

COPE

MAGAZINE

[BY SASKATCHEWAN YOUTH]

[INSIDE]

- +THE CULTURE OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
- +SEX, ALCOHOL, & CONSENT
- +BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ADDICTION
- +SPEAKING OUT WITH QUEER & TRANS YOUTH

+ MORE

WELCOME TO COPE MAGAZINE

If you picked up this magazine, you're likely a youth in Saskatchewan with a whole host of complications, challenges, and uncertainties in your life. Being young certainly comes with a lot of obstacles. Whether you're coping with your own issues, concerned about a family or friend, or simply eager to expand your awareness, this magazine is for you. We know that judgement-free conversations about sex, drugs, alcohol, and smoking can be difficult to find. This magazine is designed to provide those open conversations about coping with life's difficulties.

So, what does it mean to cope? When we think of coping, we think of dealing with issues in our lives - struggling, and making it through. In our province, we know that young people begin using alcohol and drugs at a young age. We also know that addictions don't happen out of nowhere, but rather, develop through a culture that supports and often encourages the misuse of substances. Young people go through a lot of changes and challenges that can lead them to using alcohol and drugs to ease stress, and provide temporary relief. This magazine explores these experiences. Talking about drugs, drinking, addictions, sex, and coping with life's obstacles doesn't have to feel like a lecture, and it certainly doesn't have to be boring. We've engaged youth throughout all aspects of the magazine to ensure youth throughout the province will connect with their peers' experiences, feel supported, and learn about healthy ways to, you guessed it, cope. No matter your circumstance, we think that you'll find something in this magazine that connects with you.

A special thanks to all the partnerships with schools, community groups, organizations, and the youth themselves across the province, that made this project possible. To learn more about Youth Action for Prevention, please visit our website: www.skprevention.ca. If you have any questions about the magazine, or want to place an order, please call us at 306-651-4300 or email info@skprevention.ca. You can also download the magazine from our website.

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MARGINAL MISTAKES/ FAR FROM FETCHING

By Chance Brière

The cold feels like blown glass against lips, right before light sparks and the inhale. The crunch of wet autumn leaves and the mildew smell reminds me

It's easy to follow the flashing lights
Into open car doors and back rooms
It is easy for those wanting to forget.
I remember we met in the park one night, to form a circle, to fill the silence, communal disinterest
opulent in the halogen light

blown glass pressed against lips

I read the biography of a man that for many years enjoyed the use of crystal meth until he began to very much no longer enjoy having to use it to keep his skin from crawling
He wrote that he pretended not to care
That his family was worried
He would lose another job
That his friends were looking to help him
It is easy to pretend
sparking light and the inhale

The first time I kissed a boy we used glow stick and our fingertips to find one another in the dark.

I was scared of being mistaken for marginal and it led me to breathing through a hospital filter.

It is easy to forget that sometimes we must come up for air. There's a hole in me the size of greatness and I'm not quite sure how to fill it yet, thinks the young boy who has not fallen in with but firmly placed himself with the right crowd for a **** your opinion outlook and so much white noise.

After a while I was tired of the bad taste these people left on my doorstep.

The school counsellor asked why I ran, asked me if it was because I wanted to escape. I didn't think someone could see through me like that.

Run until you drop, scream until your lungs collapse, keep going and don't look back.

And now I'm here writing poems to fill the time. I can say it got better but that won't change anything. The only way it gets better is when you make it better.

So look to the dawn sparking light, your mouth wide open and exhale new life.

THE STATS



ALCOHOL

- 46% of Saskatchewan youth (grades 7 and older) report alcohol use, while 54% refrain from drinking alcohol.
- 77% of youth who have used alcohol report having 5 or more drinks at a time at least once. Binge drinking refers to consuming 4 or more drinks for females and 5 or more drinks for males.
- On average, youth report first drinking at age 14, and binge drinking at age 15.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

- Impaired driving is one of the most common criminal offences in Saskatchewan.
- Saskatchewan has the highest rate of impaired driving fatalities in Canada. Alcohol or drug use was a factor in 43% of fatal car crashes in 2014.
- Across Canada, the rate of impaired driving is highest for 16-24 year olds.

SEX

- In Saskatchewan, 40% of rural youth report using alcohol or other drugs before having sex. Youth who use drugs or alcohol prior to having sex are less likely to use a condom, increasing the risk of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- The majority of cases of STIs in Saskatchewan are in youth aged 15 to 24. Rates of chlamydia in Saskatchewan are almost double the national average.
- The majority of youth with an STI are unaware that they are infected.

SMOKING

- 17% of all deaths in Canada (or approximately 39,000 deaths per year) are linked to tobacco use. Tobacco kills three times more Canadians each year than alcohol, AIDS, illegal drugs, car crashes, suicide, and murder combined.
- 43% of youth in Saskatchewan felt it would be "easy" to get cigarettes if they wanted to smoke. This compares to 39% across Canada.

DRUGS

- In Canada, 31% of 15-19 year olds have used marijuana at least once in their lifetime, 3% crack/cocaine, 2% speed/meth, and 5% hallucinogens. The majority of 15-19 year olds don't use illicit drugs.
- 49% of youth who use illicit drugs report at least one physical, social, or emotional harm.

For a full list of references, see www.skprevention.ca

DEAR INK

MEET INK

Hey there! My name is Ink, and welcome to my advice column. I am a recent graduate from an inner city high school in Saskatoon. I've battled with a drug addiction throughout my life, which has led to many terrible choices. I have learned a lot through the consequences of some of these decisions. Now that I have turned my life around, I want to help others make healthy decisions when they come across similar obstacles. For more resources on how to get help, check out the guide at the back of this magazine!

Dear Ink,

My world is spinning. I don't know where I'm going in life. I can't remember the last sober weekend. With a new start in the school year, I thought I might meet some new friends. So far, it seems like that's not going to happen. I can't even trust my best friends. I'm pretty sure one friend stole a bunch of my mom's jewellery. I haven't confronted her about it, but it would make sense because she needs money for the pills she's popping now... I feel like no one has my back, like I can't trust anyone. I haven't gone to school at all in the past two weeks, and my parents don't really seem to care. All my mom gets mad about is the liquor I've been stealing from her. But I'll do anything to get rid of this pain. It's unbearable and I feel like no one understands me. I feel like I am losing hope.

From, Hopeless

Dear Hopeless,

Thanks for your letter. I went through a similar thing in high school. You're right; it can feel hopeless. However, there are so many people that you can call or get in touch with that want to help you. Trust me, you are cared about and you matter. I think it will actually help to start going to school again. There is support there if you seek it out. Maybe write a note to a favourite teacher and let them know you need someone to talk to. Or go to a counsellor's office. It is intimidating but it's their job to be there for you, and they are very good at listening. They will help you make a plan to get you back on track. And high school is tough! But I promise you that you will get through it and will move forward as a bigger, better person. Concentrate on making little steps everyday towards the life you want. Sometimes, it even helps to just write everything out on paper. Write about all of your worries and fears, but most importantly, write about your passions. What did you used to like to do on weekends? What are the things that make you happy? Perhaps you can join a team or art club at school, or find a sunny spot to read a book or practice music in the park. I guarantee you will get out of this slump. Alcohol and drugs will not resolve these problems. If anything, they only make things worse. I understand the temptation, but in order to get through this, you are going to need to be courageous and focus on positive alternatives. Your future self will thank you for it.

Sincerely, Ink

Dear Ink,

My boyfriend broke up with me for my best friend. I am absolutely crushed. I didn't see it coming. I can forget about him and escape the pain by getting high. But now I'm running low on money, and it still hurts. I've started taking twenties out of my mom's purse to pay for my weed. It makes me feel guilty but I can't stand being alone with my thoughts. When I found out they were together I cried so hard, then went to my cousin's house and got wasted. It made me feel better. But I'm worried it's becoming a crutch. I'm getting high a few times a day now. I smoke in the morning so that if I see them at school, it doesn't hurt as much. But now I'm really behind in all of my classes. My ex-friend, the one dating him, is prettier than me and more popular at school. I don't know what to do. There is no way to avoid seeing them, and I get so emotional every time I do.

Sincerely, Crushed


Dear Crushed,

If there's one thing I've learned about breakups and heartbreaks, it's that it will never help to compare yourself to whoever they date after you. Easier said than done, I know, but you need to come to peace about your breakup. Maybe talk to a family member or write down everything you're feeling. Day by day it will get easier, I promise! Smoking weed actually doesn't help with getting over the breakup. The only thing it does is offer a temporary distraction from your feelings, and, as you've experienced, create more problems with school and family down the road. By constantly distracting yourself from reality, those feelings will come back. They demand to be dealt with. Luckily, I have some ideas on how to cope in a more balanced and healthy way. The first thing, make a list of all the activities that make you happy. Then, make a list of your top priorities in life. Do they match up? Are you doing what makes you happy? Try to incorporate little steps in your day to day life that make you happy. Baking cookies, taking your dog for a walk, writing poetry, or making art are just some suggestions. At school, ask a friend to walk with you to your classes so you are not alone when you see your ex. Remember, even when the pain feels overwhelming, stay sober. You're doing more damage in the long run by trying to temporarily escape reality. Focus on yourself and creating your own happiness and it will get easier. Hang in there!

Sincerely, Ink

“SOMETIMES IT EVEN HELPS TO JUST WRITE EVERYTHING OUT ON PAPER. WRITE ABOUT ALL OF YOUR WORRIES AND FEARS, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, WRITE ABOUT YOUR PASSIONS.”

CREATIVE CONTEST HAMMERED AFTER PARTY



The 'Hammered: After Party' Creative Contest is a way to empower young people across Saskatchewan to share their thoughts and experiences about alcohol. The Youth Action for Prevention (YAP) Program invited youth to submit short stories, photography, drawings, and poems. A panel of youth participated in the process to choose which works were selected to display in the magazine. We thank everyone who submitted to the creative contest. These pieces are featured to encourage dialogue among youth and their communities regarding alcohol.



Mike Litwin
Wesmor High School
Prince Albert, SK



"THE HEART"
WARICK BEATTY - PRINCE ALBERT, SK



"LOVE CONQUERS"
TIM UNGER - SASKATOON, SK

DRUGS

DEZ BENJAMIN
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

Walking these streets all alone, thinking all these thoughts, wishing for the best to happen, hoping for someone to come save me from this misery but nothing happens, so I try to find myself but it leads to nothing but drugs, I tell myself I'm only gonna do it once but once is never enough with all this drama. And still today from this moment on I'm still trying to find myself but all these drugs are blinding me from the good life.

