



**Promising Practices in Community Driven Research and Development:
The Winnipeg Boldness Project Parent Guide Group**

November 2016

Executive Summary

The Winnipeg Boldness Project has been built upon an underlying set of Indigenous research principles:

1. Community control over research.
2. A respect for individuals and community.
3. Participatory method of engagement.
4. Joint co-learning process with community members and The Winnipeg Boldness Team.
5. Reciprocity and responsibility.
6. Balances research and action.

These principles paved the way for the assertion of an iterative learning process that would ultimately highlight the unique nature of The Winnipeg Boldness Project and provide a stable foundation for such a strong community driven initiative.

As a community-driven initiative, founded upon Indigenous research principles, and informed by the Knowledge Mobilization Framework, key drivers of The Project have been the Guide Groups. The Guide Groups were formed to fill various roles and responsibilities within The Winnipeg Boldness Project. Currently there are four active & ongoing Guide Groups:

1. **Parent and Caregiver Guide Group** made up of parents and caregivers from the Point Douglas neighbourhood.
2. **Community Leadership Guide Group** made up of leaders who have collectively worked with thousands of families in Point Douglas over several decades.
3. **Research & Evaluation Guide Group** made up of senior academic and Indigenous Researchers in Manitoba.
4. **Traditional Knowledge Keepers Guide Group** made up of Elders and Cultural Advisors

In November 2014, the Parent Guide Group was developed by inviting parents and caregivers who had attended one or more of the gatherings in the first year to participate in a more consistent and ongoing basis. We invited interested parents and caregivers of children 0-6 years of age to gather with us regularly to inform the work of the Project moving forward. The PGG has been meeting at least monthly and currently has fifteen members. Over the last two years the purpose, roles, and responsibilities of

the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group has evolved and expanded, and currently include the following six areas:

1. Identify gaps and barriers in service and resource areas that impact the health and wellbeing of families in Point Douglas
2. Contribute to the development of the Proofs of Possibilities (POP)
3. Build capacity in research and evaluation including being trained as interviewers and completing evaluation interviews
4. Develop and test research and evaluation tools that will assist in POP learning
5. Co-design and co-facilitate arts-based research projects throughout Point Douglas
6. Validate and mobilize the knowledge that is being shared through support at community events

The Winnipeg Boldness Project incorporates a mixed-methods approach to gathering knowledge for research and development purposes and evaluating progress of the Proofs of Possibilities. A mixed-methods approach to data collection ensures that while also capturing important quantitative and demographic information another type of knowledge can be privileged. Using arts-based methods in The Project creates opportunities to work with the community in a way that engages participants in multiple steps along the way. These methods provide a focus on process and create an avenue for representing meaning to audiences as well as a set of investigative and communicative tools to engage community members in research (Leavy, 2009). A PhotoVoice project, a Tile Mosaic Project, and the use of creative tools for data collection and knowledge translation are outlined in this report.

The Parent Guide Group has been a critical support in the development and implementation of the research and evaluation necessary in a social lab process. By being actively involved in the design of tools, providing direct input into POPS, in community engagement, and facilitation of knowledge gathering, the Parent Guide Group members have ensured grounding in community experience that has been invaluable. We recognize the commitment that community members have made to the overall success of The Project to date and share the journey of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group in this success.

Community development and participatory processes are undertaken in a manner that creates opportunity for reciprocity – with space for sharing, learning, growth, and relationship building. Within this reciprocal space the impact of participation on researchers and on community members who work on collaborative processes has not

typically been an area of study. At the Winnipeg Boldness Project we recognize the value of reciprocity in action and have worked to capture this learning and growth as a team and as a community. The Parent Guide Group is no exception. From the perspective of the Project, the participation of the Guide Group over the last two and a half years has reflected a journey of transformative reciprocity. Members share their feelings about the Project, how they contribute, and what this means for their children and the community of Point Douglas overall.

Background

The Winnipeg Boldness Project is a social innovation initiative working alongside the North End community to identify effective mechanisms to improve outcomes for young children in the Point Douglas area. The Project is working towards a Bold Goal:

Children and families in Point Douglas will experience dramatically improved wellbeing in all aspects of self: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

Currently, about 50% of kids in the Point Douglas are doing really well in terms of early childhood development (ECD) and are starting school at a point where they're ready to begin learning and take on the world. What The Winnipeg Boldness Project is aiming to do is raise that number, because we believe that every child should have the same access to opportunity.

The three core objectives that will work to not only increase school readiness but also achieve the Bold Goal include to:

1. Design a 6-year Early Childhood Development (ECD) intervention strategy for future implementation that will help young children in Point Douglas develop the tools they need to succeed in life.
2. Create a strength-based narrative that highlights the positive and spirited aspects of Winnipeg's North End through community perspectives.
3. Build a child-centred model focusing on best practices for raising children through the deep community wisdom that exists within the North End.

Our starting point in the design process was to engage the Point Douglas community in defining success for their children. Residents, parents and leaders also identified many of the roadblocks to success for their children and are driving the development of solutions to these roadblocks. A large proportion of the residents, parents, and leaders we engage with are Indigenous and espouse an Indigenous worldview and value base. Therefore, Indigenous perspectives and methodologies form the foundation of our problem definition and solution finding. We believe that the solutions generated will lead to better outcomes not only for Indigenous children, but better outcomes for all children.

Boldness is Community-Driven

The Winnipeg Boldness Project operates using community development principles; the highest level of accountability is to Point Douglas community residents, families and their children. This guiding principle is understood at every level of the Project's governance. Our community partnerships, through families, leaders, and community-based organizations are at the core of this project. They provide knowledge and direction as well as direct hands on work to test some of the ideas that they feel could produce possibilities for success and wellbeing for children and families in the community.

Boldness is Strength-Based

Throughout the past two years, The Winnipeg Boldness Project has employed a comprehensive strategy of community engagement through diverse arts based methods. These methods have allowed community to share in the design of the project while also sharing their own experiences raising their families in the North End of Winnipeg. These arts-based methods have included a Photo Voice Project and a Tile Mosaic Project.

Boldness is Community Wisdom

The Winnipeg Boldness Project has been undertaking a deep community engagement and iterative knowledge mobilization process since April 2014. This process has brought together wisdom of community members and community service providers into a model titled: *Ways of Knowing, Being, Feeling, and Doing: A Wholistic Early Childhood Development Model*. The implementation of this model, combined with community defined indicators of healthy children and families will produce a bold goal: Children and families in Point Douglas will experience dramatically improved wellbeing in all aspects of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual being.

