Honouring Life: Aboriginal Youth and Communities Empowerment Strategy (AYCES). This shift continues to focus on protective factors and building community capacity to address Aboriginal youth issues such as suicide prevention, mental wellness, work experience/employment opportunities, educational achievement, substance misuse, violence, and healthy lifestyle.

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Lethbridge

- Lethbridge Aasitappiksi – Medicine Tree (formerly Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Friendship Society)
- Napi-Friendship Association – Pincher Creek
- Piikani Child and Family Service – Brocket
- Aboriginal Mental Health Program, Population Health Department - Chinook Health
- Blood Tribe Department of Health, Inc. – Standoff.

The Tri-Settlements area

- Gift Lake Métis Settlement,
- Peavine Métis Settlement, and
- East Prairie Métis Settlement.

Eden Valley

Dene Tha’

- Meander River
- Chateh (Assumption)
- Bushe River

Hobbema

- Ermineskin Cree Nation
- Samson Cree Nation
- Louis Bull Tribe First Nation
- Montana Cree Nation

From each of these communities our special thank you goes to:

- Community Coordinators
- Youth Participants
- Community Members
- Service Providers
- Elders
- Elected and Non-Elected Officials

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- Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS) Provincial Coordinator
- Members of the AYSPS Evaluation Sub-Committee
- Members of the AYSPS Working Group

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS) is an initiative established in response to the Government of Alberta's Children and Youth Initiatives. The vision of AYSPPS is that¹: *Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.*

Evaluation Goal

A summative evaluation was conducted in 2007/2008 of nine initial pilot sites and seven new sites; in total 16 communities. The focus of the evaluation was to determine to what degree the AYSPPS had reached its stated objective: Supporting Aboriginal communities to identify strengths and build upon their capacity to prevent youth suicide.

Evaluation Purpose

Commissioned by the ACYI Coordinating Committee and Partnering Deputy Ministers, the findings from the summative evaluation will stimulate the further development of effective province-wide and community-based approaches to (a) addressing the predisposing, contributing or precipitating factors of suicide among Aboriginal youth over the short term, and (b) strengthening protective factors to prevent the occurrence of suicide/suicidal behaviour among Aboriginal youth over the long term. The target audience of the evaluation is both Aboriginal communities and Alberta Ministries.

Methodology

The evaluation used the following methodology:

- Youth survey (n=171)
- Administrative review of the nine community action plans
- Eleven Focus groups. In total 109 participants: 15 Elders, 62 youth and 32 community members.
- In-depth Interviews (n=25). Of these, 12 Working Group members, 13 community coordinators and staff.
- Youth stories (n=2)

Analysis

Quantitative data analysis used paired sample T-tests and descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were analyzed using a thematized approach.

Findings

Youth feel hopeful, optimistic and empowered

The findings showed that AYSPPS has met its stated goals and objectives. The findings are statistically significant and are:

Youth in the communities feel more hopeful about their future. They report feeling more connected to their culture and their community.

Youth reported that they now had plans for their future, which they did not have to the same degree two years ago.

¹ Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Working Group, Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, June 2003, Revised.

Youth have a stronger sense of empowerment today as compared to two years ago. Youth, community members, Elders and coordinators attribute this to youth being better connected to role models and adults in the community, youth having friends whom they can rely on, and youth having had opportunities to learn how to solve problems.

There is an increase in cultural awareness and practice within the communities. Youth have increased opportunity for participating in activities, and youth have adults they can trust and who they view as role models.

Some of the key factors contributing to these successful outcomes are:

- Continuity within the community, both in terms of staff (building trust) and in specific programs (worthwhile getting engaged).
- The strategy providing direct activities (things to do).
- Grounding the program in Aboriginal cultural and heritage.
- Ensuring the approach is creative and diverse.

Communities have reached their goals

The communities completed or partially completed 90% of their targeted strategies/activities, which is considered a high success rate based on the challenges they faced. Establishing staff continuity and developing a supportive political and community structures were factors contributing to success at the local level. The communities achieved this success largely by partnering with other community agencies and by focusing on the resiliency factors for youth success. Each community addressed the needs in their own unique and flexible way, creating a sense of ownership within the community.

Two-thirds of the youth had actively participated in some AYSPS program. Youth felt their peers were aware of the activities offered but did not associate them specifically with AYSPS nor did they know where the money came from. There is evidence that community coordinators, community representatives and Elders are attempting to positively impact youth in their community.

Promoting research and evaluation of what works in Aboriginal communities

The acceptance of the Aboriginal ways of knowing as a valid and reliable way of planning, evaluating and assessing change is being accepted by some ministries as one methodology, to be accompanied by more established methodologies. Although the way of knowing may differ between the government and the communities; both groups expressed the need for accountability.

The community coordinators and Working Group members felt evaluation provided accountability for the funding and direction for the strategy. The initiative also allowed the acceptance and recognition of two different ways of knowing – western ways of knowing and Aboriginal ways of knowing.

Evaluation challenges noted were the concern about lack of evaluation capacity in the communities, staff changes and continued need for paper compliance.

Lessons learned have been communicated to the two new sites by the acceptance of Aboriginal ways of knowing, through evaluation processes and findings, and distinct

communication medias, such as sharing of information, site visits and ongoing connection though electronic and in-person meetings.

Province wide leadership and shared accountability

Using a community development approach was the most suitable way to address youth suicide. It allowed the ownership for planning to stay in the community while at the same time allowing a process of accountability.

The provincial coordinator position met the needs of both the communities as well as the Working Group. Both community coordinators and Working Group members see one of the key functions of the provincial coordinator is to bridge the two ways of knowing.

Recommendations

Recommendation # 1 – Continue AYSPS

It is recommended that AYSPS be continued and expanded into other Aboriginal communities, using the community development model, involving youth and focusing on youth resiliency and protective factors. This should include committed resources over several years to allow continuity in terms of planning, staffing and providing program stability at the community level.

Recommendation # 2 – Enhance staff support

It is recommended that the position of provincial coordinator be continued but with dedicated administrative support and clearer role and responsibility guidelines. Planning should also be encouraged within the communities to address staff turnover.

Recommendation # 3 – Measure longer-term impacts

Aboriginal communities should, together with Alberta ministries, identify proxy measures that will capture to what extent there is a longer-term change in behaviour and outcomes for youth in Aboriginal communities associated with AYSPS.

Recommendation # 4 – Expand communication opportunities

Communication opportunities between sites should continue to be a priority and be increased by expanding the mediums used.

1.0 Introduction

The Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS) is an initiative established in response to the Government of Alberta's Children and Youth Initiatives. Introduced in 1998, the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative (ACYI) is a collaborative partnership of government ministries working together on issues affecting children and youth. Its vision ensures that Alberta's children and youth are well cared for, safe, successful at learning, and healthy.

The vision of AYSPPS is that²:

Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.

The AYSPPS is both a policy direction and a plan for action. It has as its goals:

- Encouraging governments and communities to recognize Aboriginal youth suicide as a preventable public health issue;
- Promoting province wide leadership and shared accountability for an effective, province wide, community based approach to preventing Aboriginal youth suicide and suicidal behaviour;
- Ensuring strategies are designed at the community level to build on the unique needs and strengths of Aboriginal youth and their families in their community;
- Promoting research and evaluation of "what works" to prevent Aboriginal youth suicidal behaviour; and
- Reducing the number of Aboriginal youth who attempt and/or die by suicide.

The overall objectives of the AYSPPS are as follows:

1. Support Aboriginal communities to identify strengths and build upon their capacity to prevent youth suicide.
2. Based on the learnings derived from sample Aboriginal communities, support a province-wide education and training implementation plan that promotes suicide prevention, relationship building and community mobilization.
3. Develop an awareness and education strategy in partnership with communities, to broaden awareness and stimulate action in the prevention of Aboriginal youth suicide.
4. Establish partnerships to support research and program evaluation initiatives to inform future planning.

The focus of the summative evaluation was on the first objective: Support Aboriginal communities to identify strengths and build upon their capacity to prevent youth suicide³.

² Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Working Group, Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, June 2003, Revised.

³ The word 'suicide' does not exist in most Aboriginal languages, nor do the communities use the word. During the evaluation the topic of suicide was addressed through protective or resiliency factors.

1.1 Purpose of the Evaluation⁴

Commissioned by the ACYI Coordinating Committee and Partnering Deputy Ministers, the findings from the summative evaluation will stimulate the further development of effective province-wide and community-based approaches to (a) addressing the predisposing, contributing or precipitating factors of suicide among Aboriginal youth over the short term, and (b) strengthening protective factors to prevent the occurrence of suicide/suicidal behaviour among Aboriginal youth over the long term. The target audience of the evaluation is both Aboriginal communities and Alberta Ministries.

The evaluation was managed by the AYSPS Evaluation Subcommittee under the general guidance of the AYSPS Working Group.

1.2 Communities Participating

The AYSPS was initially implemented (2004) in three geographical areas within nine distinct communities. These were:

Lethbridge

- Lethbridge Aasitapiiksi – Medicine Tree (formerly Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Friendship Society)
- Napi-Friendship Association – Pincher Creek
- Piikani Child and Family Service – Brocket
- Aboriginal Mental Health Program, Population Health Department – Chinook Health
- Blood Tribe Department of Health, Inc. – Standoff.

The Tri-Settlements area by High Prairie

- Gift Lake Métis Settlement,
- Peavine Métis Settlement, and
- East Prairie Métis Settlement.

Eden Valley

In 2006, two more areas (seven communities) were included as part of the second phase of the AYSPS strategy. These were:

Dene Tha'

- Meander River
- Chateh (Assumption)
- Bushe River

Hobbema

- Ermineskin Cree Nation
- Samson Cree Nation
- Louis Bull Tribe First Nation
- Montana Cree Nation

⁴ Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy Summative Evaluation Terms of Reference. Received by Evaluators May 2007.

2.0 Evaluation Goals and Objectives

The following stated outcomes and research objectives formed the basis for the evaluation. These were developed as part of an evaluation framework that also outlined the evaluation approach, methodology, timelines and deliverables. This framework was approved by the AYSPS Evaluation Subcommittee as the foundation for the summative evaluation. For a copy of the complete evaluation framework, please refer to Appendix A.

Stated Outcomes	Research Objectives
Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.	<p>Identify what proportion of youth enrolled in AYSPS programs feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.</p> <p>Determine the extent to which programs have been able to have a positive impact on the lives of youth.</p> <p>Determine the proportion of youth who state that their feelings about their future have improved.</p> <p>Explore and discuss the ways that the projects that have been implemented have helped youth to feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.</p> <p>Review what changes have occurred among youth in the communities in terms of how they feel about their future.</p>
Communities have reached their targeted goals and objectives.	<p>Explore the degree to which each community has reached their stated goals/objectives.</p> <p>Review the role of the provincial coordinator.</p> <p>Identify the reach of community programs to youth in communities.</p>
Promoting research and evaluation of “ <i>what works</i> ” to prevent Aboriginal youth suicidal behaviour.	<p>Determine the proportion of action plan deliverables/objectives that have been achieved.</p> <p>Investigate how project participants have learned about the value of research and the need to demonstrate results.</p> <p>Explore lessons learned and how they can be communicated to future projects.</p>
Province wide leadership and shared accountability for an effective, province wide, community based approach.	<p>Investigate the strengths and opportunities to improve the management of the program.</p> <p>Obtain feedback on the direction of the program’s governance and accountabilities.</p> <p>Review the role of the provincial coordinator.</p>

3.0 Methodology

During the evaluation, a mixed methodology combining western contemporary evaluation methods and Aboriginal ways of knowing were utilized. Aboriginal ways of knowing focus not only on Aboriginal epistemology but also situates the experience within recognition of the interconnectivity and relationship with the broader community⁵. For a detailed description of the approach used please refer to Appendix B.

A summative gathering discussing the evaluation and proposed methodologies was held early in the project (June 2007). Community members, government representatives and evaluators participated in the full day of deliberations.

3.1 Quantitative Methods

Youth Survey

A pre-post youth survey, targeting youth aged 13-30 was developed aimed at capturing youths' perception of a series of protective factors. It was pilot tested in two communities. Guidelines for community coordinators to administer the survey were also developed and reviewed during the pilot testing.

All pilot sites received 75 copies of the survey with three pre-addressed, postage paid envelopes for returning completed surveys. In addition to identifying and approaching youth to participate in the survey, community coordinators also collected and returned all completed surveys.

A convenience sampling approach was used by the community coordinators in all nine communities. The surveys were administered by the community coordinators. The targeted number of completed surveys was 100. The actual number of completed surveys was n= 171.

Administrative Review

An administrative review was conducted of each of the nine pilot sites. It was completed by reviewing the three years of action plans, comparing these to the two years of annual reports submitted, and followed up with interviews with the community coordinators and community members to determine if the stated goals and objectives were reached.

3.2 Qualitative Methods

Focus Groups

Eleven focus groups were conducted in eight pilot project sites. They were organized by the community coordinators and participants were identified and invited by the coordinators. In total 109 persons participated:

- Elders (n=15)
- Youth (n=62)
- Community Representatives (n=32)

The purpose of the focus groups was to gather context and knowledge of the process, impacts and outcomes at the local level.

⁵ Chouinard, J.A. and Cousins, B.J. (2007) Culturally Competent Evaluation for Aboriginal Communities: A Review of Empirical Literature. *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation*, 4, (8).

To honour the Aboriginal way of knowing and to better understand the realities of youth in the communities, all youth were encouraged to share their stories or journeys as part of the evaluation. The coordinators were encouraged to collect stories from youth in writing and forward these to the evaluators. Two documented stories were received. Please see Appendix C.

Individual In-depth Interviews

Twenty-five in-depth interviews were conducted with:

- Community coordinators and representatives (n=13)
- AYSPS Working Group representatives (n=11)
- Provincial coordinator (n=1)

The purpose of the interviews was to understand how the projects had been implemented, program reach, governance and accountability process, suitability of the model, value of research, lessons learned, and how to demonstrate results.

AYSPS Evaluation Subcommittee identified AYSPS Working Group members who had a long-term association with the strategy and who also represented the ministries involved in the initiative.

For copies of the tools, please refer to Appendix D.

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Quantitative Analysis

Surveys collected were entered into a SPSS data base. During entry, each survey was given a unique identifying number. Once all surveys were entered, these numbers were randomized and a 10% sample was pulled. This sample was then compared against the entered data to ensure accuracy.

Three quantitative data analysis were completed:

- Descriptive statistics for each question (n=171) (univariate frequency)
- Paired sample T-test on active participant pre-post measure (n=115)
- T-test on active participants (n=115) compared to non-participants (n=56).

Descriptive statistics allowed demonstration of general population changes by domain. Paired sample T-tests were chosen since it allowed significance testing within a small sample size. For more detail on statistical analysis, please refer to Appendix E, Analysis.

Administrative Review

All action plans were reviewed and goal attainment was determined using the following rating:

- **Completed** - there was tangible evidence of completion (e.g. brochures and attendance rates at conferences, etc.). The completion was also verified by focus group participants and coordinator interviews.
- **Partially completed** – there was no tangible evidence of completion but there was indication from focus group discussions and coordinator interviews that movement had taken place related to the item.

- **No action** - no activity in the area was evident.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data collected through interviews, focus groups and youth stories were analyzed using theme-based analysis. Open thematized analysis was conducted on all qualitative data. That is, all qualitative responses were reviewed without a pre-established template or expected pattern for responses and then coded for general areas or themes. Key themes are reported by type sub-populations. These findings were then compared to findings from the quantitative data, as well as any secondary data collected from the communities.