ONE WISH

SKY RATT
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

We have one wish... to say goodbye one last time to the ones who have left too early... Never knowing that they brought grief, pain and misery... we release our inner beasts screaming, "come back to me" tears streaming down everyone's faces knowing that our sunshine has been taken away. That one fatal mistake you've made by wearing the rope necklace thinking that it makes you pretty... to me when you went down you took a piece of me with you... but I also have a piece that tells me "we are one" helping me with my battles... I'm the sword and you're my shield together we fight our demons... even though it never ends I know you will be my guardian through the cycle of life.

MY BROKEN CHAINS

RILEY WADITAKA, AKA COLE BRAVE
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

Over the past 7 years, I've been chained to a darkness. I thought wouldn't bring me down. I underestimated it... it took me down so far under, I couldn't see the light in the day. Everything is still dark, my inner sight is broken... and it's very hard to repair.

For five years I let the chains get stronger, it came to a point where I was unable to just let go get some water from the kitchen. I didn't move, I didn't speak, and I looked past people even if they're standing in my face. I didn't want to live at that point. Until, I met a certain person that is no longer here. This person looked at me and said, "you're not alone, you can do this... I'll help."

Then, I got up and started with STEP ONE - move... and don't stop moving. Ever since then, I haven't stopped moving. I kept on moving my body until I became paralyzed, I'd sweat to rust the chains that were holding me back. To this day I've been moving, but the chains haven't snapped. Right now, I'm just waiting to walk away from my broken chains.

YOU ARE ENOUGH

"YOU ARE ENOUGH"

RAVEN KISHAYINEW - PRINCE ALBERT, SK

SO YOUNG, YET SO DAMAGED

AMBER MARKS
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

She was young, and had her whole life ahead of her.

She was innocent and playful.

Until one day he decided it was okay to hurt her, sexually.
She has and never will be the same.

She felt hopeless, like everything has been taken from her.
Why me? She says.

She just wants it to be all over.
She numbs her pain with drugs,
But what good is that going to do? It makes her forget all
the pain she was put through.

It was her way of running away,
But she can't run away forever.
She needs to let go of the pain,
And know it was never her fault.
Let it all go and move on.



"THE SCARS WE HIDE"

MIKE LITWIN - PRINCE ALBERT, SK



Some of the participants (from left to right): Amber Marks, Sky Ratt, Riley Waditaka, Warick Beatty, Mike Litwin

ON SEX, ALCOHOL, & CONSENT

WITH DYLAN LAMBI-RAINE



The USSU Women's Centre is a safe and vibrant space for educating and informing the University of Saskatchewan community about issues affecting women. For two years, Dylan Lambi-Raine, 24, was the Women's Centre coordinator. Her efforts during that period, and those of the present Women's Centre volunteers, have been pivotal in working to challenge stereotypes, encourage safe practices with sex and alcohol, and raise awareness about consent culture.

Cope Magazine sat down with Lambi-Raine to discuss her passion for working to increase awareness about sexual assault on the University of Saskatchewan campus.

Cope Magazine: You've been working with young adults for a few years now. What are some of the risks for girls and guys who are binge drinking and having sex?

Dylan Lambi-Raine: I think a lot of people, not just young people, drink in order to have sex. We live in a society that shames sex, and even conversations around sex. People are nervous to communicate about it with their friends, let alone the person they're having sex with. Communication is vital during any kind of sexual activity. Alcohol reduces our inhibitions and creates this false sense of safety or comfort with an individual who you might not be comfortable with sober. It reduces any boundaries you may have and makes a person more comfortable to pursue a sexual act.

CM: Does consent change when alcohol is involved?

DLR: The danger is that when you're binge drinking, or intoxicated, you actually cannot consent. There's a social narrative, where if a person buys another individual a drink, they assume that person then owes them sex. People who are sober or less intoxicated may use this culture of intoxication to gain access to other people's bodies. Taking advantage of an intoxicated person is dangerous - it's a part of rape culture and lacks a basis of consent.

CM: What advice would you give to girls and guys who are involved in sexual activity and alcohol?

DLR: I think the rule and responsibility with everyone is to practice consent in all partnered activities. Even before you hug someone, you should ask, "can I give you a hug?" You're giving that person the ability to say no. It's important to educate people about their boundaries at a young age. That "no" is a full sentence. Always give people the ability to say no; read their body language and check verbally. These are all practices we can do outside the bedroom. You can practice consent with friends, acquaintances, and even strangers. We need to practice consent in all areas of our lives.

CM: How should a person react if they see someone touching another person without consent?

DLR: When you see someone touching someone else without their consent, it's important to interrupt and say "did you ask?" or "hey, it's about consent." This is particularly important if someone is intoxicated. I think these are all ways to interrupt dynamics that are not consensually based, and a way to introduce these concepts outside the bedroom. The practice becomes normalized. And then it can become normal in the bedroom, which is a place that we're not used to asking for what we want. If you're unable to speak with an individual that you're being intimate with, perhaps you're not ready to have sex.

CM: If you could, what advice would you give to yourself as teenager?

DLR: I would tell the sixteen or seventeen-year-old Dylan, who was a binge drinker at the time, that your binge drinking is a coping mechanism. Try to find a counsellor, or someone you can talk to, who will help you find more healthy modes of coping that are not drug and alcohol based. But also, I would tell myself to be more gentle with myself. Part of my binge drinking was escapism, because I hated myself. I was self-medicating. And as a larger message, to love and respect yourself. I had a non-consensual sexual experience at that age, and I told people it wasn't consensual. It's important not to believe gossip or slut-shaming, but rather to believe and respect yourself.

CM: What advice would you give to someone that has been sexually assaulted and is holding this inside?

DLR: Seeking support should be somebody's number one step. If you don't feel comfortable disclosing to family or friends, I would highly recommend contacting a hotline. I would also highly recommend the Sexual Assault Centre, where there's free counselling. You don't have to report to the police in order to access services there. And it's important to know that you're not alone. What you've gone through is traumatic, and you can even feel doubt within yourself as to whether it was sexual assault. We live in a society that often doesn't want to believe the high amount of sexual assault that happens, and tries to shame those who come forward through victim blaming. Whether it's a hotline, friend, or a women's centre, I would recommend finding a support system where you feel safe enough to disclose, and to know that you're worthy and you're not alone.

CM: Thank you for this. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

DLR: For all individuals, and particularly those who've gone through sexual assault, we're often told that we're not worthy - either from others or even ourselves. But, we are worth putting work into ourselves. Because someday, it really does get better. If you put in that work, it will get better. Adopting consent in all areas of our lives is so important.

For sexual assault support see page 47.



ONLY A CLEAR COMMUNICATED
UNCOERCED AFFIRMATIVE
ENTHUSIASTIC SOBER AND ONGOING

YES
IS CONSENT

RAP AND RHYTHM WORKSHOP SERIES: UNLEASHING THE ARTIST WITHIN

The Rap and Rhythm Poetry Workshop was designed to empower youth to creatively express their stories of resilience through storytelling and rap. Twelve youth were selected to attend the workshop at the Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop (CNYC), where they shared their life stories as a group and worked to identify similarities in their experiences. After this initial bond was created among the group, they began the songwriting and production process. The goal of the project was not only to encourage self-expression through story and song, but to create purpose-driven music with which others may connect. Through the mentorship of four talented artists, the youth were able to self-produce a powerful and personal full length album. The album was released at Paved Arts in May 2016. Cope Magazine chatted with three of the collective's featured artists.



Some of the workshop organizers and participants (from left to right):
Zondra "Pricelys" Roy, Jordan Night, Gusto, Saskatoon River, Tyger Strongquill, Eli Temple, Muskwa Lerat

TYGER STRONGQUILL

Cope Magazine: *Hey Tyger, tell me a bit about yourself.*

Tyger Strongquill: I just recently turned 17 years old, and I'm currently attending Mount Royal and in grade eleven. And I don't do any drugs [laughs].

CM: *Can you talk about the creation of the song Loop Theory from the album?*

TS: It started out as something very simple, but evolved into a deeper concept. We talked about this oblivious type of lifestyle - you come out of jail and start banging again and get thrown back in jail. Or you're an addict recovering from drugs and you relapse over and over again. I never went through any of that stuff personally, so I talked about it as if I was in the loop myself. That's where the loop theory concept came from.

CM: *What was the experience like of being involved in this project?*

TS: It was relatively new. It was like hydration, basically. It's very inspiring. It makes me believe I can actually do something with all this and make something of myself.

CM: *Did you learn something new from attending the workshop?*

TS: I've learned quite a bit of new things. It takes a lot longer than you would think. When I did it myself, I never thought there was so many retakes. I never knew all that was required for a simple song. Because in the end it sounds like one track, but there's many tracks corresponding with one another to make that sound. It's amazing.

CM: *As a whole, what does this project mean to you?*

TS: This is my life here. This is what I do. This is what I love to do. I do this all the time. I've been rapping since the day I could talk. I've been rapping Eminem, Eazy-E songs, whatever I could listen to. And to actually be able to make my own music—it's life changing. And we're not even taking this anywhere yet, but just everything we've done so far, I never thought it was possible for someone in my position.

CM: *What was it like sharing your story with the others?*

TS: It was pretty welcoming. There was an immense level of understanding between us all. There was no judgement. It was definitely refreshing to know that I'm not the only one that has gone through what I've gone through. It was refreshing to know that other people understand.

CM: *Do you feel that music helps you cope with ongoing issues in your life?*

TS: Definitely. In my opinion there is nothing more inspirational than rap music. You can do so much with it. There's so many ways to express yourself. There are many ways of communicating with different people. Music, for me, helps me connect like nothing else can. Actors get it from acting. Artists get it from painting and drawing. This is how I can express, as an artist myself.

LIAM

On the meaning of the album:

It was really good because it has brought art and expression to people who may otherwise not get the opportunity. The reason they do hip hop in the first place is to cope with things they've experienced. And it's obvious in the music they make.

Advice for fellow young people:

First, communicate your problems with other people, or those who have the resources to help you. Get out there in the community and get to know people. Or do something like this, where it can help you look at your problems differently.



Tyger practicing for the Loop Theory video release with Muskwa.

SASKATOON RIVER

On meeting the crew:

The experience was awesome. It felt like these guys were like family to me. Maybe not so much in the first two, three weeks, but it felt like family as soon as we did the video and recording. I felt welcome. I came here every single time, every single Saturday.

On the personal nature of the album:

When we first got here, right away they told us to write how we felt. After we told them our stories, we kept on writing. And, after that, I realized my perspective on writing had changed completely. After we shared our stories, I got to hear everyone's stories, and I realized that I wasn't the only person there in that same situation. It felt really good to just get into a group and talk about everything.

On how the album has impacted future plans:

I hope there's no 'after this'. I really want this to continue. I hope this becomes like a school. A different way to express feelings and emotions. A place where people can talk.

