Qanuqtuurniq – Finding the Balance
3-part live phone-in TV series

I am young and I am proud
May 13, 2009
Edited DVD Transcript

Introduction:

This is an edited transcript of “I am young and I am proud”, one of three live television shows that Inuit Tuttarvingat produced in May 2009. Edits to the transcript have been made to assist with citations and improve clarity and flow of the text, often relating to interpretation from the Inuit language to English. Changes include deletions, minor additions or changed words, etc. Significant changes are shown in brackets [...]. When you see the words ‘(via interpreter)’, it means the person typing the open captions heard the speaker’s comments – which were made in the Inuit language – spoken by an interpreter in English.

You can search this transcript for key terms or areas of interest by using the search function in your PDF. Some key terms in this transcript include: active, alcohol, Artcirq, attitude, bored, camp, city, challenge, children, computer, culture (Inuit/Western), disconnect, drugs, education, elders, facilities, government, grandparent, group/focus group, high Arctic, history, hunting, Internet, Inuit health survey, Inuusivut, issue, language, land, law, love, media, mental health, opportunity, parent, photography, positive, pride/proud, problem, program, Project Life, research, school, skill, Skype, smoking, solution, south, sport, story, support, traditional, tobacco, video, Web site, and wellness.

If you would like to quote parts of this transcript, please use the following format for citations:

The video and various excerpts can be viewed at: www.InuitWellness.ca or www.naho.ca/inuit/wellnessTV/index.php.

From left to right: Panel Members - Jennie Williams, National Aboriginal Role Model Jesse Mike, National Inuit Youth Council; Jesse Tungilik, Students on Ice; Shawn Kuliktana, National Aboriginal Role Model; Shannon O'Hara, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation; Skyper - Stacey Harris, Alaska; and, Host - Karliin Aariak.

Transcript

Disclaimer: The program you are about to see was broadcast and webcast live from Iqaluit, Nunavut in May 2009. As in the case with any live, multi-lingual programming, small technical problems, pauses and minor mistakes in the simultaneous translation and open captioning cannot be avoided. You will see some of those small errors in the following video presentation just as the audience did during the live event.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

Part 1

Qanuqtuurniq — Finding the Balance

Your Voice — Your Well-being

Join this phone-in

Host - Karliin Aariak: (via interpreter) I am young and proud. Last night we had a community event on maternity care, and on Monday we held the men’s health and wellness program. We’re holding this session from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. This is presented by Inuit Tuttarvingat at the National Aboriginal Health Organization, and produced by Inuit Communications (ICSL). We are broadcasting live across the Arctic on APTN, across Alaska on 360 North, and streaming live on the Internet. We have panelists, audience and community focus groups. Everyone, welcome, as we take some calls. We are accepting calls from here on until 10 o’clock. We have community focus groups in Cambridge Bay, Grise Fiord, Clyde River, Inukjuak, Nain, Nunatsiavut and across the Arctic. Welcome, everyone. In this program, we discuss community wellness issues. There’s some incredible work in the North and in Alaska. You can — until the end of the show — you can e-mail us at InuitWellness@gmail.com [for live show only]. If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail us. Before we start, a welcome message on the broadcast that is coming to you. We have Dr. Paulette Tremblay as the CEO of NAHO.

Pre-Recorded Video:

Hello, I’m Dr. Paulette Tremblay, Chief Executive Officer of the National Aboriginal Health Organization. On behalf of the board of directors and the staff of the National Aboriginal Health Organization, I am very pleased to welcome you to this exciting series on Inuit wellness being presented by Inuit Tuttarvingat. This series is one of the new ways the centre is engaging Inuit in sharing health and wellness information. I look forward to the discussions on issues of interest to Inuit. We at the National Aboriginal Health Organization hope the programs are meaningful to you. Please join us now for the program on Inuit youth coping and endurance, and a message from the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq.
Pre-Recorded Video:

As the federal Minister of Health, I am pleased to see Inuit involved in such an innovative television project to talk about wellness, family wellness and community wellness. It’s important to hear from men about their emotional health, from new mothers about how it feels to give birth in their own community, from young people about how they overcome difficult times. We’re hearing positive stories of Inuit and others working together, creating and running programs that are making a real change in our communities. About how Inuit are finding their balance.

Host: (via interpreter) Tonight, youth wellness issues; last night we talked about maternity wellness. Introduce yourself.

Shannon O’Hara: I’m from Inuvik. I live in Inuvik with my common law and young daughter, and am an Inuit research advisor for the regional corporation.

Shawn Kuliktana: Hi, I am Shawn Kuliktana from Kugluktuk, Nunavut. 19 years old. I was a National Aboriginal Health Organization Role Model back in 2007. I work for NTCL and my dream is to become a welder.

Jesse Tungilik: Hi. I’m Jesse Tungilik. I live in Gatineau, Quebec right now. I’ve lived in various communities in the North. I work for an organization that offers expeditions for high school students from around the world to the Arctic and Antarctic. I got involved with the student program for the first time in 2001, where I became the first Inuk to reach the Antarctic. Travelling has been a big part of my life. I’ve been to about 20 different countries on the continent. I’ve been involved with a bunch of government organizations such as Government of Nunavut, Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Parks Canada, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami to name a few. My favourite colour is green.

Jesse Mike: (via interpreter) I’m the current chair of the National Inuit Youth Council. I’m also working with NTI with the youth issues. I’m very happy to be here tonight.

Jennie Williams: Hello, I’m Jennie Williams originally from Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I’m living in Nain, Nunatsiavut. I’m a youth board member for Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada.

