

A CONVERSATION ON MENTORING WITH INDIGENOUS GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

EVENT REPORT



Emily Booker
July 2020

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INTRODUCTION

On Thursday, June 25, 2020, the More Than Words (MTW) team hosted *A Conversation On Mentoring With Indigenous Girls And Young Women*, bringing together over 40 participants from all over Canada and South Africa using the Zoom platform. The attendees included the MTW and Networks for Change sites, activists, organizers, artists, educators, academics and community scholars interested in Indigenous youth mentoring and supporting the survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and their families.

As part of MTW and Networks for Change, we had initially planned these conversations to take place face-to-face over 5 days in Durban, South Africa at the Imbizo Intergenerational, June 29-July 3, 2020. Over 60 individuals from across Canada including 40 Indigenous youth participants were preparing to travel to South Africa and connect up with 90 more researchers, community scholars, activists and youth members in Durban. The event was planned to be a mentoring retreat, bringing together Indigenous girls from Canada and South Africa to share and learn from one another. Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic of Covid-19 we have had to postpone the Imbizo. While we are all sad to have not been in South Africa together, the virtual Conversation brought us as close to face-to-face as possible under the circumstances. The Conversation provided fruitful insights into the different forms of mentoring taking place at the MTW and Networks for Change sites, in Eskasoni, Treaty 6, Rankin Inlet, in South African sites, and beyond. The panel and the breakout discussions created spaces to discuss the challenges of mentoring, share insights on positive mentoring experiences, highlight the importance of place specific and culturally relevant mentoring and reflect on past experiences to set goals for future mentoring relationships.

What We Aimed to Achieve

MTW is a project funded by WAGE working with Indigenous youth to support survivors of SGBV and their families through participatory arts-based methods and mentoring. MTW builds the idea that the young people who have been participating in Networks for Change field sites and engaged in arts-based activities to address SGBV for several years (the generation 1 youth), are in a strong position to become mentors to a new generation of youth (generation 2 youth) in their communities. MTW engages with youth mentorship to build capacity in communities to support the survivors of SGBV and their families. The project aims to support young people to take on leadership and mentorship roles, as they take participatory arts-based work further by involving younger participants in the community and by 'rolling out' these approaches to other community members.

Building on the established Indigenous-focused national network on the arts in youth-led approaches to support SGBV survivors and their families, *A Conversation On Mentoring With Indigenous Girls And Young Women* was planned in place of The Imbizo Intergenerational event, to bring together the MTW sites and others to share insights on Indigenous youth mentoring. Before the event key background information and questions to consider were shared with the attendees.

Key Questions to Consider

1. What are some approaches that we can use to study the difference that mentorship makes among Indigenous youth, especially as it relates to SGBV?
2. What do you believe is most important to include and emphasize when it comes to mentorship and why?
3. What are some challenges faced during mentorship? Do you have any solutions? How can we move forward? How can you envision mentorship taking place in a context familiar to you?

Relevant Background Information on Mentorship

A growing body of research demonstrates that mentoring has significant positive effective and beneficial social, academic, community and cultural outcomes for Indigenous young people¹. Good mentoring can increase resilience among young people, while providing them with a person, people or group in whom they can place their trust and from whom they can learn. Research from Canada², Australia³ and New Zealand⁴ illustrates the ways in which mentoring aligns exceptionally well with many Indigenous worldviews, ways of teaching and learning. Indigenous mentoring differs from typical Eurocentric models in that it recognizes that all people can be teachers and learners, and that teachers are not just those people who have official accreditation to do so⁵. In particular, Indigenous mentoring models emphasize community and environmental factors and cultural and traditional practices⁶. Cultural mentoring considers what forms of mentoring are culturally appropriate and relevant and it strives to connect the mentees to their cultures while fostering positive cultural identities and pride⁷.

¹ Amy Carpenter, Alex Rothney, Joseph Mosseau, Joannie Halas, Janice Forsyth. "Seeds of encouragement: Initiating an Aboriginal youth mentorship program". *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 31, no 2. (2008): 51-69; Ray Pawson, Annette Boaz, and F. Sullivan. *Mentoring relationships: an explanatory review*. London: ESRC UK Centre for Evidence based policy and Practice. (2004); V Ware, *Improving the accessibility of health service in urban and regional settings for Indigenous people*. Vol. 27. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2012).

² Elizabeth M Banister, and Deborah L Begoray. "A community of practice approach for Aboriginal girls' sexual health education." *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 15, no. 4. (2006): 168; Amy Carpenter, et al.. "Seeds of encouragement: Initiating an Aboriginal youth mentorship program". (2008)

³ Ingeborg Christine Kowanko, Terry Steward, Charmaine Power, Rosalie Fraser, Ida Love and Trevor Bromley. "An Aboriginal family and community healing program in metropolitan Adelaide: description and evaluation". (2009); V Ware, *Improving the accessibility of health service in urban and regional settings for Indigenous people*. (2012)

⁴ Barwick, Helena. "Young males: Strengths-based and male-focused approaches." *A review of research and best evidence*. (2004); H Hollis, Kelsey Deane, J. Moore, and Nicole Harre. "Young Maori perceptions of a youth development programme." *Kotuitui: New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences Online* 6, no. 1-2 (2011): 50-61