LOOP THEORY

BY THE RAP & RHYTHM COLLECTIVE

Life is a loop round and round
The struggle is real, don't let it get you down
Move with us to the sound
Unravelling round and round and round

Lost in myself, lost in my mind
Lost in what to find, can't tell who am I
Waking up to the same **** in the same shoes
Looking up to my ceiling wondering who I am or where I'll be in the future
As I reminisce about way back and what I made there, will I ever make it?
Some days I don't even know where I'll go
Where will your destination take you?
Yeah we live in a generation that when you don't fit in with what they do
Then you're not cool - then there comes a separation and why there is groups
Some individuals wondering where their days went to
Listen to what I'm saying - this is the key to the truth to the loop
We live in a society of manipulation
Giving a bad message to the youth and wonder why we got attitudes?

Round and round in the loop we go
Spinning right out of control
Disconnected from our kin, poverty, forced to sin
Angry, fire ranging, extinguish, pull the pin
Rednecks say "we need to control these natives",
No, you need to give them help, love, care and patience
Emotions are showing, I'll be spitting these raps
Throw my struggles on the beat when I am ripping the track
Expecting different outcomes when it's always the same
It's kinda cruel, however, insanity is its name
Don't give us jobs cuz they like to see us struggling
Are they not worried about the loop that is trapping our kids?

I'm just half the life, I came to step to be the best.
I came from the underground, try to build my name up
Get my game up - come from that struggling - addictions and afflictions
Some days feeling so constricted, like somebody got me in a vice script
Next to presidential, I'm on the vice then, always trying to be the nice kid
Violence, I always thought was the answer, but I'm cancerous
Sick ill, so commitment is the trick. Overcoming all these deficits - Its definite
Make myself relevant, I'm elegant - escalating, levelling
Moving on, try to settle in.

Life is a loop round and round
The struggle is real, don't let it get you down
Move with us to the sound
Unravelling round and round and round



Clips from The Loop Theory music video, available at www.skprevention.ca



CULTURE OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

WITH ANN DOWSETT JOHNSTON

Ann Dowsett Johnston is an award winning writer, editor, public speaker, and co-founder of the National Roundtable on Girls, Women and Alcohol. Her bestselling book, *Drink: The Intimate Relationship Between Women and Alcohol*, uses her own personal story of addiction and recovery to dissect the psychological, social, and workplace factors that contribute to high-risk drinking. Dowsett Johnston was interviewed for Cope Magazine by Rigel Smith, a young journalist and grade twelve student at Bedford Road Collegiate in Saskatoon.



Cope Magazine: *Why did you want to share your personal story in a book?*

Ann Dowsett Johnston: I wanted to share it for three reasons. One, when I knew I had a problem and was wrestling with getting sober, there was one book that I read over and over: Caroline Knapp's *Drinking: A Love Story*. Her book was really great for me. I found that book incredibly comforting and personal. So, I wanted to write a book that would provide the same comfort for other women in trouble. Two, I had grown up with a severely drug addicted mother, whom I love very much. I had seen what keeping addictions a secret had done to our family. I think there is great positive energy when it comes to being open and de-stigmatizing these very difficult subjects. And three, I wanted to explore the many faces of alcohol issues. Not just addictions, but alcohol issues for women. We are seeing a rise in high-risk drinking among women around the world. And that is incredibly troubling.

CM: *Can you talk about the culture of overconsumption of alcohol among young women?*

ADJ: Women outpace men in post-secondary enrolment, and we go toe-to-toe in the workforce – all really positive for women. But we also have our own feminized drinking culture; alcohol that's focused squarely at the teenaged girl to steer her away from beer and towards hard liquor so she becomes a client for life.

Our bodies are very different from men. When I go onto campuses, I see young men and women playing drinking games. He's drinking beer, she's drinking a shot. She's half his size, she may not have eaten before she went out because she doesn't want to get fat, and she's doing shots, and pre-drinking is real. Men out-drink women, but women are playing catch up. Since 2003, there's a very steady rise in risky-drinking for women

over twenty in Canada. The campus culture that a lot of people focus on can be deadly. So you're talking about a very large increase of drinking where you don't mix [alcohol] with food or non-alcoholic beverages. You're drinking to get drunk.

CM: *What are the risks of binge drinking for young women?*

ADJ: Beyond the health risks, the risks are around safety, sexual assault, injury, and vulnerability of all sorts. When I talk to young women in rehab, they often tell me stories about being sexually assaulted due to blacking out. She's then too ashamed or compromised to get the appropriate help, so she binge drinks again and is re-traumatized. And that becomes a habit and a pattern.

CM: *What kind of pressures do young women feel in terms of drinking in order to fit in and belong?*

ADJ: There's an enormous amount of social pressure. You're heading to a party, you want to fit in, you want to be part of the gang. You may feel that you're not thin enough, not pretty enough. It's just a way to fit in with the rest of the group. But, you're the person who has to be steering the boat in terms of your own values and your own ability to appreciate what kind of danger you could be putting yourself in.

“THERE'S AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF SOCIAL PRESSURE. YOU'RE HEADING TO A PARTY, YOU WANT TO FIT IN, YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE GANG. YOU MAY FEEL THAT YOU'RE NOT THIN ENOUGH, NOT PRETTY ENOUGH. IT'S JUST A WAY TO FIT IN WITH THE REST OF THE GROUP.”

CM: *What advice would you give to a young person experimenting with alcohol?*

ADJ: I always counsel women to do the things they love. Do the things you adore and fill your life with those things. When you go off to university, you're going to be in a community that is like a banquet table full of options. My experience, when I headed off at [age] 17 to university, there was enormous pressure to drink a lot to fit in. I think we don't appreciate that alcohol is a drug. We tend to think of wine as its own food group. We tend to think of it as sophisticated. Be savvy about what you're putting into your body. Keep yourself safe. *(Continued on page 17)*

CM: In your book, you talk about the idea of drinking as a way to cope with the stresses of perfectionism.

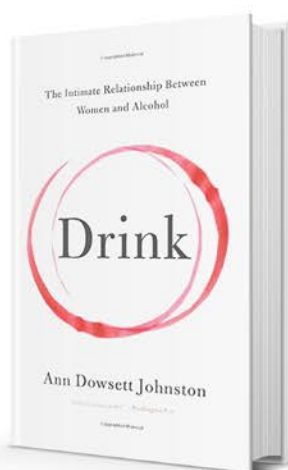
ADJ: Yes, I think we're sending women, especially young women, a really powerful message that they can be anything. But with that message also comes pressure to be perfect at home and school. It's enormous pressure. Women are 40% more likely to suffer from mental health conditions, such as depression or anxiety. The stress of perfectionism is that we become anxious because we think we have to be perfect. We arrive at a party, and we all think that we have to look and be perfect. It's unrealistic. Using alcohol numbs those feelings of anxiety around being perfect. Young women

“BE SAVVY ABOUT WHAT YOU’RE PUTTING INTO YOUR BODY. KEEP YOURSELF SAFE.”

are drinking to deal with the social anxiety of walking into a party and wanting to be accepted, and wanting to get the right guy. And I think we cannot disassociate ourselves from alcohol and marketing which tells us: if you drink the right thing, you'll end up at the party with the handsome guy, then at a beautiful cottage in the mountains. Rather, fast forward to mascara running down your face, you wake up with a chipped tooth, and you have no idea where you are, who the guy you're in bed with is, and how to get yourself out of trouble.

CM: How then do we promote healthy relationships between women and alcohol?

ADJ: We're not having a really open dialogue about alcohol. The biggest difficulty is to get people to have conversations. About what alcohol means in their life, the good and bad, and how to keep one another safe, and even include it in their lives in a balanced way. That way, it is part of celebrations, and it's not draining, and it's not binge drinking to blackout. Those are the conversations we need to be having.



OTHER THINGS YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW

Those under age 25 are at a greater risk of brain damage from heavy alcohol consumption.

Youth who initiate drug or alcohol use under the age of 14 are two times more likely to experience drug or alcohol dependence than those who initiate use at the age of 17.

Males are likely to drink more often and more heavily than females; however, recently women have started to drink at a rate close to their male counterparts. 87% of females over 15 and 91% of males over 15 drink alcohol.

Drinking alcohol puts you at a greater risk for health problems such as: cancer, stroke, diabetes, liver disease, compromised bone quality, heart disease, and reproductive health problems. Girls experience a greater risk because they metabolize alcohol and other drugs at a slower rate than males, which results in greater harm to the body.

If you have mental health problems, such as depression, you might drink to cope. If you drink a lot, it may lead to poor mental health. Heavy drinking can lead to changes in the brain that can result in depression and negatively impact relationships.

The following can improve your mental health: participating in physical exercise; eating well; taking part in healthy activities you enjoy.

Exercise has major health benefits, can reduce anxiety, can treat mild to moderate depression, and can enhance self-esteem.

Having a plan to deal with stress can decrease the desire to use alcohol and/or drugs.

For sexual assault support, see page 47.

ALCOHOL & SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual assault is the full range of forced sexual acts including kissing, touching, verbally coerced sex, and physically forced vaginal, oral, or anal sex.

Approximately half of all sexual assaults are committed by a perpetrator who has been drinking alcohol.

95% of adolescent and adult sexual assault victims are female, and when men are assaulted, the perpetrator is commonly, but not always, male.