Host: (via interpreter) Yes. Thank you very much. Before we start off, if I could ask Allen, if you could give us insight about what has happened historically to this point.
Allen Auksaq: (via interpreter) Yes, the program [Nunavut Sivuniksavut] started in 1985 to teach youth about the land claim agreement. They needed trained Inuit that had knowledge about the land claim agreement and the history, but this is our post-secondary education representing Inuit. They learn about the relationships between the government and Inuit, and they learn about the history of the Inuit up to today, and how the Nunavut land claim came to be, and we also learned to use computers and the Internet and research skills. And right now we see the youth are stuck in a position, because they have so many opportunities, [but] they also want to stick to the old [ways. The youth are different, so in knowing this, we are reclaiming our culture, as it was taken away from us in different ways, and we can work on this,) such as our dog teams, we lost them, and drum dancing, and some of these [activities] Inuit were forbidden to practice. We are now bringing them back, but the youth today are also faced with alcohol and drug problems, and many relationship breakdowns and there’s illnesses and crime, mental issues facing them.

Host: (via interpreter) How was this important for you? How did it change you?

Allen Auksaq: (via interpreter) I think it's really important to me, because I learned about Inuit and how they felt during the whole societal change, and I feel more proud to be Inuk, and I learned how to drum dance, and now I think that I want to help the youth learn more about Inuit culture and the work — and to continue the work.

Host: (via interpreter) What do you think the most important issues are?

Allen Auksaq: (via interpreter) I think education is. I think it should be accessed more, but I also want to see our culture being taught in the school, because you will go to our classroom to learn about our culture. I think it should be taught in the classroom as well. There's also many different opportunities for youth, but there's lack of resources and they're not being exposed or getting the support.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you.

Allen Auksaq: (via interpreter) And thank you.

Host: (via interpreter) What do you think, you guys, what do you think are the issues facing Inuit youth?

Jesse Mike: I think, when kind of talking about what Allen was just mentioning, about identity and trying to find a balance with the two cultures, that we have to try and live with — we're
always trying to find — like, we have one side that usually comes from the family, that's trying to live in life and be more traditional and bring back the things we used to have, and then you have your education and everything else that's trying to teach you this way of life. So that's always a huge struggle for us, I think as young Inuit, and not just as young Inuit but people around the world that have been colonized. The new society comes on so hard and so fast with media, Internet and all that stuff, so it's very catchy and it's very easy to drag people in, and that's always a struggle, because [we're trying hard to bring Inuit culture back,] it becomes a struggle for us. You know, we're being tugged back and forth between one [and the other] and I think that's always a huge struggle for young people. I think that [is true] for Inuit in general nowadays, but it’s a lot harder for young people because it's only been in the last 50 years or so that we've been colonized. So I think that's definitely a struggle for young people, for Inuit anyway.

**Host:** (via interpreter) What about for you guys, what do you think are the issues facing Inuit youth?

**Jesse Tungilik:** Well, I think nowadays youth they don't know what to do with themselves, especially in smaller communities. I know from my own experience living in smaller communities, I felt like I didn't have any opportunities to better myself. I actually had to — I moved to B.C. to finish my high school, because I wanted to have more opportunities. And I think there could be a lot that could be improved with the education system in the North. Like, for post-secondary education there's a strong emphasis on the trades, which is good to an extent, but there needs to be more than that. It seems like we’re being prepped for being the next labour force for the mines, but we need more opportunities beyond that, I think.

**Jesse Mike:** On top of — you know, you say, a lot of people have that mentality especially when you're from a small community, that what's down South is so much bigger and better, and I think — I disagree with you, but I think that, you know, I think maybe if I grew up in the South my opportunities wouldn't have been as big as they have been, and I think now maybe more than before young Inuit have so much out there for them that they can just grab on to, but the part that's hard is knowing that those opportunities are out there, and you can totally do whatever you want, but you just really have to want to do it and not wait for it to come to you. And especially, there are so many opportunities to travel the world and things like that, and also it's just letting people know that, you know, you can do this. You can do whatever you want, but you have to really want it. And I think that comes a lot to people in the communities, because you always see people now in Nunavut, especially I see that there's a lot of
opportunity, they have been travelling all over the world. You always see it in the media and stuff, so I think that definitely, we need improvement in the education system by like 100 miles, and it needs to kind of work with us, work with Inuit and our culture. You know, we learn about cows, some people learn about cows, and they've never seen a cow in their life, that sort of thing. And I think our education system definitely needs a lot of improvement in order for young people to be proud of the things that they learn about. So you go out learning about things in school that are not essential to your life at all, so what do you grow up thinking? That what you have isn't important because you didn't learn it in school, and I think that's definitely a very important aspect of the education system.

**Host:** (via interpreter) Allen also mentioned that youth have to learn about Inuit culture in the classroom and the history about colonization. What do you think — and perhaps even language, what do you think about those issues?

**Jesse Tungilik:** What I would like to see is I think a lot of Inuit need some more contacts. I think that both through travel and learning about other cultures that have experienced similar situations that we have, I think that that could give Inuit youth some valuable perspective on what we're going through — just not only to know that we're not alone in this experience, but there are some really excellent examples of peoples that have really taken their situations and made good of them.

**Host:** What about in your region?

**Jennie Williams:** A good example in Labrador about keeping the language alive is they have a new program, a language program that you put into a computer and you learn the language by matching pictures and words together, and I think that's a great idea for young people who are, you know, mixing technology with language, and I think it's a great way for young people to learn, and they really like it and enjoy it. And they came out with one for Labrador dialect, and I know the young people really enjoy that way of learning. So that's one example of a good way to teach young people the language. And it's very important in Labrador, the different dialects. Language in Labrador, keeping it alive is extremely important and the more important things we can do, the better.

**Host:** (via interpreter) Do you have any other issues?

**Shannon O’Hara:** I think in our region, there are a lot of programs that are outside of school as well, and I think in a lot of ways, I think learning language, especially for youth should be
brought back to the old ways of learning it with your family, with many generations of people learning at the same time rather than just the youth themselves. There are some examples. We have a lot of after-school and after-work language programs that people are taking advantage of in our region. I think that’s a step forward.

**Shawn Kuliktana:** I’ve got to comment on Allen Auksaq’s comment. I got to go on a trip out of the country and learn about education, and one of the things, when I went out on this trip, I learned about education in other countries, and coming back home I felt like some of us Inuit up in the North are very lucky to have education today, with free education and all these opportunities open to us compared to some other countries where they have to fight for education every single day. So just to know that, you know, Inuit should be proud to have education today in their communities, and that they have these opportunities open. But, you know, maybe some peers or youth might need that little push to get that going.