The following process was used for analyzing the qualitative data:

- Both evaluators collected information concurrently. Some interviews with Working Group were done independently by each evaluator.
- Each evaluator conducted independent initial open theme analysis of data and defined broad themes by sub-population.
- Themes were reviewed jointly, areas of consistency verified, and areas of irregularities were re-assessed and clarified.
- A second layer analysis within each theme was conducted jointly to define and capture nuances and understand variations of the main theme.

For more detail please refer to Appendix E, Analysis.

5.0 Limitations

The following limitations should be considered when reviewing the findings:

1. A convenience sample was used for the youth survey. That is, youth coordinators identified participating youth, location and times for the youth survey to be administered. No efforts were made to ensure it was a random sample of youth in the community. This issue cannot guarantee unbiased findings.
2. Sample size of non active participants was 56. In some statistical analysis this is considered a small sample size for providing acceptable statistical confidence. Hence, paired sample T-tests were used in the analysis as it is considered sensitive for small sample sizes. Nevertheless, caution should be used when interpreting the findings for this sub-population.
3. Participants in the focus groups were identified and invited by the coordinators. This procedure follows Aboriginal ways of ensuring community inclusion; however, it may be considered a potential bias by contemporary methods.

Other considerations are noted that may have impacted the data collection and the evaluation. See Appendix F for these challenges.

6.0 Findings

The evaluation findings are presented below in relation to each of AYSPS⁶ stated desirable outcomes. Quantitative data are reported as statistical significance when paired samples T-test resulted in a 95% confidence (p=.05). Detailed quantitative data analyses are available in Appendix G. Comments presented in italics are verbatim comments from participants in focus groups or interviews that capture the essence of a particular topic. Please note that the sample size for non participants is small and subject to considerable variability.

6.1 Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures

All youth who completed a survey were asked to provide some basic demographic profiles. This information was captured to assess if there were any differences between the youth cohorts and the total population. The profile of the respondents is presented in Table One below.

Table One Respondent Profile N=171					
	Participated in activity?			Participated in activity?	
	YES (n=115)	NO (n=56**)		YES (n=115)	NO (n=56**)
Age			Are you . . .?		
Under 16	44%	38%	First Nations/Native	80%	79%
16 to 18	44%	53%	Inuit	0%	0%
Over 18	11%	9%	Métis	12%	9%
			Other	4%	2%
Gender					
Male	56%	47%	Community		
Female	44%	53%	Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Friendship Centre	17%	11%
			Chinook Health	9%	6%
Do you live in this community?			Piikani	28%	49%
All the time	75%	77%	Eden Valley	18%	15%
Now and Then	22%	13%	Kainai Wellness Centre	17%	13%
Visiting	3%	6%	Tri-Settlement	11%	6%
What are you doing at this time?					
I work	10%	13%			
I go to school	71%	58%			
I do not work or go to school	3%	4%			
Other	14%	19%			

* Totals do not always equal 100% due to no response.

**Please note: Data are based on a small sample size therefore considerable variability can occur when interpreting this data.

⁶ The word ‘*program*’ is used throughout the document. Youth and community members do not recognize the language or word ‘*strategy*’ and refer to the AYSPS as a “*program*”.

6.1.1 Youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures and their future has improved⁷

Youths sometimes had difficulty or appeared to be reluctant to define hope, optimism and empowerment. However, some of the definitions given were:

- Hope – “*having faith, believing in yourself and community*”,
- Optimism – “*being positive*”,
- Empowered – “*having lots of confidence to succeed in whatever you want to try*”.

Feeling Hopeful

For the purpose of AYSPS the statements included in the survey that captured youth’s sense of hope were:

- I am proud of who I am as a person.
- I am proud of my culture.
- I have plans for my future.

Quantitative Data

Respondents who had participated in AYSPS’ activities reported an increase in agreement with feeling proud of whom they are (62% - 84%), their culture (73%-87%) and that they have plans for their future (50%-83%). See table below.

When assessing if there was any significant change over time, the data showed in all three measures of ‘hope’ a statistically significant change.

	Table Two Measures of hope Active participants n=115					
	How do you feel TODAY?			How did you feel TWO YEARS AGO?		
<i>Would you agree or disagree with the following statements . . .</i>	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)
I am proud of whom I am as a person	7%	7%	84%	18%	18%	62%
I am proud of my culture	8%	5%	87%	11%	16%	73%
I have plans for my future	10%	7%	83%	24%	24%	50%

* Percentages may not equal 100% due to no response by some respondents

When comparing active versus non-active populations, participants who indicated that they had actively participated in AYSPS activities had greater change in all three domains as compared to those who did not report active participation.

⁷ When developing the survey the evaluators established which questions addressed feeling hopeful, optimistic and empowered.

Qualitative Data

Focus groups with youth, Elders and community members, review of stories and interviews with community coordinators resulted in the following themes.

Increased hope

In focus groups youth consistently reported that they felt more hopeful now than two years ago. When asked what this meant they described how they did new and different things now, and they knew they had options for what to do in the future. They felt they were more aware of some of the opportunities available to them and they felt someone had faith in them and that they can accomplish their goals. *“There is always hope now, this brings a big change to youth, - we know there is a positive future down the road (youth).”* *“Camp counsellors gave us a lot of knowledge [about culture] and I felt so smart” (youth).*

Community members, parents, and Elders in all focus groups also expressed they thought youth were more hopeful now. This was evidenced by reports of more youth staying in school and graduating from school, some youth going to nearby cities for employment, more youth becoming involved in community programs, more parents becoming involved in youth activities, youth showing more respect for Elders, and the youth appearing prouder of whom they are by wanting to learn about their culture. *“There has been a phenomenal change. Before they [youth] were impossible to control. No respect. Once they [youth] see that parameters and boundaries are consistently enforced – to all - the social behaviour is starting to change. Now they discipline themselves” (community worker).*

Grounding program in Aboriginal culture and history

The importance of always grounding the program in Aboriginal culture and history was also evident. Many participants spoke of how the youth in their communities do not know their culture and the AYSPS strategy has been a vehicle for reintroducing the culture to the youth through the Elders. *“Younger parents don’t know their culture; they don’t know their Aboriginal history. They [youth] are so excited when they learn about it at camp” (Elder).* *“For their spiritual aspect – most don’t know about it. They were taught for the first time” (community representative).*

Optimistic About Future

Areas of inquiry in the survey that captured youth’s sense of optimism were related to:

- I think I am doing pretty well.
- I feel my future looks good.

Quantitative Data

A larger proportion of youth reported they are doing pretty well today (74%) as compared to two years ago (53%). A similar pattern was found when youth were asked to reflect on their future. Reflecting on their outlook two years ago about half of the respondents (51%) indicated their future looked good, today 80% indicated the future looks good. Both concepts showed changes that were statistically significant.

Table Three Measures of Optimism Active Participants n=115						
	How do you feel TODAY?			How did you feel TWO YEARS AGO?		
<i>Would you agree or disagree with the following statements . . .</i>	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)
I think I am doing well	8%	18%	74%	18%	27%	53%
I feel my future looks good	9%	10%	80%	19%	27%	51%

* Percentages may not equal 100% due to no response by some respondents

Youth who indicated they had actively participated in AYSPS activities showed more change in both domains than those who had not actively participated.

Qualitative Data

Focus groups in the communities with youth, Elders and community members, review of stories and interviews with community coordinators resulted in the following themes.

Opportunities to experience new things

Youth in focus groups consistently described how they thought AYSPS had given them opportunities to participate in many different experiences that were new to them. In doing so they reported how they now had more confidence in themselves to pursue future goals. The experiential learning that was evident in most communities opened doors to options that many youth had not been aware of prior to AYSPS. Field trips included touring local campuses and meeting other Aboriginal people who attended programs. These encounters allowed youth to see how Aboriginal youth had choices and opportunities. *“It has changed how you feel about yourself. Prompted you to think about the future”* (youth). *“[I] look at it in a different way. How I can change things in my life”* (youth).

The importance of assisting youth in experiencing new things and being exposed to a world that many of them cannot access on a regular basis was also mentioned by adults in most of the communities. *“Experiential learning is so important – for many of them [youth] this is the only time they get out of the community”* (community representative).

Program can be costly

However, even though it was recognized that exposure to other settings is important it was also commented on by program coordinators during interviews that it is a costly part of the program that is not always funded. *“Leaving the community is important – but it is costly”* (community coordinator). *“Youth travel is not in the budget – it was missed – and it [money] is hard to move around”* (community coordinator). In one community the community members commented on how the youth had taken the initiative and done fundraising in order to be able to attend events outside the community.

Focus on the future

Community members and Elders attending focus groups consistently expressed that they had observed how they had seen a change in youth over the last years. They said that youth now talked about how their future looked and that they felt they were doing well in life. As an example, in one community a recent participant in an AYSPS specific program had gained employment outside of the reserve. This was a first such endeavour for any youth in the community.

Empowerment

Areas of inquiry that captured youth's sense of empowerment were related to:

- I know I can find ways to solve problems.
- I know of at least one adult to whom I can go when I need help.
- I have the "guts" (or nerve) to ask for help.
- I have good friends whom I can rely on.
- I have gone to some community activities/events.

Quantitative Data

In all five concepts related to empowerment there was an increase in the proportion of youth who reported stronger agreement with the statements as compared to two years ago. See Table Four below.

Over two thirds (69%) of youth reported they were able to solve problems today as compared to 55% two years ago.

The importance for youth to have at least one adult whom they trust and can go to is well documented in the literature. When asked if they felt they had such an adult in their life today, 80% of youth reported they did today as compared to 62% who felt they did two years ago.

Access to an adult whom youth can ask for help is only the first step in getting support. The second step is 'having the guts to ask for help'. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the youth reported that they had the confidence to ask for help today as compared to 44% who felt they did two years ago.

Having friends to rely on is important and adds to one's resiliency factors. Three quarters of the youth (75%) reported having good friends they can rely on today as compared to 61% two years ago.

Three quarters (74%) of respondents indicated they attended community events today as compared to 58% two years ago.

All measures of empowerment showed statistically significant of change over the two years.

	Table Four Measures of Empowerment Active Participants n=115					
	How do you feel TODAY?			How did you feel TWO YEARS AGO?		
<i>Would you agree or disagree with the following statements . . .</i>	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)	Disagree (1,2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4,5)
I know I can find ways to solve my problem	11%	20%	69%	17%	27%	55%
I know of at least one adult whom I can go to when I need help	10%	10%	80%	21%	16%	62%
I have “guts” (or nerve) to ask for help when I need it	13%	24%	62%	33%	23%	44%
I have good friends whom I can rely on	6%	17%	75%	14%	23%	61%
I have gone to some community activities/events	9%	15%	74%	26%	15%	58%

* Percentages may not equal 100% due to no response by some respondents

When comparing youth who actively participated in AYSPS to those who did not, the following should be noted:

- Youth who actively participated in the program showed statistically significant change in all areas related to empowerment.
- Those who did not participate showed less statistical significant change in all of the areas.

Qualitative Data

Focus groups in the communities with youth, Elders and community members and interviews with community coordinators resulted in the following themes.

Increased problem solving in youth

Youth were beginning to show their ability to solve problems for themselves and within their communities by starting to identify some areas of need that programming could address. As one community member stated, *“youth are starting to take ownership and can say ‘this is what we need’”*. Community coordinators and other service providers reported they were trying to be responsive to the youth by modifying new initiatives to accommodate what youth were requesting.

One youth gave an example of how the information she received from one of the AYSPS events assisted her in solving a problem with a friend. She said, *“I used the knowledge I had and something happened over the summer with a friend and her boyfriend and she felt suicidal. I helped her and I felt really good”*.

In focus groups the importance of having an adult was also reported. The youth frequently indicated that they now know of at least one person they can turn to and whom they trust. For many, this person was involved with the AYSPS and was also viewed as a role model. *“There is not a lot of expectations of Aboriginal youth. As soon as we struggle we quit. Now we have role models that we can turn to”* (youth).

One Elder noticed, *“Youth have more adults they can trust and adults have more youth coming to them [for help]”*.

By being exposed to the AYSPS initiatives where discussions occurred about challenges faced by youth, youth felt they could talk about their problems, and that they were not alone in having problems, questions and concerns for their future. One youth stated, *“I am in the process of healing and it made me want to talk about it more to people who have gone through the same thing. I don’t hide it from people now”*.

In focus groups, youth repeatedly spoke of the positive influence that other successful youth have had on them. One youth spoke of the influence of one person’s commitment and dedication who is becoming a professional boxer. She stated, *“When you see others do it you put your mind to do things”*. Another youth explained, *“When you attend more programs, the adults and friends influence you in a positive way and you see there are more things to life than drinking”*.

Feeling connected

Youth who participated in focus groups consistently described that having people in their life that they can share their concerns and thoughts with made them feel less lonely. Furthermore, many youth appeared to be more aware of the issues in the community and knowing how to stay away from complicated situations. *“I am not alone – all other youth are going through the same problems, alcohol, gang violence, drugs, bullying”.... “It [AYSPS] keeps me out of trouble. I don’t like the street scene anymore. This gives me a place to go [AYSPS event]”* (youth).

Picking friends who were supportive and shared their values was also important and may explain why those who participated actively in ASYSPS reported they had friends they could rely on as compared to youth who did not actively participate. *“If you have friends who don’t drink and do drugs then you change as well”* (youth).

Many youth in the focus groups also described how they now had the support of the older people in the community. One youth stated she felt that about 40% of older people in the community were good influences. When asked in a focus group, the majority of the youth felt supported, especially by their family. This also leads to greater trust with the family in terms of what the youth are doing. One youth reported that her grandmother now is more at ease when she is out in the community *“before grandma never thought we were doing anything good, now I can say we are going to the modelling”*.

Community members in several communities expressed how they have noticed more parent involvement. One community member stated, *“Parents are asking now about things [programs] because the young people are excited and asking parents, grandparents or workers about what is happening”*. Community members also believe that, *“Kids are taking more ownership and responsibility for programs”*.

Overall youth in the focus groups stated they felt empowered, but with some reservations. One youth expressed it as, *“If you put your mind to things you can accomplish things and gain self-confidence”*, while another youth explained, *“I feel I can do anything and have the power and control to do anything, but there is fear that it might be too hard or I might not pass”*.

Success leading to success is a sign of empowerment. In other words, once youth begin to feel they can achieve their goals they feel empowered to set more goals for themselves. As one youth stated, *“When you accomplish your goals you want to accomplish more”*.

6.1.2 Program impact on the lives of youth

Quantitative Data

Respondents who had participated in activities were asked in an open-ended survey question to comment on how the activities had helped them personally. The most common responses were:

- 11% stated they were more open to meet people, associate with others or meet new people,
- 8% stated they helped with self-esteem and they were proud of who they are.
- 8% stated they made them better at sports.
- 6% stated they gained knowledge of what they should be focusing on and how to look to the future.
- 6% stated they were given pastime/activities.
- 6% stated they were given confidence.

Qualitative Data

When youth were asked in focus groups if the community had changed in the last two years close to half of the respondents indicated that it had. The most common response was that there were now more programs/activities and help for natives/youths. However, it is worth noting that a number of respondents in the focus groups also indicated continued struggles within the community, such as *“more drugs in the community”* (youth), *“more aggressive people – fighting – violence”* (youth), *“loss of culture”* (community member), *“we are financially broke”* (community member), *“more issues”* (youth), *“bad housing”* (youth), *“youth less involved with the community”* (Elder).

6.1.3 Changes that have occurred among youth and in the communities

Qualitative Data

The following main themes capture the reported changes that have been noted in the communities by youth, community members and coordinators. These themes are consistent across all nine communities.