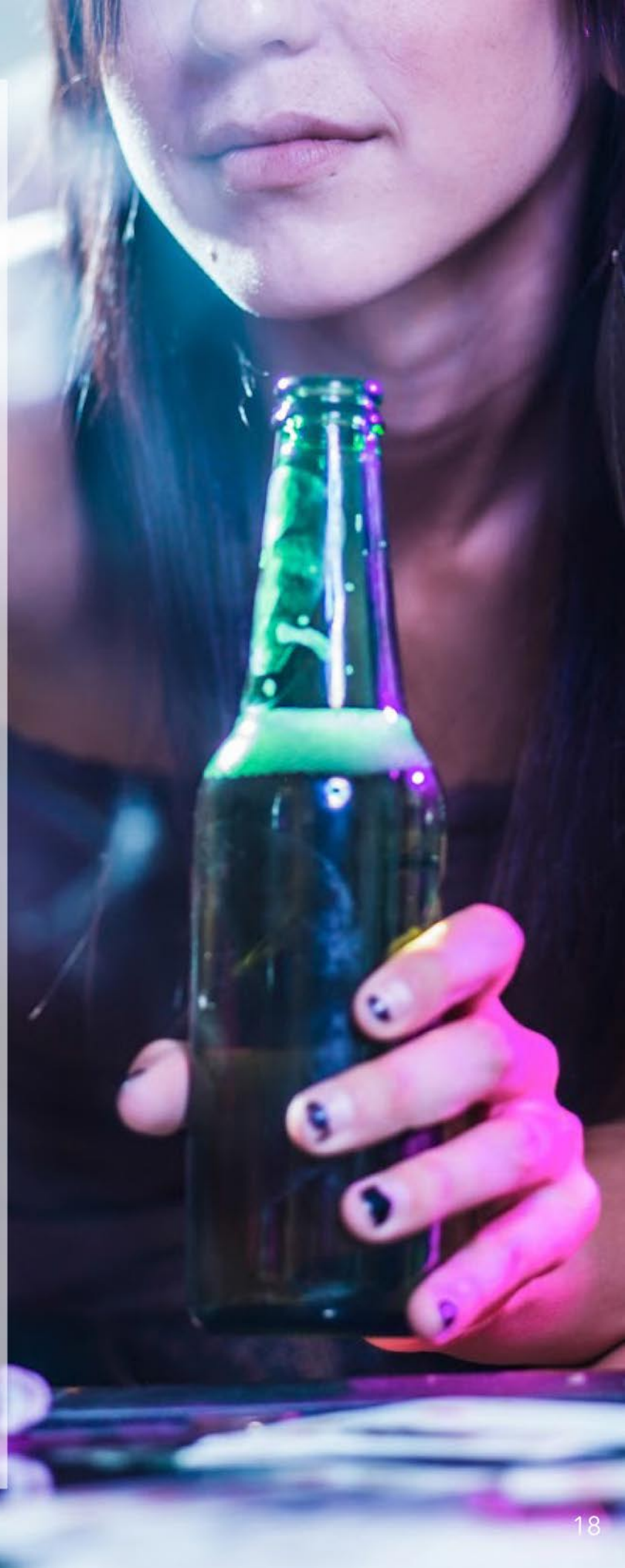
Alcohol consumption may increase the likelihood of experiencing sexual assault; this does not make the assault survivor responsible.

Having sex with someone too intoxicated to give consent is legally rape. Intoxication is the point at which alcohol depresses the central nervous system so that mood, physical, and mental abilities are noticeably changed. The legal definition of intoxication is a Blood Alcohol Content of .08.

Inability to consent due to intoxication means "No".

Individuals who commit a sexual assault are criminally responsible for their actions under the Criminal Code of Canada, even if they were drunk at the time of the assault.

Because alcohol makes it easy to ignore subtle signals, both males and females need to be careful when drinking to communicate their sexual desires clearly and to obtain active consent throughout the sexual encounter.





BREAKING THE CYCLE

Joshua, a student from Regina, shares his story of how he overcame his addictions and changed his life for the better. He now helps others in their healing journey and wants you to know that it's never too late to change your life.

My name is Joshua and I am twenty-three years old, born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan. I had my first drink when I was fourteen; beer with some other kids on a playground near my house. My first experience with drugs was around that same time. I didn't care for the taste or effect of alcohol at first, but loved the effects drugs had on me from the very beginning.

I soon began habitually using substances to numb the way I felt about myself. I was seeking a sense of comfort and belonging, and believed I found what I was looking for in drugs and alcohol. I convinced myself that if using a little helped me cope, using a lot would make me feel great. And so, I began using a variety of drugs, every dollar going towards supporting my addiction. I would steal alcohol and sell drugs, which led me to legal problems, hospitalizations, mental health issues, and absence from school and home. My family tried to intervene, but I had very much latched on to this destructive way of life. I rarely attended high school. I became entirely dependent on drugs and alcohol; I needed them just to function.

At the age of sixteen, I overdosed in an attempt to kill myself. After my suicide attempt, I still refused to stop using, despite serious concern from my family. My relationship with them grew very strained because I wouldn't accept any of the help they offered. Addiction is a big problem in my family, and as such, I had always vowed to avoid going down that same path. Unfortunately, my own addiction issues ended up being worse than the issues my family faced. I left home to continue to lead a lifestyle of drinking, using, and selling drugs. My life was miserable. Addictions brought me sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. I was unhealthy, underweight, and depressed beyond belief.

Drugs were my coping mechanism, but if I'm being honest, it only ever made me feel worse. I would often wake up and wish that my miserable existence would come to an end. It's funny though, what you can see when you've gained some perspective. I learned later, 'nothing changes when nothing changes'. If you're not ready to embrace life, nothing is going to improve.

It was only when I acknowledged my problem that I was able to begin my recovery. I found available resources in the community, such as detox centres, twelve-step programs, and counsellors. I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to go to treatment and it completely changed my life. It wasn't easy, it was a long process of trial and error, but I learned to take it one day at a time. It's very difficult to view a life without the use of drugs and alcohol, and is particularly overwhelming for someone new to recovery. For those new to recovery, sometimes it's just taking it a minute at a time. Life is unpredictable and we don't know what tomorrow will hold. I can't promise I'll be sober for another week, a month, or a year. But I can make the promise I'll be sober for today. With the support given to me, I've been able to maintain relatively long-term sobriety. However, being an addict still poses many challenges in my life. I need to be actively involved in the recovery community in order to maintain my sobriety. I can only keep my recovery by giving it away - helping others is the main pillar of my success in recovery. As self-centeredness was the root of my addiction, I needed to embrace virtues of selflessness, honesty, and humility. I've also had to associate with a new group of individuals that understood and supported my recovery in order to stay sober. If I continued to hang out with my old friends who still drink and use regularly, I would not be sober today. We are a product of our environment. To use a cliché, 'if you hang out in the barber shop long enough you're bound to get a haircut'.

I've found no greater resource than other people walking the same path of recovery. Connection is the opposite of addiction. You can't have a successful and happy recovery, or life, doing it on your own. Life doesn't work that way. We need each other.

Today, I can look at myself in the mirror and be happy with who I am, free from the chains of addictions that held me down for so long. I am currently studying psychology at university, and have dedicated the last two years to working at a treatment centre for drug and alcohol addiction. I speak at schools about my experiences with substance abuse in order to aid others in their path to recovery. It's important to know that you're not alone; others have been there before and made it through. In fact, I have a family member who struggles with their own addiction issues. They contacted me for help not too long ago, and now they are over three months sober. This, above all else, is the most amazing gift recovery has given me; an opportunity to help others.

I didn't do any of this on my own, I needed help and I only received it when I asked for it. If you relate to any of this, I want you to know that it's never too early to begin your path in recovery and there is a great life outside the cycle of addiction and abuse. All it takes is honesty, open mindedness and conviction.

For support, see page 47 for mental health and addictions services.



THE LUNCHTIME CLUB

A group of young guys, grade ten, sit and talk about drinking, sex, masculinity, gender, home life, drugs, peer pressures, and social expectations. No one cracks any disrespectful jokes, no one makes fun. A bully doesn't come lurching around the group to pound anyone brave enough to share something sensitive. They're safe to open up here - a place where vulnerability isn't mocked but encouraged. Sounds like a pipe dream, doesn't it? Hollywood's version of teenage boy simpatico.

But it's not some fantasy, or far-off aspiration. It's the social project of two high school support workers who simply wanted to give a group of boys a platform to share the often challenging and complex experience of growing up. Ryan Bilanski and Dave Berg, restorative action program, and school counsellor, respectively, created two 'Guy's Groups' at Tommy Douglas Collegiate in Saskatoon, inspired by similar Guy's Groups in Nova Scotia. Over the course of two semesters, the groups of boys met once a week over lunch hour to learn more about themselves, their peers, and the social pressures that weigh on them all. *(Continued on page 23)*

(Continued from page 22) "Talking freely is contagious," says Bilanski. "At first, they didn't know they could talk about these personal things so openly. But it's been normalized now. It's become an outlet for them."

In one last session before breaking for the summer, an assortment of boys from the two different Guys' Groups met to talk about how the group impacted them over the year. It's a diverse group, all-inclusive - gamer kids, jocks, skaters, art kids, the quiet, observant types - the full spectrum of male youth doing what society tells them is virtually forbidden: sharing their feelings.

Of course, the group rattles off a few jokes about the perks of missing class and getting free pizza before they settle into a more serious discussion. [Due to the personal nature of the conversation, the names of the participants will be withheld.]

"It was a safe place to share anything. Some of the topics we discussed were very personal, and came from a very vulnerable place. You were able to see people in a different light. Everyone, in that way, was on the same plateau."

"Some of the topics we talked about were controversial or touchy, and because we had this group, if we ever had a problem in or outside school, I knew I could go to someone in this group. I could have a pretty honest, raw conversation about what's going on."

Bilanski and Berg would occasionally offer topics or direction for the conversation, bringing up complex subjects like gender and masculinity. The group, in attempting to define masculinity, responded first with the most common associations: "muscular", "macho", "jockish", "beards". But the group, again, became more thoughtful.

"I started seeing [masculinity] differently after we talked about it and began to break it down. You begin to see how much of 'masculinity' is really just about a person feeling insecure and needing to portray themselves a certain way. You see how they're trying to overdo themselves."

The conversation spins off-topic, to a different, but equally important one - the misuse of words like "gay" and "retarded". This detour was self-directed, Bilanski and Berg allowing them to follow any train of thought. None of the boys outright condemn using these words in a disparaging way, but they're smart. They don't need to say much at all. Conversations like this don't need a lesson attached, a grand solution, a promise to end the use of derogatory language once and for all. The conversation itself is enough, and they'll remember these talks and how they felt the next time they're put in a similar circumstance.

"I've seen how the group has made many of them a lot more confident. Quite a few of them have become leaders in their peer group," says Bilanski. "And they're there for each other. You see guys who weren't previously friends talking in the hall."

During the first sessions, sheets were passed around, asking the boys to check off which societal pressures they feel. Things like drinking, being masculine, having sex, being a jock were some of the pressures nearly all the boys identified with. When the sheets were passed around on the last session, there were a fraction of the original checkmarks.

"If people pressure you to get drunk, then they're not really your friends. If you don't put yourself in that position, to be stupid and get drunk, then you have nothing to lose."

"I barely checked any of them this time. The first time, I checked just about all of them. After learning that these aren't pressures I actually have to fulfill, I can just be who I want."

"Yeah. We all seem to feel the same pressures. If we're all feeling the same way, then why would I worry about someone judging me?"

Before being released into fourth period, the guys were asked if the group was a worthwhile experience. Nearly every boy made a reference to the group providing to them an opportunity to talk about things that normally would never happen, free from jokes and judgement.

"It was an eye opener. An ear opener, too. It showed me how different people's perspectives are compared to mine. How we often thought and felt the same. I looked forward to it every week."

