

SACY ABORIGINAL CAPACITY CAFE: APRIL 2010

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Adult Participant



4/30/2010

Adult and Youth Perspectives

This report presents the findings from the fifth Aboriginal Capacity Café held in Vancouver in April 2010.

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SACY ABORIGINAL CAPACITY CAFE: April 2010

PERSPECTIVES OF ADULTS AND YOUTH

Aboriginal Capacity Café Background

On **April 30, 2010**, through partnerships made possible by the shared energies and contributions of the British Columbia/Yukon Society of Transition Houses (BCYSTH), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), Vancouver Board of Education (VBE), School-Aged Children and Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program (SACY) and Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA), the fifth Aboriginal Capacity Café was hosted at Point Grey High School in Vancouver. This Capacity Café was made possible through partnership and funding from the BCYSTH and Health Canada's Population Health Fund. In total, the attendees included: 55 adults who registered for the event and 15 youth participants. Of these attendees, 15 youth and 36 community members (parents, school board staff and social service agency staff) provided evaluation feedback.

What is a Capacity Café?

A Capacity Café is a unique opportunity for community members to hear about the lived experiences of youth. The overall goal is to encourage young people to feel listened to, respected, and valued in order that they view themselves as a needed resource within the community. By creating this youth-friendly environment, youth are willing to talk openly about their lives and issues they consider to be important. The key tenet of a Capacity Café is that the engagement of young people potentially forges intergenerational connections by helping adults and other community members understand and appreciate life from a youth's perspective (e.g., stressors and lived experiences).

Capacity Café Report Overview

Feedback regarding this Aboriginal Capacity Café is presented in two parts:

1. Adult feedback
2. Youth feedback

Adult Participants

36 adults participated in the evaluation of the Aboriginal Capacity Café. Of the 36 adults, 15 identified themselves as parents, 6 as school staff, 6 as counselors and community/youth workers, 3 as family members and 1 elder. An additional 5 people identified themselves as guests or interested individuals.