**Host:** (via interpreter) Thank you. We will be getting some information on a project called Qanuippitali.

Time Code: 20:42

**Pre-recorded video: Qanuippitali? Inuit Health Survey**

*When Inuit in regions across the Canadian Arctic wanted to develop a health research project to explore their overall health and wellness, the “Qanuqiptpit? Qanuippitali? Kanuivit?” survey was created and became the first comprehensive look at the health of Inuit in Canada. Their mission was to improve health care planning, personal health and community wellness for the future.*

*My name is Kue Young and I am a professor of public health with the University of Toronto and I partnered with Dr. Grace Egeland from McGill University to apply to the International Polar Year to get this project going. We wanted to have a baseline about where things are now when we are talking about climate change and eating habits that will change quite drastically in the next 20-30 years, so we wanted to have a baseline to compare to in the future. To accomplish this, a medical and research team traveled to Inuvialuit, Nunavut and Nunatsiavut in 2007 and 2008 with more than two thousand Inuit participating. Also, the communities can use this information, so if they see major gaps in, for example, if physical activity is a problem and lack of recreational facilities is the reason, then the communities can use that for information to lobby for additional resources.*

*[Paul Quassa] I am the Mayor of Igloolik – a community of about 1600 – a very isolated community. I thought it was important for individuals of our community to know where they are in terms of their health. Adult participants from randomly selected households completed initial*
parts of the community survey and answered questions about household crowding and food security, nutrition, country food and eating habits, mental health, community wellness and medical history.

The second part of the survey was conducted on the Canadian Coast Guard Ship Amundsen. Participants were transported to the ship for a clinical appointment. During the appointment on the ship, participants took part in clinical tests to measure their heart health including blood pressure, pulse and carotid artery health, blood glucose and diabetes risk, their height, weight, body composition and waist circumference, exposure to infections, women’s bone health, nutrient status and exposure to environmental contaminants.

I really wanted to get an idea of my food and what is going into my body. I think this is important for myself, my children and my grandchildren.

First of all we want to report back to the people who participated – they all got a passport that contains immediate measurements like weight, height and things like that and later on they will get in the mail a more detailed report about cholesterol, blood sugar and some of those things and they have the option of keeping that or taking it to the local health care centre and of course we also alert them to abnormal values that may need more immediate kind of attention and then we have the data there and we will start doing some analysis and then a presentation to the communities so they can get immediate results.

It is a benefit to the community and the individual. It can be used to help individuals to know what their health status is because of climate change.

Host: (via interpreter) We start off with what do you really think makes a difference in the lives of youth?

Herb Nakimayak: I think actually support at home, you know, at home we don't have any support systems in our communities all across, you know, and that leaves youth doing a lot of stuff for themselves within and amongst each other, and they may get a little bit of recognition there, but with more support, you know, we could branch out across Inuit Canada, all over the world. Links between youth and elders would make a difference — technology, we're using SKYPE and call-in and TV. That's another way to document elders' programs, language, you know, activities. Our elders are going away at a fast rate, and maybe as quick as some younger babies are being born, but once an elder is gone, you lose all that information and it's gone forever, and if it's documented then, you know, we could have something to balance,
something to reflect, something to set our foundation straight so that we can build something bigger today for tomorrow.

**Host:** We saw a little bit of the Inuit Health Survey, Qanuippitali. Can you give us information that was gathered about youth?

**Herb Nakimaya:** Yeah, information collected on diet, food frequencies, country food, the country food that we have in our respective communities and regions, household questions which were access to country food, living conditions, education, housing conditions, which is a huge issue all over the North. It's actually an alarming rate, so one big issue should be raised. When you don't have a support system like a household big enough to house a huge family, then that leaves a lot of children, you know, maybe, how do you say, intimidated by, you know, going to school and not having any support at home. So that leads them to a lot of substance abuse and other things that might not be essential to what a kid needs to grow. Also in terms of cost of living we recorded diet and pop consumption, which all over the Arctic is very high — [consumed] at an alarming rate. It would be very interesting if there was a substitute for that. Maybe we'll find that one day. We also need to raise awareness of what in the pop content leads to diabetes. Medications [were included] and as well the community and personal wellness questionnaire about mental health, coping, alcohol and drug use, violence, sexual abuse, physical activity, and social and community support systems as well too. For example, if someone had a person they could talk to about their troubles, you know, then they could maybe have that extra support, you know, and maybe not have so many issues that we are maybe facing today. Suicide rates are very high, and if that could be prevented, then all of that — then that means having a support system at home in the house or in town. As well, you know, maybe [there could be] a place they could get help for a crisis, like domestic violence, and we also asked what types of support systems were needed in communities.

**Host:** Sounds like a lot of information. Do you think the information will be useful?

**Herb Nakimaya:** Yeah, I think it would be very useful. We don't know where we stand right now health-wise. Maybe the diabetes is maybe raising the awareness. Maybe we should look at where we are now and that would give us a better idea of what we need to do to live healthier lives in the future, and today as well.

**Host:** So when do you think we'll be expecting results?

**Herb Nakimaya:** Some of the results have been sent out to communities too, so that was another six months ago and for a big survey like that to have the results, six more months.
Some were already — like the diabetes and the sugar content in the blood is already given the same day, like it should, then participants knew that day after the appointment whether they needed to go to their hospital, go see their local nurse or go to the health centre or doctor. Most regions received their results, and we communicated about the need for follow-up for medical attention. For children age three to five, there's a format that went out to communities in June for that. Workshops are coming with the steering committees for the summer and fall, and maybe we can do something about [the results].

Host: Thank you very much. Herb Nakimayak. We would like to start with a community focus group in Clyde River, they’re on Skype. Can you hear me? Can you hear me? Welcome.

Community Focus Group - Skypers: Yes, yes, we can hear you. You asked a good question, what youth are facing, would you like to get more information on that and health issues?