PRE GUY



DRINK
LOTS

SSURES S FACE:

BE A
PLAYER

HAVE A
BIG BODY

FIX YOUR
OWN PROBLEMS
DONT ASK
FOR HELP

BE COOL
AROUND
WOMEN

BE A
JOCK

HAVE LIMITED
AFFECTION
WITH THE
SAME SEX

PRESSURES GIRLS FACE:

SHOPPING AND
ACQUIRING
THINGS IS
IMPORTANT

HAVE A
THIN BODY
AND BIG
BREASTS

YOU SHOULD
WANT SEX AND
BE A SEXUAL
OBJECT

BE FLIRTY
AROUND GUYS
AND WANT TO
PLEASE THEM

BE
ATTRACTIVE

LIFE IS ABOUT
THE BF,
MARRIAGE, HOME
AND KIDS

WHOEVER YOU
ARE YOU ARE
NOT GOOD
ENOUGH

STAYING IN
DESTRUCTIVE
RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT PRESSURES DO YOU FACE?

The page contains ten hand-drawn rectangular boxes, each intended for a student to write a response. The boxes are scattered across the page, with some overlapping the edges of the page. They are drawn with simple black outlines and are currently empty.



I am who I am





to me; nothing less.



THE FOUR SEASONS OF RESILIENCE PROJECT

How does one define strength? Resilience? And how would one go about representing one's own understanding of those very complex words? This was the very task given to a group of young photographers in the Four Seasons of Resilience PhotoVoice project. The project was created through a partnership with the University of Saskatchewan and Station 20 West to identify and generate strategies of resilience and mental wellbeing among inner-city youth in Saskatoon. Through photography, these youth were able to display their PhotoVoice stories of strength and resilience in the SCYAP Art Gallery in Saskatoon.

Cope Magazine chatted with two of the young PhotoVoice participants about expressing their voice through photography. *(Continued on page 29)*

THE FOUR SEASONS OF RESILIENCE: INTERVIEWS

SIENNA WASKEWITCH

Cope Magazine: *Sienna, tell me about yourself.*

Sienna Waskewitch: I grew up in Saskatoon, originally from Onion Lake First Nations. I'm in grade twelve.

CM: *How did you become involved in the project?*

SW: My mother, she gets emails about all these kinds of things. She encouraged me to come to the first part, so I did. I really enjoyed the idea of taking pictures and representing the things you want, in a resilience type of way. I've always been interested in photography so I thought it would be really interesting. The more I got involved, the more interested I became. So I stayed with it for the entire four seasons.

CM: *What was the experience like being involved in this project?*

SW: It was really eye-opening. At first, I wasn't sure what I was supposed to photograph. But the more I got into it, the easier it became. I went out and had an idea about what I wanted to represent. And then I went out and would look at something and interpret it in a completely different way. I think, to a degree, I somewhat always did. This project just really made me think about it more.

CM: *What does the concept of 'resilience' mean to you?*

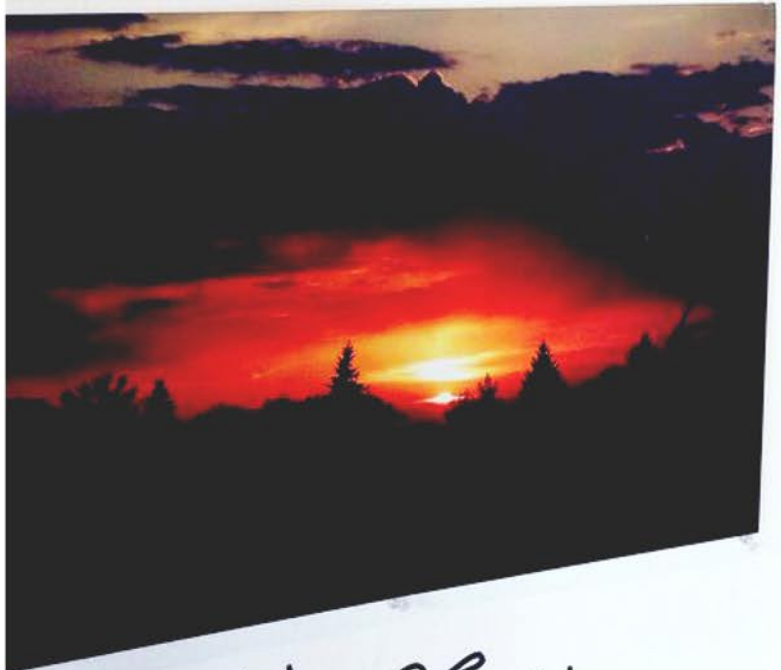
SW: I think it's any way the individual needs help or healing. I've realized that for a lot of different people, it means different things.

CM: *Did this project help you identify some of those positive things in your life?*

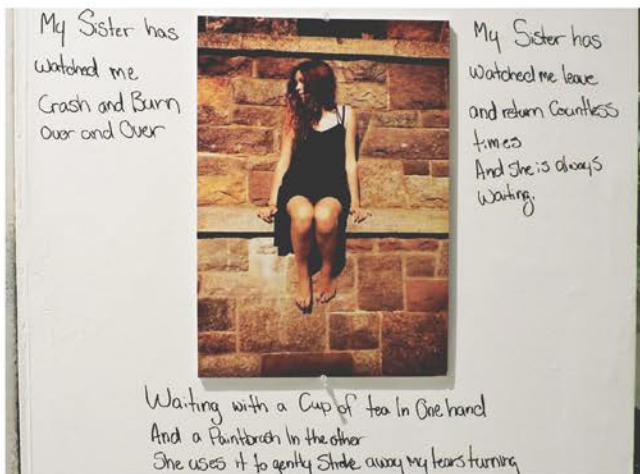
SW: Yeah, after every season, after we took all the pictures, and edited them. We had to answer questions about them, and they made it very spiritual so it was such a safe area for us to speak openly. All these emotions and stories poured out. They really helped to shine a new light and think about things in a new way. I think that aspect of the project really helped everyone to understand themselves in a new way. When we all realized what everyone went through, we realized how strong and powerful we all are.

CM: *What, if anything, surprised you about this project?*

SW: With some projects I've been involved with, people aren't very connected to it. During this project we were all devoted to it. It was such a good experience to get together every couple weeks. Go take pictures, go have another meeting, go eat food. It was all so personal; we all opened up so much. It was hard not to become invested in it.



Hope...





SHANIA DUQUETTE

Cope Magazine: *Shania, can you tell me a bit about yourself?*

Shania Duquette: I'm 20 years old, grew up here in Saskatoon, and go to school at Oskayak.

CM: *What was the experience like being involved in this project?*

SD: It was really fun. It forced me to really think. Plus I'm very shy and often avoid being involved in things. So this helped me be comfortable with myself and express myself. It's helped me become more open.

CM: *What types of things act as resilience in your life and give you strength?*

SD: The things I took pictures of. My books, my tea, and my family. Just going out in nature. This whole experience has helped me. It showed me what I'm comfortable with, and what actually does make me happy.

CM: *So would you say this project helped you identify positive things in your life?*

SD: Yeah, it did. It showed me that there are things in my life that are going to help me keep going and be successful. Like getting into school and planning a future for myself. This whole project has really helped me a lot.

CM: *Was there anything that surprised you about this project?*

SD: The support. The whole community that came out of it. That was pretty cool. I feel closer to everyone.

CM: *After the project is done, will you continue to keep in touch?*

SD: Definitely. They're just like family now.



SPEAKING O

Many queer and trans youth face homophobia and transphobia on a daily basis. This causes difficulties at school, increased stress and anxiety, and the search for coping strategies. According to a Canadian study, LGBTQ youth face approximately 14 times the risk of substance abuse than their peers. If queer and trans youth are turning towards substances in order to cope with bullying and discrimination, then it's important for us to listen to their stories and do our best to create safe spaces where they can be themselves and accept themselves.

ALICE LA

Around grade eight, I began to realize I wasn't straight. There was this pretty girl and I asked her to be my girlfriend. I mostly did it to seem cool and impress the other kids in class. But, the first time I kissed her, I got butterflies. Suddenly, my obsession with Hilary Duff made more sense.

Still, I didn't think my sexuality was valid. At the time, I identified as bisexual, but many people told me that there was only straight or gay, but no in-between. I started to smoke weed and drink as a way to relax. Then I began using those substances more and more as a way to avoid the feelings I was experiencing. I felt like it was becoming part of my identity. But my true friends were the ones who stuck by me when I was sober. So, I decided to cut out the people in my life who were always partying.

In grade ten, I began attending the GSA [Gay-Straight Alliance] at my high-school, as well as a support group for GSD [gender and sexually diverse] youth called Rainbow Coffee. Those two safe spaces opened up many doors for me; I realized I identify as pansexual, and that my sexuality is real and as valid as any other.

I got involved in the queer community younger than most. I think it's important to have all-ages GSD events. I always wished I had someone older to look up to and see that it truly does get better. I know that now, but when I was fourteen, I was lost. All ages events allow younger queer kids to have role models. These events made me feel like I was a part of a movement and was doing something bigger than myself.

Regrettably, the majority of queer events are in bars and heavily centred around drinking. I used to think that drinking is what I had to do to be a part of the community. Mental health is a prevalent problem in the GSD community, and it goes hand in hand with substance abuse. It can spiral out of control until self-harm or suicide comes into your thought process. That's why everyone should have access to a support network. The right community, like a GSA or support network, can provide the skills and tools to deal with issues in a way other than turning to substance use.

CHARLIE

I was in grade seven when I first started identifying with the queer community and I was in grade eleven when I decided to come out to my friends and family.

When I first started coming out, I wasn't entirely sure on how to handle answering their questions, mainly because I wasn't educated on those topics. There's a lot of queer youth who don't have those outlets to openly discuss their issues, whether it be about how they identify, or how they're trying to cope with problems. It's important to have safe places without fear of being judged or ridiculed. Now that I've been educating myself on these issues, it's easier sharing what I've learned and helping to educate other people as well.

In the past, I have had friends who have used drugs or alcohol to cope with their problems. After a particular family tragedy, I found myself numbing the pain with alcohol. But, I learned quickly that this is a very destructive way of handling things. People are very capable of making things seem okay, when under the surface might be another story. I think it's important to offer support to anyone who might need it, whether you recognize the need in them or not.

When coming out, try to be true to yourself. In order to be content with life in general, you have to learn to be happy with who you are. Coming out can be tough and scary. Sometimes you have to look at it as ripping off a band aid: it might hurt a little, but it'll be worth it in the end. You'll find people who are just like you and it's a great feeling. Just do you and love yourself.



OUT

I started transitioning when I was in grade twelve, but I had been exploring what the 'T' in LGBTQ meant to me since the beginning of high school. There was no transgender representation in any of the media I consumed, and living in a small town Saskatchewan, there were few resources to explore.

When I was still living at home, it was very difficult. My dad was struggling with my identity, so I'd leave home for a week or more at a time, where I would couch-surf, drink, and smoke. I wasn't allowed at home at times, which gave me more of a reason to stay away. This struggle with home life, as well as the complications with my identity, were some of the reasons I turned to drugs and alcohol.