Creativity and diversity of programs

According to the majority in all respondent groups, their communities have not traditionally had any opportunity for youth to actively participate in community life. Activities that in other communities are viewed as basic services such as recreation, sports, arts, clubs and camp activities did not exist. AYSPS has led to creative ways of developing these opportunities and has provided a richer and more structured life to youth in the communities. Examples of some of these creative opportunities are establishing a girls’ hockey team, modelling for a fashion show, being involved in conducting a play or going on field trips to universities or colleges. This diversity also allowed the youth to broaden their thinking of what life might entail and see how they

can be active participants in community life. Some youth participated in field trips to Edmonton and toured districts of **what not to do**. As an example, one youth described how they took a trip to Boyle Street in Edmonton and saw the homeless people.

Role modelling

By participating in various programs within the community and outside the community many youth reported they were affiliated with positive role models from within and outside the community. Furthermore, many older youth had become role models to the younger ones. There was more socialization across the age groups “*we now all talk to each other*” (youth). “*Some girls never used to talk to each other and now they are constantly talking with each other*” (youth).

Culture and heritage

Activities such as the cultural camps enabled youth to learn from their Elders and understand their culture and traditional ways. By understanding the history of Native people and their culture, Aboriginal youth saw themselves as part of the larger picture. By taking youth to a ceremonial place one group, “*introduced youth to where people go to fast, why, and what we [Native people] believe*” (community representative).

It should be noted that a number of respondents also spoke about the importance of such cultural components as pow wows, sundances, youth gatherings and sweat lodges.

Change stigma

According to some Aboriginal youth, expectations of Aboriginal people are not high - neither from within their own community nor from external communities. As stated in some focus groups, non-Aboriginal persons often have the impression that Aboriginal people are “*drunks*”. Allowing youth to experience the positive ways of Aboriginal people such as cultural camps and learning that they can do what they set their mind to and succeed in sports, employment or school, they experienced an increase in self-esteem and felt they were able to change the impression and stigma often associated with Aboriginal people. “*I have a lot more confidence and I believe I could be and do anything I want*” (youth).

Continuity of programs

The continuity of programs and staff were important for the youth and hence the overall success of the intervention. Youth commented on the fact that AYSPS led to continuity in the community, including having access to programs that existed for more than a few weeks. They allowed their excitement to build and they were not disappointed because a program was cancelled suddenly and without reason as it used to be in the past. The consistency of the initiative created hope, trust and commitment. Therefore, the attendance at various programs grew. When the programs continued, the youth felt stability in that they could count on the program being there and the people being there. “*In the past we had some good activities or workshops then nothing happened. Now there is continuity, it creates excitement – that brings in others. It is like a snowball. That’s what we need*” (youth).

Positive youth behaviour

In all focus groups community coordinators and community members stated they can tell the youth are happier by the expression on their faces, by how they behave (such as going up and talking to Elders) and by how they talk about the future and their plans (such as

planning for school or jobs). Some youth stated it was exciting to think about the future and going to college, and some had specific educational goals; however, they were also apprehensive about moving away from family, the community and in some cases away from an all-Native school. “[It is] *exciting not knowing what is happening* [when away from your community as in the community everyone knows what is happening], *away from parents, but it is scary*” (youth).

Discussion

All data sources, both qualitative and quantitative, indicated that youth in the communities felt prouder of whom they are and their culture as compared to two years ago. They felt a connection to their culture and their community. They reported being more active and participated more in community events. All of these aspects appear to have contributed to the sense of hope.

Youth reported that they were now seeing their future in a different and more hopeful way. The greatest increase was noted in the number of youth who reported both through survey and focus groups, that they now had plans for their future, which they did not have to the same degree two years ago.

Youth also had a stronger sense of empowerment today as compared to two years ago. Youth, community members, Elders and coordinators attributed this to youth being better connected to role models and adults in the community, youth having friends whom they can rely on, and youth having had opportunities to learn how to solve problems.

Those who indicated they had participated in specific AYSPS activities showed more change over time.

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data also showed a growth in personal identity among the youth that is related to increased cultural awareness and practice, increased opportunity for participating in activities, access by youth to adults they can trust and who they view as role models, and the benefit of experiential learnings.

Some of the key factors contributing to successful outcomes are:

- Continuity, both in terms of staff (building trust) and in specific programs (worthwhile getting engaged).
- Providing direct activities (things to do).
- Grounding the program in Aboriginal cultural and heritage.
- Ensuring the approach is creative and diverse.

6.2 Communities have reached their targeted goals and objectives

6.2.1 Action plan deliverables/objectives have been achieved

Quantitative Data

Action plans and annual reports from each community were reviewed⁸ to determine the degree of achievements within each pilot project. This review was further verified through tangible evidence of the outcome having been reached such as verification from

⁸ Rating scale for assessing completion levels are presented in Section 3.0 Methodology.

youth focus groups, key stakeholders or other informed persons. For each community a matrix was developed⁹. As can be seen in Table Five below, close to half (45%) of the strategies were completed and an additional 45% were partially completed. Considering the realities these communities faced and the obstacles they overcame, 90% of the actions being completed or partially completed must be considered a high success rate so early on in the program.

Table Five Action Plan Completion Rate n=9			
Total # activities/ strategies	Completed	Partially completed	No action/unable to determine
N=40	45% (n=18)	45% (n=18)	10% (n=4)

Qualitative Data

Focus groups in the communities with youth, Elders and community members and interviews with community coordinators and Working Group members resulted in the following themes as impacting the level of goal attainment.

Short timelines for showing change

When trying to assess to what degree the communities have been able to reach their targeted goals and objectives, the feedback from most community representatives and Working Group members was that three years is a very short time to change a community and that the real impact of the AYSPS strategy would not be measurable or noticeable in terms of reduced suicides until 10-15 years into the future. *“Too soon to tell, long term we may get more of a handle if it worked”* (Working Group member).

Several Working Group members commented on the fact that it has taken over a hundred years to get to the point communities are at today, and we have unrealistic expectations of the intervention if we believe it can be changed in three years. However, there are, according to most of the community focus group participants, Working Group members and community coordinators some noticeable changes that have taken place in the communities. There has been a renewed focus on youth in the pilot communities. Youth reported a sense of ownership and responsibility in that they were part of the initiative. For many it also meant that they had a specific place to *“hang out”*, such as a youth centre or hockey team. *“[It] brought the youth in and planted the seed in the communities and the parents”* (community member).

Many community coordinators expressed a feeling of not doing enough. They stated they felt that other communities were doing better and more than they were. They were critical of their own accomplishments but when asked if they accomplished their goals most of the communities stated they had completed or partially completed their goals.

Partnerships developed

⁹ Appendix H: Administrative Review by Community

There is evidence in the communities that local partnerships have been established and maintained as part of the initiative. *“Partnership is a big part of the Aboriginal culture. It is how we do things”* (community coordinator). There was evidence through administrative reviews and at focus group sessions that in all communities AYSPS had been implemented by partnering with other organizations such as schools, recreational programs, and health programs, etc. One concrete example is the co-location of ASYSPS within an outreach school.

One of AYSPS’ anticipated outcomes was that the strategy would lead to a partnership being developed between the six provincial departments and the nine communities. There were site leads identified within the Working Group to assist and support specific communities. Even though both Working Group members and communities reported respect and understanding of each other’s positions and agendas, there was still not a sense from the communities that this strategy allowed full and equal partnership with provincial ministries. Most of the Working Group members also felt that true partnerships were not achieved. They stated that although members would like to continue intense contact with the communities, their jobs do not enable the time for this to work. As one Working Group member stated *“This project is only one corner of my desk”*.

Difficulties/challenges for communities

Five major themes emerged related to AYSPS implementation challenges, and hence impacting the degree of goal attainment. The themes were identified by Elders, community members, coordinators, and/or youth. They were:

- ***Transportation.*** Transportation is a challenge for communities to get the youth involved and to provide transportation to events. It is anticipated that the more they can get parents involved the easier transportation will become.
- ***Importance of youth consultation.*** To find the right mix of being ‘exciting’ for the youth while at the same time encompassing a positive role modelling component presents a challenge for the communities. One example given was presentations were offered on colonialism. While the information was valuable, the youths were not ready for that type of academic approach to the information and therefore did not return for further presentations. Another example given was hosting a music evening focusing on rap music to encourage hard-to-reach youth to attend. It was suggested that youth input is essential in what activities are required and community planners must be open to change. For instance, one program focusing on sports identified a need to offer diverse programming in fine arts and drama as not all youth were interested in sports and the program coordinators are now working towards those areas as well.
- ***Challenge of staff turnover.*** Staff change occurring within the communities presented the biggest challenge for the strategy. One community with staff continuity stated that their success is based on this continuity allowing a great working relationship to develop– *“good friendship, networking within - they feel supported and the bosses must be equal and support you in your work”*.

- **Community buy-in.** The buy-in from the broader community remains a constant challenge for all communities after three years. There remains a reluctance to say the word “suicide” as one community member stated, “*It doesn’t apply to us. It’s my business, It’s a family secret*”. Some believe this resistance is cultural but it was also noted by a few participants (coordinators and Working Group) that it may also be a reflection of the Catholic religion that states suicide is a sin.
- **Excessive paperwork.** Paperwork presented problems for the communities. The addition of the provincial coordinator has helped the communities clarify the government expectations.

6.2.2 Community program reach

Of the youth who participated in the survey around 2/3 reported that they had actively participated in some program that they recognized as being AYSPS. In focus groups most youth felt that their peers were aware of the AYSPS activities – but they did not call it AYSPS nor did they know where the funding came from or that the activities were focused on the resiliency factors associated with reducing suicide. Youth in smaller communities were more likely to indicate “*everyone*” in the community is aware of the program. Youth from communities with larger populations were not as likely to report general knowledge of AYSPS. This lesser profile of AYSPS in larger communities may be partly due to the model used where the AYSPS funding has been applied to strengthen already existing initiatives – it is not a stand alone activity.

There is evidence from all community coordinators interviewed that they are striving to reach youth and make a positive impact on them. All community coordinators showed their dedication as they described their work and approach. Some comments made by them were, “*It is our privilege and duty to try and help youth*” ... “*Youth are my passion – I love them*”.

Discussion

The communities completed or partially completed 90% of their targeted strategies/activities, which is considered a high success rate based on the challenges they faced. Staff continuity and supporting political and community structure were factors contributing to success at the local level. The communities achieved this success largely by partnering with other community agencies and by focusing on the resiliency factors for youth success. Each community addressed the needs in their own unique and flexible way creating a sense of ownership within the community.

Two-thirds of the youth who participated in the survey had actively participated in some AYSPS program. In focus groups it was found that many of the youth felt their peers were aware of the activities offered but did not associate them specifically with AYSPS nor did they know where the money came from. There is evidence that community coordinators, community representatives and Elders are attempting to positively impact youth in their community.

6.3 Promoting research and evaluation of “what works” to prevent Aboriginal youth suicidal behaviour.

Qualitative Data

The findings presented below are based on in-depth interviews with Working Group members¹⁰ and community coordinators from all sites, including the new sites.

6.3.1 Value of research and the need to demonstrate results

Working Group members and community coordinators were asked about benefits and concerns of evaluation and if evaluation led to an increase in knowledge, and if so, how? For each of the three areas of inquiry main themes arose as outlined below.

Benefits of Evaluation

Accountability

One of the AYSPS’ goals is to promote research and evaluation of what works in ‘Aboriginal communities’ as it relates to strategy implementation. There was an implicit understating between the funder and the communities that within the strategy there were two levels of accountability:

- Between the community and the funder (action plans and annual reports).
- Between the community program and the community members (program evaluations).

Communities did conduct evaluations using their own approach. The methodologies used may not be considered standardized acceptable methods in most western methodological circles; however, the evaluations were culturally appropriate and reflected the community’s need to know. Also, through this process, communities became aware of how important it is to think through the evaluation criteria prior to implementing an initiative to ensure that the framework exists so appropriate information is collected at the appropriate time. For example, some community coordinators commented that they “wished” they had collected some baseline data from the youth in order to measure change over time. *“Yes it is reasonable to expect programs to evaluate but it should be set up before and when you reach a benchmark you evaluate....All community coordinators should have the prerequisites – suicide prevention training, proposal writing, budget, youth background, reporting, crisis intervention and knowledge of new statistics”* (community coordinator).

Aboriginal communities often have a “feeling” of success as expressed by one coordinator, *“They had a gut feeling that it would be effective when set up”*. These further related that it was successful.

All Working Group participants interviewed see the overall accountability structure between the communities and the funders as valuable and required. However, it is noted by some members that it is the *process* of the accountability structure that is most important at this time. *“The action plans are weak but come alive in meetings [when explained]. Over the three years they [the communities] have improved – still need support but are improving....The accountability is of what they did -not so much what the impact is – it is because intuitively they know”* (Working Group member). The

¹⁰ The Provincial Coordinator is considered part of the Working Group.

importance of this process was further articulated as, *“Let communities take ownership, develop pace and set the goals. It has been respectful at the community level”*.

One Working Group member explained, *“[One] community looked at evaluations after the fact to see the results. It was used in consulting with other communities – doing presentations – talking about their initiatives – giving profile on their work, show of public interest - number of kids graduated, number of kids employed”* (Working Group member).

According to some Working Group members, the benefit of evaluation is that in the long term it helps government and individual programs decide what programs are beneficial to continue. *“On this initiative – if there are suicides there is no way to know if it is due to AYSPS, if suicide doesn’t occur it is hard to know if it is due to the program. It is hard to quantify hopefulness, satisfaction – qualitative measures have value”* (Working Group member).

Internal evaluation provides direction

Most community coordinators conducted internal evaluations to offer them direction for their program. One community coordinator stated, *“In evaluation we go by feel and see when more people are talking about it [the program] then it is successful”*.

Although recognizing the challenges of evaluation, some Working Group representatives stated, *“The benefit of research keeps everyone on track; them [the communities] knowing what they have to do to be accountable for serves as a sense of direction and review.”*

A few Working Group members stated action plans were helpful as they looked at what was done and the expectations of what communities planned to do and these were used for broader strategy planning. *“Action plans became initiated and using their own capacity. Focus was on protective factors – action plans reminded us [of this]. Communities always must do it and when they are ready”* (Working Group member).

Concerns About Evaluation

Community coordinators generally and also some Working Group members expressed their lack of knowledge about evaluation. Most of these participants expressed concerns about staff changes and paper compliance.

Lack of knowledge and understanding of evaluation process

Some community coordinators found the evaluation process overwhelming and did not understand it, its value or the expectations. They viewed it as putting more of a work load on them and would just like an external evaluator to come in and do it. *“There was no process - you got different messages from different people on the documentation required. There was no package that came with the deal”* (community coordinator). *“Evaluations were difficult – [we were] so busy and it was so hard to put on paper and evaluate things. [It is suggested that] it be built into [the strategy] that an external evaluator comes in and do the evaluation”*. *“Not sure what is required for reporting only that there is an annual report”* (community coordinator).

Several Working Group members noted that sometimes it might not be clearly explained to the partnering communities what the reporting expectations are and also that ministries do not fully understand how communities operate.

In general, the Working Group members indicated that the main purpose and use of the evaluation findings were not for decision making related to program continuation or funding decision but rather it was considered a learning tool for the communities and a mechanism for reporting back to the Working Group. There were great differences among Working Group members to what degree they were familiar with the specific community's evaluations and its use.