⁵ Claire V Crooks, Debbie Chiodo, Darrin Thomas, Shanna Burns and Charlene Camillo. "Engaging and empowering Aboriginal youth: a toolkit for service providers." Victoria, BC: Trafford. (2009)

⁶ Albright, Jamie N., Noelle M. Hurd, and Saida B. Hussain. "Applying a social justice lens to youth mentoring: A review of the literature and recommendations for practice." *American journal of community psychology* 59, no. 3-4 (2017): 363-381; Weinberger, Susan, Mentor Consulting Group, and United States of America. "Strengthening Native community commitment through mentoring guidebook." *Norwalk, CT: Mentoring Consulting Group*. (1999)

⁷ Jamie, N Albright, et al. "Applying a social justice lens to youth mentoring: A review of the literature and recommendations for practice". (2009)

Mentorship in youth studies has often been understood as an adult to child pairing which seeks to build confidence, resilience, and leadership skills within the mentee. While mentorship is present in most cultures, this traditional definition and structural organization of mentorship is not always applicable, relevant, or appropriate. When creating mentoring programs for Indigenous youth, it is important to remember that each Indigenous community brings with it unique approaches, customs and traditions. As such, *More Than Words* and *Networks for Change* project work emphasizes that the concept of mentorship is flexible and that it can take many forms. We have employed several different intergenerational mentorship models to adequately address the needs of the communities we work with, and each model provides learning opportunities for both the mentor(s) and the mentee(s).

	Group Mentoring	Peer to Peer	Community & Cultural	Auntyship	Workshop/ Retreat
Description	Mentorship model where a single mentor has multiple mentees. This allows for a more social type of mentoring. For some youth, the social aspect of group mentoring is particularly appealing and provides different benefits than one-on-one mentoring.	Matches youth mentors with younger youth or child mentees. Since the age gaps are smaller amore egalitarian relationship is usually formed. Both mentor and mentee gain social skills from interacting with each other, giving the youth a chance to see themselves as leaders and empowers them	Community-based mentoring empowers individuals to become active members of their communities. Cultural mentoring considers what forms of mentoring are culturally appropriate/relevant and strives to connect the mentees to their cultures while fostering positive cultural identities.	Uniquely Indigenous mentoring model which focuses on the kinship system and the relationship between Indigenous women and young Indigenous women and girls.	Workshops and retreats are a short-term, intergenerational mentorship model in which mentors and mentees are able to share skills and form relationships through organized activities and events.

OVERVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS

Welcome and Opening: Claudia Mitchell And Marjorie Beaucage

Claudia opened the event with some brief considerations for Zoom, noting that Zoom is not the ideal platform for a conversation and preferably everyone would be face -to-face. Further, Zoom is not a neutral platform, and like most videoconferencing tools, it privileges the voices of some over others. Namely, individuals with limited access to technology and reliable internet connection are unable to join the Conversation, highlighting how Covid-19 has made this work particularly challenging. Further, it was noted that a goal for the event was to highlight the girls' voices that were joining from the sites. Next, Claudia discussed how she offered tobacco to the Earth before the meeting and set intentions for the event. Typically, the tobacco would have been offered to Marjorie as the Elder performing the opening ceremony of the event and for the knowledge and wisdom, she shares. However, as Claudia was located in Montreal and Marjorie in Treaty 6 territory, the team worked to find a new way to respect protocols; therefore, the tobacco was offered to the Earth.

Marjorie opened the event by inviting the ancestors to guide the Conversation and thanking them for their knowledge. She then drummed and sang the Women's Warrior Song from BC to honour all the participants and their work. She evoked the image of a circle to speak about creating equal spaces for listening, learning and speaking. She also noted that as circles grow and shrink, there are many different ways to engage in mentoring and no one way to engage with mentorship.