BL There are many reasons youth in the LGBTQ community drink. I'm sure some big factors are trying to cope with internalized homophobia and transphobia, abuse at home, bullying at school, or trying to fit in when your entire identity seems to isolate you. I also think that the LGBTQ community is stuck in a rut, a constant cycle of pride and community events revolving around alcohol.

Regardless of drugs and alcohol being used as a coping mechanism, it's more difficult for LGBTQ youth to cope with their problems if they don't have support. Using alcohol to cover up your problems is harmful, but not having love, support, and a community to tell you that it gets better is also harmful for an individual.

And guess what, it does get better. Find people who support you, even if you're not out. If life is troubling and feels like it won't get better, just remember to take it a day at a time. Be genuine to yourself, be safe, and take care of yourself.

The summer before grade eight, I began to identify as queer.

I'm lucky in that all of my close friends are either queer, or fantastic allies to our community. My broader friend group, on the other hand, is less educated about queer issues. Thankfully though, they are all very open-minded individuals who are always down to learn more.

LOLA Unfortunately, a lot of my peers turn to drugs or alcohol when dealing with challenges. Personally, I've never turned to drugs or alcohol. My mom has taught me more constructive coping mechanisms. But a lot of LGBTQ individuals go through so many challenges, either within themselves or at school, so they turn to a more destructive method to cope. Queer youth have a lot to deal with, and there aren't enough resources to help as there should be, particularly if you live outside of a city. Many of my peers weren't accepted by their parents or have a lot of underlying issues on top of coming to terms with their identity. For a young person, that's a lot to deal with.

For queer youth coming out: only do so if it's safe for you and there's no possibility of your family having a violent [physical or verbal] reaction. Don't expect your parents to completely understand at first - this is something new to them as well, and it might take them a while to understand. Remember, sexuality is fluid, so you might not identify this way forever. No matter what anyone tells you, you're not wrong about how you feel, you know yourself better than anyone else.



SASKATOON

OUT Saskatoon Peer Support Line (province wide support): 1-306-665-1224

HEALTHY MINDS MATTER A STUDENT TO STUDENT CONFERENCE

Two motivated students from Bedford Road Collegiate in Saskatoon initiated the Healthy Minds Matter Conference. Rigel Smith and Xilonen Hanson-Pastran felt a personal call to action due to the harms they were seeing from drugs among their peers, particularly fentanyl. The conference taught students alternative coping methods, such as yoga, martial arts, and poetry writing, as well as provided a place for students to talk with their peers about drug and drinking addictions. Smith and Hanson-Pastran spoke with Cope Magazine about the conference, social pressures, and the widespread issues of addiction among their peers.



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making better
decisions

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HEALING

learning
from mistakes

- reflecting → looking to the future
- realization
- getting help
- setting goals.
- reaching to people who get it.
- take control
- admitting your wrongs
- staying sober
- commitment

A WORD FROM THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

HEALTHY MINDS MATTER

COPE MAGAZINE: *What made you want to speak out on this topic?*

XILONEN HANSON-PASTRAN: Out of a group of ten people that I'm friends with, three of them have experimented with fentanyl, two have overdosed, and those two continued to use drugs after the overdose. I was also frustrated with responding to discussions about fentanyl with questions. I felt that more information should be known.

RIGEL SMITH: When it comes to the education about drugs and their effects on people, I just think that sometimes schools can do themselves harm in being too conservative. They almost censor some of the real life issues that go on. Because they're scared or they're bound by specific policies. I wanted to change the way we approached the issue of drugs in the school systems.

CM: *What kinds of things have you witnessed among your peers in terms of their experiences with alcohol and drugs?*

XHP: There is a normalcy built around alcohol and drugs at parties. I've seen how addictions have affected families and friends. There is an impaired ability to make good decisions in other areas of the user's life. Negative repercussions from drug use can be at the expense of your life.

CM: *What did you think of the response from the grade nine students at the conference?*

RS: I was surprised. I was concerned going into it, specifically about the separate sessions where students had the chance to learn about healthy coping skills. I was concerned that the students wouldn't participate. But they really got involved. Once we came back from those separate sessions, we had intrigued many other students in the school who ended up joining and came to check it out. By the end, there were probably one hundred and fifty students in the gym. It was really exciting.

CM: *What were your lessons learned about hosting a school conference about alcohol and drugs?*

XHP: I think a big lesson learned from this conference is that youth voice can make a difference. That if you persist and you inquire, you can make your ideas become a reality.

CM: *How has this conference made an impact on your own decisions around alcohol and drugs?*

XHP: I personally feel like I have taken on a lot of responsibility by becoming a role model for young people. That has inspired me to be a better influence on others because I see how I impact

people around me. It has also opened up a new level of confidence in myself that I haven't seen in a really long time.

RS: Making sure my friends are well educated and make smart decisions. Or if my friends need a designated driver, I'm there for them. I hope in doing this, other people will follow in my footsteps.

CM: *What advice would you give to young people that are using drugs and alcohol?*

RS: The best advice that I could give is to talk to people about drugs and alcohol. Don't be afraid to start a conversation if it's bothering you. You don't need to keep it secret because you're afraid about what people will think. You have to make sure that you're getting advice from those that are educated - not just your peers who may not provide you with the right answers.

XHP: Also, really think about your future. Think about how your actions affect your mental health and physical health, your family. Think about what



Xilonen and Rigel speaking at The Healthy Minds Matter Conference



6 BASICS

FOR STARTING YOUR OWN YOUTH CONFERENCE

Passionate about creating change in your own school or community? Here are some tips to help you plan your own youth group and conference.

Find Your Subject - Which relevant issues are most concerning to you and your peers? Which subjects do you want more information about?

Determine Your Target Audience - It may be a certain class, a particular grade, or even your entire school.

Get the Green Lights - Your conference will require space, co-ordination, teacher participation, and most importantly, time. Talk to your Principal, Teachers, Youth Coordinators and Counsellors to ensure your plan can become a reality.

Resources and Speakers - You'll need up to date information and may need experts. Look into what's available in your community or nearby.

Participation - No one wants to sit and listen to yet another lecture. Have engaging activities that get people involved. The Healthy Minds Matter Conference, for example, organized yoga, poetry, and a panel discussion with experts. Students also acted out a simulation of a party scenario, and what to do if someone needs help.

Advertise! - Make sure people know the what, where, when, and whys of your conference.

For funding opportunities, check out the Youth Health Community Grants Program on the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute website. The grant is specifically designed to help young people take action in their communities. The focus is to increase awareness of alcohol-related harms, and promote education about sexual health. Tell the adults in your school or community about the grant and they can assist you with the application, if needed. If you have any questions, contact the Saskatchewan Prevention Institute at: 306-651-4300.

your friendships are based on because there are so many people in the world who want to help you and want to see you do good in your life. And you might not have met them yet. There are so many resources out there that are there to help you, and won't make you feel like you're missing out if you're not doing drugs and alcohol.

RS: I like what you said about not missing out on much. I don't get invited to those certain parties. But I don't care anymore.

XHP: When some people use drugs and alcohol, it's about peer pressure. And that's linked to who you're surrounding yourself with. It's important to think about what kind of mental situation you're in, and the kinds of ways you're relieving stress and finding happiness.

CM: Thanks for this. Any last words?

RS: Noni and I set up this conference partially to create precedence so that other students and other schools don't have to feel overwhelmed if they want to start a conference like this. So if anyone is inspired by what we've done, we encourage them to try to recreate it, or bring it to the attention of their school or workplace.

SUPPORT VS SPACE

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING AN ADDICTED PERSON IN YOUR LIFE

Don't assume that you're responsible, in any way, for their addiction. Addictions occur as a result of many factors – it is not your fault.

Do maintain your own balance and boundaries.

Don't allow the addicted person to convince you that their drugs or alcohol use is normal. They may want you to drink or use with them because it normalizes their behaviour.

Do talk to a trusted person about what's going on. You may feel a sense of shame and betrayal for exposing them; however, it's important that you find people who you can be open and honest with about what's going on. This could be a school counsellor, teacher, a close friend, or family member.

Don't give them ultimatums, such as: "if you loved me, you would quit." For many addicted people, these ultimatums will not turn out well. Remember, this is about them, not about you.

Do help to find support for your loved one. You could start by asking the addicted person, "would you like me to look into supportive resources or treatment options for you?" If they say yes, start looking for supports in your area.

Don't put yourself in a situation where you can be manipulated, or abused mentally or physically. In such cases, you may need to distance yourself from the addicted person, and access professional support for yourself.

Do let the addicted person know that you support them through their recovery, and you are there any time they want to talk. Setting up boundaries (for example, only when they are sober) is recommended.

PROVIDING AID TO THOSE WITH ADDICTIONS

by Allan Kehler

The greatest tool a person has is their voice. After spending years struggling through mental illness and addictions, I began to understand that nobody needs to be 'fixed'. Rather, the value of being seen and heard is immeasurable. This is the message I hope to leave to the audiences I speak with: people should be encouraged to use their voices in times in need.

Recently, following one of my presentations, a sixteen year-old broke down in front of me after sharing that he believed he was the cause for his father's drinking. What a weight to bear. One of the most heart-wrenching things a person can experience is watching a loved one struggle with addiction. It's like having a front-row seat to a horror show of an individual deteriorating before your eyes.

We cannot be held responsible for the actions of others. Another young person once told me, "I've already told my friend that I'll listen, but she won't talk to me!" The reality is that whether the person is willing to talk or act on various supports is entirely out of your control. However, what that individual does know is that there is a place where they can go to be heard when they are ready.

How, then, do we help? Friends and family often find themselves drawn into a storm of anxiety over a loved one's substance use, and their sincere effort to stop the problem only makes the situation worse. A person who is struggling with addiction often responds to concern with anger or denial. Anger is our defence mechanism to keep people at a distance. As an addict, I was well aware that I had a problem, but when someone approached me, I turned to anger. Their words made me feel shame and remorse for actions that I believed I could not control. It's easy to feel helpless and resentful towards this individual who is rapidly heading down a path of self-destruction. Your relationship with this person can resemble running a three-legged race; if they fall down, you fall too.

In time, it becomes evident all that we can control in this world is ourselves. Support groups often demonstrate this understanding through the Three C's: You can't Control an addict. You can't Cure an addict. And you didn't Cause it.

There is only so much that you can do. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. In my own experiences with addiction, I didn't need to be fixed. More than anything, I just wanted to be heard. Opening the doors of communication doesn't have to be intimidating. Simply approach the individual and say "I don't mean to pry, but I'm concerned. I'd be more than happy to listen if you ever need to talk." This might seem like a minor statement to you. But for the person with an addiction, it could help to change his or her life.