Some community coordinators and a few Working Group members suggested that more education is required for evaluation. Everyone should be trained in identifying what it is, its benefit and value to communities and government, and how to store data. *“Some communities feel it is forced on them. They can be informed about what they are doing and if going in the right direction -not doing more harm. Some communities are buying into it – it is a tool for them and not just a reporting requirement”* (Working Group member).

Paper compliance

Paper compliance is not the cornerstone in planning within many Aboriginal communities. The reason it does happen varies but it is traditionally not an Aboriginal way of thinking and planning. Sometimes the actual work needed to be done in order to be successful (such as developing partnerships) takes up all the energy. In other situations it is just a matter of other work being more important at the time so documentation becomes secondary. As one community coordinator stated, *“There is too much paperwork reporting for the amount of money we receive”*.

Some Working Group members also recognized that paper compliance and timelines was one of the hardest concepts for communities to address. *“No one signs up for the paperwork – but [sign up] to work with people, particularly in Aboriginal communities”*.

Staff changes

Staffing changes were frequent in some communities and presented many challenges. Some coordinators found it difficult to come into the program and deliver the action plans developed by someone else. *“There should be more flexibility in the budget”, as “I came over [to the program] when year two action plans were approved and I could not change the plan (community coordinator)”*.

The knowledge gained by Working Group members may be lost as members move to other positions, and therefore constant ‘updating’ and teaching of new members has to take place, *“we have to continue to teach about Aboriginal ways of knowing – and allowing it to be community driven”* (Working Group member). However, it should be noted that the loss of a member is also an opportunity to reach one additional (new) Working Group member who will become familiar with the lessons learned from the project.

The staffing changes within the Working Group allows the strategy to continuously inform and increase Working Group members’ understanding of the realities of Aboriginal communities and how to best work in partnership with them. Working Group

members commented about a “*ripple effect*” taking place where members take the lessons learned in this project and apply it in other areas of their work “*They [Working Group] take up Aboriginal knowledge in other work they do – there is a ripple effect*”.

Furthermore, it was noted that the staff change is a reality of the various ministries and should be one of the planning aspects as one develops a strategy. If this planning is done at the start of an initiative the disruptions from staff changes will be minimized.

Led to Increased Knowledge

Understanding communities and programs

Several AYSPS programs reported they conducted immediate feedback sessions with youth after major events like conferences or cultural camps, etc. This process involved focus groups or Circles where each participant had an opportunity to comment and reflect on what worked and provide suggestions for improvement or changes. Other types of evaluation activities reported were reactions from participants, attendance numbers and attendance by parents who in the past may not have attended events. Elder feedback, comments from elected leaders, and coordinator observations were also used in evaluations according to some community coordinators.

One community coordinator stated, “*They did internal evaluations and collected data on the demographics and a pre-post of what the kids knew [about their culture] and what they wanted to know*”. The community coordinator stated they used this information to change and shape the program. Another community coordinator explained, “*We already had an inkling to some of the results because the program was here already. The use of focus groups has been beneficial in evaluation as well as pre-post for youth and staff*”.

Most community coordinators and most Working Group members believed there was a benefit of communities learning from communities at gatherings and exchanges, and some Working Group members believe it has led to increased knowledge of what works in Aboriginal communities. “*Yes, I would hope so [there is an increase of knowledge] but it is too early [to tell]. It is not just this strategy but all things together – victim services, restorative justice – developing relationships with identified key people in the community is important, and receiving support of Chief and Council*” (Working Group member).

However, some Working Group members did not feel that an increase in knowledge has occurred at this point. [There are] *not enough results to say what works and what doesn't. We know a few things - working with communities at the level of readiness they are at is important, long term is needed as it takes time to mobilize community and build capacity, and champions in the community are effective*” (Working Group member).

6.3.2 How lessons learned can be communicated to new sites

In the last year, two additional sites have been added to the AYSPS, Hobbema and Dene Tha'. In-depth telephone interviews were conducted with community coordinators and program staff from both new project sites. They were asked to what degree they had benefited from the lessons learned from the initial sites and what mechanisms had been used to inform them of the knowledge gained throughout the initial implementation of AYSPS.¹¹ Working Group members were also asked about lessons learned in their

¹¹ The formative evaluation conducted in 2005 has not been shared with the new sites as a mechanism for them to gain insight into the ‘lessons learned’ from the previous projects.

interviews. The following major themes were identified as it relates to benefits, mechanism for sharing information and lessons learned.

Learning and Acceptance of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing

By utilizing the community development approach Aboriginal communities have implemented the strategy based on their communities' strengths and needs. The focus on protective factors rather than risk factors is important to maintain for the strategy. "[By working with Aboriginal communities in this manner] *government is more effective in the community,*" (Working Group member). This learning about and acceptance of Aboriginal ways was an important lesson learned by some Working Group members. As stated by one Working Group member, "*Having an Aboriginal provincial coordinator helped the Working Group understand and taught us on the Aboriginal Way. He gently brought ceremony into our meetings*".

Evaluation Guidelines

Evaluation activities have provided articulation of some of the lessons learned. The formative evaluation conducted in 2005 offered direction and guidance for the Working Group when working with Aboriginal communities. The individual and summative evaluations have provided a means of direction and improved planning for the programs and the strategy. Many Working Group members expressed how the evaluation findings guided them. "*Having one key contact person is important for each site, having a Provincial Coordinator enhances the communication and support for the communities, and going slow is important – the communities must move at their own place. We can be as hands on as they want but not to put your words on the paper*" (Working Group member).

Types of Communication

Direct contact with existing pilot projects has been very beneficial according to coordinators in new communities. Sharing of planning documents, action plans, approaches to community development and strategies for implementing programs were noted by all as very beneficial. "*Another gathering would be helpful. We met a lot of people and you meet face-to-face. The struggles are similar and it helps to support each other. Asking for help you do a lot more than when you struggle in isolation*" (community coordinator).

Site visits with and from existing communities took place between Dene Tha' and Eden Valley projects. These visits helped Dene Tha' see the work in progress. It also forged a connection between the youth in the two communities that contributed to experiential learning and exposure to outside communities. "*Both communities had a connection*" (Working Group member).

Project sharing and coordination through videoconferencing updates, newsletters and gatherings have been identified as a success by coordinators for providing updates and to share strategies and to ask questions of other sites. The new sites commented on the value of these to make contact and get to know the other site coordinators. "*There should be more contacts like the summative gathering. It was very informative, we learned about activities they were doing and successes. At the beginning we thought it was limited to what we could do. This was the only contact we had with any of the sites*" (community coordinator).

According to most Working Group members communication among communities of individual programs and sharing of information is a valuable process. *“The successes, challenges and processes are shared through video conferencing, newsletters, gatherings and conferences and exchange visits”*, (Working Group member).

Finally, due to the geographical isolation of some of the communities, face-to-face communication with the communities can be very difficult. Other ways of communication become even more important. For instance, *“the use of video conferencing is proving to be a valuable way to communicate”*, (Working Group member).

Discussion

The acceptance of the Aboriginal ways of knowing as a valid and reliable way of planning, evaluating and assessing change is slowly being accepted by some ministries as one methodology, to be accompanied by more established methodologies. Although the way of knowing may differ between the government and the communities; both groups expressed the need for accountability.

As the three years evolved most communities acknowledge the benefit of individual evaluations for their programs. The community coordinators and Working Group members expressed the benefits of evaluation as providing accountability for the funding and providing direction for the strategy and programs, as well as the acceptance and recognition of these two different ways of knowing.

Both coordinators and Working Group members identified evaluation challenges such as the concern about lack of evaluation knowledge, staff changes and paper compliance. However, both sub-populations also recognized that there has been an increase in knowledge about and within the programs.

Lessons learned have been communicated to the new sites by the acceptance of Aboriginal ways of knowing, through evaluation processes and findings, and distinct communication medias, such as sharing of information, site visits and ongoing connection though electronic and in-person meetings.

6.4 Province wide leadership and shared accountability for an effective, province wide, community based approach.

Qualitative Data

The findings presented below are based on in-depth interviews with Working Group members¹² and community coordinators from all sites, including the new sites to assess the community development model, the addition of the provincial coordinator position, governance and accountabilities.

¹² The Provincial Coordinator is considered part of the Working Group.

6.4.1 The strengths and opportunities to improve the management of the program

Community development model

The strategy was implemented through a leadership model leaning heavily on the Working Group, and using community development principles. Following a recommendation from the formative evaluation in 2005 a provincial coordinator position was added to bridge the communication between the Working Group and the communities.

When asked if the model developed was the right one in view of the anticipated outcomes, most Working Group members felt that the model was the most appropriate and was based on best practices for working with Aboriginal communities. Even when considering the restraints encountered by the strategy, such as lack of funding, lack of long-term commitment of funding, it was felt to be the most suitable model. There were several working group members commented on the model allowed relationships and trust to be built between ministries and communities. The model also required that all partners trusted and respected the underpinning community development principles established as a foundation. It provided a balance between strict guidelines of operation and allowing communities self direction and determination. Some comments made by Working Group members were:

- *“We can’t show results to deputy but in your heart and head you know because it is respectful to Aboriginal ways – letting them do what is best for their communities”.*
- *“Unequivocally the right model. You know your community – tell us what works and how”.*

Longer-term

It was recognized by most Working Group respondents that reducing Aboriginal youth suicide rates requires long term, complex approaches. Allowing the communities to develop internally is a long term process that after year three now starts to see the beginning of some evidence, *“Community processes take longer [than expected]. We must let the communities build relationships. That way we get stronger work”* (Working Group member).

Horizontal structure

It was recognized by a few Working Group members that some of the challenges come from within the ministries. The strategy was set up to allow a cross-ministry approach to work with the communities. Traditionally, Alberta ministries were not set up to have a structure that functions horizontally between departments however, within the ACYI initiative this model has been used in recent years. As one Working Group member noted, *“We are not set up to work horizontally – only vertical reporting of dollars”.*

6.4.2 AYSPS governance and accountabilities.

Some Working Group members felt the accountability process in place was not stringent enough. These Working Group members believed that the communities were not required to account for the funding in the same reporting manner as some of the other projects they were responsible for. *“Accountability is what they did (not so much what impact it had),”* (Working Group member). This Working Group member felt they are responsible for accountability and it is weak.

Other Working Group members stated AYSPS is a community based project which means that each project is different based on resources, strengths and needs of the community. In working with Aboriginal communities in a community development approach it is also necessary for the communities to determine how they should report and be accountable. *“It is a holistic approach – little pieces of everything are happening. They shouldn’t have to separate it out and accountability for money is not appropriate”*, (Working Group member).

6.4.3 Provincial coordinator

A provincial coordinator role was established and filled in the spring of 2007. The coordinator is housed within the AMHB but works closely with the Working Group.

Reporting

The provincial coordinator position reporting structure is unusual. In reality the position is accountable to the Working Group, but since the Working Group is not a legal entity the position reports internally to AMHB. *“His services are purchased through the cross-ministries Working Group, but AMHB is the custodian of the position”* (Working Group member). Even with this complex reporting structure the position seems to meet the needs of both communities and Working Group.

Role of the provincial coordinator

This position is viewed as the primary day-to-day liaison between the communities involved in the project and the funding ministries. Working Group members and community coordinators were asked about the role and effectiveness of the provincial coordinator.

All Working Group members and community co-coordinators interviewed agreed that the introduction of this position has been very successful and benefited the strategy.

The Working Group members interviewed listed a number of roles of the provincial coordinator:

- pull us all together,
- focus the strategy,
- gives a face to community,
- be a central person for the strategy,
- facilitate work in the community and government,
- provide general coordination of the strategy,
- oversee some administrative functions,
- coordinate meetings,
- assist in contact,

- do capacity building,
- help with action plans,
- be a resource for the community and Working Group,
- crisis management, and
- go to events.

With the provincial coordinator position in place, all community coordinators felt they have a single point of entry to where they can turn for direction and support. They felt that through the provincial coordinator they had access to the various ministries that are involved. Prior to the establishment of the provincial coordinator position communities often felt they did not know who to contact for information and directions since the Working Group membership was mostly unknown to them. They commented on the improved communication, easy access, sharing of information and community presence with the introduction of a provincial coordinator.

The Working Group representatives were also very supportive of the role and reported an improved function within the strategy. It was reported how the position provides administrative support to the project while also acts as the “*ear to the ground*” for the Working Group. There is reporting and clarification of Aboriginal community realities and why certain actions and interventions may or may not work.

There is a sense of teaching or “*translation of expectations*” taking place between the coordinator and the Working Group, and between the coordinator and the communities. The coordinator has to stand and function in both worlds and explain one world to the other.

Challenges

A new position like this is not without challenge. These challenges, as expressed by some Working Group members, include:

- Local politics and elections can impact local agendas as it relates to community projects.
- A change in staffing at the local level requires time for the provincial coordinator to orient and provide broader support.
- Communities not knowing if project funding will continue make it difficult to plan.
- Communities are unclear to what extent the provisional coordinator will assist and ensure their reports are appropriate.
- There is a potential concern that the provincial coordinator’s role will become viewed as an expert and hence the lead planner at the community level, rather than maintaining a facilitator role and allowing the communities to become experts in planning and implementing.
- The geographical distance between the communities and the number of requests for community involvement result in a lot of travel time for the provincial coordinator.

Clarity of role

However, a few community coordinators stated there should be a clearer role as to what extent or level the provincial coordinator can assist the communities. “*Clarity about*

what he/she can and cannot do, what are their limitations? Within what areas can the coordinator advocate for?" (community coordinator).

Discussion

The model using a community development approach was the most suitable way to address youth suicide from the Working Group members' perspective. It allowed the ownership for planning to stay in the community while at the same time it allowed a process of accountability.

Although some Working Group members felt the direction of the governance and accountability process was appropriate, others felt it was not stringent enough.

The provincial coordinator position met the needs of both the communities as well as the Working Group.

The roles of the provincial coordinator listed by the community coordinators and the Working Group members can best be summarized as follows:

- Administrative – ensuring reporting takes place such as completion of action plans and annual reports.
- Liaison – liaising between Working Group and communities.
- Advocate – speaking and teaching about Aboriginal culture to decision makers.
- Collaborator – assisting in building trust and respect between provincial departments and communities.
- Communicator – ensuring that information flows in both directions between the coordinator and the communities.
- Ambassador – accepting invitations to present AYSPS to various organizations within Alberta and outside Alberta in other provinces.

The provincial coordinator's key function is the bridging the two ways of knowing.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

AYSPS Approach

Each community has approached and implemented AYSPS in a unique and different way based on the strengths and needs of their community. However, all communities have addressed the strategy by focusing on protective or resiliency factors by targeting the following goals:

1. To address the protective resiliency factors within the communities.
2. To increase education in Aboriginal culture, spirituality and identity through camps, and Elders' teachings.
3. To increase awareness of suicide and prevention of suicide through initiatives such as Gatekeepers, and ASSIST program.
4. To increase awareness of life opportunities and choices through experiential learning such as diverse programming (recreation and fine arts) and field trips (touring universities and colleges).
5. To develop and maintain partnerships within the communities as well as outside the communities. This includes identifying potential role models to assist in the community development/programming.

6. To provide a safe environment for youth to reach outside their comfort zone by gathering, supporting, mingling, learning and developing life skills to become community role models.

Reached AYSPS Stated Goals

AYSPS has reached its stated goal. The communities have impacted youth in a positive way, increasing the youth resiliency factors, grounded in Aboriginal culture and practice. Both quantitative (statistically significant) and qualitative data show changes in the following areas:

- Youths' increased sense of hope, optimism and empowerment,
- Youths' increased in knowledge of cultural awareness and practice,
- Youth's increased opportunities and experiential learning,
- Youth's increased positive behaviour change.