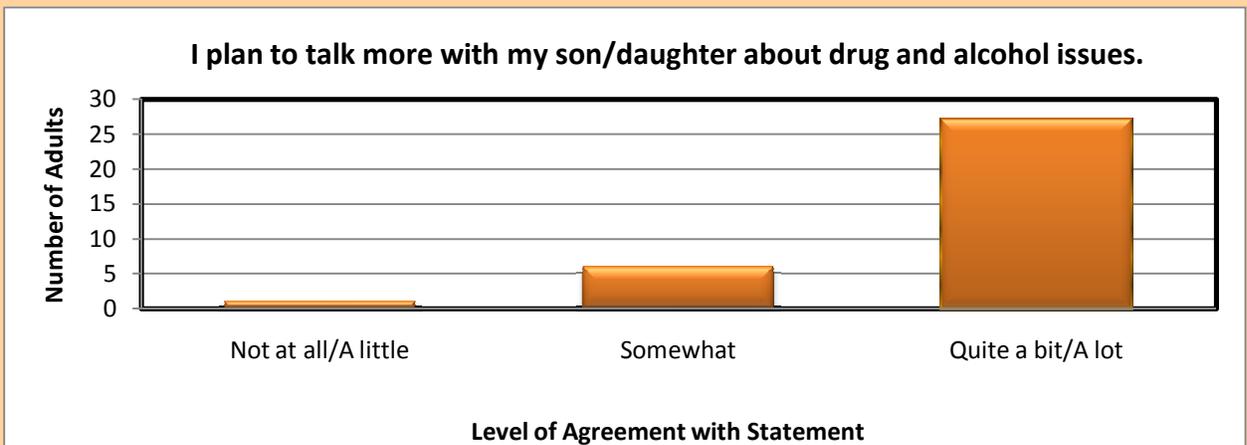
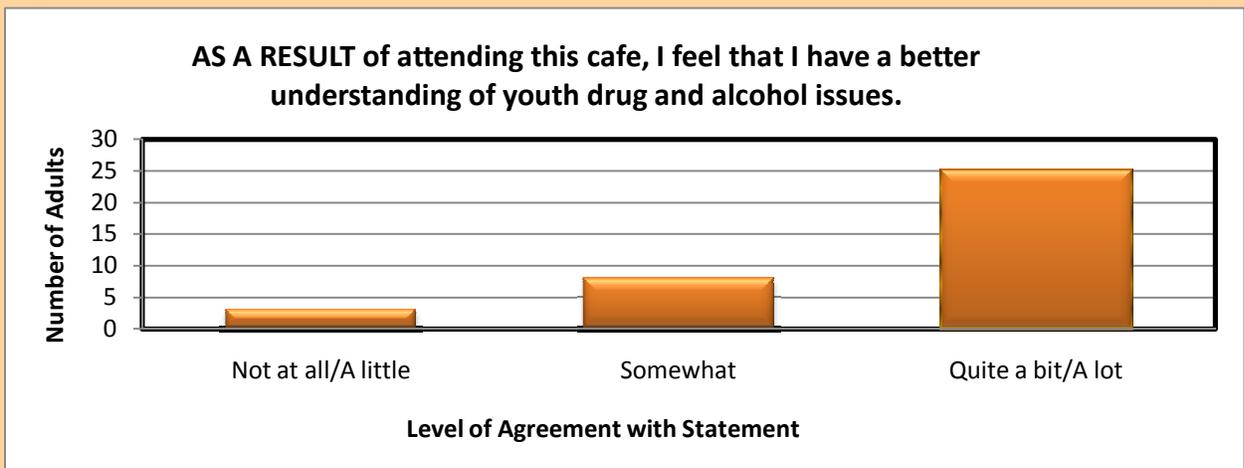
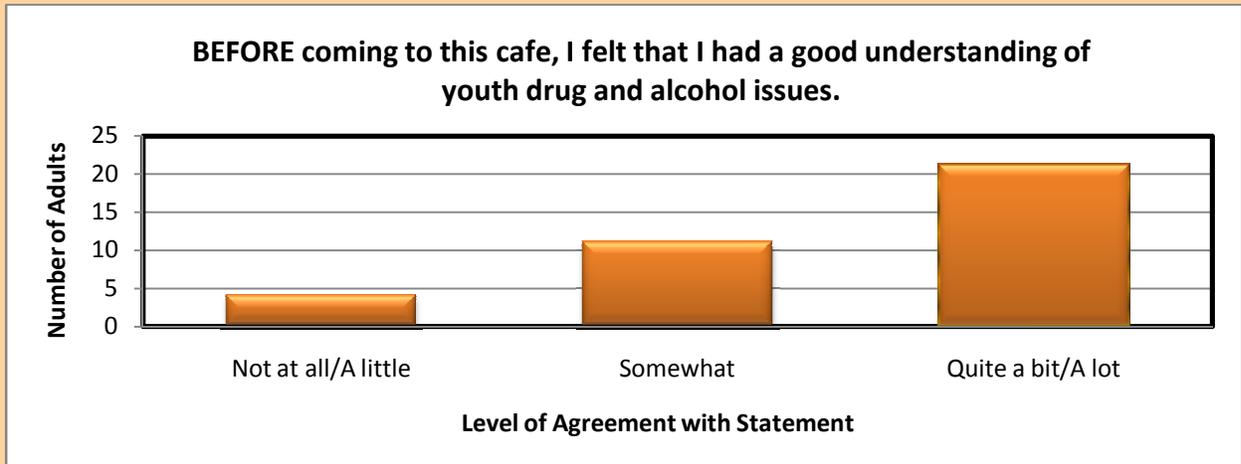
Feedback from Adults