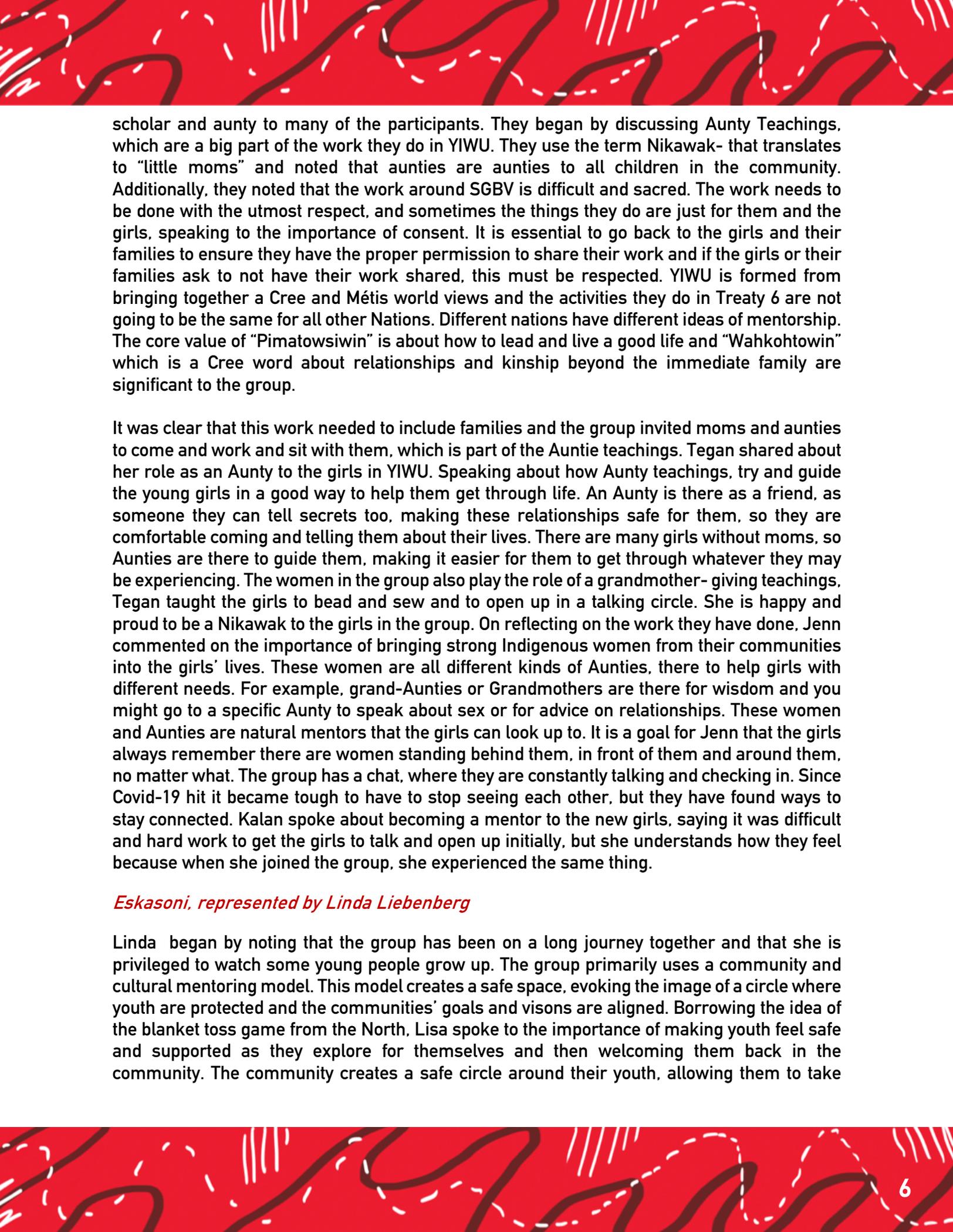
Claudia spoke about the MTW project, discussing how mentoring is capacity building and how youth can be resources for one another and their communities. The youth who have participated in MTW and Networks for Change have experience using arts-based methodologies to address the many different aspects of SGBV. This Conversation is about how girls working in this area already can use their experience to mentor each other and be a resource/ source of support for each other and their communities. When thinking about mentoring and the different mentoring relationships taking place, it is important, to hear from each site about the unique relationships they have formed.

Site Panel from More Than Words and Networks for Change, moderated by Elizabeth Cooper, Univeristy of Regina

The panel was comprised of representatives from the three MTW sites, Eskasoni, Treaty 6 and Ranking Inlet, and representatives from the South African sites from the Networks for Change project. The panel first heard from the Treaty 6 group.

Treaty 6, Young Indigenous Women's Utopia, represented by Kalan Kakum-Mckay, Tegan Mckay and Jenn Altenberg

Kalan is a group participant and a mentor and aunty to the Little Utopias, generation 2.0. Tegan is Kalan mother, a mother to 6 girls and 2 boys, originally from Treaty 4 territory and an Aunty to the girls in Young Indigenous Women's Utopia (YIWU). Jenn is a group leader, community