Success Factors

Factors of success for AYSPS were identified as:

- Continuity, both in terms of staff (building trust) and in specific programs (worthwhile getting engaged),
- Providing direct activities (things to do),
- Grounding the program in Aboriginal cultural and heritage.
- Ensuring the approach is creative and diverse.
- Developing partnerships within the communities.
- Planning and implementing the plans. The majority of strategies planned have been completed or partially completed in the communities.
- Community challenges have been encountered and steps are part of the initiative to overcome the challenges.

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned have been identified by youth, the community members, community coordinators, and the Working Group. They include:

- The accountability process has been an important area for lessons learned.
- The acceptance of the Aboriginal ways of knowing as a valid and reliable way of planning, evaluating and assessing change is slowly being accepted by some ministries as one methodology, to be accompanied by more established methodologies.
- There is some evidence that the lessons learned from AYSPS have reached further into the funding ministries beyond the Working Group membership.
- The model using a community development approach was the most suitable way to address youth suicide from both the community as well as the ministries perspective. It allowed the ownership for planning to stay in the community while at the same time it allowed a process of accountability.
- The provincial coordinator position met the needs of both the communities as well as the Working Group.
- The provincial coordinator's key function is the bridging of two acceptable ways of operating.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the evaluation the following recommendations¹³ are made in order of priority:

Recommendation # 1 – Continue AYSPS

It is recommended that AYSPS be continued and expanded into other Aboriginal communities, using the community development model, involving youth and focusing on youth resiliency and protective factors. This should include committed resources over several years to allow continuity in terms of planning, staffing and providing program stability at the community level. It should also continue to build on the collaborative approach which recognizes Aboriginal ways of knowing as well as meeting ministries needs for accountability.

Recommendation # 2 – Enhanced staff support

It is recommended that the position of provincial coordinator be continued but with dedicated administrative support and clearer role and responsibility guidelines.

Planning should be encouraged within the communities to address staff turnover. Community coordinators are often alone in their work. Structures should be developed that provide support, network, peers and annual leave without forcing a shutdown of program.

Recommendation # 3 – Measure longer term impacts¹⁴

Aboriginal communities should, together with Alberta ministries, identify proxy measures that will capture to what extent there is a longer-term change in behaviour and outcomes for youth in Aboriginal communities.

Recommendation # 4 – Expand communication opportunities

Communication opportunities between sites should continue to be a priority and be increased by expanding the mediums used.

¹³ Evaluation comments are noted in Appendix I

¹⁴ Proxy measures that may be considered are:

- The number of youths who stay in school.
- The number of youths who graduate from high school.
- The number of youths going to further education (college, university, etc.).
- The number of youths being employed.
- The number of youths becoming involved in Aboriginal culture.
- The number of parents becoming involved in events/initiatives, such as organized sports, drama plays, or school projects.
- The number of Elder-youth involvements.

Appendix A

Evaluation Framework

Evaluation Framework

A Developing Evaluation Matrix for the Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy (AYSPS)

AYSPS Vision: Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.

In 2003, the AYSPS Working Group, under the direction of the ACYI Partnering Deputies, determined that AYSPS would focus on protective factors using a community development approach.

The role of protective factors in the reduction of suicidal behaviour was highlighted by the findings of Borowsky and associates, wherein the addition of protective factors dramatically reduced suicide risk¹⁵. Current literature also indicates that when working with Aboriginal communities, positive results will come from projects that focus on community and individual strengths, abilities, gifts and assets instead of problems¹⁶. With this evidence-based knowledge, the AYSPS evaluation is based on protective factors through a community development approach.

The ultimate goal of the AYSPS is that Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures. This goal is strength-based, and according to research, will reduce the incidence of suicide over a longer period of time (i.e. 10-15 years). This factor, and the existing methodological challenges associated with classifying and compiling valid and reliable suicide incidence rates, has prevented the strategy from identifying suicide incident rates as a formal goal, thus the emphasis on protective factor and community outcomes.

As the research suggests, Aboriginal suicide prevention projects should focus on protective factors and work from a community development approach. Through AYSPS, Alberta continues to be a leader in the field of Aboriginal youth suicide.

¹⁵ Alcantara, C. & Gone, J. (2007). Reviewing Suicide in Native American Communities: Situating Risk and Protective Factors within a Transactional-Ecological Framework, *Death Studies*, 31 (5), 457-477.

¹⁶ AYSPS. (2003). *Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy: An Alberta Approach*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Government.

Stated Outcomes	Research Objectives	Approach/Methodology	Timeline/Deliverable
Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.	<p>Identify what proportion of youth enrolled in AYSPS programs feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.</p> <p>Determine the extent to which programs have been able to have a positive impact on the lives of youth.</p> <p>Determine the proportion of youth who state that their feelings about their future have improved.</p>	<p>Quantitative survey of a representative sample of youth aged 11-30 years who are either participants or non-participants in projects located in three communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethbridge (5 projects); • Eden Valley (1 project); and • Tri settlement (3 projects). <p>Target of 100 completed surveys. Exact distribution of surveys across three communities or 9 projects to be determined.</p>	<p>Pilot test completed October 19, 2007 Finalize Survey: October 25, 2007</p> <p>Complete data collection: October 26-December 7, 2007</p> <p>Compile data and weighted tables: December 31, 2007 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008 Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008</p>
Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.	<p>Explore and discuss the ways that the projects that have been implemented have helped youth to feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.</p> <p>Review what changes have occurred among youth in the communities in terms of how they feel about their future.</p>	<p>Conduct a minimum of one focus group in each pilot project community with invited representatives from the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools • Enforcement • Health • Youth workers • Planners • Elected leaders • Non-elected leaders • Youth • Elders • Parents 	<p>Finalize Interview Guide: October, 2007</p> <p>Conduct focus groups: Eden Valley Nov 14/07 Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Nov 19/07 Kainai Nov 23/07 Peavine Nov 27/07 Gift Lake Nov 28/07 East Prairie Nov 29/07 Piikani Dec 5/07 Napi TBA Chinook TBA</p> <p>Analysis Jan 15/ 07 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008 Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008</p>
Communities have reached their targeted goals and objectives.	<p>Explore the degree to which each community has reached their stated goals/objectives.</p> <p>Review the role of the provincial coordinator.</p> <p>Identify the reach of community programs to youth in communities.</p>	<p>Complete nine, in-depth interviews of approximately one hour each with each project coordinator located in the three communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethbridge (5 projects) • Eden Valley (1 project) • Tri settlement (3 projects) 	<p>Finalize Interview Guide: October, 2007</p> <p>Conduct interviews: November 14- Dec 7/ 2007</p> <p>Analysis Jan 15/ 07 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008</p>

Stated Outcomes	Research Objectives	Approach/Methodology	Timeline/Deliverable
			Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008
Communities have reached their targeted goals and objectives.	Determine the proportion of action plan deliverables/objectives that have been achieved.	Conduct an administrative review of action plans for each project and summarize stated results.	Finalize instrument used to summarize action plans: November, 2007 Compile data: November – January, 2007 Analysis Jan 15/ 07 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008 Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008
Promoting research and evaluation of “ <i>what works</i> ” to prevent Aboriginal youth suicidal behaviour.	Investigate how project participants have learned about the value of research and the need to demonstrate results. Explore lessons learned and how they can be communicated to future projects.	Complete 17, in-depth interviews of approximately one hour each within the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AYSPS provincial coordinator; • Five AYSPS Working Group members who have been involved in implementing both pilot and extended sites; and • Nine community contacts. • Two community contacts from “new sites”. 	Conduct interviews: November – Dec 7 2007 Analysis Jan 15/ 07 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008 Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008
Province wide leadership and shared accountability for an effective, province wide, community based approach.	Investigate the strengths and opportunities to improve the management of the program. Obtain feedback on the direction of the program’s governance and accountabilities. Review the role of the provincial coordinator.	Complete a minimum of eight, in-depth interviews of approximately one hour in length with senior management representatives from each of the following strategy partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Children’s Services • Alberta Mental Health Board • International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations • Health and Wellness • Solicitor General and Public Security • Seniors and Community Supports • Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission 	Conduct interviews Nov – Dec15 /07 Analysis Jan 15/ 07 Draft overall evaluation report: January 31, 2008 Final, overall evaluation report: March 15, 2008

Updated October 31, 2007

Appendix B
Evaluation Approach
and Methodology

Approach

The approach used in the evaluation aligned itself with the initial intent of the strategy that recognized that to be truly responsive and effective programs that address the prevention of Aboriginal youth suicide must be built around the strengths, unique characteristics and needs of each community. AYSPS recognizes in its planning documentation that projects, programs and services are more successful if they are initiated and delivered at the community level. The approach must involve local partnerships which build community capacity and strengthen cultural identity. This promotes ownership and accountability and creates a sense of community responsibility.

The evaluation framework incorporated both the Aboriginal ways of knowing and western contemporary methods. This was evident in the following ways:

- The language used by the community members has been adopted in this report. Youth and community members do not recognize the language or word “*strategy*” and refer to the AYSPS as a “*program*”. Hence, the term strategy and program is used interchangeably throughout the report as it is used in the communities.
- Surveying is a western methodology that does not fit well in Aboriginal communities, but by inviting communities’ to provide input into the tools and carefully selecting wording in the areas of inquiries, surveys as a method were approved by the communities who also administrated the tool.
- Administration of the survey tool was completed by the community coordinators. Even though guidelines had been developed for the administration, it was up to the coordinator to conduct the survey in the most suitable and workable way for their community.
- Focus group discussions were held based on the community timelines and based on the community’s protocols for acceptable ways of bringing together youth and community members. The focus groups attempted to be conversations and stories that were guided by the areas of inquiry developed by the evaluators prior to attending the focus group meetings. The setting, participant numbers, time, age composition, format and protocols were handled by the community coordinators. Some people who attended the focus groups were not directly involved in the strategy but lived in the community and had perspectives related to youth. Permission was given by the participants for the evaluators to take notes during the sessions.
- The holistic approach of community development, coupled with some communities accessing multiple funding sources for the same target population made it difficult to ensure that the discussion only reflected on programs developed and carried out under the AYSPS umbrella. Therefore, community coordinators were present and their responsibility was to identify specific activities, initiatives or programs that were funded by AYSPS.
- The strategy has been active in the communities for three years; however, the survey asked respondents to reflect back two years. This change was made to recognize the time factor needed to plan and begin implementation of the local initiative. Furthermore, some youth who currently are 13 years of age would have been only 10 years old when the program began. Trying to reflect back three years would have been difficult for them, two years was thought to be more reasonable for them to reflect upon.

Community Development

AYSPS was implemented using community development principles. This makes it difficult and even improper to distinguish outcomes solely based on youth's active participation in a specific activity. By the sheer presence of AYSPPS in the community it can be assumed that *ALL* youth were impacted directly or indirectly. For the purpose of this evaluation, it is acknowledged that all youth in the community have been impacted by AYSPPS but some youth have been more actively involved in AYSPPS activities than others and hence may be more interested in terms of measuring outcomes. Therefore, rather than defining participants and non-participants in this report they will be referred to as active and non-active respondents.

Methodology Background

The evaluation relied on a triangulation data approach using multiple methods, sources, and type of data.

Summative Gathering

A summative gathering was the starting point of the summative evaluation and was held early in the project (June 2007). Community members, government representatives and evaluators participated in the full day of deliberations. The gathering resulted in the following deliverables:

- All 16 communities were represented at the gathering. Participants shared and learned from each other.
- The community representatives offered suggestions for the evaluation and agreed to fully participate in the upcoming evaluation.
- Validation of the long term evaluation plan developed in 2005 was received.
- There was a re-confirmation of the long term goals established in (2015). This included reduced suicide rates by 2015 and that youth will self report that they feel empowered, hopeful and optimistic.
- The group reached consensus on the summative evaluation goals.
- The group reached consensus on methodology, tools and evaluation framework.
- The communities provided direction for the youth survey's areas of inquiry.

Some concerns arose from three communities regarding the nature of the evaluation. These concerns required an additional meeting with senior management (representing elected officials) from these communities to clarify the purpose of the evaluation, the level of intrusion for the communities and to smooth the way for the evaluation to proceed.

Youth Survey

A youth survey was developed aimed at capturing youths' perception of a series of protective factors. The survey was structured as a pre/post measure requiring the youth to respond to statements as they reflected on the present realities followed by a retrospective assessment of the same areas. The survey targeted youth aged 13-30, and was intended to be used in all of the initial nine participating communities.

The survey was pilot tested in two communities, Eden Valley and Gift Lake. A total of 15 youth aged 13 – 23 participated. Their feedback was captured and incorporated into the survey.

Guidelines for community coordinators to administer the survey were also developed and reviewed during the pilot testing.

All pilot sites who did not participate in the pilot testing were invited to an information session where the final copy was delivered together with implementation guidelines. The material was reviewed and questions were answered. Representatives from two sites attended this session. Survey packages and guidelines were hand delivered to the remaining communities. They also received invitations to contact the consultants with any questions or areas that needed clarification.

All sites received 75 copies of the survey with three pre-addressed, postage paid envelopes for returning completed surveys.

The targeted sample size was 100 completed surveys. The actual sample size was $n= 171$.

Administrative Review

An administrative review was conducted of each of the nine pilot sites. It was completed by reviewing the three years of action plans, comparing these to the two years of annual reports submitted, and followed up with interviews with the community coordinators to determine if the stated goals and objectives were reached. It should be noted that the administrative review only captures if there is evidence of action within a specific area. It does not capture the value, worth or merit of those actions.

For each goal (activity/strategy) a rating was given as follows:

- **Completed** - there was tangible evidence of completion (e.g. brochures and attendance rates at conferences, etc.). The completion was also verified by focus group participants and coordinator interviews.
- **Partially completed** – there was no tangible evidence of completion, but there was indication from focus group discussions and coordinator interviews that movement had taken place related to the item.
- **No action** - no activity in the area was evident.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were held in eight of the nine pilot project sites. They were organized by the community coordinators and participants were invited from the community.

Participants came from the following populations:

- Youth
- Elders
- School representatives
- Health workers
- Youth workers
- Elected leaders
- Non-elected leaders
- Parents
- Community coordinators
- Mental health services
- Social service agencies

A joint focus group with youth from the communities of Piikani and Napi were held in Piikani. At the time of the evaluation Napi did not have a community coordinator or any ongoing AYSPS activities. These communities are located close to each other and often the same youth have accessed ASYSP funded programs in both communities. It is therefore felt that youth from both communities had an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation.

Stories

To honour the Aboriginal way of knowing and to better understand the realities of youth in the communities all youth were encouraged to share their stories or journeys as part of the evaluation. The coordinators were encouraged to collect stories from youth. Two youth did share their story and these stories were captured verbatim.

Individual In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with ten key community coordinators to explore:

- The degree to which each community had reached their stated goals and objectives.
- To review the role of the provincial coordinator.
- To identify the reach of the community programs to youth in the communities.

Telephone interviews or in person meetings were completed with 11 Working Group representatives from the coordinating ministries to assess:

- The suitability of the AYSPS model.
- The strengths and opportunities to improve the management of the program.
- The strength of the program's governance and accountabilities.
- How project participants have learned about the value of research and the need to demonstrate results.

In-depth interviews were conducted with the provincial coordinator to assess:

- The role and responsibility of the position.
- The key strengths and challenges of the position.
- How, if any, improvements could be made for the position.

Interviews were also conducted with partners in the community to assess:

- How and why the local program entered into partnership with other groups.
- How the partnering impacted the program.