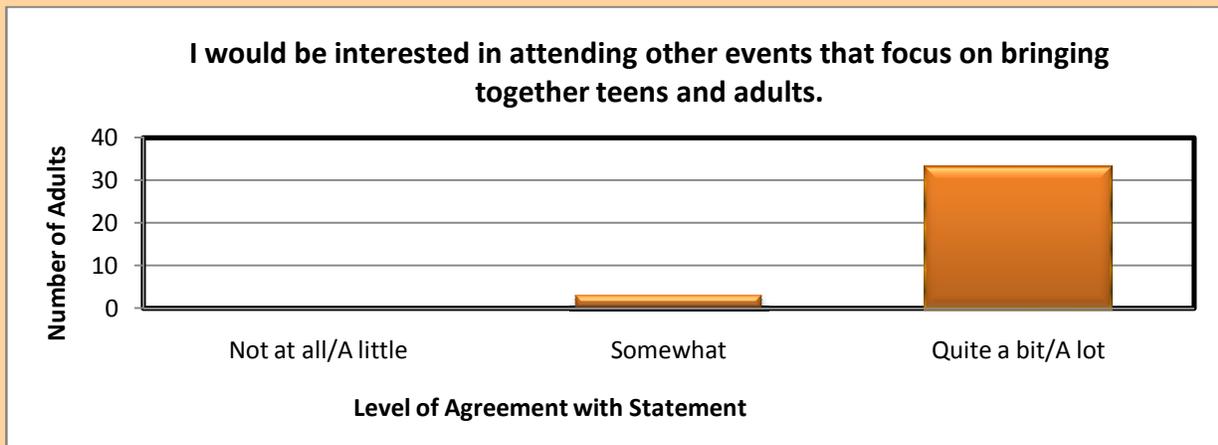
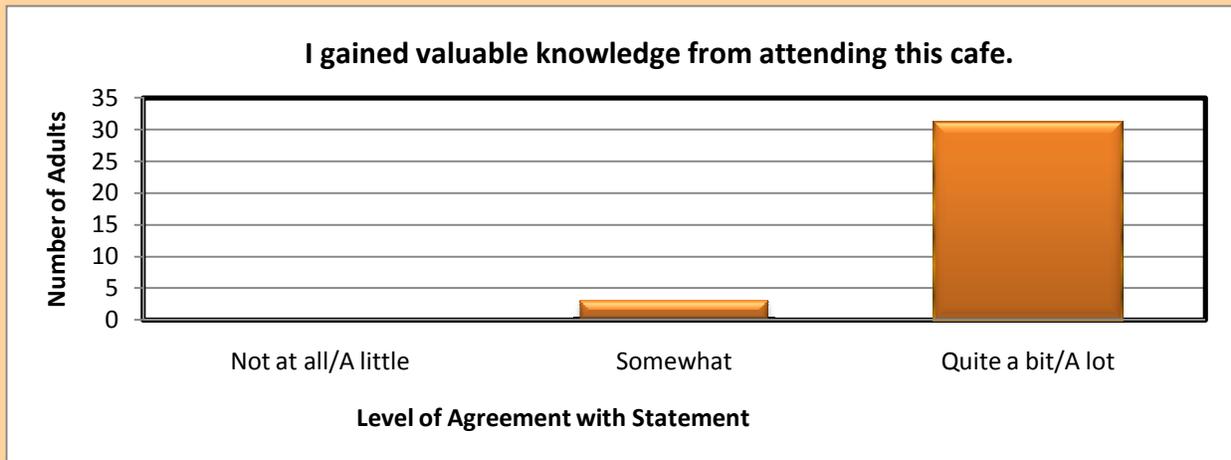
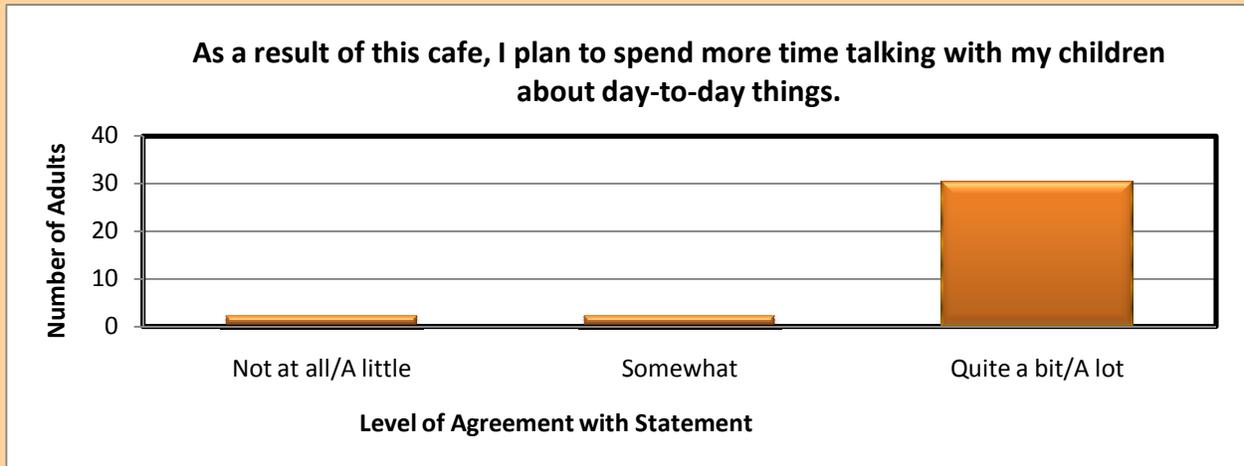
Adults responded to two open-ended question and 9 Likert-scale type questions in order to hear their perspectives on their involvement in the Aboriginal Capacity Café. Results of their feedback are presented below.