Building on community wisdom: Launching principles into action

The Winnipeg Boldness Project has been built upon an underlying set of Indigenous research principles. These principles, made explicit in year one, have been demonstrated over course of The Project in the following ways:

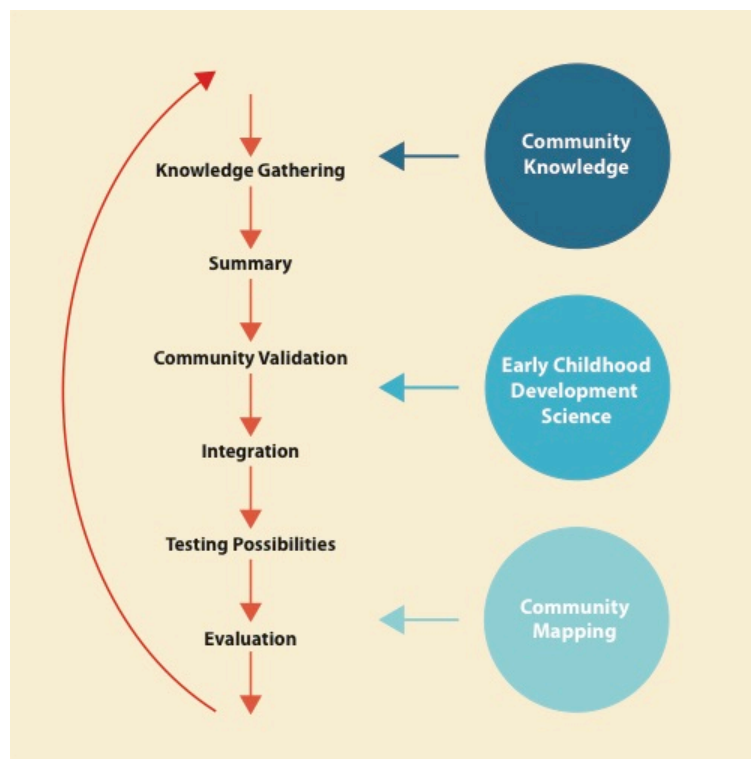
1. **Community control over research.** This is demonstrated in The Winnipeg Boldness Project through the multiple sources and opportunities for community people to develop, approve, and implement the research and development. This means making space for people to contribute and participate in the manner that they choose, for as much or as little time as they choose, and in a way that acknowledges to the best of our ability the value of their contribution.
2. **A respect for individuals and community.** This is demonstrated by the multiple methods being used to gather knowledge within the community. There are diverse experiences and diverse levels of participation. In order to ensure people are able to participate and contribute in a way that is meaningful and respectful of their experiences, we incorporate multiple opportunities for engagement and re-engagement. In this way we respect the diversity and unique nature that each individual brings to community
3. **Participatory method of engagement.** This principle is demonstrated through the meaningful involvement of a diversity of experiences and knowledges by facilitated opportunities for community visioning. For example The Winnipeg Boldness Project has been involved at events, hosted circles at community organizations, invited feedback through open houses at the office, sought input through paper surveys and electronically. We have also invited diverse participation in the co-creation, implementation and evaluation of Proofs of Possibilities. We also remain committed to the use of arts based methods at various stages of research and development including formulation of the overall goal, data collection, analysis, and knowledge mobilization.
4. **Joint co-learning process with community members and The Winnipeg Boldness Team.** A strong signal of success in The Project has been the commitment to building local capacity. This is a reciprocal value, where research completed by the Project is done in partnership with local community members and organizations. This includes providing training, mentorship and support to be actively involved as a community researcher.
5. **Reciprocity and responsibility.** This can be demonstrated through the commitment of The Project to relate and act within the community in ways that place the highest value on their knowledge and contribution. The priorities, values, and direction that

are generously shared with the Project is the long term vision upon which the activities of the Project will contribute.

6. **Balances research and action.** This is demonstrated through the continued commitment to the *how* of The Winnipeg Boldness Project in the actualization of the Knowledge Mobilization Framework.

These principles paved the way for the assertion of an iterative learning process that would ultimately highlight the unique nature of The Winnipeg Boldness Project and provide a stable foundation for such a strong community driven initiative.

This iterative learning process, developed in the first year of The Project is the Knowledge Mobilization Framework (KMF). The KMF outlines *how* The Project engages with and gathers wisdom from the community – in an iterative and continual process. The KMF is a visual representation of the various sources of knowledge that are used in the development of the Project and how these knowledges are then incorporated moving forward. The KMF signifies the value and weight that is placed upon deep community and Indigenous knowledges and identifies how existing innovative science on early childhood development is incorporated. The Knowledge Mobilization Framework is based upon and acknowledges that meaningful and in-depth community engagement will drive the development of The Winnipeg Boldness Project.



As a community-driven initiative, founded upon Indigenous research principles, and informed by the Knowledge Mobilization Framework, key drivers of The Project have been the Guide Groups. The Guide Groups were formed to fill various roles and responsibilities within The Winnipeg Boldness Project. This has included sharing their experiences and expertise to help further investigate innovative solutions to complex challenges. The Guide Groups help us organize the most promising ideas and further identify research and innovation necessary to work towards achieving the bold goal. Currently there are four active & ongoing Guide Groups:

1. **Parent and Caregiver Guide Group** made up of parents and caregivers from the Point Douglas neighbourhood.
2. **Community Leadership Guide Group** made up of leaders who have collectively worked with thousands of families in Point Douglas over several decades.
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The following document will share the strengths, challenges, and key learning from the journey of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group including: its genesis, roles and responsibilities, how their work aligns with principles and attributes of promising practices with children and families, and the opportunities that have been provided through the use of arts-based methods.

The formation of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group

During the first year of knowledge gathering there were multiple points of contact for community members to share priorities for families in the North End. During these gatherings participants were also invited to stay involved with The Project with possibilities of future invitations to participate. In November 2014, the Parent Guide Group was developed by inviting parents and caregivers who had attended one or more of the community conversations, early childhood cafes, of the Photo Voice Project to participate in a more consistent and ongoing basis. We invited interested parents and caregivers of children 0-6 years of age to gather with us regularly to inform the work of the Project moving forward. From the initial core group of Parents and Caregivers,

ongoing invitations have been extended at community events for participation. The PGG has been meeting at least monthly and currently has fifteen members.