Host: (via interpreter) Can you hear me?

Skyper: (via interpreter) I would like more information on employment opportunities. And what education we need, or what we require to be employable.

Skyper: (via interpreter) Just to clarify her comments, [some of our young girls, they have what is called] schizophrenia. We need [to talk about this as it needs to be understood here, because we want to be able to help those who don’t understand it. Here] in Clyde River, [we can talk,] we have computers, [places to play ball at] the community hall, [free movies, track, hockey, everything that we can use. We want people to see this as this can really help those with mental health issues. Once we can understand, then we would be able to help them.] So if we could get some people who are familiar with mental health issues, to give us more insight and guidance, [then we would be able to help the people in focus groups.]

Skyper: (via interpreter) We would like to hear about more research on Inuit youth.

Host: (via interpreter) I'm not sure, can you repeat. Regarding the research, what kind of research?

Skyper: (via interpreter) We need research on Inuit youth in the communities, from the communities.

Host: (via interpreter) We are unable to understand you. I just recognized Meeka. Welcome, I just recognized you. Can you talk about the hip-hop program that you have in the community. How has that impacted the Inuit youth in the community?
Skyper: (via interpreter) Here in Clyde River, the hip-hop program is running very well. It's well received by the youth. We're now trying to incorporate Inuit traditional practices such as throat singing, Inuit lullabies, Inuit dance movements, and incorporate that into our hip-hop program, because the hip-hop is a trendy, very interesting thing for the youth here, and so we're trying to use that to include Inuit throat singing and traditional movements for dancing as an introduction, and we're trying to put more emphasis on Inuit culture such as storytelling and how they used to go hunting by dog team or go polar bear hunting. So we try and incorporate that into our programs — hip-hop programs — and are trying to have a big emphasis on Inuit culture.

Host: (via interpreter) Yeah, right on. Thank you. It was very good to hear from you. Perhaps we'll touch base again later. Thank you, Meeka and Sarah, and the people behind you.

Skyper: Yeah, those are the other members of the focus group.

Host: (via interpreter) Yes, thank you, that was Meeka and Sarah from Clyde River. And we talked to them about what kind of research is being done on Inuit youth. We also have a doctor — I tried to say it earlier, Doctor Shahin Shirzad. [How did I do?]

Dr. Shahin Shirzad: Good.

Host: But really, in your practice you're at the general hospital here and you're going through your practice, what do you think the youth issues are, or what do youth need to worry about in terms of health?

Dr. Shahin Shirzad: Well, first off, thank you for inviting me. It's very important to be here — very important discussion. My own personal experience and I think the panelists have a lot of information on this topic — I'm an emergency physician, so often I see the very difficult health issues that a community faces. And what I think is consistent here, is that it is consistent in most communities throughout Canada with the youth — there often is this struggle with regards to drugs and alcohol and issues related to drugs and alcohol. And particularly I think in the North, alcohol is really an issue that youth often confront and it really manifests itself in multiple ways. I think traditionally we think about the car accidents and the ski-doo accidents that happen because people are under the influence of alcohol, and we really know that trauma and accidents are probably the biggest risk for youth for their health. So that's one thing that we often see. But we see a myriad of things involved with alcohol, both assaults, physical and sexual, to suicide attempts that are done under the influence of alcohol, to just the mental
anguish and turmoil of putting themselves into compromising situations associated with the drugs and alcohol. But I think what is great also with my experience here, I also have met a lot of youth who have really inspired me and I’ve seen how they have been able to turn their lives around. And in my experience, a lot of it has been reconnecting with their own communities, their own cultures, and really using their families and their elders as a support system. And so one thing that I think research-wise, that would be very beneficial, would be to go to these youth, go to these experts who deal with this on a daily basis, who know what they're facing, what their fellow Inuit youth are facing, and really use them, as mentioned earlier, as a focus group on how can we orient our educational programs, on how can we better improve our treatment programs to deal with the issues and the factors that are faced by the Inuit youth here. So you know, we can go to the experts down South, we can go to everybody who has got their PhDs and MDs, but we should talk to the youth. That’s why I think this discussion is useful. More than that, we need to encourage our youth. They have a huge influence and they can really be leaders in their community and they may have seen difficulties in their lives, but they really need to use those difficulties and inspire the other people around them and realize that we're all responsible for one another, that we do live in a community.

Host: Exactly, that's what we've wanted to come out of these discussions. It’s a discussion about taking ownership of yourself as youth, ownership as women, ownership as a community, and part of these beautiful discussions is realizing some of this and hoping that people at home and a lot of us get to more of the end results of working together and being able to discuss [things], but also identify the issues and find solutions together.

Dr. Shahin Shirzad: I think personal responsibility is a huge part of it. We all have to realize that the only person who is really going to advocate the best is yourself. Who is really going to try to ensure that your health and safety is there? It’s going to be yourself. So you know, it's great to rely on medical practitioners, it's great it rely on friends, but at the end of the day you also have to look at yourself and realize that the responsibility is mostly on your own shoulders.

Host: Thank you so much.

Dr. Shahin Shirzad: My pleasure.

Host: All right. I'm going to try to say this one more time. Dr. Shahin Shirzad.

Dr. Shahin Shirzad: Fantastic!

Host: All right. (via interpreter) We'll be back after these messages.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

Time Code: 40:53

Pre-Recorded Public Service Announcement:

Father and Son Land Program

Today, the knowledge is being lost.

I would encourage youth and adults to learn as it would be something they’d use for life.

As they learn the vital things, they end the program with high spirits.

Brighter Futures

To start a Brighter Futures program in your community, contact your hamlet or Regional Wellness Programs Coordinator.