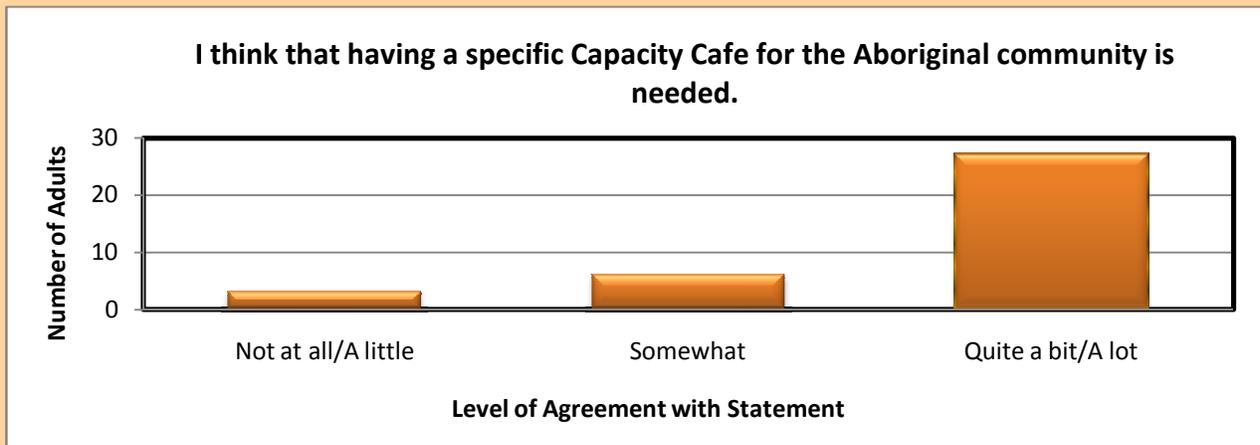
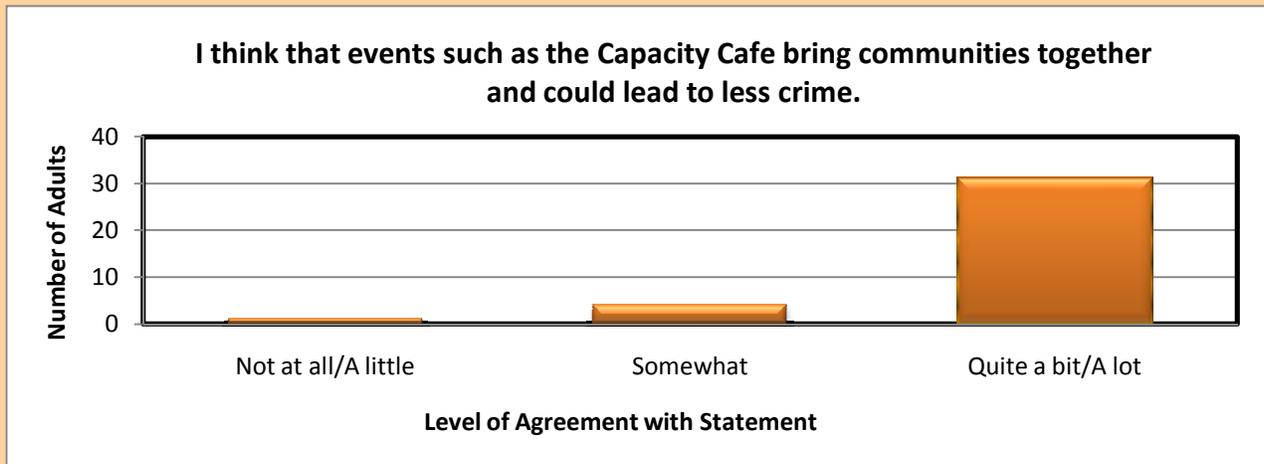
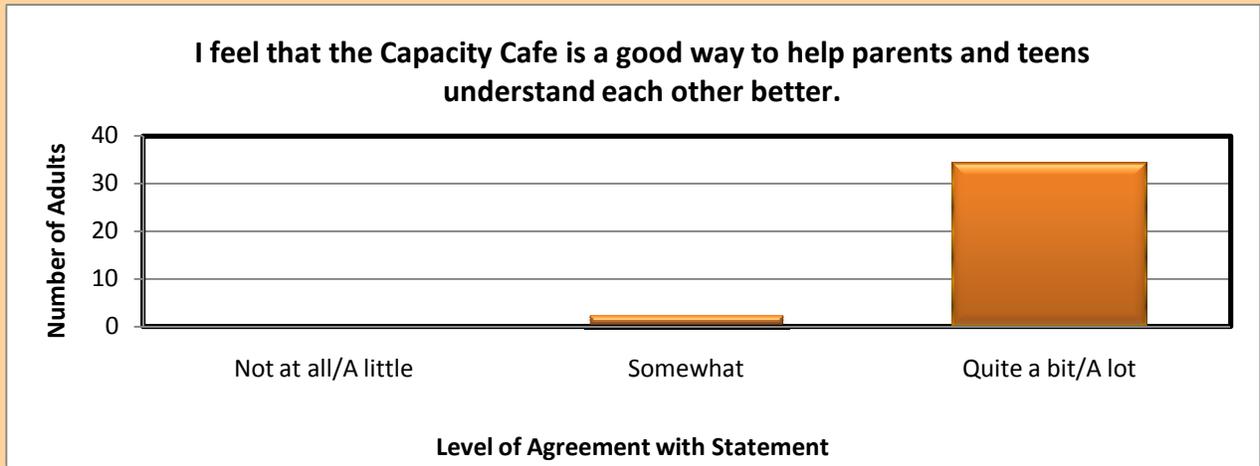
What was the best part about participating in the Aboriginal Capacity Café?