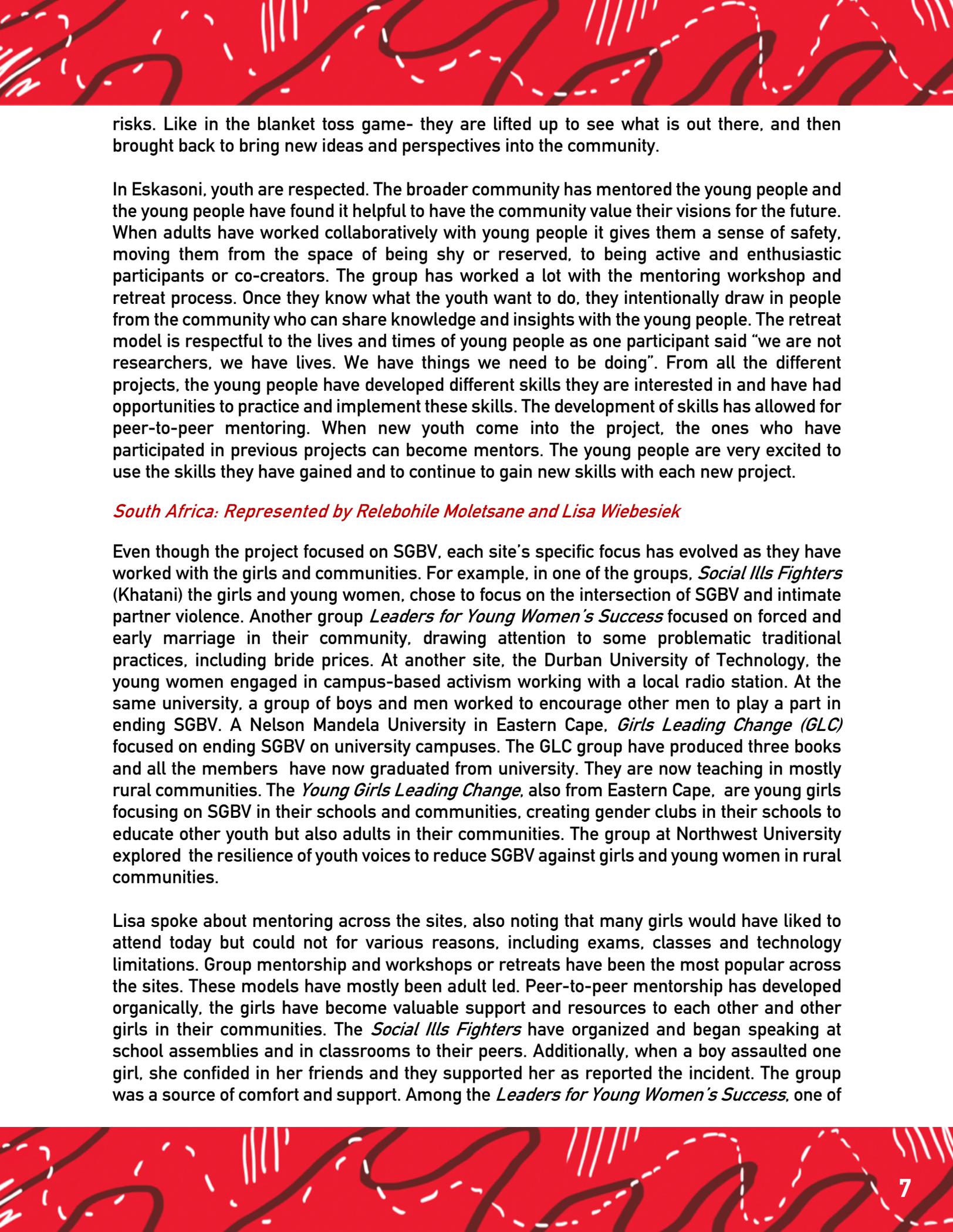


scholar and aunty to many of the participants. They began by discussing Aunty Teachings, which are a big part of the work they do in YIWU. They use the term Nikawak- that translates to “little moms” and noted that aunts are aunts to all children in the community. Additionally, they noted that the work around SGBV is difficult and sacred. The work needs to be done with the utmost respect, and sometimes the things they do are just for them and the girls, speaking to the importance of consent. It is essential to go back to the girls and their families to ensure they have the proper permission to share their work and if the girls or their families ask to not have their work shared, this must be respected. YIWU is formed from bringing together a Cree and Métis world views and the activities they do in Treaty 6 are not going to be the same for all other Nations. Different nations have different ideas of mentorship. The core value of “Pimatowsiwin” is about how to lead and live a good life and “Wahkohtowin” which is a Cree word about relationships and kinship beyond the immediate family are significant to the group.

It was clear that this work needed to include families and the group invited moms and aunts to come and work and sit with them, which is part of the Aunty teachings. Tegan shared about her role as an Aunty to the girls in YIWU. Speaking about how Aunty teachings, try and guide the young girls in a good way to help them get through life. An Aunty is there as a friend, as someone they can tell secrets too, making these relationships safe for them, so they are comfortable coming and telling them about their lives. There are many girls without moms, so Aunts are there to guide them, making it easier for them to get through whatever they may be experiencing. The women in the group also play the role of a grandmother- giving teachings. Tegan taught the girls to bead and sew and to open up in a talking circle. She is happy and proud to be a Nikawak to the girls in the group. On reflecting on the work they have done, Jenn commented on the importance of bringing strong Indigenous women from their communities into the girls’ lives. These women are all different kinds of Aunts, there to help girls with different needs. For example, grand-Aunts or Grandmothers are there for wisdom and you might go to a specific Aunty to speak about sex or for advice on relationships. These women and Aunts are natural mentors that the girls can look up to. It is a goal for Jenn that the girls always remember there are women standing behind them, in front of them and around them, no matter what. The group has a chat, where they are constantly talking and checking in. Since Covid-19 hit it became tough to have to stop seeing each other, but they have found ways to stay connected. Kalan spoke about becoming a mentor to the new girls, saying it was difficult and hard work to get the girls to talk and open up initially, but she understands how they feel because when she joined the group, she experienced the same thing.

Eskasoni, represented by Linda Liebenberg

Linda began by noting that the group has been on a long journey together and that she is privileged to watch some young people grow up. The group primarily uses a community and cultural mentoring model. This model creates a safe space, evoking the image of a circle where youth are protected and the communities’ goals and visions are aligned. Borrowing the idea of the blanket toss game from the North, Lisa spoke to the importance of making youth feel safe and supported as they explore for themselves and then welcoming them back in the community. The community creates a safe circle around their youth, allowing them to take



risks. Like in the blanket toss game- they are lifted up to see what is out there, and then brought back to bring new ideas and perspectives into the community.

In Eskasoni, youth are respected. The broader community has mentored the young people and the young people have found it helpful to have the community value their visions for the future. When adults have worked collaboratively with young people it gives them a sense of safety, moving them from the space of being shy or reserved, to being active and enthusiastic participants or co-creators. The group has worked a lot with the mentoring workshop and retreat process. Once they know what the youth want to do, they intentionally draw in people from the community who can share knowledge and insights with the young people. The retreat model is respectful to the lives and times of young people as one participant said “we are not researchers, we have lives. We have things we need to be doing”. From all the different projects, the young people have developed different skills they are interested in and have had opportunities to practice and implement these skills. The development of skills has allowed for peer-to-peer mentoring. When new youth come into the project, the ones who have participated in previous projects can become mentors. The young people are very excited to use the skills they have gained and to continue to gain new skills with each new project.