Provided by: Government of Nunavut- Department of Health and Social Services. Health Canada

Pre-Recorded Public Service Announcement:

Suicide Prevention (in English – subtitles not provided)

Special funding provided by: Department of Health and Social Services, Government of Nunavut, Brighter Futures, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

Part 2

Time Code: 42:32

Host: (via interpreter) I'm Karliin Aariak. You're watching Qanuqtuurniq. The phone numbers [you see,] you will be able to call [to comment on the] issues. We'll have an opportunity to talk with other groups about solutions. We want to know what young people are facing in the North not only in the Arctic but Alaska. We started at 8 p.m. and go to 10 p.m. We are broadcasting on APTN, 360 North in Alaska, and streaming live on the Internet. We had focus groups and we have been able to show Inuit wellness programs, so you can write to us: InuitWellness@gmail.com [during the live program only]. You can e-mail us at this address. We were able to discuss issues that young people are facing and there's also something about the health issues that was shared with us by a doctor, and what things you think will benefit and help us, and I would like to start focusing on those from your experience. What have you noticed that would be a benefit to other youth like yourself?
Jesse Mike: I'll tell you what I think. I think one of the things, especially with the National Inuit Youth Council and all the Inuit organizations, when they're doing work with youth, it's always trying to take a positive approach on things like affirming programs for whatever that is, ‘on the land’ programs or teaching people about multimedia, expressing themselves, whether it's hip hop or learning your own, you know, traditional skills or whatever physical activity, and things like that. I think all of us have grown up having been able to be involved in that, as a lot of times it's kind of the only resource we have, and we're isolated in terms of what goes on in the communities and what works — what we think works. And I think that's something that needs to be recognized more, the community takes their own responsibility for their young people when they have programs like this. And far too often we don't recognize them, and obviously there's a lack of health care in every community across the North. So we always look at that very negative aspect, but we have to recognize those in the community, especially community counsellors who take their own time, and young people as well. Like, if I have a problem, I'm going to talk to someone closer to my age. So we have to try and teach young people to have that skill to be able to help their friends. So it's always at the community level using whatever we have as best as we can without the resources that the rest of Canada has. And I think those are the positive things — what goes on in the communities right now.

Host: So we've talked about the issues in the beginning. What are some of the things maybe you guys have experienced or programs that you guys have gone through that have really worked for you to help you get through some of your issues or, you know, some positive experiences that you experienced?

Shannon O'Hara: Talking from experience, I actually was involved with a lot of mentoring programs in the region, and through that I realized my interest in science and research, and I think that's something that youth can help each other with. They can be mentors to each other, or you can find a mentor that you trust in your community, but that is definitely a successful way to reach out to youth in the North.

Shawn Kuliktana: From my own experience going to high school last year, and also Doctor — I'm unable to to — [say his name].

(Laughter)

Host: Everybody's going to know your name.

Shawn Kuliktana: So from my own experience, he gave out a good point before that Inuit youth, you know, have to trust themselves. You know, most youth that are scared to talk to a
friend about what are their real feelings, and from my experience, I've had to — maybe youth can get closer to their parents and able to talk about stuff, and that's what I learned. And these are the experiences that I got while I was in high school and watching other peers going a different direction. They might get stuck into a circle of drugs and alcohol or into a good circle of, you know, making good choices. So that's one of the benefits to youth, that they should be able to trust themselves, and also trust one another.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you. In Nunavut, and with the focus on Nunatsiavut, let's have a look at this.

Time Code: 48:35

Pre-recorded video: Inuusivut - Our Way of Life

Hi, my name is Qajaaq Ellsworth. I coordinate a project with the Embrace Life Council called Inuusivut. Our project travels to Inuit communities across Canada training young people in photography and film production. Since starting the project in January 2008, we have trained over 100 young people in multi-media.

What made you participate in the workshop? Working with the cameras and... getting some ideas for our youth committee and a way to communicate for the Kitikmeot.

Media always gives you the opportunity to express yourself. I think that’s a very important thing for youth, for everyone really, but for youth especially.

It’s pretty amazing how just a picture can make you feel — it’s a part of remembering you’re good, bad, sad, anything emotional, and... I think it’s really fun.

My project is all about daycare. It was basically just seeing what everything looks like through the kids’ eyes. It’s making me wonder if I should go into this as a career.

There is a very high demand for young people to learn skills in multi-media — not only to learn the technical skills, but also something to do. When young people are able to learn new skills in photography, film production or new media and those kinds of things, they develop a lot of leadership skills. They get a sense of the fact that at the community level when they want to see something happen, they can’t just wait for governments or organizations to do things for them and that’s one of the things that we really try and reinforce is the need for young people to take initiative to make good changes in their communities.

www.Inuusivut.com   Embrace Life
Host: All right. That was awesome. So good to see you. We were able to see some of the projects you were doing. Why do you think this project was so useful to youth?

Stacey Aglok MacDonald: Well, I think that youth just naturally love expression and media and the arts and stuff, so this was a perfect medium through which to get youth active and be able to be leaders in their own projects and be the ones pursuing and making their ideas for a film or photography piece come to reality, and just basically the people, the Inuusivut team are the ones there to support them so they can do whatever they want.

Host: What have you learned, and what's your best experience that you can tell us about with this project?

Stacey Aglok MacDonald: There have been so many projects. For some of them we've been really lucky in that a lot of times in Inuusivut, we've piggybacked off great community programs. So with Inuusivut we really try not to be 'stand alone'. We try to partner with other community projects that are happening so that youth know that there is cool stuff happening in their communities, and it doesn't always — it's not always outsiders coming in and bringing these cool projects to them. We're just kind of there piggybacking on other cool things that are happening in their community and helping make it just a little bit cooler.

(Laughter)

With photography and video, because what is cooler than that? We're involved in elder and regional camps and possibly this summer, Pang [Pangnirtung] has been talking about doing a legends retreat, and that's something Inuusivut might be involved in. So it's photography and video, but also possibly theatre and working with elders. So I think that's been really cool.

Host: All right.

Stacey Aglok MacDonald: Not only us, but the youth.

Host: It's so good to hear about your project and what fun it is.

(Laughter)

It's a classic example of why media is working well with youth. We also have virtual youth, Inuit youth in the communities, and they had a discussion with Jenna, are you on-line?