| Theme | Examples of Comments |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Hearing Youth Voices (26 comments) | Hearing and see the youth take a risk in sharing their wisdom. Hearing youth speak openly and honestly. Giving youth the lead and the strongest voice in the room. The chance for youth to voice their opinions without people interrupting. |
| Sharing (2 comments) | Everyone sharing their thoughts. |
| Other (3 comments) | Reaffirming my thoughts that youth are generally great and not to think the worst of them. The question and answer period. The opportunity for the Aboriginal community to share the experience of the past and present. |

Adults were then asked to respond to 9 statements and indicate how much they agreed with each statement. Results are presented on the following pages.







Learning by Adults

Adults offered comments about what they felt they learned through the experience of participating in the Aboriginal Capacity Café.

| Theme | Examples of Comments |
|--|--|
| How to better support youth in their role. (9 comments) | How to be a better mom, teacher and person. I am really hard on my children – I am a work in progress. I should talk to my nieces instead of forgiving or forgetting or being too hard on them. I just need to be there for them. |
| Increased understanding of youth challenges and needs (5 comments) | It was the most powerful event that I have ever attended. I am walking away with a clearer understanding of what youth are facing. The resiliency of youth and that they all want to be loved. Youth struggles. |
| Increased appreciation for the importance of the community coming together (3 comments) | Circles work. Youth have strength and people out there care. We need to be more together. I have learned the importance of sharing your experience and feelings. Just to be heard. |
| How to listen without judgment (2 comments) | How to listen with openness and no judgment. |
| Other (5 comments) | That good kids do drugs and drink and they're still good kids. Youth can make their own choices and they don't need youth workers or parents telling them what to do. We as adults have to take more risks in allowing ourselves to be vulnerable. My children learn from me and my example is important. |

Feedback from Youth

15 youth provided their feedback about the Aboriginal Capacity Café by responding to three open-ended questions and 7 Likert-scale type questions. Results of their feedback are presented below.

What was the best part about participating in the Aboriginal Capacity Café?