South Africa: Represented by Relebohile Moletsane and Lisa Wiebesiek

Even though the project focused on SGBV, each site’s specific focus has evolved as they have worked with the girls and communities. For example, in one of the groups, *Social Ills Fighters* (Khatani) the girls and young women, chose to focus on the intersection of SGBV and intimate partner violence. Another group *Leaders for Young Women’s Success* focused on forced and early marriage in their community, drawing attention to some problematic traditional practices, including bride prices. At another site, the Durban University of Technology, the young women engaged in campus-based activism working with a local radio station. At the same university, a group of boys and men worked to encourage other men to play a part in ending SGBV. A Nelson Mandela University in Eastern Cape, *Girls Leading Change (GLC)* focused on ending SGBV on university campuses. The GLC group have produced three books and all the members have now graduated from university. They are now teaching in mostly rural communities. The *Young Girls Leading Change*, also from Eastern Cape, are young girls focusing on SGBV in their schools and communities, creating gender clubs in their schools to educate other youth but also adults in their communities. The group at Northwest University explored the resilience of youth voices to reduce SGBV against girls and young women in rural communities.

Lisa spoke about mentoring across the sites, also noting that many girls would have liked to attend today but could not for various reasons, including exams, classes and technology limitations. Group mentorship and workshops or retreats have been the most popular across the sites. These models have mostly been adult led. Peer-to-peer mentorship has developed organically, the girls have become valuable support and resources to each other and other girls in their communities. The *Social Ills Fighters* have organized and began speaking at school assemblies and in classrooms to their peers. Additionally, when a boy assaulted one girl, she confided in her friends and they supported her as reported the incident. The group was a source of comfort and support. Among the *Leaders for Young Women’s Success*, one of



the members is trans, and she receives amazing day-to-day support from other members of the group in her community, as generally her community is not very trans-friendly.

Lisa also spoke about the tricky topic of using mentorship to critically engage girls with practices that have been oppressive and harmful. Many girls have stressed that what is understood as a culture and tradition may not be protective of girls and that much of the violence girls experience is perpetuated under the guise of tradition and culture. There is a belief that mentors can focus on enabling and developing criticality among young girls, giving girls the confidence to critically engage with violence they experience in their cultures or traditions. A view of girls as passive and obedient makes it challenging for them to engage with adults and their communities. This is especially so as it is not always considered appropriate for girls to ask questions on “taboo” topics such as sex and intimacy. This view of girls can also make it challenging for them to see themselves as leaders or agents of change.

Auntyship, inspired by conversations from Treaty 6, is an approach to mentorship with potential in South Africa. There is a history of grandmothers and older girls mentoring girls through puberty, particularly in sexual and intimate relationships. Older girls and grandmothers provide sex education to younger girls when they are ready to engage in romantic and sexual relationships. Younger girls are also taught about the social expectations in these relationships. The relationships between grandmothers, older girls and girls are strong foundations that could be built upon. As a result of colonialism, apartheid and urbanization, these relationships are not currently functional. However, they point to the benefits and possibilities of intergenerational mentorship. Finally, Lisa noted that “Mosaic mentorship” is promising as all forms of mentorship are valuable and meaningful and that a multifaceted approach would be best.

Rankin Inlet, represented by Jennica Alhda Barcial, Haily May Ussak and Julia Ussak

The group began by discussing how through More Than Words they have begun incorporating more cultural aspects into the arts-based program “Girls Talk Back”, by inviting community members to come and lead workshops for the girls. These workshops have included traditional Inuit tattooing, throat singing and speaking with Elders. The girls spoke with an Elder about bullying before making a video addressing bullying in the community. They picked the topic of bullying because they felt it was something everyone in the community faces and something everyone could relate to. In the group the older girls have taken on more of a mentoring role to the younger girls. Both Haily May and Julia will be taking on leadership roles, teaching arts and working with the younger girls to make videos. Julia expressed that she really liked working with the younger girls, and how she found it rewarding to teach them new things and see how they learned and improved their skills. Julia also expressed how much she enjoyed having women from the community come into the group to run cultural workshops. For Haily May the best part of the program has been making videos with the younger girls and watching them have fun while participating. She is extremely excited to be taking on a mentoring role and is hoping to do a sewing program in the future with the girls and teach them about their shared culture.

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Once the panel finished, attendees were placed into one of three breakout rooms. After 20 minute discussions, the groups came back into a single screen. The facilitators shared summaries of what had been discussed.