Youth Focus Group Skyper: (via interpreter) I can hear you.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

**Host:** How are you?

**Skyper:** (via interpreter) I’m good.

**Host:** (via interpreter) Can you tell me who you are, introduce yourself.

**Skyper:** (via interpreter) Jenna Kilabuk is my name. I’m with an Inuit focus group. We’re trying to work together by way of Internet and communicating together. We’re trying to communicate with each other. I’m going to mention the youth... We’re proud of the group as youth, and what we look at. We’re trying to level out on some of the issues that we see, and we’re communicating to each other on [Skype. Some are better than others, and young people are getting better and it’s great. It can be used at home or at school and we can hear others from anywhere in the world or from the Arctic.]

**Host:** (via interpreter) It’s unfortunate we just got disconnected. We will try to talk to you again. Jenna Kilabuk was talking with the Inuit youth that communicate with each other on the Internet and we were asking them whether they’re able to do that with other communities. And what they have done — why this program is working in the community. That was Jenna from Pangnirtung. We will try that again. Jenna, are you still there? Jenna, can you hear me? Unfortunately, I don’t think we can see each other. Hi, Jenna. Yes. Go ahead.

**Skyper:** (via interpreter) It's always fun to learn new skills with different conversations. We were able to use these tools to express ourselves and create something and build confidence and to have our voice heard.

**Host:** (via interpreter) Oh, darn. We'll be back later to this program. We wanted to see other projects in the northern circumpolar regions. We'll hear from a project from Alaska.

Time Code: 57:57

**Pre-Recorded Video: Project Life — We are the Culture**

My name is Stacey Harris. I am from Kotzebue, Alaska. I grew up in two different camps called Sasol Lake and Eli River. Sasol Lake is a fish camp and Eli River is more of a winter camp or fall camp. And those are two camps where I grew up that really shaped who I am today.

I’m George Provost, the manager of Project Life, which is a youth suicide prevention program in the Northwest Arctic Borough of Alaska. Ninety percent of the population here are Inupiat, native Alaskans.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

Back home in the villages, not a lot of kids have options. They’ve got basketball; they’ve got open gym that’s only open for just a couple of hours — it’s not open all the time. A lot of the time they go hunting and fishing and do other such activities, but there is so much down time.

In Project Life, we don’t focus on suicide — we focus on life, enjoying life and being well. Our activities that we mostly do in the schools — we go to all the villages — we have classes in resiliency and wellness and we do an after school workshop called digital story-telling that lasts a week. The young people make their own short movie, and burn it to a dvd. We’ve made about 150 of these so far.

That’s what Gorge does, he goes to all the different villages and he helps these kids create short stories — he doesn’t say you are going to create a story — he says who wants to create one? Once it’s done they have a big community viewing. It’s a really powerful piece, because other people are really hearing what the kids have to say — what they want to say — because they are not always heard and they don’t always speak up. It can be about how the Eskimo dances are fading and how kids want to bring them back. Or it can be about their village not having enough activities for the young kids to be doing — it could be about all kinds of things.

The wonderful place I call home is filled with nature, inventions, recipes, colors and feelings. When I created my story, I already knew what it was going to be about, because I lost my Mom and my brother in a tragic house fire and I have lost many more people throughout my life and that’s how it is — life is tough. I knew I was going to title it “Life is Short – Take Advantage,” because I just recently lost my Mom and I keep telling myself “Man, I feel like I didn’t spend enough time with her,” and I don’t want anybody to have that feeling. Before that, my Mom’s cousins, Albert and Stacey Monroe, went to be with the Lord because of cancer. I was 18 when my best friend committed suicide and he was 21. This movie really made me understand and live life to the fullest. I had no idea what the outcome was going to be with this digital story, but I realized I got this really big emotional response from anyone and everyone. Everything I have and you can hear right now, really came from who I am. My grandparents did all they could to make sure I was on the right track, like my parents. We have a lot of values that I mentioned at the end of my digital story that we go by:

“knowledge of language, knowledge of family tree, sharing, humility, respect for others, love for children.”

Please do me a favour, love your life as it is — enjoy every moment and cherish it. Learn new things, go to new places, further your education. I am going to college at the University of Alaska in Anchorage and this is my second year. My goal is to become a teacher and go back up North and teach in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District. I don’t care. It can be in one of the eleven villages surrounding the region; it doesn’t matter to me, just as long as I go home and teach and do what I love.
Host: (via interpreter) Thank you so much. That was a very interesting story. You're watching Qanuqtuurniq, I am young and I am proud.

Skyper: Hi.

Host: That was an amazing vignette we just saw and it was such an incredible story. Can you give us an idea of what kind of risks you had to take to get this project going?

Skyper: Well, the story that you have just seen I created with "Project Life." How I got introduced to them in the very beginning was actually through an extra credit in psychology; it was as an extra credit opportunity. So the University of Massachusetts actually got ahold of me and asked me to be in one of their research projects, so I was, and then they asked me to work for them here in Kotzebue, Alaska, which is my home town. They wanted me to help them with a research project on resilience and I helped my boss ask youth about resilience, and after that was all done, my boss wanted me to create a digital story, which you've just seen, and George, with "Project Life" helped me make that story, because he already was working on digital stories with a bunch of other kids in our region, in another 11 surrounding villages. So that's pretty much how I got introduced to "Project Life" and that's how I came across my video. It's pretty much on resilience.

Host: Wow! Stacey, what makes you so passionate about getting other youth involved in projects like this?

Skyper: I think it's so important, because there are so many youth just hanging out after school, who don't know what to do, don't know where to go, don't know who to hang out with, and if you think about it, 100 years ago, our people were working together with elders, adults, and children, all working together, whether it was to do with hunting, fishing, gathering greens or picking berries, everyone had a job, and to this day I feel like no one's doing their job. I mean, a lot of people are, but there are people who forgot how to live, how we were raised and how we're supposed to be, and their kids are just walking around, like I said, they don't know what to do, and what we should be doing is grab them by the hand, bring them to the tundra, give them a bucket, tell them to fill it, no matter if they like it or not, and, you know, show them how to use an ulu, cut some meat, show them how to cook, show them how to gather wood. You know, there's all this stuff based on survival that our kids need to know, not only natives, but everyone else around, and I think everyone just needs to really get tied to their culture and figure out who they are and try not to forget. And definitely take your children along with you.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

Host: Ms. Stacey, you're a beautiful person inside and out and continue your work, your beautiful efforts. Thank you.