As a participatory and community driven project it was vital that community members be meaningfully involved at the various stages of the project in as much as they felt they were able. This means that it is important to support participation as much as possible without interfering in other responsibilities. Supporting participation for families can mean that for parents of young children to be able to participate in daytime or evening meetings and gathering, childcare is a necessity. Transportation and food likewise are important to include if the resources are available. While these may seem like small things to think about, it is how we can show respect and reciprocity to honour the value and contribution that parents and caregivers make each time they share their time, presence, and knowledge. After all, without the committed participation of community members The Winnipeg Boldness Project would not have accomplished the work to date in a meaningful manner.

How we work together

One of the key accomplishments of the first year of the Project has been the documentation of the Child Centred Model. Early on in the Project it was clear that this Model would serve as a foundation of promising practices upon which to build a strategy that would allow children and families to achieve the Bold Goal. ***The Ways of Knowing, Being, Feeling, and Doing: A Wholistic Early Childhood Development Model*** signifies a theory of change upon which the work of The Winnipeg Boldness Project is based. The model is being implemented through the Proof of Possibilities at The Project to demonstrate what is possible when communities, organizations, systems, and funding structure their work with the child truly at the centre. In addition to designing POPs that embrace this way of working with families in order to allow families to be successful and achieve their goals – this model can also be witnessed in how we work with the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group. As a community driven and participatory research and development project we work to continually adhere to the following attributes included in the model:

1. **Relationships/Trust:** Time and care is taken to develop relationships and build trust with individuals and families; it is the essential foundation required to be effective and respectful in dealing with all people.
2. **Non-judgment:** All people are welcomed and respected regardless of situation or circumstance. People are met where *they* are at: services recognize that people are at different stages in their own journey, face different challenges and have varied gifts.
3. **Peer-to-peer learning:** Services provide opportunities for community members to build their capacity to become mentors for their peers; this respects the diverse gifts of peoples' experiences and provides meaningful support.
4. **Natural support systems:** Are actively promoted and supported to provide sustainable and stable resources for individuals and families.
5. **Families are experts in their own lives:** This addresses the balance of power in healing relationships, which is often only available from “professionals”; it promotes self-determination by providing choices to effectively address a family's needs instead of dictating requirements to receive support.
6. **Options:** A wide variety of resources and services are accessible and appropriate to effectively meet the diverse needs of families and individuals.
7. **Prevention:** In addition to crises support, services work toward addressing the underlying causes of crises and support people to maintain healthy and happy lives.

8. **Restorative:** Time, space and opportunity for healing and self-care is available to people regardless of their socio-economic status; people in poverty are often denied any access to the respite and relaxation that most people feel is essential for their well-being.
9. **Cultural safety:** Beyond professional cultural competency, the recipient's point of view is the essential factor. The power to determine if a situation or interaction is culturally safe lies with the recipient of services.
10. **Belonging and Identity** "Belonging means we feel connected, important, valued, part of the group. It feels good to know that others want to have us around."² Identity is being able to answer four questions: Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is my purpose? Services actively promote and incorporate these principles in dealing with all people.
11. **Secure attachment:** Is the essential bond between child and caregiver that enables healthy brain development. Secure attachment is the foundation for wholistic well-being of the child. Everyone contributes to the support of and is responsible for the development of secure attachment.
12. **Equity:** Certain individuals or groups face more challenges than others and therefore require more support. Specialized services, increased opportunities, and support is available to those who have greater need.

Roles and Responsibilities

Over the last two years the purpose of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group has evolved as The Project has moved from a phase of knowledge gathering and community priority setting in the first year, to designing and testing Proofs of Possibilities, to coordinating a wholistic healthy baby strategy in year three. The roles and responsibilities have evolved and expanded, and currently include the following six areas.

1. Identify gaps and barriers in service and resource areas that impact the health and wellbeing of families in Point Douglas

During the first year of The Winnipeg Boldness Project, PGG was actively involved in the knowledge mobilization framework as we worked collaboratively to gather, synthesize, validate and incorporate knowledge and ideas about the current experiences of families in Point Douglas and in visioning the possibilities based on community priorities. Parent and Caregiver Guide Group members helped us sort through the ideas that were being generated, sharing their perspectives on strengths and barriers that were being

identified in the community, and expanded upon promising ideas that were coming through as priorities.

This role has continued over time with The Project. For example, at a PGG meeting in February 2016, building off of the multi-method approach to gathering knowledge to design the Support for Dads POP, it was discussed that a gap in male focused services existed. In particular the discussion focused on the necessary components for fathers to participate meaningfully and fully in their family life.



In order to explore more fully what the possibility could be, the PGG focused on the question: "Why aren't men getting support"? A map of the challenges was completed with five barriers or areas of concentration identified: Stigma, Community/Culture, Accessibility/Awareness, Masculinity, and Communication. The map was further developed when each PGG member used 5 sticky notes to share their immediate responses to these topics and place them where they felt appropriate on the chart. Responses included:

- Outings – camping, road trip, hunting, being out on the land
- One on one counseling sessions: men are quiet, men don't go out to ask for help, they have stubborn pride
- Ways to light their own fires
- Media portrayal – television, music, movies
- Gang culture – provides for families, provides a sense of family

At the end of this session, the PGG agreed that, in order to learn more about each of the challenge areas a knowledge gathering process should be designed. It was important to

learn more by gathering stories to learn more about the strengths and journeys of men and that this could also be a support or resource for other men in Point Douglas. Based on the identified gaps in this mapping session, the goal of this piece of the Supports for Dads knowledge gathering strategy would be:

Sharing stories and experiences in order to validate one another, develop a community that encourages fatherhood, peer-to-peer relationships for men, and the de-stigmatization of masculinity and male nurturing.

PGG discussed groups of stories that would be valuable to hear from the community, the first being community leaders. Collectively, the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group brainstormed community leaders and members shared their interest in being interviewers for this data collection.

The PGG further refined the purpose and product of the project based on their knowledge of community needs and strengths. It was envisioned that a result of this project would be a physical book, which holds recantations of stories from the community, collected by the community, to share successes, struggles, and anecdotes on parenting or becoming a parent. In addition to these narratives, there would be a list of resources as well as “tips & tricks” made available to the reader. It was also envisioned that the book could be accompanied by a digital version, available to access online, or video documentation of the project.