Summary of Data Collection

Title/Location	Organization	# of Focus Groups	Participants			Individual Interviews	Surveys submitted
			E=Elder	Y=Youth	CM=Community Member		
			E	Y	CM		
Eden Valley Pilot Site	Eden Valley AYSPS	1	2	4	7	1	31
Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Friendship Centre, Lethbridge	Medicine Tree	2	9	8	2	2	25
Aboriginal Youth Wellness Project	Chinook Health Region	1	1	5	4	2	14
Blood Tribal Mental Health Services	Kainai Wellness Centre	2	1	8	2	2	27
Peavine	Tri Settlement	1	0	4	5	1	18
Gift Lake	Tri Settlement	1	0	9	2		
East Prairie	Tri Settlement	1	2	9	5		
Piikani	Piikani/ Napi	2	0	15	4	1	56
Working Group Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Alberta Children and Youth Initiatives • Alberta Mental Health Board (AMHB) • International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations (IAR) • Health and Wellness • Solicitor General • Community Supports • Alberta Alcohol and Drug Addictions Commission (AADAC) 					11	
Coordinator & staff	Hobbema					2	
Coordinator & staff	Dene Tha'					2	
Provincial Coordinator	AMHB					1	
TOTALS		11	15	62	32	25	171

Appendix C
Aboriginal Youth Stories

When I started school this October I wanted to concentrate on my studies, like I didn't want any distraction, So when my adviser asked me if I wanted to be in the first nations program I told him that I did not want to join.

R came up to me after talking to my adviser and asked me if I could come the next day, because she wanted to talk about the first nations program, she got me by saying she was getting pizza, so I said alright I guess.

When I came the next day and she started to talk about the program I started to get interested in this.

Since I have been in this program I felt like I have a friend and role model. I feel like I can talk about anything and will not be judged, I have a lot more confidence and I believe I could be and do anything I want.

I have been trying to find myself for a really long time, and I think that when it comes to R, R and R they give me that, because that are always talking about finishing school and being something. They all give me a sense well being.

They are my angles [angels]

No Place Like Home

**Hold tightly to your dream
Stay strong and do not waver
There is no hope but so it seems
In a place called Gift Lake
When boredom sadness and hate kicks in
They will march in massive forms
But I know our drive, our will to win
Overcome starring eyes and corrupting storms
Our ears will hear the words blaze up
But in my mind I know
In this place there is a way we will rise up
Even though judgment is as cold as snow
Politics fill the hearts and minds of all
For this were all brought down
Them they all feel ten feet tall
To us their all just clowns
Elected by us to entertain
Our minds and hopeful hearts
All our hopes aren't all in vain
Neglect hurts like piercing darts
We are not too weak for our hearts endeavours
Lets fill our hearts with something new
It will be this way for now? Forever.
All our dreams can become true
While reading my words remember this
The Wizard of Oz has shown
The boredom, sadness and hate I will miss
Because, "There is no place like home!"**

Appendix D

Tools

Community Youth Survey

Please read each question carefully, and fill in or circle the response that best applies to you. All responses will be kept strictly confidential, so please be honest. If you have any questions talk to the person who gave you this survey.

Section One: First a little bit about you – as of TODAY

1. Have you participated in any youth activity/initiative in the last 2 years? **Yes** **No**
2. What is your age? _____ years
3. Are you.... **Male** **Female**
4. Do you live in this community? **All the time** **Now and then** **Visiting**
5. What are you doing at this time? *(Please circle all that apply)*

I work I do not work or go to school	I go to school Other _____
---	-------------------------------

6. Are you..... *(Please circle one)*

First Nations/Native Métis	Inuit Other _____
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Section Two: How do you feel TODAY?

7. Would you disagree or agree with the following statements.... *(Please circle only one number for each question).*

	<u>I totally disagree</u>	<u>I somewhat disagree</u>	<u>neutral</u>	<u>I somewhat agree</u>	<u>I totally agree</u>
a) I think I am doing pretty well	1	2	3	4	5
b) I feel my future looks good	1	2	3	4	5
c) I know I can find ways to solve my problem.....	1	2	3	4	5
d) I know of at least one adult whom I can go to when I need help.....	1	2	3	4	5
e) I have the "guts" (or nerve) to ask for help when I need it	1	2	3	4	5
f) I have good friends whom I can rely on	1	2	3	4	5
g) I have gone to some community activities/events	1	2	3	4	5
h) I am proud of who I am as a person.....	1	2	3	4	5
i) I am proud of my culture.....	1	2	3	4	5
j) I have plans for my future.....	1	2	3	4	5

Section Three: How did you feel TWO YEARS AGO. *This section asks about how you felt two years ago? (Please circle only one number for each question).*

8. Thinking back to how things were two years ago would you disagree or agree with the following statements.... <i>(Please circle your response on the scale below.)</i>					
	I totally disagree	I somewhat disagree	neutral	I somewhat agree	I totally agree
a) Two years ago I thought I was doing pretty well.....	1	2	3	4	5
b) Two years ago I felt my future looked good	1	2	3	4	5
c) Two years ago I knew I could find ways to solve my problem	1	2	3	4	5
d) Two years ago I knew of at least one adult whom I could go to when I needed help.....	1	2	3	4	5
e) Two years ago I had the ‘guts’ to ask for help when I needed it	1	2	3	4	5
f) Two years ago I had good friends whom I could rely on.....	1	2	3	4	5
g) Two years ago I had gone to some community activities/events.....	1	2	3	4	5
h) Two years ago I was proud of who I was as a person	1	2	3	4	5
i) Two years ago I was proud of my culture	1	2	3	4	5
j) Two years ago I had plans for my future	1	2	3	4	5

9. How have any of the activities that you went to helped you personally?

10. Has your community changed in the last two years? Yes No
 If yes, please tell us how it has changed.

***Thank you for completing this survey! Your answers will be very helpful to us.
 Please fold your completed survey and put it in the envelope that is with the person who gave you this survey.***

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

Signing Consent

If you use consent forms in your community, as part of other work you do, please have the youth complete one before they do the survey. Follow your own guidelines for how to store the consent forms.

Ensuring Confidentiality

- Tell the youth the survey is ***confidential***.
- Do not put names on the survey.
- Ensure that the information provided by youth remains confidential.

Who should complete the survey?

- Youth between the ages of 13-30 years old.
- The main objective of the survey is to have as many youth as possible who have participated in AYSPS activities complete the survey.
- We also would like you to distribute this survey to youth who have not participated in AYSPS activities.

How should the survey be completed?

- To assist the youth in completing **Question 1**, please give examples of AYSPS activities/events conducted in your community.
- The youth can complete the survey themselves if they feel comfortable doing so.
- If they need help with the survey you can read the question to them.
- When the youth have completed the survey, please ask them to fold it in half and place it in a big envelope that you are using to collect all surveys.
- On the front of the envelope, write your community name and initial the envelope.
- At the end of each week please mail the envelope containing the surveys to:
Birgitta Larsson
BIM Larsson & Associates
#308, 1211 – 51 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6H 6A3

How should the survey be described to youth?

Youth in Aboriginal communities across Alberta are being asked to help provide feedback and direction for planning of services and activities. The results will be used for future planning and decision making. ***Please use your own words to explain what the strategy is about.***

Further Questions?

Contact: Birgitta Larsson at 780-988-9420 or larsson@telus.net
Barbara Allen at 780-352-0947 or ballen2@telus.net

Areas of Inquiry for AYSPS

Community Representatives - Focus Group

Outcome # 1: Aboriginal youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic about their futures.

Changes in Youth:

- What do you think it means for youth to feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic?
- Did the initiative help youth feel hopeful, empowered and optimistic? If so how or what part? How do you know?
- Have you observed any changes in the youth since they attended the initiative? If so what?

Success/Challenges:

- Is the community aware of the initiative? If so, how do you know?
- What activities/processes have had the most impact at the community level within this initiative?
- What changes have you observed within the community since the introduction of your initiative?
- What has been the most successful?
- What have been the challenges for the initiative?
- Has AYSPS created partnerships? How and with whom?
- How did you become aware of the initiative?
- Are you involved in the initiative? If so, in what way?
- Do you know a “story” about how the program impacted a youth? (If so, would it be possible to have the youth’s permission to share his/her story?)

Community Coordinators - Interviews

Outcome # 2: Communities have reached their targeted goals and objectives.

Goals/Objectives:

- Were your initial stated goals/objectives appropriate?
- Did your goals/objectives change over the 3 years? If so, how?
- To what degree have you reached your stated goals/objectives?
- How do you know?
- Are there any that you have not? Why?
- Knowing what you know today – would you become engaged in this initiative again? Why/ Why not?
- What, if any, would you do differently this time around?
- Does a strategy like AYSPS work for community members? (Is this the most appropriate way of trying to make a difference in the communities)?

Provincial Coordinator:

- Has the introduction of a coordinator changed your role or responsibilities?
- What contact have you had with the Provincial Coordinator? (Type and Frequency)
- How has the Provincial Coordinator assisted you in this strategy?
- What was the most valuable assistance?
- Was the introduction of the coordinator the most appropriate way to support the strategy?
- What challenges have you encountered working with the coordinator?
- How could the role of the Provincial Coordinator be enhanced?

Reaching Youth:

- How has the community program targeted youth?
- Why did you choose this way to implement the AYSPS initiative?
- Has it worked?
- Has the program spread? If so how, if not why not? (To partner with other agencies/to include more youth/to include the whole family).
- Is there a “story” about the impact of the program on a youth that could be shared?

Research:

- How did you evaluate your initiative? (What methods did you use?)
- Was your evaluation helpful to your initiative? (Did it help you to understand your initiative?)
- How did you use the evaluation data you collected?

Working Group Members - Interviews

Outcome # 3: Promoting research and evaluation of “what works” to prevent Aboriginal youth suicidal behaviour.

Research:

- How did you use the individual evaluations from the sites?
- Were the evaluations helpful to the strategy (decision making, informing etc.)?
- How did you use the evaluation data collected?
- Explain if you believe the development of the action plan was helpful in guiding the implementation of the initiative. How?
- Explain if the development of an overall evaluation plan (which was developed for all pilot sites in 2005) was helpful for planning. How?
- How could the evaluation process been made easier/more informative for the communities?
- What benefit do you see from an evaluation?
- Have any of the evaluation findings from year 1-2 been used? How?
- What benefit do you see from communities learning from communities? (The pilot sites and the new sites).
- Has the AYSPS lead to increased knowledge of what works in Aboriginal communities?

Lessons Learned:

Questions asked of Working Group Community Lead (as identified in document named– AYSPS Pilot Site Working Group Lead Contacts Oct 2, 2007):

- Explain the lessons you have learned in running your initiative.
- Explain the lessons you have learned in conducting an evaluation of your initiative.
- Explain how these lessons could best be communicated to other communities.

Questions asked of ALL Working Group Members:

- Explain the lessons learned in being involved in the AYSPS. (Specifically, communication and contact between provincial representatives and communities, information sharing).
- Is the AYSPS model the best way for communities and government to work together? Explain (specifically how they have worked together and why it is the best way)? If this is not the best way, how would you suggest?
- Is there a “story” about the impact of the program on a youth that could be shared?

Questions asked of Working Group Member of New Sites:

- How were the lessons learned from the pilot sites communicated to you?
- What, if anything, have you used?
- What lessons have been most useful?
- What lessons have been most challenging?

- What, if any, ongoing support/communication do you receive from the pilot sites?

Provincial Coordinator:

- From your understanding what were the expectations of the coordinator? Why?
- To whom is the position ultimately responsible? How? Why?
- What challenges have you encountered?
- How could the role of the Provincial Coordinator be enhanced?
- What contact has the Provincial Coordinator and communities had to your knowledge? (Type and Frequency).
- Has the introduction of a Provincial Coordinator assisted in this strategy? If so, how? If not, how could the coordinator help?

Provincial Coordinator – Interview

Role:

- From your understanding what were the expectations of the coordinator?
- To whom is the position ultimately responsible? How? Why?
- How much of your FTE is AYSPS coordination?
- Did you use the formative evaluation to inform your work with communities? If so how?
- How have you used the evaluation process to assist the communities in developing their programs?

Supporting Communities:

- What was your actual role in working with the communities? Did this differ from your initial expectations? If so, how?
- How did you determine what type of assistance the communities needed?
- How did you support the individual communities?
- What challenges have you encountered?
- Was the introduction of the coordinator the most appropriate way to support the strategy?
- How could the role of the Provincial Coordinator be enhanced?

Research:

- How did you use the individual evaluations from the sites?
- Were the evaluations helpful to the strategy (decision making, informing etc)?
- How did you use the evaluation data collected?
- Explain if you believe the development of the action plan was helpful in guiding the implementation of the initiative. How?
- Explain if the development of an overall evaluation plan (which was developed for all pilot sites in 2005) was helpful for planning. How?
- How could the evaluation process been made easier/more informative for the communities?
- What benefit do you see from an evaluation?
- Have any of the evaluation findings from year 1-2 been used? How?
- What benefit do you see from communities learning from communities? (the pilot sites and the new sites).
- Has the AYSPS lead to increased knowledge of what works in Aboriginal communities?

**AYSPS AREAS OF INQUIRY FOR THE FORMATIVE
EVALUATION OF
NEW SITES OF DENE THA' AND HOBHEMA**

October 2007

1. How were you involved in being chosen for the site for the AYSPS project?
2. How was the AYSPS project described to you?
3. Did you get any feedback from the AYSPS formative evaluation conducted in 2006?
 - How were the lessons learned from the pilot sites communicated to you?
 - What, if anything, have you used?
 - What lessons have been most useful?
 - What lessons have been most challenging?
 - What level and type of contact have you had with the other sites?
 - What has been the most useful or beneficial of having other communities to contact?
4. What has been your role in the development of the program?
5. What have been your experiences so far in developing and implementing your programs?
6. What has been the most challenging in implementing your program?
7. What, if any, additional support or communication would you like to receive? Either from the pilot sites, the working group contacts, Provincial Coordinator (frequency, # of visits, type of support, communication)?
8. For future project sites, how can “lessons learned” best be shared?
9. Any other comments that you have?

Appendix E Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

Surveys collected were entered into a SPSS data base. During entry, each survey was given a unique identifying number. Once all surveys were entered, these numbers were randomized and a 10% sample was pulled. This sample was then compared against the entered data to ensure accuracy.

Open ended questions were also checked with a new 10% sample being pulled and recoded. This recoding was done to ensure that the codes used in the 10% sampled surveys were coded in the same manner as the original entries.

The first analysis completed was a descriptive statistics section for each question. This was done using cell referencing and balancing to ensure no errors in the results. These results captured the overall response rates to each question by the entire population.

The second test performed was a paired sample T-Test. This test was performed on questions 7a-j and 8a-j, to assess reported changes over time. The paired samples T-Test provided several variables, including the average change of the sample group over time (mean), a range in which 95% of respondents showed change over time (confidence interval of the difference), as well as the statistical significance of the results (the ability to replicate the results under similar conditions). It does this by comparing the changes between the two points in time for each respondent.

For this study, an initial paired T-Test was completed for the total population (n-171). The sample group was then broken down into sub populations and individual T-Tests were conducted for gender, age, communities, and if respondents took part in an activity (yes versus no respondents). Within each of these categories, the overall population was split into the sub-populations (i.e., for gender it would be male and female) and compared against one another. It is important to note, that while statistical significance can be done within each subpopulation (male results are statistically tested against themselves and female results are tested against themselves), the paired samples T-Test does not allow for the males results to be statistically tested against the female results, or vice versa. Rather a detailed comparison of how the subpopulations acted compared to one another was completed using a number of variables that included but were not limited to, mean change, consistency of the change, confidence interval of the subgroup and direction of the change within each sub-population.