Breakout Room 1: What are some approaches that we can use to study the difference that mentorship makes among indigenous youth, especially as it relates to SGBV? Facilitated by Sarah Flicker, York University

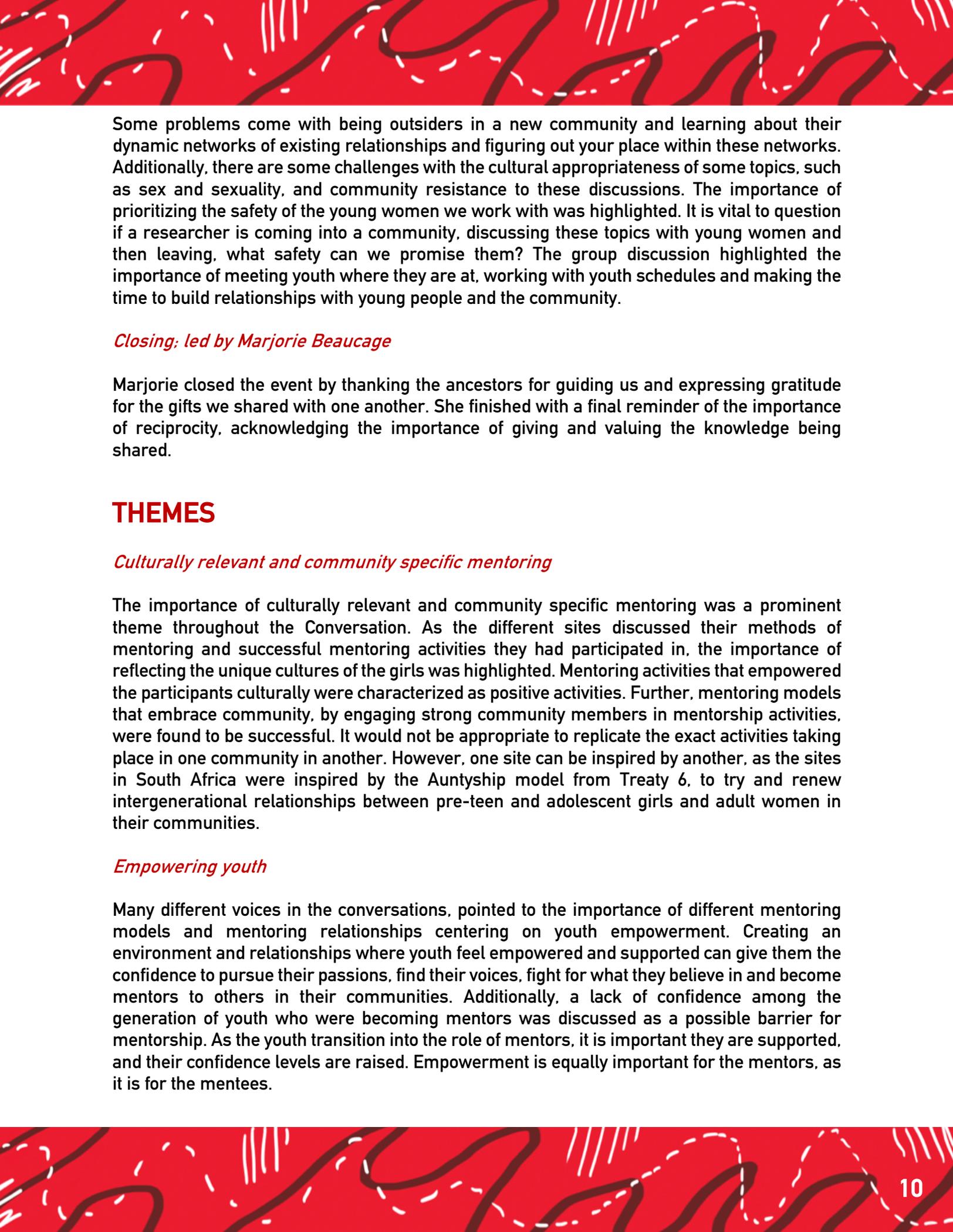
The group thought about the importance of considering who we are doing research for, thinking about who motivates the research and who the audience is for the finished work. When the work is being done, are we thinking about the community as the audience or funders as the audience? The group thought about reframing research so that we are doing work that is the most useful to the community. The challenges of meeting funders' expectations and creating the proper documentation during the process, without interrupting the meaningful process were highlighted. The group also questioned how to respectfully engage with people's stories and how funders are supposed to be engaging with these stories, if at all. The struggle persists as to how we advocate and research with communities and girls in a way that is not extractive and exploitative. Finally asking: do we need to share these traumatic stories to validate funding?

Breakout Room 2: What do you believe is most important too include and emphasize when it comes to mentorship and why? Facilitated by Lisa Starr, McGill University

The group determined that there is no one specific way that is the correct way to participate in mentorship, but it is important to be flexible. This flexibility extends to the goals of mentorship, highlighting that it is not productive to go in with a single goal or pre-set expectations. A valuable skill to learn when working with young people is identifying when and how to get out of the way and give youth space and control. It is important to stay present and focus on the now, versus stressing over what is going to happen in years to come. Meeting youth where they are at and being patient will help create meaningful relationships that may result in more positive outcomes that benefit youth. It is crucial to make sure that everyone is safe and comfortable and that the mentors and mentees are continually building trust. It is also essential to create a balance between making space and taking space, highlighting how mentoring is circular, as you teach and learn at the same time.

Breakout room 3: What are some challenges faced during mentorship? How can we move forward? How can you envision mentorship taking place in a context familiar to you? Facilitated by Katie MacEntee, University of Toronto

The group focused on bringing to the table some of the challenges in building mentoring and then studying mentorship, with a focus on relationships. The challenges of building relationships with youth and building relationships with communities at large were discussed.