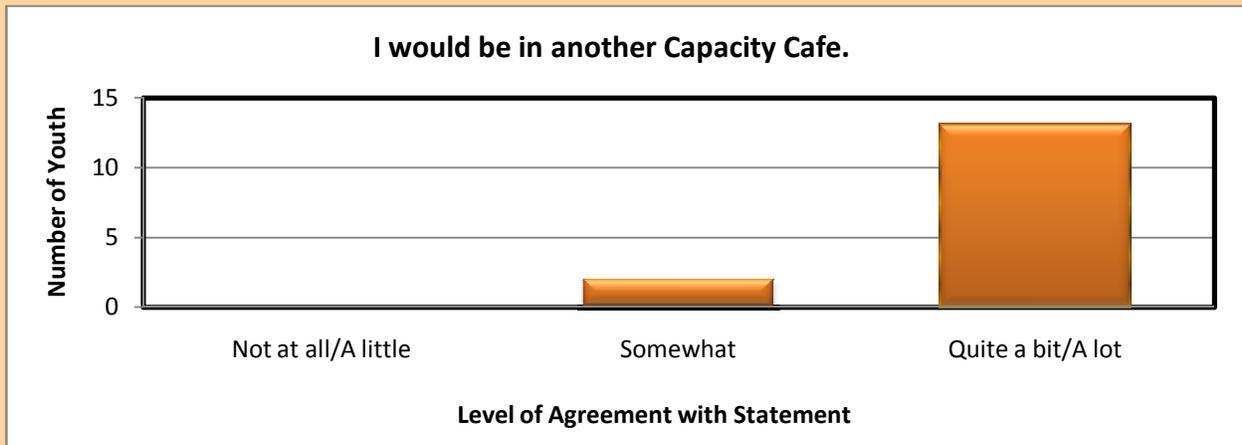
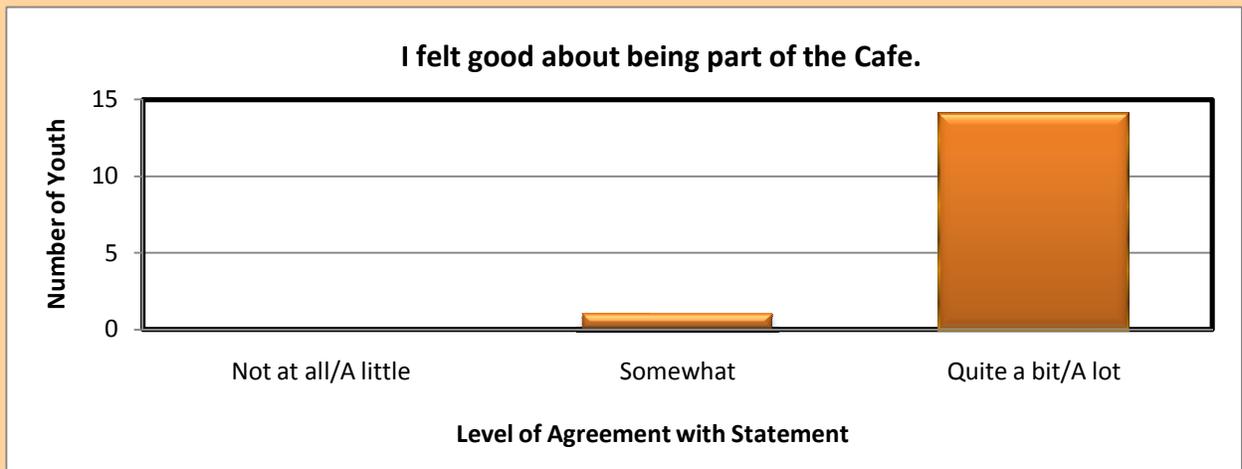
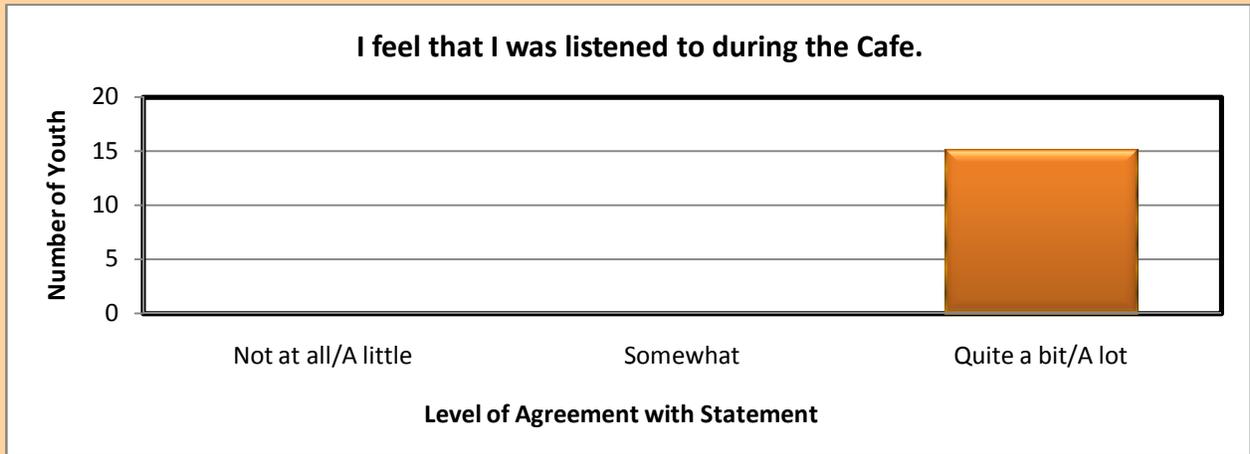
| Theme | Examples of Comments |
|--|---|
| Expressing and being heard (7 comments) | Having adults listen without interruption. It feels great to know people want to hear teens talk. Having people listen to me. Knowing everyone was listening and having the support. |
| Interacting and meeting new people (4 comments) | Chilling with the other kids. Meeting new people. |
| Teaching others (2 comments) | To open the eyes of others. Sharing information. |
| Other (2 comments) | Hearing the feedback from everyone. Talking about the struggles that affect First Nations. |