Skyper: All right, stay in school.

Host: (via interpreter) Stacey Harris from Anchorage, Alaska. We spoke to her. She spoke to us from Anchorage, Alaska. One of the questions that was asked from Ottawa, and live, they're watching us live in Ottawa, something to think about... how would Inuit, Inuit youth, what kind of connection to or impact do they have from their culture, or is there a disconnect? Perhaps if I read it in English, and we'll find out more. But let's see a program in Inuvik.

Time Code: 1:07:51

Pre-recorded video: Inuvik Youth Centre

[Dennis Allen Co-Founder, Inuvik youth Centre] The Inuvik Youth Centre started in 1996. It all came about from a survey we did with the youth — they wanted a place where, number one, they could be safe and where they could socialize with their peers. At that time, there was no real place for kids to go except for organized sports and a lot of them could not afford organized sports. Or for whatever reason they couldn’t go. So they didn’t have any other place to go other than hanging [out in] the streets.

[Emma Tius, Inuvik Youth Centre Supervisor] We have a lot of different programs right now — we just got a new recording studio, so we have opportunities for the youth to learn music, engineering, video production and editing. And we have all sorts of other programs for the youth to explore their creativity and have their voice heard in the community.

We are making a music video. My friend, Monica, has made a rap [song] and she has made a music video out of it and we've been going places and taking videos of stuff.

The way we did it is we made an issue out of it — we used the newspaper and the radio and we kind of put pressure on the potential leaders that these kids were crying out for help and they wanted a place that they could call their own and be safe and do their own thing.

At the youth centre, we have a pool table and we have... five computers for youth with Internet.

For kids coming into the community, the youth centre is really good because it has a pool table, it has a music room, it has computers — it gives them a place to go especially in the evenings, because there is not a lot of things for the kids to do in the evenings — there’s no bowling centre or other things in Inuvik. So a lot of them go there for entertainment. They have movie nights and they bring their own movies and it’s a really unique place, and it’s a great place that they can call their own.
I am young and I am proud – Edited DVD Transcript

What I like about the youth centre, they have the camera and I like the people at the youth centre — if I didn’t have this, I would be really bored.

Once the centre was opened, it was kind of on again, off again depending on where we could get money. Sometimes the money would dry up after a couple of months and then we’d have to shut down for a week or a month and we’d have to go out looking for more money. It was like that for a long time — for many years it was just on again, off again — and then there was a lot of vandalism and kids were breaking windows and breaking into the youth centre. But times are changing and their attitudes are changing towards the youth centre now. I guess the way I could gauge the success of the centre is by how happy the kids are. Some of the programs are hit and miss but at least they are going out there and trying to involve the kids in literacy programs, or on the land with traditional knowledge. We bring people in to see [the centre].

I like coming to this centre because it’s fun and a good place to hang out.

When I see that they are happy and safe — for me that’s successful.

Host: That was the Inuvik Youth Centre. It was kind of hard for me, I’m not going to lie to you — I’m going to say this in English. There was a group in Ottawa that is watching this, and they have a question to pose and just wanted a few comments from you, and they asked "how do Inuit youth who have moved away from their community, or who are living in the South stay connected to their culture?"

Jesse Mike: From what I know, I have lived in Ottawa for just a little bit, but travelled there often and having travelled to other Inuit meetings, there’s some cities, Edmonton just got one recently, Ottawa, Montreal, Winnipeg, I’m not sure which other ones, but they have Inuit centres, where Inuit can come together and eat country food or, you know, just have Inuit to be with, and to be able to connect, because it gets pretty lonely in the big cities sometimes. So that’s one way. But I think — well, we talked about media a lot, but I often connect with other Inuit youth in the South quite often through media, through Internet and stuff like that, so I think that's a huge — that plays a huge role in being connected to home, because it's so expensive to get here.

Host: Home in their culture?

Jesse Tungilik: Yeah, for sure. Yes. I definitely agree that media is very important. It’s a very useful tool. Like, Web sites and TV, there’s a lot of really cool outlets that you can tap into when you're outside of the North. I’ve been living in the South for a couple years now, and, yeah, definitely it can be tough, and there are a few things that I tried to connect — I think it’s the little things for me that really help me overcome my — whenever I feel home sick.
Host: I lived in New Brunswick for a year, and what I found really neat, and what I always, always longed for that helped me be connected to home, was being able to call home and talk to my mom and talk to my dad. It really helped me to cope with being away from home, family and culture.

Jesse Mike: When I went to Nunavut Sivuniksavut, I learned to live in the city. Being around other Inuit in the city was helpful and made it a lot easier being away from home.

Host: [Thank you.] What I personally like about what is happening in Igloolik right now is Artcirq. I got a chance to see them perform live and I feel lucky to have seen them. Let’s take a look at what they do.

Time Code: 1:15:38

Pre-recorded video: Artcirq

My name is Terry Uyarak. I am 22 years old. I have been with Artcirq for 2 years, and it has taught me a lot [of good things]. It has an impact on our community by making the community see that even [something small can be accomplished] and that we don’t always have to be sad about everything. We are able to fly around the world, like everyone else. We have learned a lot about our language and our culture. Here, working with Artcirq — we are made aware about our culture, and not just us, we are about [25] performers in Artcirq, and the relatives of the troupe [are more aware too] when we perform. Artcirq has many levels of impact in our community — we try to do everything and make the community happier.

Back in 1998, Guillaume Saladin came to town after two people killed themselves, here in Igloolik. The reason for him to come to Igloolik was to try and help the youth to get rid of the thought of suicide. Guillaume came to town with his performing friends; there were several doing a show. Guillaume was looking for people who were interested, so I decided to try it out, and I was chosen as one of the performers, and that’s where I started. I think that was 10 or 11 years ago.