Some problems come with being outsiders in a new community and learning about their dynamic networks of existing relationships and figuring out your place within these networks. Additionally, there are some challenges with the cultural appropriateness of some topics, such as sex and sexuality, and community resistance to these discussions. The importance of prioritizing the safety of the young women we work with was highlighted. It is vital to question if a researcher is coming into a community, discussing these topics with young women and then leaving, what safety can we promise them? The group discussion highlighted the importance of meeting youth where they are at, working with youth schedules and making the time to build relationships with young people and the community.

Closing; led by Marjorie Beaucage

Marjorie closed the event by thanking the ancestors for guiding us and expressing gratitude for the gifts we shared with one another. She finished with a final reminder of the importance of reciprocity, acknowledging the importance of giving and valuing the knowledge being shared.

THEMES

Culturally relevant and community specific mentoring

The importance of culturally relevant and community specific mentoring was a prominent theme throughout the Conversation. As the different sites discussed their methods of mentoring and successful mentoring activities they had participated in, the importance of reflecting the unique cultures of the girls was highlighted. Mentoring activities that empowered the participants culturally were characterized as positive activities. Further, mentoring models that embrace community, by engaging strong community members in mentorship activities, were found to be successful. It would not be appropriate to replicate the exact activities taking place in one community in another. However, one site can be inspired by another, as the sites in South Africa were inspired by the Auntyship model from Treaty 6, to try and renew intergenerational relationships between pre-teen and adolescent girls and adult women in their communities.

Empowering youth

Many different voices in the conversations, pointed to the importance of different mentoring models and mentoring relationships centering on youth empowerment. Creating an environment and relationships where youth feel empowered and supported can give them the confidence to pursue their passions, find their voices, fight for what they believe in and become mentors to others in their communities. Additionally, a lack of confidence among the generation of youth who were becoming mentors was discussed as a possible barrier for mentorship. As the youth transition into the role of mentors, it is important they are supported, and their confidence levels are raised. Empowerment is equally important for the mentors, as it is for the mentees.

'Mosaic' Mentoring Approaches

The discussion highlighted the value of engaging with different types of mentoring simultaneously, or what was referred to as 'mosaic' mentoring approaches. Notably, no one style of mentoring will meet the needs of the youth or be effective in achieving all the goals of the individuals involved. Throughout the Conversation, the need to be flexible in mentoring styles and having the ability to combine different mentoring models was highlighted. At different times youth may prefer a one-on-one mentoring relationship or group mentoring through weekend retreats. Being aware of the different kinds of mentoring models and relationship, working with the youth to identify the mentoring they would benefit the most from and then having the flexibility to implement different mentoring models simultaneously or at different stages in the project was deemed important.

REFLECTING FORWARD

Covid-19 has had a major impact on many of the mentoring activities planned across the MTW sites. However, virtual conversations, such as this one, can help foster new ideas on the topic of mentoring and inspire us to think outside the box of traditional mentoring practices. A goal of the Conversation was to engage in meaningful discussions on mentoring and share what components or types of mentoring have been successful in different contexts. With attendees from all over Canada and South Africa and the MTW sites and the South African sites from Networks for Change, the Conversation highlighted the importance of place and culturally specific mentoring, while also discussing how mentoring in one location can inspire mentoring in a different context. The Conversation centred the voices of youth and reinforced the connections between the community of individuals engaged with or passionate about mentoring, Indigenous youth led, arts-based work to address SGBV and reinforced the value of sharing knowledge and learning across sites. Moving forward an extensive literature review on mentorship is being produced and several other groups looking at Indigenous youth mentorship in Quebec and other parts of Canada have been identified. We anticipate fruitful connections with these groups. This is clearly an area for further inquiry particularly in the context of Covid-19. What support is required to sustain what is already there in terms of strengths? Finally, we hope to be convening the Imbizo Intergenerational in 2021 in Durban South Africa.

APPENDIX A. SCHEDULE

2:00-2:10 Welcome and Introduction

2:10-2:35 Site Panel from More Than Words and Networks for Change

Treaty 6 – Kalan Kakum-Mckay, Tegan Mckay & Jenn Altenberg

Eskasoni – Linda Liebenberg

Rankin Inlet – Jennica Alhda Barcial, Haily May Ussak & Julia Ussak

South Africa - Relebohile Molestane & Lisa Wiebesiek

2:35-2:40 Introduction of Break-out Rooms

2:40-3:00 Break Out Room Discussions

1. Lisa Starr

2. Sarah Flicker

3. Katie MacEntee

3:00-3:30 Group Discussion on Breakout Rooms conversations and Closing

APPENDIX B. BIOS OF SPEAKERS

Jennifer Altenberg is a Metis woman from Prince Albert, Duck Lake area, her Michif roots run deep within Saskatchewan and Red River, Manitoba. Currently living in Saskatoon, Jennifer is a Mother, Educator, Community Scholar, and President of the Pleasant Hill Community Association. Jennifer's work as an educator and experience as a Mother continues to drive her passion to empower young people and create equitable opportunities and anti-oppressive content in the classroom and within the community. She has spent many years listening, advocating, and deconstructing current pedagogical processes in the education system around Gender-Based Violence and enhancing Michif identity and unity throughout the community with a land and visual arts-based methodology focus.