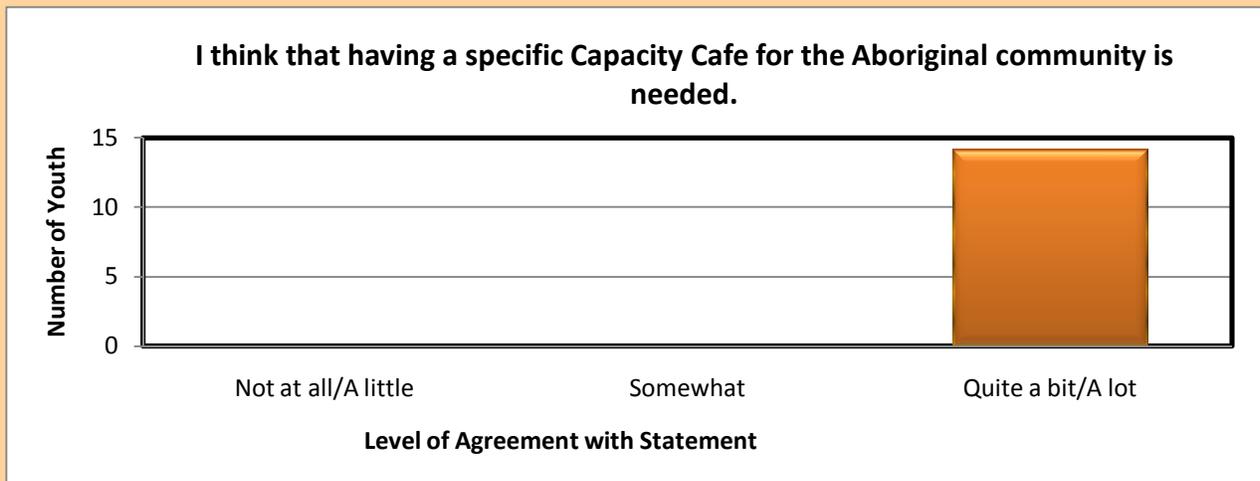
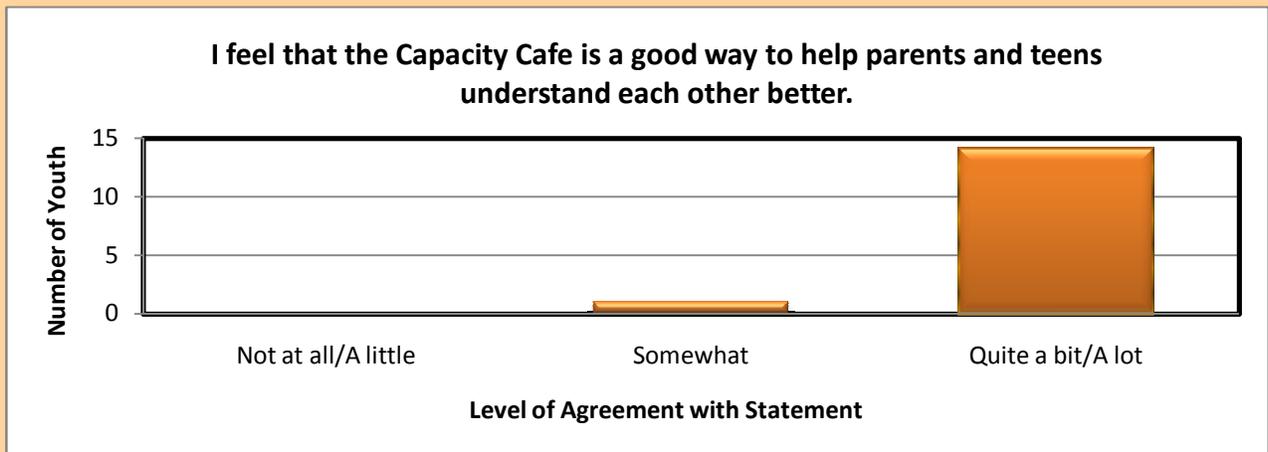
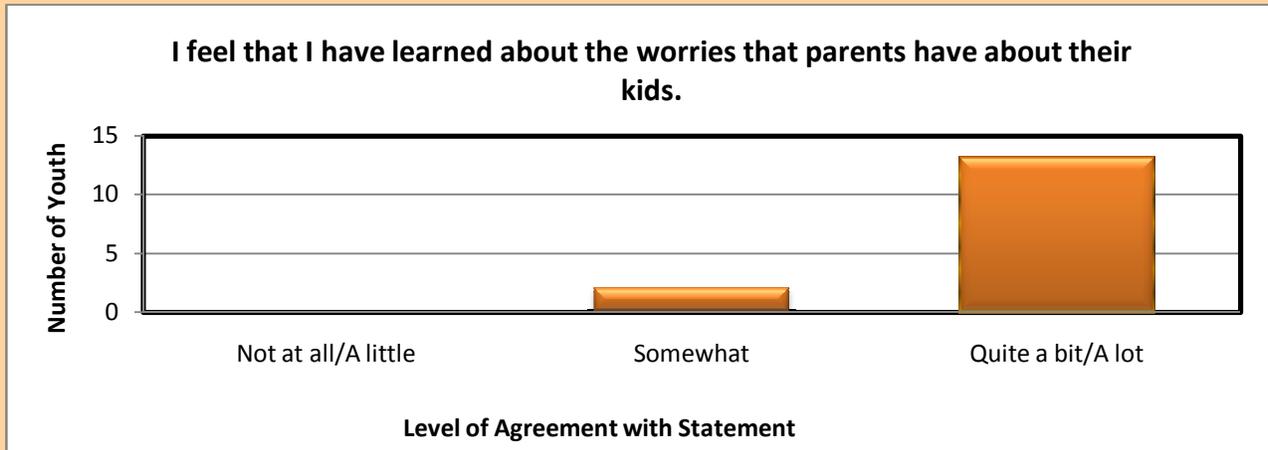
What do you like about having an Aboriginal-only Capacity Café?