Qualitative Analysis

To ensure data confidence, validity and reliability the following data collection approaches and analysis were used. It should be noted that validity and reliability measures are internal to each community. In addition to the measures outlined below the evaluators had existing working relationship with most community representatives established during the formative AYSPS evaluation.

Data collection: The evaluators spent 20 days combined in the nine communities. This allowed some time to establish rapport within the communities, observe the community uniqueness and meeting the various stakeholders outside of the focus group setting.

Validation of data: At the end of each segment or topic during the focus groups, and the individual interviews with coordinators and working group members, the evaluators

paraphrased the information that had been provided. At the end of each focus group the information was reviewed by category.

The written stories from the youth were presented verbatim.

All communities received the draft document for review, including their community's administrative review.

Triangulation was accomplished by using multiple methods, multiple sources and multiple types of data. The findings from each method were compared and contrasted to identify any irregularities, areas of unclarity or contrasting findings.

Coding: Data was hand coded by broad category. A matrix was used to capture themes by population and areas of inquiry. Open analysis was conducted. That is, all qualitative responses were reviewed without a pre-established template or expected pattern for responses and then coded for general areas or themes.

Reliability: Both evaluators took extensive notes during the focus groups (when appropriate). Both sets of notes were used in the analysis. Peer debriefing took place after each focus group and any irregularity or unclarity was followed up for clarification.

Appendix F

Evaluation Considerations

Methodology

Aboriginal communities function in a non-linear holistic manner. Western contemporary research methodology requires logical, linear, prescriptive data. These different ways of knowing are often at odds with each other. Attempts to respect both ways of knowing were at times a challenge for the evaluators, the evaluation sub-committee, the communities and participants. However, through discussion, deliberations and acceptance of both methods as complementary tools in the evaluation, a strong methodology, which meets both systems' needs, was developed. Even though these discussions were necessary and beneficial they sometimes delayed the progression of the evaluation.

Attribution

The evaluation focused on capturing the impact of AYSPS in nine communities. In small complex communities where coordinators often have multiple roles within the community it is difficult and often impossible to distinguish precisely what is an AYSPS program/initiative and what is not. Hence, as in most program evaluations causality is not possible; however, contributory factors can be identified.

Staff Turnover

Due to staff turnover in the communities, new relationships needed to be developed between the contact people and the evaluators. Evaluation protocols in Aboriginal communities require evaluators to initiate dialogues with the community members and/or coordinators. This consultation involved a detailed plan of the project, its intent, purpose and expectations for the evaluator and the community, which was open to modifications to accommodate the needs and protocols of the community. The process of working with new staff required this time to build trust in order to work effectively together.

Some staff changes resulted in delays in two communities in submitting action plans – which is the foundation for funding. For instance, the status of NAPI and Sik-Ooh-Kotoki program funding and reporting was unclear. Hence, data collected do not reflect three years of AYSPS programming in these communities.

Finally, changes in the membership of the Working Group and Evaluation Sub-Committee presented some challenges. New members indicated they required mentoring in the strategy, community development and Aboriginal communities.

Evaluation

Community coordinators were unsure of what evaluation is, its purpose, how to use evaluation to benefit their programs, how to do it and the value of evaluation. Therefore, the summative evaluation presented a challenge for them – adding more work for them in arranging meetings, explaining the importance to community members and gathering participants and collecting surveys. Sometimes the evaluation may not have been high on their priority list.

Definition of Youth

The vast age span in the definition of youth, 13-30, years presented a challenge for the quantitative data collection. Youth completing the survey could have been 11 years old and questions asked of this age are different than questions for a 30 year old. The survey questions may not have addressed the subtleties due to this large age range.

Appendix G

Quantitative Data Analysis

T-Test – Overall, all respondents

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	3.8988	168	1.07023	.08257
	Q8a.	3.5655	168	1.21192	.09350
Future Good	Q7b.	4.0060	167	1.02085	.07900
	Q8b.	3.5569	167	1.16477	.09013
Solving Problem	Q7c.	3.9102	167	1.05183	.08139
	Q8c.	3.5928	167	1.17789	.09115
One Adult	Q7d.	4.2754	167	1.18558	.09174
	Q8d.	3.7605	167	1.42359	.11016
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.7176	170	1.24141	.09521
	Q8e.	3.2471	170	1.35355	.10381
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.0427	164	1.12064	.08751
	Q8f.	3.8232	164	1.24307	.09707
Attend Events	Q7g.	3.8263	167	1.25142	.09684
	Q8g.	3.2275	167	1.48761	.11511
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.4000	165	1.00487	.07823
	Q8h.	3.8485	165	1.36420	.10620
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.5799	169	1.02112	.07855
	Q8i.	4.2544	169	1.13929	.08764
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.2899	169	1.07679	.08283
	Q8k.	3.4911	169	1.35012	.10386

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	168	.331	.000
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	167	.326	.000
Solving Problem	Q7c & Q8c.	167	.277	.000
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	167	.396	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	170	.419	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	164	.353	.000
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	167	.471	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	165	.391	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	169	.645	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8k.	169	.385	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.33333	1.32533	.10225	.13146	.53520	3.260	167	.001
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.44910	1.27373	.09856	.25450	.64370	4.556	166	.000
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.31737	1.34473	.10406	.11192	.52281	3.050	166	.003
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.51497	1.44729	.11199	.29385	.73609	4.598	166	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.47059	1.40235	.10756	.25826	.68291	4.375	169	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.21951	1.34779	.10525	.01169	.42733	2.086	163	.039
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.59880	1.42296	.11011	.38140	.81620	5.438	166	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.55152	1.34076	.10438	.34542	.75761	5.284	164	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.32544	.91645	.07050	.18627	.46462	4.616	168	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8k.	.79882	1.36530	.10502	.59148	1.00615	7.606	168	.000

T-Test – Respondents that stated “YES” to having gone to an activity

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	3.9735	113	1.02173	.09612
	Q8a.	3.5398	113	1.17287	.11033
Future Good	Q7b.	4.1250	112	1.01453	.09586
	Q8b.	3.5179	112	1.20795	.11414
Solving Problem	Q7c	3.8860	114	1.07883	.10104
	Q8c.	3.5877	114	1.20332	.11270
One Adult	Q7d.	4.2832	113	1.14540	.10775
	Q8d.	3.7080	113	1.42479	.13403
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.7895	114	1.16341	.10896
	Q8e.	3.1491	114	1.33855	.12537
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.1455	110	1.03902	.09907
	Q8f.	3.8636	110	1.24501	.11871
Attend Events	Q7g.	4.0360	111	1.05251	.09990
	Q8g.	3.4324	111	1.44362	.13702
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.3604	111	1.00718	.09560
	Q8h.	3.7928	111	1.38903	.13184
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.5304	115	1.09482	.10209
	Q8i.	4.1913	115	1.19131	.11109
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.3717	113	1.03678	.09753
	Q8k.	3.4336	113	1.37501	.12935

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	113	.258	.006
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	112	.300	.001
Solving Problem	Q7c & Q8c.	114	.263	.005
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	113	.451	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	114	.418	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	110	.398	.000
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	111	.325	.001
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	111	.366	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	115	.648	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8k.	113	.324	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.43363	1.34215	.12626	.18346	.68379	3.434	112	.001
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.60714	1.32446	.12515	.35915	.85513	4.851	111	.000
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.29825	1.38851	.13005	.04060	.55589	2.293	113	.024
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.57522	1.36804	.12869	.32023	.83021	4.470	112	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.64035	1.35756	.12715	.38845	.89225	5.036	113	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.28182	1.26442	.12056	.04288	.52076	2.338	109	.021
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.60360	1.48495	.14095	.32428	.88292	4.283	110	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.56757	1.38578	.13153	.30690	.82823	4.315	110	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.33913	.96325	.08982	.16119	.51707	3.776	114	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8k.	.93805	1.42856	.13439	.67178	1.20432	6.980	112	.000

T-Test – Respondents that stated “NO” to having gone to an activity

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a. Q8a.	3.6087	46	1.18281	.17440
Future Good	Q7b. Q8b.	3.6739	46	1.03396	.15245
Solving Problem	Q7c. Q8c.	3.5652	46	1.12846	.16638
One Adult	Q7d. Q8d.	3.8696	46	1.02434	.15103
Ask for Help	Q7e. Q8e.	3.5217	46	1.11034	.16371
Good Friends	Q7f. Q8f.	4.1556	45	1.36441	.20339
Attend Events	Q7g. Q8g.	3.8889	45	1.46508	.21840
Proud of who I am	Q7h. Q8h.	3.4681	47	1.45738	.21258
Proud of Culture	Q7i. Q8i.	3.4043	47	1.39346	.20326
Future Plans	Q7j. Q8k.	3.7333	45	1.30384	.19437
		3.7556	45	1.31694	.19632
		3.2128	47	1.53136	.22337
		2.6170	47	1.51160	.22049
		4.4565	46	1.06888	.15760
		3.9783	46	1.35793	.20022
		4.6667	45	.90453	.13484
		4.4444	45	.98985	.14756
		4.0426	47	1.21508	.17724
		3.5957	47	1.36190	.19865

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	46	.472	.001
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	46	.485	.001
Solving Problem	Q7c & Q8c.	46	.276	.063
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	45	.327	.028
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	47	.494	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	45	.292	.052
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	47	.618	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	46	.497	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	45	.753	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8k.	47	.576	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.04348	1.31583	.19401	-.34727	.43423	.224	45	.824
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.10870	1.10007	.16220	-.21798	.43537	.670	45	.506
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.34783	1.28612	.18963	-.03410	.72976	1.834	45	.073
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.26667	1.64317	.24495	-.22700	.76033	1.089	44	.282
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.06383	1.43564	.20941	-.35769	.48535	.305	46	.762
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	-.02222	1.55927	.23244	-.49068	.44623	-.096	44	.924
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.59574	1.32959	.19394	.20536	.98613	3.072	46	.004
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.47826	1.24256	.18321	.10927	.84726	2.611	45	.012
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.22222	.67044	.09994	.02080	.42365	2.223	44	.031
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8k.	.44681	1.19434	.17421	.09614	.79748	2.565	46	.014

T-Test – Respondents that are FEMALE

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	4.0260	77	1.01274	.11541
	Q8a.	3.4416	77	1.30277	.14846
Future Good	Q7b.	4.0000	76	.90921	.10429
	Q8b.	3.4079	76	1.22396	.14040
Solving Problem	Q7c.	3.8312	77	.99211	.11306
	Q8c.	3.2727	77	1.17693	.13412
One Adult	Q7d.	4.2078	77	1.17359	.13374
	Q8d.	3.4935	77	1.49229	.17006
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.4487	78	1.27562	.14444
	Q8e.	2.8846	78	1.37681	.15589
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.0135	74	1.14069	.13260
	Q8f.	3.6757	74	1.23984	.14413
Attend Events	Q7g.	3.7532	77	1.21564	.13854
	Q8g.	3.0130	77	1.49994	.17093
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.3421	76	.90263	.10354
	Q8h.	3.4868	76	1.42822	.16383
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.7662	77	.74155	.08451
	Q8i.	4.1688	77	1.14021	.12994
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.2857	77	1.07431	.12243
	Q8j.	3.2208	77	1.39193	.15862

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	77	.201	.080
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	76	.264	.021
Solving Problem	Q7c. & Q8c.	77	.130	.259
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	77	.429	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	78	.355	.001
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	74	.323	.005
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	77	.471	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	76	.252	.028
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	77	.530	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8j.	77	.344	.002

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.58442	1.48103	.16878	.24826	.92057	3.463	76	.001
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.59211	1.31836	.15123	.29085	.89336	3.915	75	.000
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.55844	1.43723	.16379	.23223	.88465	3.410	76	.001
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.71429	1.44966	.16520	.38525	1.04332	4.324	76	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.56410	1.50833	.17078	.22403	.90418	3.303	77	.001
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.33784	1.38759	.16130	.01636	.65932	2.094	73	.040
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.74026	1.41795	.16159	.41842	1.06210	4.581	76	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.85526	1.48507	.17035	.51591	1.19462	5.021	75	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.59740	.97683	.11132	.37569	.81912	5.367	76	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8j.	1.06494	1.43580	.16362	.73905	1.39082	6.508	76	.000

T-Test – Respondents that are MALE

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	3.7889	90	1.11672	.11771
	Q8a.	3.6667	90	1.13177	.11930
Future Good	Q7b.	4.0111	90	1.11672	.11771
	Q8b.	3.6778	90	1.10999	.11700
Solving Problem	Q7c.	3.9663	89	1.10216	.11683
	Q8c.	3.8539	89	1.11346	.11803
One Adult	Q7d.	4.3258	89	1.20393	.12762
	Q8d.	3.9888	89	1.33565	.14158
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.9451	91	1.17722	.12341
	Q8e.	3.5385	91	1.25882	.13196
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.0674	89	1.11598	.11829
	Q8f.	3.9438	89	1.24645	.13212
Attend Events	Q7g.	3.8876	89	1.29192	.13694
	Q8g.	3.4045	89	1.46721	.15552
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.4545	88	1.09239	.11645
	Q8h.	4.1477	88	1.23679	.13184
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.4286	91	1.19390	.12515
	Q8i.	4.3187	91	1.14386	.11991
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.2967	91	1.09031	.11430
	Q8j.	3.7033	91	1.27797	.13397

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	90	.477	.000
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	90	.384	.000
Solving Problem	Q7c. & Q8c.	89	.376	.000
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	89	.363	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	91	.425	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	89	.379	.000
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	89	.468	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	88	.520	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	91	.769	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8j.	91	.439	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.12222	1.14977	.12120	-.11859	.36304	1.008	89	.316
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.33333	1.23616	.13030	.07442	.59224	2.558	89	.012
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.11236	1.23802	.13123	-.14843	.37315	.856	88	.394
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.33708	1.43767	.15239	.03423	.63993	2.212	88	.030
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.40659	1.30791	.13711	.13421	.67898	2.966	90	.004
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.12360	1.32133	.14006	-.15475	.40194	.882	88	.380
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.48315	1.43109	.15169	.18168	.78461	3.185	88	.002
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.30682	1.14829	.12241	.06352	.55012	2.507	87	.014
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.10989	.79513	.08335	-.05570	.27548	1.318	90	.191
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8j.	.59341	1.26472	.13258	.33002	.85680	4.476	90	.000

T-Test – Respondents from Ages Under 16

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	3.8571	70	1.01132	.12088
	Q8a.	3.4714	70	1.28222	.15326
Future Good	Q7b.	4.0563	71	.99839	.11849
	Q8b.	3.5493	71	1.25116	.14848
Solving Problem	Q7c.	3.8732	71	1.04101	.12355
	Q8c.	3.4085	71	1.30469	.15484
One Adult	Q7d.	4.2083	72	1.19786	.14117
	Q8d.	3.5972	72	1.58033	.18624
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.8056	72	1.21770	.14351
	Q8e.	3.1389	72	1.46610	.17278
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.0278	72	1.08734	.12814
	Q8f.	3.7917	72	1.28849	.15185
Attend Events	Q7g.	3.9718	71	1.25325	.14873
	Q8g.	3.0986	71	1.55062	.18402
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.3239	71	1.06603	.12651
	Q8h.	3.6901	71	1.43020	.16973
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.7917	72	.60369	.07115
	Q8i.	4.2639	72	1.03452	.12192
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.2877	73	1.02034	.11942
	Q8j.	3.3836	73	1.38072	.16160