2. Contribute to the development of the Proofs of Possibilities (POP)

The PGG has been critical in the development of the Proofs of Possibilities, and in the second year their previous role in the knowledge mobilization framework became more focused on the development and implementation of the five initial Proofs of Possibilities. In each of the Proofs of Possibilities PGG members have been a starting source of knowledge about particular issue areas. With the Canada Learning Bond (CLB) it became very apparent through our meetings that while education for themselves and their children was an utmost priority, how to access the CLB, a free educational savings bond of up to \$2000 per child, and how to navigate the various steps was more complex than originally thought. The PGG members assisted The Project in the mapping of the CLB journey as well as in the design and testing of Supported Enrollment as a potential lever to unlock the barriers identified in the completion of the journey mapping during the Co-Creation of the POP.

Another POP that went through the stages of Co-Creation and Implementation in the first year was the Hub of Strength. This POP focused on the community priority of leadership, in particular within and to support families in a way that was congruent with the Child Centred Model. We heard in year one that the community prioritized opportunities for personal learning, growth, skill building, and training. One of the elements of the Hub of Strength was an Early Childhood Development Training program that focused on traditional Indigenous values and how to incorporate this into parenting young children. This training was developed in congruence with the Child Centred Model that asserts values and attributes of best practice when working with children and families.

The initial testing of the Early Childhood Development parenting program as a prototype was completed by the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group, who provided important feedback and direction for the growth of the training. While being an excellent training for strengthening knowledge and skills on parenting this training provided an opportunity to build relationships and natural support networks – both identified by parents as areas that would support healthy and strong children and families in Point Douglas.

3. Build capacity in research and evaluation including being trained as interviewers and completing evaluation interviews

In addition to the development being built upon during each PGG session, two training sessions were completed to support PGG members and other community members to build interviewing skills for research and evaluation. The training sessions included how to use the digital recorders, becoming comfortable with asking questions, working with interview guides, and one on one mock interviewing. This is an important skill area that allows PGG and community members to become researchers with The Project. It creates new skills and engages members in another stage of the research design, implementation, and analysis.

To date, PGG members have been involved in interviewing at various stages and have supported the work of the Canada Learning Bond and Supports for Dads POPs. Interviewers have been supported to build their skills through mentorship and have shared that this is a valuable opportunity for them to become involve in the hands on research and evaluation activities. Capacity building, connected to the value of reciprocity as outlined in the guiding research principles continues to be a goal of The Project.

4. Develop and test research and evaluation tools that will assist in POP learning

Members of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group have engaged in the development of research and evaluation priorities, methods, and tools. During the monthly meetings PGG was regularly asked to assist in the design and testing of methods used in the evaluation of POPs including questions, format, and priority evaluation areas. For example, in the design of the Supports for Dads POP, PGG contributed to the overall knowledge gathering strategy that was undertaken to learn more about experiences of men and fathers in Point Douglas. This multi-method approach to knowledge gathering grew from discussion, direction, and design facilitated in the Guide Group meetings. As a result, the strategy incorporated methods such as an environmental scan, semi-structured key informant interviews with men identified as leaders and role models in Point Douglas, and community circles held at partnering organizations. At each stage of this development and implementation PGG members were contributing to the purpose of each method, types of questions, and providing recommendations for locations and interviewees.

One example of the development of a new tool is the PGG's use and adaptation of journey mapping. Experiences shared by the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group and the community were used to develop characters whose stories carry them through various systems where they face barriers. Using these experiences characters were developed and their stories written out so to preserve the anonymity of those who shared their stories. These stories were used in exercises to identify the various barriers approached by those who are navigating complex systems.

An initial story shared with the PGG was used to signify various stages in the life of Trevor. *Trevor's Story* was created to identify some of the issues faced by young men in particular, when becoming a father. The PGG reviewed his story, and at each of the stages identified potential strengths, needs, and resources based on the narrative. After each section of *Trevor's Story*, the group paused to reflect on his experiences. Many members of the PPG expressed heart felt concern for Trevor. Others listed off various resources he could obtain for his various issues. Solutions included social assistance, youth advocates, Manitoba Housing, counseling, addictions support, job search and interview training, relationship counseling, and father specific parenting programs.

The Journey Mapping activity was further developed after being prototyped by the PGG, in order to bring the activity to the Indigenous Innovation Summit, which took place

November 19 & 20, 2015, at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Based on this same process, four different characters were developed in order to allow groups to develop journey maps on two different POPs being worked on at The Winnipeg Boldness Project – the Canada Learning Bond (post enrollment) and transportation. Journey mapping is a valuable tool that is used at The Winnipeg Boldness Project when bringing together partners from diverse experiences and areas of knowledge into Co-Creation sessions to design potential Proofs of Possibilities. The PGG provided important contributions to the development of this tool in order for it to be the most useful possible in The Project.

5. Co-design and co-facilitate arts-based research projects throughout Point Douglas

Arts-based research, which will be discussed in more detail later in this report, has been a method that has been incorporated frequently in engaging the Parent Guide Group members in completing their roles with The Project, but also as a method that asks community members to contribute to the priorities and direction. The first large arts-based research project, Photo Voice, occurred in the first year and was facilitated by staff of The Project. The second large piece - a Tile Mosaic was designed by the staff with the overall research question formulated by the PGG who also worked to gather community input at different events during the spring and summer of 2015. The third arts-based research project was conceptualized by the PGG from the beginning. The PGG continues to take a lead role in the co-design and co-facilitation of arts-based research projects in Point Douglas that add to The Project's understanding of community priorities and overall vision of wellbeing for their families.

6. Validate and mobilize the knowledge that is being shared through support at community events

In addition to the knowledge gathering in evaluation activities and facilitation of participation through arts-based research, members of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group have been key leaders in outreach, awareness, and education at a variety of community events that The Winnipeg Boldness Project attends. This includes leading activities at the annual Austin Street Music Festival and Picnic in the Park events, the Andrews Street Family Fun Day, Aboriginal Music Week, The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority baby Fair, Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, and open houses with The Project. The PGG serve as ambassadors, leaders, champions, and demonstrate an overwhelming passion for the work that is done in The Project.

What it means to work in the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group

In our commitment to remain open, iterative, accessible, and meaningful as a Project, there are often times of reflection that occur to share learning to grow stronger in *how* the work is done at The Winnipeg Boldness Project. While there are many points of informal check-ins, discussion, and reflections, over the course of the PGG's work we have actively sought their feedback with a focus on roles and participation at two points during the work of The Project to date: September 2015 and December 2016.