Remember, it's okay to create some safe space between you and the person who is struggling with addiction. Communicate that you will always care for that individual, but if you need space, express that it is time for you to step back until they are ready for change. Let them know that you're ready when they are.

PHOTOVOICE PROJECT

The Photovoice Project was created for a group of youth to use photos and words to express their stories and feelings about the various obstacles young people face today. The group incorporated the Traditional Teachings of courage, honesty, respect, love, truth, humility, and wisdom as a theme for taking photos of healthy lifestyle choices and honouring the hard work of change. The first phase of the project focused on the potential harms of binge drinking. It was designed as a catalyst for dialogue among young people from six communities near North Battleford, where seventeen youth met on an ongoing basis from November 2015 to May 2016.

We spoke with two of the young participants to learn about how their creative approaches to the issue of substance abuse generated new and positive perspectives.

HILARY SUNCHILD, 23

Cope Magazine: *Why did you want to become involved in the Photovoice project?*

Hilary Sunchild: So my voice can be heard. I was bullied at school when I was young. I didn't have a voice, I was going to be called fat or ugly. It really hurt me to hear those things. And a lot of the bad things that happened to me were because of drugs and alcohol. My life is better now, but I wanted to be a part of this project to have my voice heard.

CM: *Has this project helped you deal or confront some of those experiences?*

HS: Yeah. Everything I saw growing up that related to my experience, I would try to capture photos of that in order to show what it was like. It helped me understand that you can't run from your problems. You'll never get ahead that way.

CM: *Has the experience of participating in this project impacted your plans for the future?*

HS: Yeah, it makes me want to go back to school. It also makes me want to teach my kids to have a good moral code and not to be bullies.



Circle of life

HUNTER CAMERON, 17

Cope Magazine: *What got you involved in this project?*

Hunter Cameron: My aunty brought it up to me. It sounded really cool. And I saw some photos from other projects. And I like taking photos. So I ended up liking the project and stayed until the end. It was nice to talk to people about how we're feeling and meet new people from different reserves.

CM: *Did this project help you reflect on your previous behaviours with alcohol?*

HC: Yeah, it opens your eyes to see what can happen to you. If you're going to drink, you should always do it responsibly. I'm fortunate because my kokum [grandmother] always talks to me about drinking, so I know quite a bit about the issues surrounding alcohol.

CM: *Was there anything unexpected about this project?*

HC: I've been told by a couple of the ladies that I'm really good at taking photos. And that I could find a job doing this. That really surprised me. I thought at first it was just a hobby, but now I'm thinking about doing this for real. So that was cool.

CM: *What advice would you give to other young people that you've learned through taking part in this project?*

HC: Whenever I feel like drinking, I ask myself: 'What went wrong today? What happened today that is making me want to use drugs and alcohol?' When I feel like that, rather than start drinking, I just talk to someone, and not hide from my emotions. So I would say that's been helpful for me.



Love life, lead life, honour life



Life is a glorious journey.



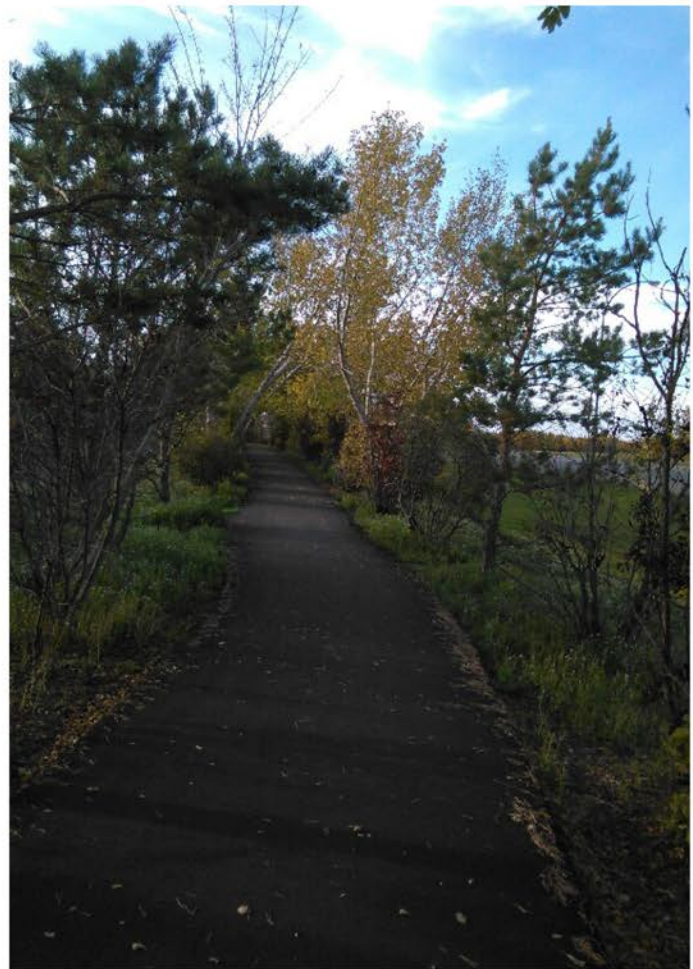
Change doesn't happen overnight, but when it does, it's amazing.




Mind, body, and spirit.



Growing up I thought binge drinking was normal.



Follow the right path.

A close-up portrait of Lindsay Knight, also known as 'Eekwol'. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a thoughtful expression. Her hand is resting against her face, with her fingers near her eye. She is wearing a large, ornate ring on her ring finger. Her hair is pulled back, and she has a tattoo on her left arm. The background is dark and out of focus.

Lindsay Knight, aka "Eekwol"
Photo by Sweetmoon Photography

ORCHESTRATING LIFE'S HARMONIES

Lindsay Knight, aka "Eekwol" is a highly acclaimed Saskatchewan-based musician and rapper. Originating from Muskoday First Nation, Eekwol uses her music as an outlet to challenge negative stereotypes, confront life's challenges, and offer positive solutions. As an extension of her commitment to creating positive change, Eekwol facilitates workshops with students, imparting to them both songwriting skills, and the therapeutic, unifying power of music. Here's what Eekwol and the Students Against Drinking and Driving group on Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation had to say about the songwriting workshop.

“MUSIC IS THE MOST UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE WE HAVE. IT AFFECTS US ALL ON AN EMOTIONAL LEVEL. MUSIC FROM ANY CULTURE COMES FROM THE SAME PLACE — IT COMES FROM EMOTION AND HEART. THAT’S WHY IT’S SO THERAPEUTIC. THERE’S ALWAYS POSITIVE OUTCOMES WHEN WE USE MUSIC AND CREATIVITY AS A MEANS OF HEALING.” - EEKWOL

“YOUNG PEOPLE RESPOND SO WELL TO HAVING ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LEARNING. THE CREATIVE COMPONENT, THE ABILITY TO SEE THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY. CREATIVITY AND EXPRESSION IS SO HEALING. MUSIC FEELS GOOD.” - EEKWOL

“I LEARNED HOW TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS AND HOW TO GET OVER MY SHYNESS, AND THAT’S GONE WELL SINCE THE WORKSHOP.” SHYLYNN

“IT TAUGHT ME TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP. MUSIC ALSO HELPS ME WHEN I’M SAD AND DEAL WITH PROBLEMS.” - LATRELL

“THE WORKSHOP HELPED ME LEARN NEW SONGS, AS WELL AS RAP BETTER. I WANT TO BE A RAPPER.” - KREEDON

POWER OF MUSIC

“MUSIC HAS HELPED ME THROUGH ALL SORTS OF STRUGGLES GROWING UP. IT HELPED ME TO HAVE MUSIC, TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS IT IN A POETIC FORM. IT’S STILL THE MAIN THING THAT HELPS ME WHEN I’M DEALING WITH SOMETHING. THOSE ARE THE TOOLS I HOPE TO PASS ON TO THESE GROUPS.” - EEKWOL

SELF EXPRESSION

“I WRITE DOWN WHAT’S AFFECTING ME PERSONALLY, WHAT’S HITTING ME IN AN EMOTIONAL WAY. I EXPLAINED (TO THE GROUP), WRITE DOWN WHAT’S AFFECTING OR FRUSTRATING YOU, OR EVEN THE GOOD THAT’S GOING ON IN THE COMMUNITY. IT GIVES THEM THAT OPTION TO EXPRESS SOMETHING PERSONAL, GOOD OR BAD.” - EEKWOL

“IT HELPS ME TO WORK BETTER AND HELPS ME TO STAY CALM.” - AALIYAH

“YOU REALIZE THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE, WHEN YOU HEAR THE LYRICS TO A SONG THAT HITS YOU IN THE HEART.” - GINA

“MUSIC HELPS ME IN MY LIFE BECAUSE THE LYRICS SEEMS LIKE IT’S SPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR ME.” - KIARAH

“MUSIC HELPS ME BLOCK OUT THE NEGATIVE THINGS. IT MOTIVATES ME.” - DANEEN

“WHEN I’M MAD IT CALMS ME DOWN OR WHEN I’M CLEANING IT HELPS ME CONCENTRATE.” - LAYCEE

“I PLAY SPORTS OR WRITE TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES IN LIFE.” - TAMIKIA

“COMMUNICATING, LISTENING AND BEING ABLE TO EXPRESS THE HURT AND UNHAPPY FEELINGS OPENLY WITH MY ELDER. MY SPIRITUALITY IS MY GROUNDING LEVEL, ALSO LOVING MYSELF AND FOCUSING ON THE GOOD THAT LIFE HAS TO OFFER.” - BERNADETTE

COPING

“THERE’S SO MANY NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES SURROUNDING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. I CAN CHOOSE TO HARP ON THOSE OR I CAN DECONSTRUCT THEM THROUGH TELLING THE TRUTH. IN MOST CASES, THE TRUTH IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE STEREOTYPE.” - EEKWOL

“DRIVEN”

BY STUDENTS AGAINST DRINKING AND DRIVING GROUP ON BEARDY’S AND OKEMASIS FIRST NATION

Driven by a need to stay alive
Hoping and coping we will survive
Hoping and coping with what’s inside

They’re some people like you and I
We drive with caution just to stay alive
Driven by our desire to live,
desire to stay alive
A million humans and
you’re the only one to drink and drive
Do you think that’s dumb?
You left to have fun, but now you’re gone
You can’t fix it you are done

Driven by a need to stay alive
Hoping and coping we will survive
Hoping and coping with what’s inside

Making us believers, hurting us inside
Helping people on the outside
People leaving us behind,
making me feel sad inside.
You’re getting a little worried, saying
you’re sorry,
it will never happen again.