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	70	.433	.000
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	71	.364	.002
Solving Problem	Q7c. & Q8c.	71	.344	.003
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	72	.454	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	72	.504	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	72	.376	.001
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	71	.340	.004
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	71	.357	.002
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	72	.382	.001
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8j.	73	.423	.000

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.38571	1.24287	.14855	.08936	.68207	2.597	69	.011
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.50704	1.28589	.15261	.20268	.81141	3.323	70	.001
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.46479	1.36100	.16152	.14265	.78693	2.878	70	.005
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.61111	1.48756	.17531	.26155	.96067	3.486	71	.001
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.66667	1.35314	.15947	.34869	.98464	4.181	71	.000
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.23611	1.33736	.15761	-.07815	.55038	1.498	71	.139
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.87324	1.62946	.19338	.48755	1.25893	4.516	70	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.63380	1.44657	.17168	.29141	.97620	3.692	70	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.52778	.97825	.11529	.29790	.75765	4.578	71	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8j.	.90411	1.32460	.15503	.59506	1.21316	5.832	72	.000

T-Test – Respondents from Ages 16 to 18

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	3.9114	79	1.08828	.12244
	Q8a.	3.6329	79	1.21082	.13623
Future Good	Q7b.	3.8701	77	.99142	.11298
	Q8b.	3.4416	77	1.11796	.12740
Solving Problem	Q7c.	3.8312	77	1.05634	.12038
	Q8c.	3.5974	77	1.05456	.12018
One Adult	Q7d.	4.2500	76	1.22338	.14033
	Q8d.	3.8684	76	1.30988	.15025
Ask for Help	Q7e.	3.5570	79	1.29839	.14608
	Q8e.	3.2278	79	1.29049	.14519
Good Friends	Q7f.	3.9589	73	1.24095	.14524
	Q8f.	3.8904	73	1.25346	.14671
Attend Events	Q7g.	3.6494	77	1.27492	.14529
	Q8g.	3.1948	77	1.46034	.16642
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.4533	75	1.04356	.12050
	Q8h.	3.9333	75	1.35899	.15692
Proud of Culture	Q7i.	4.3291	79	1.31774	.14826
	Q8i.	4.1772	79	1.28860	.14498
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.1948	77	1.20349	.13715
	Q8j.	3.3766	77	1.35762	.15472

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	79	.247	.028
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	77	.314	.005
Solving Problem	Q7c. & Q8c.	77	.198	.084
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	76	.429	.000
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	79	.382	.001
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	73	.399	.000
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	77	.574	.000
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	75	.412	.000
Proud of Culture	Q7i. & Q8i.	79	.781	.000
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8j.	77	.317	.005

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.27848	1.41364	.15905	-.03816	.59512	1.751	78	.084
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.42857	1.24000	.14131	.14713	.71002	3.033	76	.003
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.23377	1.33669	.15233	-.06963	.53716	1.535	76	.129
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.38158	1.35614	.15556	.07169	.69147	2.453	75	.016
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.32911	1.43867	.16186	.00687	.65136	2.033	78	.045
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.06849	1.36757	.16006	-.25058	.38757	.428	72	.670
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.45455	1.27264	.14503	.16569	.74340	3.134	76	.002
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.52000	1.32909	.15347	.21420	.82580	3.388	74	.001
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.15190	.86363	.09717	-.04154	.34534	1.563	78	.122
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8j.	.81818	1.50199	.17117	.47727	1.15909	4.780	76	.000

T-Test – Respondents from Ages over 18

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Doing Well	Q7a.	4.0000	19	1.24722	.28613
	Q8a.	3.6316	19	.95513	.21912
Future Good	Q7b.	4.3684	19	1.16479	.26722
	Q8b.	4.0526	19	.91127	.20906
Solving Problem	Q7c.	4.3684	19	1.01163	.23208
	Q8c.	4.2632	19	.93346	.21415
One Adult	Q7d.	4.6316	19	.95513	.21912
	Q8d.	3.9474	19	1.22355	.28070
Ask for Help	Q7e.	4.0526	19	1.02598	.23538
	Q8e.	3.7368	19	1.09758	.25180
Good Friends	Q7f.	4.4211	19	.60698	.13925
	Q8f.	3.6842	19	1.05686	.24246
Attend Events	Q7g.	4.0000	19	1.10554	.25363
	Q8g.	3.8421	19	1.25889	.28881
Proud of who I am	Q7h.	4.4737	19	.51299	.11769
	Q8h.	4.1053	19	1.10024	.25241
Proud of Culture	Q7i	4.8333	18	.51450	.12127
	Q8i.	4.5556	18	.78382	.18475
Future Plans	Q7j.	4.6842	19	.58239	.13361
	Q8j.	4.3684	19	.83070	.19058

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Doing Well	Q7a. & Q8a.	19	.326	.173
Future Good	Q7b. & Q8b.	19	.085	.728
Solving Problem	Q7c. & Q8c.	19	.068	.782
One Adult	Q7d. & Q8d.	19	-.160	.513
Ask for Help	Q7e. & Q8e.	19	.112	.649
Good Friends	Q7f. & Q8f.	19	-.041	.868
Attend Events	Q7g. & Q8g.	19	.679	.001
Proud of who I am	Q7h. & Q8h.	19	.497	.030
Proud of Culture	Q7i & Q8i.	18	.389	.111
Future Plans	Q7j. & Q8j.	19	.484	.036

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Doing Well	Q7a. - Q8a.	.36842	1.30002	.29825	-.25817	.99501	1.235	18	.233
Future Good	Q7b. - Q8b.	.31579	1.41628	.32492	-.36684	.99841	.972	18	.344
Solving Problem	Q7c. - Q8c.	.10526	1.32894	.30488	-.53527	.74579	.345	18	.734
One Adult	Q7d. - Q8d.	.68421	1.66842	.38276	-.11994	1.48836	1.788	18	.091
Ask for Help	Q7e. - Q8e.	.31579	1.41628	.32492	-.36684	.99841	.972	18	.344
Good Friends	Q7f. - Q8f.	.73684	1.24017	.28451	.13910	1.33458	2.590	18	.018
Attend Events	Q7g. - Q8g.	.15789	.95819	.21982	-.30394	.61973	.718	18	.482
Proud of who I am	Q7h. - Q8h.	.36842	.95513	.21912	-.09194	.82878	1.681	18	.110
Proud of Culture	Q7i. - Q8i.	.27778	.75190	.17723	-.09614	.65169	1.567	17	.135
Future Plans	Q7j. - Q8j.	.31579	.74927	.17189	-.04535	.67693	1.837	18	.083

Appendix H
Administrative Review
by Community

Tri-Settlement: Gift Lake, Peavine, East Prairie

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
AYSPS working committee	Added youth representatives	Difficult to ensure ongoing attendance by youth. Honorariums and travel cost are an issue.	Completed
Information package, brochure and poster	Brochure developed – targeted adults. Need youth component.	Difficult finding information suitable for all ages.	Partially completed
Research funding possibilities	Partnerships have started to be established.	Funding structure in each community differs and available resources are limited.	Partially completed
Awareness campaign (workshops, youth gatherings)	Bracelet campaign added. Self esteem workshops were planned – but not held.	Focus on establishing talking circles. Need local community leads to carry this on. Need longer term planning.	Partially completed
Youth/Elder conferences presentation/bracelets distribution	Led to the theatre group HOPE established.	Have received requests to show HOPE in other communities. Have held AYSPS sessions at Annual Métis Youth conference	Completed
ASSIST workshops	Have not implemented in year three.	30 community members trained. Difficulty accessing facilitators for training	Completed.
Peer Support Groups	Jan 08 - three days session planned as the foundation for establishing peer support groups.	Terms Of Reference established. Trying to identify local leads for each community.	Partially completed
Website AYSPS/Video information	Theatre group was established in year three.	Plans are for HOPE to be video taped. Technical assistance at local level is not available to develop a website.	Partially completed
Yellow Ribbon	Tried to reconnect with program in year two.	Each community received the information. Content will be incorporated into other activities.	Partially completed

Eden Valley

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
Community Development Activities	<p>New activities have been added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Counselling • Camp Activities • Girls' Hockey program, and • Programs targeting family violence. 	<p>Ongoing community development activities. Main focus has been support, education and awareness related to wellness and social issues and providing activities for youth to strengthen resiliency.</p> <p>Newsletter has been developed.</p> <p>A three day gathering was held with community members to plan and raise awareness.</p> <p>Connected youth and Elders in a Centennial project.</p>	Completed
Alberta Future Leaders Program	Continues as originally planned.	Used feedback to modify implementation to better meet youth's needs.	Completed
Paradigm Esteem	Added a boys specific program	Success from girls' program promoted request for a boys' program	Completed
Hero & Gamma Girls	Expanded the age group to include adults	Have added previous participants as leaders in the program.	Completed
Youth Life Skills program	Continues as planned in year one	Staff changes and loss of building due to fire has delayed the implementation this year.	Completed

Piikani Suicide Prevention Program (PSPP)

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
Coordinate Piikani AYSPS	Year one focused on establishing an internal structure including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee • Newsletter • Brochure 	Due to staff changes there has been disruption in the program. There is limited documentation available for year one and two.	Partially completed
Provide training in suicide awareness and prevention	Year one focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide response plan • Resource Manual • ASSIST Training 	Initial strategies very focused on tangible outcomes. There is no evidence of this having been completed.	Not action
Youth mentorship and leadership	Specific activities for year one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellness activities • Male Mentorship • Youth Camps/youth weekend retreat 	Youth camps were held. No evidence of specific mentoring program being established. Various workshops and training sessions were held in year one.	Partially completed
Community capacity	Was not identified as specific strategy in year one-two.	Work with schools. Summer camps are planned	Partially completed.
Community interagency development	Was not identified as specific strategy in year one-two.	Have started bringing together groups and agencies within community	Partially completed

Napi Friendship Association

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
Establish Youth Support Group	Broadened to include 'a safe place to hang out'.	Operated during the first two years. Meetings held.	Partially completed
Social support		Focused on mentorship and leadership. Provided during years one and two.	Partially completed
Skills building	Broaden to include community capacity building and interagency developments	Youth conference was held in Spring 2007. Most participants were from outside the community.	Partially completed
Staff Training	Broadened to prevention and awareness to Napi youth and community.	Multiple changes in coordinator position have made sustainable efforts difficult.	Unable to determine
Program Promotion		Suicide prevention video forum held in 2007.	completed

Sik-Ooh-Kotoki Friendship Society, Lethbridge

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
<p>To work in partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders Wisdom Circle Crazy Horse Youth Council Other pilot sites of Lethbridge 	<p>Elders' Wisdom Circle is inactive.</p> <p>Crazy Horse Youth Council has been activated.</p> <p>Ongoing communication occurred with bi-monthly meetings rotated throughout the five sites. In year three the meetings have expanded to include all 16 communities via Video Conference.</p>	<p>No funding 2006, no Annual report submitted. Difficult to ensure ongoing attendance due to lack of funds travel costs. Attempts are being made to reactivate.</p> <p>Youth Council is now housed in the Youth Centre.</p> <p>The communities have more contact with each other as a result of the video conferences. The results are shared information, staff development and problem solving.</p>	Partially completed
Horsemanship Club	This activity was completed the first year but has since been discontinued.	Taking youth into the country for riding.	Partially completed
To develop and enhance the Youth Centre	The Centre is up and running.	The Centre is a place for youth to come and they are now working on increasing equipment, diversifying programs such as sports, fine arts, lunch program and field trips.	Completed
Cultural Camps	Two camps were completed.	Teaching cultural awareness	Completed
Certification of 10 Aboriginal youth in suicide prevention	Plan to implement in year three.	Work in partnership with Gatekeepers in Kanaii.	Partially completed
Suicide Awareness Day			No action
Establish more fundraising/awareness of Youth Suicide	Began advertising. Began fundraising activities such as dances, approaching businesses.	Contacting various community businesses and organizations.	Partially completed
Aboriginal Peer Youth Workshop	Plans to develop a workshop model and manual were proposed for year one.	No plans were evidenced of this model.	No action

Chinook Health Region, Lethbridge - Aboriginal Mental Health Program, Population Health Department,

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
Summer Day Camps	The Aboriginal Youth Wellness 6 day Project was adapted from the Nitsitapii Wellness Program. Health promotion activities are incorporated to strengthen the relationship of Aboriginal mothers and daughters and Aboriginal fathers and sons.	The Medicine Wheel holistic framework was used for group activities. The suicide prevention training was incorporated in the Mental Health component and cultural information was taught by an elder. Incentives were provided for year one for transportation and attendance and lunch was provided. Incentives not provided in year three.	Completed
Partnering with the Lethbridge Outreach High School	This seven week youth wellness project was incorporated with the high school studies. In year one it was run one time. In year two it ran twice and in year three it was run twice for eight weeks.	The majority of youth participated. Further talks are taking place with the School District # 51 to incorporate a cultural component within the school district.	Completed
Youth Parent and School District Staff Focus Groups	After the completion of the above two sessions three focus groups were run to gather information on the impact of the project on the community.	The information gathered was used to incorporate in the sessions for the following years.	Completed
Team Meetings and Sharing of Information	Ongoing communication occurred with bi-monthly meetings rotated throughout the five sites. In year three the meetings have expanded to include all 16 communities via Video Conference.	The communities have more contact with each other as a result of the video conferences. The results are shared information, staff development and problem solving.	Completed

‘Saving Lives through Healthy Living’, Blood Tribe Department of Health Inc., Kainai Wellness Centre, Lethbridge

Strategies/Activities	Changes in strategy from year one and two	Comments	Results
Deliver a two day Gatekeepers Workshop to learn the signs and symptoms of suicide.	Trained 100 people. For respectful circumstances the video “Sacred Lives” is no longer being shown.	From year one more people are attending and more requests are being received through schools, groups, surrounding towns, conferences and workshops. The sessions include parents and grandparents.	Completed
Cultural Camp	Every year it is changed slightly to incorporate the requests made by participants. Year three there were 21 youth both male and female. The sweat did not take place in year three but spiritual leaders still attended and told stories and shared their knowledge.	More interest is being expressed from one year to the next. The camp includes youth and their family. Cultural teachings as well as information on sessions on topics such as alcohol and drugs.	Completed
Staff training in youth suicide “Healing Our Spirits Worldwide” Conference in Edmonton	The conference was a one time occurrence in year three. In-service training and staff development are ongoing.	Learning from other cultures was a good experience. Some staff helped create a song to accompany “Healing Our Spirits Worldwide”	Completed
To research and identify available resources and develop a response plan and directory for youth at risk.	The directory is in the planning stage with the Kainaiwa Education Board.	Focus is on establishing a working relationship with the school.	Partially completed

Appendix I Evaluation Comments

Evaluation Comments

Based on lessons learned throughout this evaluation, the following comments are forwarded for consideration:

Provide Evaluation Assistance

It is recommended that when requesting communities to conduct evaluations of their initiatives, assistance be offered regarding evaluation processes and concepts. This should be completed using a knowledge transfer approach, with the expectations that the community will require less support over time. In order to accommodate this action the following guidelines are suggested:

- Devote time and resources to establish relationships with the evaluators and the communities.
- Devote time and resources to conduct training and education about evaluation to anyone who is interested - community members, coordinators and/or Working Group representatives.

Aboriginal Ways of Knowing

It is recommended that when conducting evaluations within Aboriginal communities, the methodology should continue to be consultative with both Aboriginal communities and funding agencies utilizing both Aboriginal ways of knowing and contemporary ways of knowing.

Share the Findings

It is recommended that results of all evaluations be shared with all AYSPS communities.