At a reflection point in September 2015, the session was designed in order to reflection upon the role of the PGG to date and to make any adjustments as directed by the group. The goal was to determine what was working, what wasn't, and how the group would like to move forward. A range of questions were asked including their previous expectations before joining the group to what their understanding of what the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group's purpose is right now. Additionally, the group was asked questions about their comfort level with the activities up to date and what they liked and disliked about them. Parents were also asked for their own ideas of facilitation techniques and future group projects.

NEW IDEAS

- Getting more people involved giving my experience in being a mother as a low income family.
- Lots of games
- Fun DAD + KID GROUPS - LIKE OUTINGS FOCUSED ON DADS + THEIR KIDS.
- HEALTHY BABY PROGRAMS ON THE WEEKENDS.
- SEVEN DAYS DIN. PROGRAMS - BRING THEM TO WPA. SCHOOL DIN. #1 AS A GROUP
- ANOTHER PHOTO VOICE PROJECT BOARD GAME
- SPEAKERS (LIKE... POSITIVE MENTORS IN COMMUNITY)
- MAKE A BOLDNESS PROJECT
- POTTERY PAINTING
- MAKING A RESOURCE BOOK OR PAMPHLET FOR PARENTS IN P.D.
- Redesigning bus fare for med would help families!

CRITICISMS

- DIDN'T ENJOY THE STORY TELLING ON FEET + THE DRAWING OF OUR STORY WITH THE BEG. MIDDLE. END.
- I THINK WHEN WE SIT AT DIFFERENT TABLES IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE A TEAM. MAYBE HAVE A CIRCLE SET UP
- 50 GOOD SO FAR (NO COMPLAINTS.... YET!!)
- Bina apart of our community.
- Sharing ideas. talking for community.
- Having my say.

ACTIVITY

- Liked doing the photo voice project + THANKFUL FOR FAMILY PICTURES.
- FUN! I Like the quilt L It was easy to talk about my grandk.i
- hard
- enjoy our smudges. enjoy hearing people share stories. DON'T & LIKE TALKING IN LARGE GROUP.
- (art) work.
- I have did it so awesome
- maybe see what being displayed...
- I SEE People Have The Same Ideas - Family Love
- Come up with
- eat
- Share thoughts.
- I AM A PARENT WHO GROW UP IN POINT DOUGLAS + CONTINUE TO LIVE HERE. I WORK IN THE COMMUNITY.
- POSITIVE CHANGE CHILDREN OF TOMORROW.
- EAT. VEGES WILL PROVE THE COMMUNITY.
- Terrast in find don't what THE kids

REFLECTIONS

- Fun Friendship Belonging ming each other
- CFS ACT
- I really like coming here being part of holdness makes me happy enjoy doing the interviews having our voices heard just speaking for the nothard.
- waiting

Other Notes:

- Group for Families with Older Children...
- Writing Story Bad
- yes... Finally being heard
- fun feelings up to get into wres are activities bring focus group up US what we
- FOOD BINGO, POTLUCK, REAL QUILT Ideas, thoughts and

I felt like I would have a stronger voice and that I would have more of an ability to make a difference of change for the positive in my community

19

I share my knowledge. I am kind and honest. My role is to be real

I really like coming here, being a part of boldness makes me happy. I enjoy doing the interviews, having our voices heard. Just speaking for the North End

In July 2016 members of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group were asked to reflect on their participation in the Guide Group and share their thoughts with staff.

Overwhelmingly the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group members shared how they look forward to coming to the meetings each month. Members shared that they felt it was a valuable opportunity to be involved in The Project and feel like it is an important use of their time. PGG appreciated the food and laughter shared at each of the meetings and see it as a meaningful space to share experiences with one another where their contributions are appreciated. PGG members felt that they learned important information at each meeting and felt that the opportunities to participate in extra activities such as the Early Childhood Development training contributed to their own knowledge as parents, but also to building something valuable for other community members as well.

Parent and Caregiver Guide Group members felt that the ideas that they share are valued in The Project and that the representation of their priorities is being translated across to funders and in the design of the POPs.

Over the course of each of the Guide Groups member's time in with The Project they have felt positive changes. Friendships and natural supports are important areas that have been strengthened through participation in the Guide Group. In addition members feel that they are able to be involved in volunteering and at community events in new ways – helping out to build awareness about The Winnipeg Boldness Project in Point Douglas and to invite people to share their ideas in the arts-based research. PGG members also shared how the partnership with National Leasing, creating opportunities for participation in the arts with families in Point Douglas, have allowed their families to enjoy time together accessing events and activities they may not have been able to.

During their time with the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group, members have also had the opportunity to build new skills. Some of the skills that were identified include the ability to work as a team, learning about new ideas, and working to solve barriers together in creative ways. Some members shared that working with the PGG has

allowed them to become more comfortable speaking up in large groups and feeling comfortable in sharing their opinions. Other members who possess these skills, feel that they have been able to practice their public speaking and have strengthened presentation skills to focus in on a topic area when they are sharing in a group. By being able to listen to other families' stories about parenting for example, PGG members felt they were able to learn more about themselves as well.

Finally, PGG members wanted to share that the group has provided them with a sense of belonging and that their voices are important. They feel that even though they are a small group of men and women they are coming together to speak about issues that are important as a voice that represents community. They feel their roles as providers of community feedback and direction are crucial and take this role very seriously.

Arts-Based Research in The Winnipeg Boldness Project

The Winnipeg Boldness Project incorporates a mixed-methods approach to gathering knowledge for research and development purposes and evaluating progress of the Proofs of Possibilities. A mixed-methods approach to data collection ensures that while also capturing important quantitative and demographic information another type of knowledge can be privileged. Qualitative research methods traditionally have included varying levels of structured to unstructured interviews to more recently arts based and story based methods.

Art allows the Project to work with the community in a way that challenges the objectification of research participants' knowledge and instead truly engages participants in multiple steps along the way. Arts based research activities can include narratives, poetry, music, dance, visual arts, theatre, and photography for example. The use of arts practices in research have emerged out of the creative arts therapy practices with a shift beginning in the 1970s. By the 1990s arts-based research became a new methodological approach, or way of exploring an issue area. The arts possess therapeutic, restorative, and empowering qualities that have been attractive to researchers in helping professions (Leavy, 2009). These methods provide a focus on process and create an avenue for representing meaning to audiences. This provides qualitative researchers an expanded set of investigative and communicative tools to engage community members in research (Leavy, 2009).