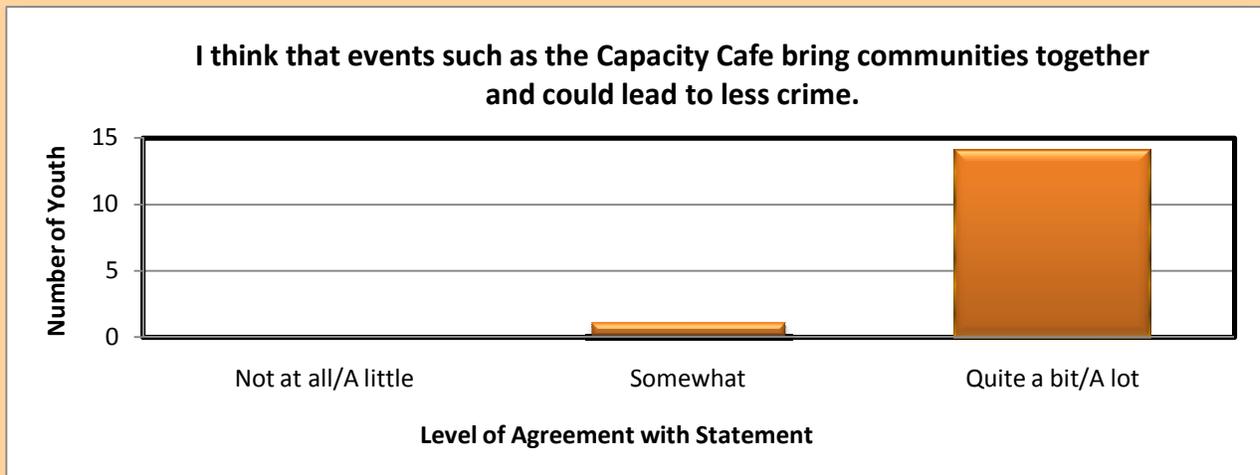
Once again, 15 youth responded to this question. Comments were analyzed in order to draw out themes.

| Theme | Examples of Comments |
|---|---|
| Easier to relate to one another/shared identities, culture, history (5 comments) | Most Native people know what you are going through. It's nice to be around Natives. You can relate and there is an unspoken bond. |
| Interaction with new people (2 comments) | We are able to communicate with people we don't know. |
| Aboriginal youth and parents coming together (2 comments) | Aboriginal parents and youth coming together positively. Aboriginal youth can teach the Aboriginal parents how to bond with youth. |
| Listening to Others (2 comments) | Hearing about the different Nations. It's good because there is so much to hear. It's hard. |
| Sharing with others (2 comments) | It's good for us to talk about our feelings. Talking about life. |
| Other (2 comments) | The respect. Lecturing to the elders. |

Youth were then asked to respond to 7 statements and indicate how much they agreed with each statement. Results are presented on the following pages.







What did you learn through participating in the Café?

Finally, youth were asked about what they feel they learned through their participation in the Aboriginal Capacity Café. Comments were analyzed in order to draw out themes.

| Theme | Examples of Comments |
|--|---|
| The power of sharing (5 comments) | We can talk about our feelings. Relating to one another. I learned that being involved will refresh yourself through being able to talk about some situations in life. Adults care and want to understand. |
| Everyone has struggles (3 comments) | All kids have their problems – big or small. To listen and know that you are not the only one. |
| Other (4 comments) | Everyone is equal. How to be respected in a room of elders. I have to communicate with my own parents. |

Summary

Once again, the Aboriginal Capacity Café continues to be extremely well-received by youth and adults in the community. Youth report being able to speak their truths and adults clearly indicate the powerful impact of having an opportunity to hear the perspectives of youth. Among Aboriginal youth, there continues to be a great deal of support for having a Capacity Café that has an Aboriginal focus. As one youth stated, “there is an unspoken bond” among Aboriginal participants.

This Capacity Café marks the fifth one to date in the Vancouver area, each held in different areas throughout the city. From the first Aboriginal Capacity Café to the fifth one, there has been a consistent and exceedingly high level of satisfaction and learning reported by youth and adults. Through the circle of sharing, greater levels of mutual understanding and compassion have emerged for participants. There is no doubt that this understanding and compassion will be carried forward into the lives of the many youth and adults who come to impart their wisdom and bear witness to life stories of others.