Jennica Alhda Barcial has lived in Rankin for four years now and works fulltime as the spousal abuse assistant counsellor at Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre. She delivers the GET ART program (Girls expressing themselves through art program) where participants discuss essential topics such as bullying, healthy/unhealthy families, self-esteem/empowerment through the medium of art with 8-12-year-old girls in the community. Jennica is currently in the process of completing her Master's degree in Counselling Psychology. She also travels to different communities in Nunavut and teaches a suicide intervention workshop.

Marjorie Beaucage is a proud Métis tastawiyiniwak Filmmaker, cultural worker, and community based video activist. Her work as a community based independent artist seeks to question, empower, and change the ways we look at ourselves...seeing from the inside out. Marjorie was a co-founder of the Aboriginal Film and Video Art Alliance. As a 'Runner' she worked as a Cultural Ambassador to negotiate self-governing partnerships and alliances with the Banff Centre for the Arts, V-tape, the Canada Council for the Arts which resulted in the development of Aboriginal Arts programs. She also programmed the first Aboriginal Film Festival in Toronto in 1992.

Elizabeth Cooper is an Assistant Professor in kinesiology and health studies at the University of Regina on Treaty 4 territory and Metis homelands. She is of British Polish and Sami settler descent. She was raised in Treaty 1 territory and the birthplace of the Metis nation. Much of her work focuses on working with communities to combat intergenerational effects of historical trauma and colonialism in Canada and globally. She holds a MA in native studies and Ph.D. in community health sciences both from the University of Manitoba and she did her postdoc at the University of the Fraser Valley in BC.

Sarah Flicker is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University in Toronto, Canada. Her research focuses on engaging youth and other actors in environmental, sexual and reproductive justice. She employs community-based participatory methodologies to promote adolescent sexual health and respond to gender-based violence in Canada and South Africa. Her research has informed policy at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. She is a member of the MTW Implementing Team.

Linda Liebenberg is a leading researcher and evaluator with a core interest in children and youth with complex needs, and the communities they live in. Her work explores the promotion of positive youth development and mental health through civic engagement and community development. As a key component of this work, Linda reflects critically on how best to conduct research and evaluations with children and their communities, including participatory arts-based methods; sophisticated longitudinal quantitative designs; and the design of measurement instruments used with children and youth. Linda has presented internationally and published extensively on these topics of research and youth. Linda's full CV can be seen [here](#).

Katie MacEntee is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, at the University of Toronto. She edited a book about cellphilm method called *What's a Cellphilm? Integrating mobile technology into research and activism*. Katie has been centrally involved in exploring how cellphilms and cellphones can be integrated into participatory visual research on HIV and AIDS education, transactional sex, and gender-based violence. She has experience facilitating cellphilm workshops with youth and adults internationally, including in Canada, India, Mozambique, and South Africa.

Kalan Kakum-Mckay is a youth participant from Young Indigenous Women's Utopia in Treaty 6. She enjoys traditional dancing and playing ice hockey. Kalan is a mentor or Nikawak to the Little Utopias. She adopts a quiet leadership and embraces humility as she passes on knowledge to the younger girls.

Tegan Mckay is from Kahkewistahaw First Nation and an Aunty to the Young Indigenous Women's Utopia in Treaty 6. She attends activities with the girls, works and sits with them.

Relebohile Moletsane is Professor and John Langalibalele Dube Chair in Rural Education in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa where she is also the Pro Vice-Chancellor: Social Cohesion. Using participatory visual methods, her research focuses on rural education, girlhood studies, and gender-based violence in rural schools and communities. She is the co-author (with Claudia Mitchell and Naydene de Lange) of *Participatory Visual Methodologies: Social Change, Community and Policy* (2017), co-editor of *Disrupting Shameful Legacies*, and is currently working on a new book on girls, ethics and participatory methods. She is the co-PI of *Networks for Change and Well-being: Girl-led 'from the ground up' policy making to address sexual violence in Canada and South Africa*.

Lisa Starr is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education (DISE) and Director of Internships and Student Affairs for the Faculty of Education at McGill University. She is also the Past President of the Canadian Association for the Study of Women and Education (CASWE). She completed her doctoral degree in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria. Lisa is currently the principal investigator on the SSHRC funded project, *Designing and implementing pedagogical strategies for addressing Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Teacher Training Colleges in Mozambique*, alongside Claudia



Mitchell. Lisa also teaches in the area of pedagogy and cross-curricular learning and engages in Canadian research in Teacher Education at McGill University.

Haily May Ussak is a youth participant from Rankin Inlet. She is excited to become a mentor to the next generation of youth joining the project. Haily May is particularly passionate about video production and looks forward to teaching younger girls about this and having fun with them.

Julia Ussak is a youth participant from Rankin Inlet. Julia enjoys throat singing, playing soccer and basketball. She'd like to become a throat singer and a hair stylist. Julia is enjoying her leadership role within her group and looks forward to developing this further through the project as she mentors younger girls and shares her knowledge of art making

Lisa Wiebesiek is the Research Manager of the Centre for Visual Methodologies for Social Change at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the project co-ordinator for the Networks for Change and Well-being project in South Africa. She has previously worked in the fields of HIV prevention and rural education development. Her current work focuses on working with girls and young women to better understand and address gender-based violence in rural communities. Lisa's research interests include adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender and sexuality education, rurality, girlhood studies, and participatory visual methodologies.