Art-based research can be defined as the systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the arts,

as a primary way of understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies. (McNiff, 2008, p. 29)

Art-based methods provide the opportunity to understand an experience from a multisensory perspective (Greenwood, 2012) that can offer an alternative to traditional methods that may fail to represent issues wholistically (Leavy, 2009). Incorporating artistic methods into research is seen as a way to gain a new perspective or knowledge about experiences (McNiff, 2008).

We come to know the world through our senses as well as through the verbally coded information we receive. We communicate through our bodies as well as words. And when we *know* things, we often do that in ways other than just the intellectual. The arts... invoke multi-dimensional responses fro their makers and their audiences. They allow an engagement of the whole human being. The use of arts-based approaches to research, therefore, has grown from the desire of researchers to elicit, process and share understandings and experiences that are not readily or fully accessed through more traditional fieldwork approaches. (Greenwood, 2012, p. 2)

Arts-based research uses qualitative methods to study an issue area and can be used in the various research stages: through data collection, analyzing findings, and in presenting findings in any combination (Finley, 2005; Greenwood, 2012; Sakamoto, Chin & Baskin, 2010). Using arts-based methods in research supports an iterative and open investigative process that creates space for learning from new sources of knowledge. "Art and science bear intrinsic similarities in their attempts to illuminate aspects of the human condition. Grounded in exploration, revelation, and representation, art and science work toward advancing human understanding" (Leavy, 2009, p. 2).

Arts-based research methods have various strengths in the different stages of research: data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation. For example, and arts-based method can pose a research question in a new way that reaches different audiences. These methods can be very helpful for projects whose goal is to explore, describe, or discover and are also excellent when communicating emotional aspects of social life (Leavy, 2009). Arts can evoke an emotional connection and response by both the creator and the audience where there is opportunity for empathy, compassion, and understanding ultimately becoming a means to raising critical understanding and consciousness about social justice issues for example (Leavy, 2009).

Another strength of arts-based research practices is the ability to promote dialogue, sharing diverse experiences and perspectives that may not readily be visible. Important assessment questions when observing and relating with what has been produced through arts-based research include: "How does the work make one feel, what does the work evoke or provoke, and what does the work reveal," (Leavy, 2009, p. 17). This is a critical component to cultivate understanding: "these methods are very useful for unsettling dominant stereotypes and providing people with the tools necessary (such as compassion) to continue problematizing dominant ideologies," (Leavy, 2009, p. 14). Art making within research can create space and facilitate an inclusive process that is inclusive of multi-faceted realities, potentially increasing research participation and accessibility in communities with low view of and participation in research (Sakamoto, Chin & Baskin, 2010).

Arts-based research methods have been used by groups who have experienced oppression or marginalization as a way to promote dialogue and raise awareness about experiences of inequalities and barriers (Leavy, 2009). These methods have been seen as one vehicle for community inclusion in research practices and as a tool of activism towards social justice as they can support critical dialogue in social issues (Finley, 2005).

Incorporating arts-based methods into qualitative research can provide an avenue of exploration that makes the iterative nature of searching, meaning-making, and idea percolation more explicit (Leavy, 2009). Both research and arts require constant examination and reflection in order to create new meanings from the information being shared. This requires critical characteristics such as, "keen observation skills, analytic skills, storytelling proficiency, and ability to think conceptually, symbolically, and metaphorically. Moreover, as indicated, both practices require creativity, flexibility, and intuition, and result in the communication of information from which an audience generates meaning," (Leavy, 2009, p. 11).

In a mixed-methods research project, utilizing arts-based methods creates the opportunity for triangulation of data. In other words, by using multiple sources and methods of data collection, a researcher, in their analysis, can begin to ascertain a point of saturation in the stories and themes that are being shared. Do the stories in each of the methods add to the complexity? Do the stories overlap? Do they contradict? Are there stories that begin to be told over again by different people? Consideration of these questions during knowledge gathering with art-based and other qualitative and quantitative methods is triangulation (Leavy, 2009).

Within The Winnipeg Boldness Project, the use of arts-based methods has been incorporated consistently. This is due to the multiple strengths of arts-based methods such as, iterative learning, focus on the process, opportunity for including multiple and diverse voices, and sharing experiences with new audiences in a way that creates understanding. The Winnipeg Boldness Project has taken a mixed-method approach to research and evaluation that has incorporated quantitative and qualitative sources. Within the qualitative methods there has been ample incorporation of creativity in the knowledge gathering strategy.

Through My Own Eyes: A Visual Narrative of Life in the North End

One arts-based method that was incorporated into the first year of knowledge gathering and community driven priority setting was a Photo Voice project. In October and November 2014 The Winnipeg Boldness Project designed and commissioned an early childhood photo voice activity with children, youth, parents, caregivers, and community members. Photography is a powerful medium for storytelling and connecting with viewers beyond the oral experience and invites viewers to feel and listen with their hearts.

Through photography we sought to understand the experiences and stories of children and families in Point Douglas. We engaged with participants to explore the following key questions:

1. What does this community do to support strong and healthy children and families?
2. What is important for your family in the North End?
3. If you could wave a magic wand and make something in your community different to ensure healthy children and families what would it be?
4. What are your experiences raising children in this community?
5. What would you like to celebrate about this community?
6. What will/does a good community that focuses on kids wellbeing look like?

There were two key purposes of the PhotoVoice project. The first purpose was to engage community members in sharing their experiences and vision for Point Douglas in supporting child and family wellbeing. The second purpose was to pilot this method as a qualitative post-test for participants to share the story of their involvement in Proofs of Possibilities that have been implemented.

Three sessions with three groups of photographers were undertaken that encouraged participants to share the story of their photographs. Each photographer chose three to five that they would like to share with the larger community. An exhibit was developed entitled ***Through My Own Eyes: A Visual Narrative of Life in the North End***. The exhibit unveiling was held on November 13, 2014. The photographs that were taken by community members were full of rich meaning and insight into their personal lives and what they feel is important to them as residents of this community.



Prior to beginning the project, photographers reported feeling mostly excited about being involved in the project. While many indicated medium or no skill level to use a camera, after the project many indicated an increase in their capacity around camera use to either a medium or high level of skill. Additional skills gained through this process included: how to center and focus on a subject, being more aware of the North End, and the confidence to speak up and assert one's self.

