Edgewalkers: Aboriginal Millenials

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4Rs YOUTH MOVEMENT
"I have said it is our time as Indigenous peoples, that we must smash the status quo, and that my job is as an advocate to open doors for First Nations to drive change."

Shawn Atleo, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, May 2, 2014

- There is a persistent and well-documented education gap between Indigenous & non-Indigenous youth
- Aboriginal youth generally lack the career supports that non-Aboriginal youth take for granted
- Family and community well-being have a major impact on youth education and employment outcomes.
- Aboriginal youth continue to experience socio-economic impacts stemming from policy such as Residential Schools
• We’re growing! One of the fastest growing populations in Canada!

• We’re cultural! A majority of urban youth are very proud of their Aboriginal identity

• We’re inclusive! Urban Aboriginal youth embrace pluralism, and even more so than non-Aboriginal people.

• We are the future of the economy! A rapid growing labourforce could held fill labour shortages

• We want Education! Rates of Aboriginal youth graduating highschool & post-secondary are increasing
Aboriginal Millennials are Edgewalkers

“When you find identity, you find purpose.”

Candace Neveau, Anishinaabek
4Rs Youth Movement Panel August 2015

- Education
- Economic Development
- Rights-based recognition
- Health & social
- Justice & access to justice
- Supporting community based leadership
- Environment
- Culture & Language

Assembly of First Nations Youth Council Advocacy Principles (2015)
Canada’s Reality

Why aren’t we supporting the potential of Aboriginal youth?
While 62% of Canadians have no interactions with Aboriginal people, 63% agree that “most of the problems of Aboriginal people are brought on by themselves”
“To repay hatred with love, that is our burden”

Jeff Ross, Anishinaabek, 4Rs Gathering August 2015
The Legacy of Canada’s Residential Schools

Odds of dying for children in Indian residential schools: 1 in 25

Odds of dying for Canadians serving in WWII: 1 in 26

Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Intergenerational Fairness
Empirical research provides evidence of how youth – defined as young people 15–24 years of age – have been agents of change in Canada over the 35 years from 1978 to 2012.

Youth are more impactful and aim for higher scales of impact than we give them credit for: youth think big and are risk takers.
Youth have been responsible for prompting a variety of social changes that include influencing debates of national importance, leading important health sciences research, and increasing access to post-secondary education (to name a few!).

Youth making change create impacts as individuals (affecting one or persons or organizations on their own), community or inter-organizational (affecting change at the community/ regional or sector scale), and national or international (institutionalizing change at the macro scale).
What are you waiting for? Engage us!

“Despite their input, youth are increasingly disenfranchised from the decision-making process”

Youth-led social change: Topics, engagement types, organizational types, strategies, and impacts (2015)
Changing the Country by changing the relationship between Indigenous & non-Indigenous youth
4Rs’ Core Values
Respect, Reciprocity, Reconciliation and Relevance
4Rs National Partners
Working together on a new collective initiative
What we will achieve this year

- Mobilize and connect young leaders to the movement by **activating our network**
- Build the capacity of young people to host cross-cultural conversations that build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people through the **development of a leadership training program**
- **Hold events/gatherings** that promote the values of 4Rs (respect, reciprocity, relevance & reconciliation) and inspire young people to take action!
- **Tell the story of 4Rs** through website, social media, video and face to face interactions, connecting grassroots young leaders to the national movement
1. Youth engagement is an attitude
2. Contributions must match the needs
3. One cannot represent the many
4. Debate as a learning tool
5. Dignity and safety
6. Avoid false or unrealistic expectations
7. Balance and accessibility
8. Understanding and integrating cultural identity
9. Increasing youth engagement and fostering youth empowerment

Principles of Indigenous Youth Engagement
Adopted from the AFN Youth Engagement Framework, 2015
Take action on the TRC’s recommendations

- Education reform
- Cultural competency training
- Job creation in support of action on the TRC’s recommendations
- Supports for Aboriginal innovators and change makers including access to micro funding/grant programming
- Increased funding for arts based programming and initiatives

**Policy Implications**

“We don’t need you to feel that you are connected to this history. We need you to feel that you are part of the future and that you’re part of the solution, and therefore we have to talk about what your role is going to be going forward . . .”

*Justice Murray Sinclair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*
• Join our Facebook group and join the conversation: 4Rs Youth Movement on Facebook
• Begin to educate yourself and increase awareness of this movement or about Indigenous issues in general by talking with your friends and community
• Come out to events, speeches, cultural experiences
• Reach out to Indigenous young leaders
• Ask questions from your heart, stand in solidarity as brothers and sisters and become a part of a broader forward thinking community

Build your heart knowledge!
What are you waiting for?
“Reconciliation may never happen, but the possibility makes it work trying.”

Mitch Case, Sault Ste. Marie Metis community

Miigwetch! | Thanks! | Merci!

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