You’re still trying to make us believers,
but I heard there are a lot of leavers
Driven by a light we can’t fight
Sitting by a phone all alone

I have to go get money,
driven by a guy who is drunk.
I can’t fight
Praying to God, hoping he can make it right
Please don’t say goodbye
For every tear that I cry
For each time that I try
I won’t be able to fly

Believers hurting, Don’t Drink and Drive
Make good choices, listen to what’s inside
Mamma don’t worry I’ll be alive
So now you can fix me cause I’m alive
I’m crying because I want to stay alive
I’m crying, trying to say sorry!

Driven by a need to stay alive
Hoping and coping we will survive
Hoping and coping with what’s inside

Growing from my youth
sitting by the phone booth
I don’t know what to do,
seeing youth joining crews

Killing and living through genocide
Youth are going through depression and suicide
See my mamma and papa drinking.
I wonder what they are thinking.

Do they really love me or just use me for their hit?
A couple of times I say...
can I go out to play?

But when I come home I feel all alone,
with no one around to call my parents
Help, teach me to use the natural elements,
the alphabet the animals we use to eat for hunger
Say thanks to our Elders .

Driven by a need to stay alive
Hoping and coping we will survive
Hoping and coping with what’s inside

“DRIVEN” CAN BE VIEWED AT WWW.SKPREVENTION.CA



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Shynikia Gardypie, Kiarah Ruda, Tamikia Ruda, Aaliyah Smallchild, Lacey Yahyakeekoot, Gina Gamble, SADD Coordinator.

WISE WORDS



"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new." -Albert Einstein

"TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW YOU WILL BE MORE DISAPPOINTED BY THE THINGS THAT YOU DIDN'T DO THAN BY THE ONES YOU DID DO, SO THROW OFF THE BOWLINES, SAIL AWAY FROM SAFE HARBOUR, CATCH THE TRADE WINDS IN YOUR SAILS. EXPLORE, DREAM, DISCOVER."
-MARK TWAIN

"No matter what happens in life, be good to people. Being good to people is a wonderful legacy to leave behind."
-Taylor Swift

"ENJOY GOING THROUGH LIFE AS YOURSELF."
-LENA DUNHAM

"I think a champion is defined not by their wins but by how they can recover when they fall."
-Serena Williams

"Work hard in silence. Let your success be your noise."
-Frank Ocean

"Surround yourself with the dreamers and the doers, the believers and the thinkers, but most of all, surround yourself with those who see the greatness within you, even when you don't see it yourself."
-Edmund Lee

"Talent is cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work."
-Stephen King

"Do not bring people in your life who weigh you down. Trust your instincts. Good relationships feel good. They feel right. They don't hurt. That's not just with somebody you want to marry, but it's with the friends that you choose. It's with the people you surround yourselves with."
-Michelle Obama

"Study hard what interests you the most in the most undisciplined, irreverent and original manner possible."
-Richard Feynman

"Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius and it's better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring."
-Marilyn Monroe

"HAPPINESS IS NOT SOMETHING READY MADE. IT COMES FROM YOUR OWN ACTIONS."
-DALAI LAMA XIV

"THE DESIRE FOR THINGS TO BE EASY IS THE MAIN REASON PEOPLE RARELY GET ANYTHING WORTH KEEPING."
-ROB HILL SR

"The only thing standing between you and your goal is the story you keep telling yourself as to why you can't achieve it."
-Jordan Belfort



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- 1** What is the percentage of pregnancies in Canada that are unplanned?
 - 15%
 - 40%
 - 50%
- 2** Within 20 minutes of consuming a drink, this can rise significantly.
 - Booze Alcohol Concentration (BAC)
 - Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)
 - Blood Alcohol Consumption (BAC)
 - Blood Alcohol Condensation (BAC)
- 3** What body parts or systems are not responsible for absorbing, transporting, and breaking down alcohol?
 - The stomach
 - The bloodstream
 - The liver
 - The brain
- 4** What are the ways you can die from using inhalants? (Check all that apply)
 - Choking: you can choke on your own vomit
 - Asphyxiation: you cannot get enough oxygen to your body
 - Convulsions: this can occur due to the change in your brain to which it is not accustomed
 - Heart attack: your heart can stop suddenly
 - All of the above
- 5** What are some harms associated with the overconsumption of alcohol?
 - Poor grades in school
 - Violence
 - Unwanted/unprotected sexual activity; unplanned pregnancy
 - Property damage
 - Alcohol poisoning
 - Motor vehicle crashes
 - All of the above
- 6** Why do young people drink alcohol?
 - Increased desire to take risks
 - Cope with stress
 - Peer pressure
 - All of the above
- 7** When a pregnant woman consumes alcohol, there is a chance her baby will be born with a lifelong disability called Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). What can her partner and/or other people in her life do to support her?
 - Choose not to drink as well
 - Provide non-alcoholic beverages at parties and events
 - Participate in activities that don't involve alcohol or drugs such as walks, movies, and exercise (with doctor's approval)
 - Not pressure a woman to drink
 - All of the above
- 8** This province has the highest rate of pregnancy for 15 to 19 year olds in Canada.
 - New Brunswick
 - Alberta
 - Manitoba
 - Yukon
 - Saskatchewan
- 9** Alcohol and abuse are major risk factors for this leading cause of premature death in Canada.
 - Suicide
 - Cancer
 - Heart Disease
 - Cirrhosis of the liver
 - Stroke
 - Anemia
- 10** The risk of alcohol-related harms can be reduced by doing these things.
 - Drinking alcohol with food
 - Ensuring no more than one standard drink is consumed per hour
 - Alternating drinks with non-alcohol drinks
 - Planning a safe ride home
 - Drinking no more than 2 drinks for women and 3 drinks for men
 - All of the above

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. The age that young people in Saskatchewan first report drinking alcohol is 16 years of age.
2. In Saskatchewan, young drivers in their first year of driving can have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) less than 0.04 without any legal consequences.
3. Binge drinking is defined as drinking more than 4 standard drinks on one occasion for males, and more than 3 standard drinks on one occasion for females.
4. Alcohol affects men and women in the same way.
5. The human brain develops until age 24.
6. You can become dependent on marijuana.
7. The harms that young people experience due to alcohol are 5 times higher than the harms experienced by people over 25 years of age.
8. FASD stands for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disease.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. C. Approximately 50%; however, among teens and women in their early 20's, the rate is as high as 73%.
2. B. Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC).
3. D. The brain. The stomach and liver absorb alcohol. The blood (bloodstream or circulatory system) transports alcohol. The liver breaks down the alcohol.
4. All of the above. Using inhalants is very dangerous for your health, in the short term and long term. In addition to these short term dangers, some long term consequences include: irreversible changes to the brain resulting in depression, memory loss, hearing loss, and lack of coordination.
5. G. All of the above.
6. D. All of the above. In addition, you may personally have other reasons you drink alcohol: fit in, have fun, relax, feel more social, or you may have an addiction, and are continuing to drink despite resulting harms.
7. E. All of the above. Choose not to drink as well; provide non-alcoholic beverages at parties and events; have alcohol free parties and events; participate in activities that don't involve alcohol or drugs such as walks, movies, and exercise (with doctor's approval); not pressure a woman to drink.
8. E. Saskatchewan
9. A. Suicide.
- 10 F. All of the above.

TRUE OR FALSE ANSWERS

1. False. The average age is 14.
2. False. In Saskatchewan, there is a zero tolerance for any blood alcohol concentration (BAC) for young drivers in their first year of driving.
3. True.
4. False. On average, women experience a higher level of intoxication than men. This is because women weigh less than men and typically smaller people will reach a higher BAC than larger people for a given amount of alcohol; additionally, women have less water in their bodies than men do, so even if a woman and man weigh the same and drink an equal amount, the resulting BAC will be higher in a woman. Lastly, women have less alcohol-metabolizing enzymes and digest alcohol differently than men, which affect the amount of alcohol a woman can consume before reaching a certain level of intoxication.
5. True.
6. True. 30% of users have a substance use disorder. Those who begin using before 18 are 4-7 times more likely to develop a disorder.
7. False. The harms young people experience (lower marks in school, injuries, car crashes, etc) are 10 times higher.
8. False. FASD stands for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.



SEEKING SUPPORT IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH

Are you concerned that you may have an alcohol or drug problem? Or maybe you're noticing that someone in your life needs support.

TO LOCATE LOCAL ADDICTIONS/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES NEAR YOU:

Go to www.saskatchewan.ca/addictions

Go to the HealthLine Online at www.healthonline.ca

Contact the HealthLine at 811 and ask to speak with an Addictions or Mental Health Counsellor

To speak with a counsellor contact: Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868

CRISIS INTERVENTION SUPPORT

Northeast Crisis Line – 24/7 Hours

1-800-611-6349

Prince Albert Mobile Crisis Unit – 24/7 Hours

1-306-764-1011

Regina Mobile Crisis Services – 24/7 Hours

1-306-525-5333

Saskatoon Mobile Crisis – 24/7 Hours

1-306-933-6200

West Central Crisis and Family Support Centre

1-306-463-6655

After Hours: 306-933-6200

SEXUAL ASSAULT/ABUSE SUPPORT

Battlefords and Area Sexual Assault Centre

Sexual Assault/Abuse Crisis Line – 24/7 Hours

1-306-446-4444

Lloydminster Sexual Assault and Information Centre – 24/7 Hours

1-306-825-8255

Prince Albert Mobile Crisis Unit

Sexual Assault Line – 24/7 Hours

1-306-764-1039

Regina Sexual Assault Centre

Sexual Assault Line – 24/7 Hours

1-306-352-0434

Women's Abuse Crisis Line – 24/7 Hours

1-888-338-0880

Sexual Assault Crisis Line – 24/7 Hours

306-244-2224

Envision Counselling and Support Centre (Southern SK)

Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Line – 24/7 Hours

1-800-214-7083

OTHER SUPPORT

OUT Saskatoon Peer Support Line

1-306-665-1224

Saskatoon Pregnancy Options Centre (province-wide support)

Call: 1-306-665-7550

Text: 1-306-261-2760

Saskatchewan Farm Stress Line – 24/7 Hours

1-800-667-4442

Support for Transgender people (translifeline)

1-877-330-6366

COPE

MAGAZINE

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Project coordination: Róisín Unsworth (Project Coordinator), Stephanie Kuse (Graphic Design), Nathan Raine (Editorial Assistance)

About the program: Youth Action for Prevention (YAP) is a youth-engaged FASD awareness initiative that works to increase the knowledge that Saskatchewan youth (aged 14-24) have regarding alcohol-related harms. Within this program, youth are supported to create positive change in their lives and in their communities. YAP brings together Saskatchewan youth to develop projects and resources. YAP also travels to communities to: share resources that have been developed by youth; help young people get engaged in projects and develop leadership skills; and host service provider training events to encourage youth engagement opportunities.

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Website: www.skprevention.ca

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Youth Action for Prevention

saskatchewan
preventioninstitute
our goal is **healthy** children