This project left many feeling proud, empowered, and valued at the end of their participation. Individuals also commented about feeling "different" in the sense of prestige, feeling more connected to community, important, and accepted. For many the most meaningful part of being involved was the process of taking the photographs. Being behind a lens allowed people to look at the neighbourhood from a different perspective. As such, people felt they were seeing beauty they hadn't seen before, that happiness was being part of something bigger, and that everything can be made into a memory by the click of a button. The ability to take a photo, share its meaning, and have

it displayed publicly was a full circle experience for the residents capturing and sharing their personal experiences in Point Douglas. The completed PhotoVoice exhibit has been travelling to various locations around the city including: The United Way, Millennium Library, The University of Manitoba, and the Legislative Building.

Visual imagery such as photography can represent so much more than a window on the world of an experience. Rather there are multiple vantage points that need to be considered: the view of the photographer, the view through the lens, and the view of the audience (Leavy, 2009). There are so many contexts involved in the visual arts that dialogue and perspective can be an important aspect to incorporate when using visual representations in research. Visual methods can serve as a prompt for dialogue for example in photo elicitation where photographs are presented in order to evoke memory, emotion, or reaction (Leavy, 2009). This PhotoVoice project was a key entry point for several of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group members into consistent and ongoing participation with The Winnipeg Boldness Project. The feedback from photographers who participated was so positive that the design of another arts-based research project began.

Our Roots: Where we belong

With close to a year passing from this snapshot of family experiences of the community, The Project was looking for a new activity that could be used to engage with North End families. Creating a research based community mosaic felt like a productive way to get feedback from the families living in Point Douglas while also creating a piece of art that could travel around the community and other locations in the city sharing stories.

A mosaic is an art piece created by bringing together many small elements to create a large, singular whole. Every individual piece is important, and if one piece were to go missing, the mosaic wouldn't be complete. This ancient art practice is still being continued today, and the mosaic is often used to create a visual narrative that will document civilizations. From agricultural practices to revolution, throughout history, these art pieces communicate what is most important to the people who made them. Through the adaptation of this art practice into a research tool, the Winnipeg Boldness Project set out to ask North Enders, "What is the most important contributing factor to the success of families living in Point Douglas?"

Over the summer of 2015, the Winnipeg Boldness Project invited residents of Point Douglas to design their own tile for this community mosaic art piece. By attending

events such as the Austin Street Festival and Picnic and the Park nearly one hundred different contributions were made. Over half of those tiles clearly stated that “love” was the most important thing to families living in Point Douglas. Other important themes included drawings of happy, smiling families, and Indigenous knowledge rooted in the seven sacred teachings.



Together with the Project’s Parent Guide Group we reflected on the overwhelming themes of love and togetherness that are so prominent in Point Douglas. Our Guide Group members agreed that families in Point Douglas share many of the same struggles and experiences, and felt that the mosaic was a valuable tool in sharing their stories. The name, “Our Roots: Where We Belong,” expresses the strength of the North End’s spirit – a community who stands strong together, strives together. Kevin Shingoose, a

Point Douglas father who participates in our Parent Guide Group, painted the black and white background to complete the piece, with his own original artwork.

Values Mapping

Another example of an art-based research process is the values mapping tool that was initially used at The Indigenous Innovation Summit, November 2015 in Winnipeg. For the activity, over 100 8.5 x 11 colour photos of various things were placed across the largest wall in the room. Some photos contained imagery of pipes and other items used in ceremony, there were photos of different animals and types of food, there were photos of people partaking in different activities such as sports or DJing. Participants in the session were given equal amounts of red and green stickers, and were instructed to place the green stickers on images that solicited a positive response from them, and the red stickers on images that solicited a negative response.



After the group recorded their responses, they gathered to discuss the choices that were made. Some participants asked others to come forward and explain their choice if a single red or green dot was placed on an image. Many in the group felt that they may have responded a certain way because the images with a lot of green or red stickers caused them to respond in a similar matter – since “red” is a well known cautionary or negative colour, and “green” is a well known safe or positive colour. Some participants also didn’t notice the same things about pictures; a picture of a mother bear with her cub in a zoo was given both green and red stickers, some people saw the mother/child imagery as a positive, and others concentrated on animals in captivity as a negative. The discussion also lead towards conversations about language, and how different cultures may express themselves. Participants discussed how some cultures have words for

things that westerners or English users are unable to describe, and provided examples of Indigenous words that better helped to express themselves in this discussion.

During the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group meeting following the Indigenous Innovation Summit team members adapted the Values Mapping activity. PGG members were asked to put stickers on whatever image solicited a response from them (any response, not just positive or negative), and the colour of the stickers did not indicate what type of response that they had. Afterwards, the images were rearranged so that the images with the most responses were in the center, and the ones with the least were on the outside edges. This radiation of images from the centre outward represents Indigenous perspectives on learning and growth, that everything is interconnected and important to our existence.

The previous section outlined three examples the use of arts-based research methods in the work of The Winnipeg Boldness Project and the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group. These examples are meant to share the power and possibility of creativity in research and development and the impact that this creativity can have on dialogue, understanding, participation, and eliciting new ideas to challenges.

Determining impact: Reciprocity in action

What does it mean to be a community-driven and participatory project? In addition to supporting the goals of The Project, does participating in this work have an impact on the individuals and their families who walk with us in the Guide Group?

Community development and participatory processes are undertaken in a manner that creates opportunity for reciprocity – with space for sharing, learning, growth, and relationship building. Within this reciprocal space the impact of participation on researchers and on community members who work on collaborative processes has not typically been an area of study. At the Winnipeg Boldness Project we recognize the value of reciprocity in action and have worked to capture this learning and growth as a team and as a community. The Parent Guide Group is no exception. From the perspective of the Project, the participation of the Guide Group over the last two and a half years has reflected a journey of transformative reciprocity. Members share their feelings about the Project, how they contribute, and what this means for their children and the community of Point Douglas overall.

The framework of community-driven and participatory development projects has been widely used to promote community development across the globe (Mansuri, 2004; The World Bank, 2013). These approaches to development, which are based on the direct participation of the community members, including members having control over crucial project decisions, is believed to have great potential to benefit communities (Mansuri, 2004) by having positive effects on poverty, welfare reduction, and increasing access to services (The World Bank, 2013). Despite the common use of these development frameworks, there is still minimal research demonstrating the direct effects of implementing these projects on community outcomes (Mansuri, 2004).

The Parent Guide Group members have expressed their belief that their work on the Project is important and it provides direction that is critical to positively impacting the lives of children and families:

“I think it’s important because it’s nice that we all come from the North End. We all live in the areas, we grew up in the area. And I feel like our voices, I feel like maybe we would know better than a bunch of researchers from the south end. I feel like since we’re from the North End I feel like we can relate, we can say things like what we’re going through, and things that we went through and those things a lot of people also go through in Point Douglas. I think it’s important to hear from people who actually live in the area.” Wendy Hallgrimson

“I feel the Parent Guide Group is a huge contribution to the ideas, suggestions, and actions with Boldness. I feel the Parent Guide Group is the main helping hand of Boldness, it gives parents who otherwise would be silenced the say to voice opinions, ideas, concerns and just general conversation between people dedicated to changing the North End” Miranda Pullman

“I think it’s the most important part. It’s our children that we’re talking about. So I think that the work that they do for the kids in the community, it’s affecting our kids too. So I think that as a member, a grandparent who’s looking after small children – the things that we talk about, the things that we do and the decisions that we make, affect not only my grandchildren, but everybody’s kids in the community – and that’s what makes us important to the Boldness project.” Mary Lund Burton

Other studies have found the impact of participating in community-based organizations extends beyond the scope of crime-prevention and reduction. In a qualitative study with 91 participants from eight community-based organization (CBOs) in Winnipeg’s inner city, researchers found a number of positive outcomes for the participants, the participants’ families, and the general community (MacKinnon, & Stephens, 2007). For instance, researchers found that participating in the CBOs had been empowering for participants, as they reported increased confidence in asking for help and knowledge about where to go to ask for help. Many participants also reported finding the courage and strength to cope with their personal issues from their past and in their present. Other participants reported that participating in the CBOs helped them to reclaim their culture, as they became increasingly informed about traditional Indigenous cultural and spiritual teachings. The participants also reported that embracing Indigenous teachings had a positive impact on all facets of their health. Furthermore, some participants reported that being involved with the CBOs inspired them to take the first steps in overcoming addictions, as people were able meet others who were also struggling, and where able to address the shame and stigma related to addictions. Participants also reported that they were able to meet people and become more interested and involved in the community, which helped decrease feelings of isolation. Being involved with the CBOs also created new opportunities for many participants, as they were able to try

activities and gain experience that helped to provide participants with new skills and job experiences. Additionally, participants reported having an increased knowledge of resources that were available to them and that could improve their quality of life.

The results have been similar with the Parent Guide Group as they reflect on the impact that participating with The Project has had on themselves:

“I’ve gained skills – I’ve done so many amazing things with the Boldness project. I’ve had the chance to speak publically regarding Boldness, I’ve had the chance to take classes with Boldness. And more importantly I’ve made some really good friends within the Guide Group and within the staff at Boldness. People I’ve met and people I’ve known for years, I’m strengthening those bonds that I’ve made and I feel like I’m part of a group that’s actually trying to do something – that’s trying to change things. I think that’s the most important for me is that I feel like I am part of a group that’s trying to make change. And that’s the reason why I’ve stayed for so long – because I feel like we’re making those strides and its actually working.” Mary Lund Burton

“I feel like I’m a little more recognized in the community. They will be like hey I saw you in the paper, or hey what is that, tell me more about that. So that’s kind of made me feel like a bigger part of the community.” Wendy Hallgrimson

Public speaking and participation in community activities have supported members to feel more confident:

“For me it has helped me overcome my anxiety of being in public and to do things as part of group, I feel the program has helped me express myself more openly” Miranda Pullman

“Now that I’ve got all this extra knowledge that I’ve gained I know there are ways to help my grandson succeed in school. The school has started to implement my strategies with him, and how I deal with him and it’s working. And now they’re starting to ask, okay what else can we do with him to make things better for him. To me that’s a win – because now they’re not looking at my like she’s just his grandma, she doesn’t know what she is talking about. Now they’re looking at me like okay this woman knows something about what she’s talking about, lets listen to her. That’s basically why I say, the project has helped me find my voice in that regard, 3 years ago I didn’t have that voice or that confidence to step up and say this is my child.” Mary Lund Burton

Relationships and community connections are also areas that have been impacted for PGG members:

“I definitely have connected with people I never would have connected with. Like Shannon, she’s my neighbor and I had never talked to her before. And now because of Boldness I talk to her now. And like Mary, or anybody in Boldness, I probably wouldn’t have connected with them if it wasn’t for this. So I met new friends.” Wendy Hallgrimson

“I feel my family has been closer since Boldness, we seem to be happier knowing our ideas and concerns for our community are being heard as we are dedicated members of this community that we continue to call home” Miranda Pullman

In addition to these individual impacts, participants reported that their involvement in CBOs also affected their family, as parents reported being able to receive support and resources to become better parents and caregivers, and received the opportunity to have positive interactions with their children and with other parents (MacKinnon, & Stephens, 2007). After becoming involved with the CBOs, many participants also reported a strong desire to give back to the organization and their communities, and began to volunteer in their neighbourhood, which provided a number of participants with a sense of pride. Many participants also reported how the CBO’s provided them with care and compassion, a place to go, and made their communities feel safer.

The Winnipeg Boldness Project, as a participatory community driven initiative has the potential to engage in reciprocal growth and benefit with the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group. As leaders who are actively involved in the priorities, direction, and development of The Project – there could be opportunity to receive benefit, as was experienced by those who were involved in the community based organizations described above. As a result of this potential, there have been regular check in’s to explore the following questions: Have PGG members found their participation meaningful? How have they felt they have contributed to the project? Has the method of engagement supported accessible and respectful participation? Has being a part of the PGG impacted themselves and their families personally?

This report has shared stories about the role and responsibilities of The Winnipeg Boldness Project as well as the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group in relation to one another and in leading the direction of The Project. We continue to be committed to working with the Guide Groups and the community of Point Douglas in a way that maintains congruency with core Indigenous values of reciprocity, relational accountability, and respect. *How* we do the work is as important as *what* work is done. In light of this, the Project has incorporated a participatory multi method approach that

relies heavily on community capacity building, arts-based research methods, and a knowledge mobilization framework that is founded upon Indigenous research principles.

The Parent Guide Group has been a critical support in the development and implementation of the research and evaluation necessary in a social lab process. Whether in the design of tools, providing direct input into POPS, in community engagement, or facilitation of knowledge gathering, the Parent Guide Group members have been invaluable. It is important to ensure that members who consistently contribute their time and energy to the success of the project are recognized for their strengths and provided opportunity to build capacity in areas that they identify as priorities. As The Project continues forward it will remain critical that the work of the Parent and Caregiver Guide Group, along with the other Guide Groups be supported as central components of The Winnipeg Boldness Project.

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