I am Reena Qulitalik from Igloolik. Artcirq to me means trying to strengthen the Inuit culture and show it. Also trying to make Inuit understand their physical and spiritual strengths.
Part 3

Time Code: 1:19:10

Pre-Recorded Public Service Announcement

The following public service announcement © 1997 Pauktuutit Inuit [Women’s Association].

Are you playing hockey this season?
I don’t think so. I’m so out of breath when I skate. Then I cough and cough.
That’s from smoking!
But I’ve only been smoking three years.

Doesn’t take that long. There’s all those chemicals and tar that you take in when you smoke. People get really bad lung diseases and cancer. Some people die from it.

Maybe we should quit.

Don’t know if I can. Everyone says it’s really tough.

Well lots of things are really tough. The sooner we quit, the sooner we’ll be back playing hockey.

OK. Let’s try it.

OK.

We did it!

Aniqsaattiarniq – Breathing Easy. Pauktuutit Inuit Women’s Association.

Host: (via interpreter) Artcirq. We just saw that program, and we discussed the issues and challenges earlier. So now we have seen what the good programs are, the best practices from Alaska, and Artcirq. We are now going to open the lines. Can you tell us about other projects and programs going on in your regions about the health and wellness of youth? And we have a caller from Pangnirtung, you're going to talk about who you are and the program you're going to talk about.

Caller: (via interpreter) Yes, I'm part of the youth council in Pangnirtung. We try and run programs to embrace life, because in our culture, hunting is a big part of it. We try to keep that in, and also expose [youth] to Inuit culture and why we live the way we do, because sometimes
during the school year they get stuck inside the classroom, so we try and bring them out of the classroom and expose them to our environment in the Arctic. And I can tell you that elders are now being included. We know that elders are a big part of the Inuit culture, but the government is not utilizing them, and they’re not including them. They are dying at an alarming rate, and we know as youth, they hold a lot of knowledge, so we should make the government accountable to include elders, because we're losing a lot of their knowledge. So we now have Nunavut — we now have to include Inuit culture into the government, inject it with Inuit culture and practices, because the programs should be reflecting the Inuit population. It is our government. Some of the attitudes, the general understanding right now with the government programs is there’s a big, big disconnect between the population and the government programs. When Inuit do something wrong, they get charged or they violate a law. And these days, like, with mining development and oil exploration, if they're going to go ahead, I don’t like that, because they’re going to be focused on development and finances. I think that if they’re going to develop that, we have to develop in other areas [too. It should be geared to old ways, and not just the old ways, the ways we use right now.] We shouldn’t just document it on paper, we have to practice the inclusion of the Inuit culture in government [and school programs — anywhere it can be used. It would be nice to see.]

Host: Thank you very much.

Caller: (via interpreter) If there is a disconnect, I don’t think we have found a way to make the connection, because the Western culture and the Inuit culture have always clashed.

Host: (via interpreter) Yes. We're talking about what different programs are in the Inuit regions, [relating] to the health and wellness of youth. What things are beneficial, what can help the youth. We have a lot of callers, 1-800-337-6186 [during live show only]. Please remember that you should be brief. Jason in Iqaluit? What do you think of projects and programs that are benefitting youth? Hi, Jason, you’re on the line now.

Caller: Oh, hi, Jason Anawak here. I work with young offenders, helping youth. I used to help youth too. One thing I noticed, young parents, or — yeah, young parents too — that there’s not [enough] role-playing on how we can help youth, like our own children. We end up letting them grow up a bit too fast, and we end up losing control of them too. And there has to be some kind of way of teaching us parents [how] to love too, so we can start loving our children too. But also from that love, too, there has to be ways of teaching them [how they can manage], once we start to heal them too. So I think the parents, too, have a big role in some of these programs and should be involved. So that's just my little bit, and thank you very much.
Host: Jason, thank you. Thank you so much for your discussion and input. Jason from Iqaluit. We have another caller. 1-800-337-6186. And you want me to ask you, Alicee, about the elders, that they should be included more. Do you agree with that?

Alicee Joamie: (via interpreter) Can you hear me?

Host: (via interpreter) Yes.

Alicee Joamie: (via interpreter) I think they should be fully utilized and included, because sometimes we're totally missed or ignored in the government, and sometimes by the teachers. This is how I see it. Let me explain this to you first. Like, with health care, and I'm always involved in that with an anti-smoking committee and chairing since 2000, because I wanted to help fellow medical staff and youth and children with anti-tobacco campaigns. Something that I have seen here is I have worked with youth for over 30 years being a foster parent. With abandoned children, stressed-out children, what I've seen is, yes, we are disconnected. There's a real disconnect between the elders and the youth, and why is it like that? What I've realized is that a lot of them think that they're not loved anymore. They are not feeling affection. Another thing too is that we're letting our children grow up with babysitters and poverty. Back then when we were younger, we were included right from the start in the community, not just by our parents, it was always by members of our camp and our community. We were involved right from the get-go. And we were welcomed by everyone in the community. All the elders, you felt like they were your parents or your grandparents, because there was so much love in the community. That was how we grew up. We were taught you should not kill, you should not steal, treat your neighbour as you would want to be treated. Those were the laws taught to us. Another thing I wanted to talk about is when the school institutions came to Iqaluit. I've been here since 1960 in Iqaluit, and I'm growing old here. Since the schools started, because we cherished our youth and our children, it seems like — we haven't treated them the way they should be treated. There were a lot of people that — because we don't have the diplomas and the certificates to teach our children — we tried to [prevent them from going] to school. [We tried to go and speak with them], but because we weren't certified teachers, [we weren't welcomed. The teachers and elders have to come together, and the elders have to be the backbone.] I think that the youth today would, you know — if we were included right from day one, we would have had a very different culture today. I think that elders should be teachers in the school. And the way I see it, youth are very capable and very talented, and if they are welcomed and encouraged by their elders, [that] would have another big impact. And I know speaking as an elder, when we’re welcomed and encouraged, [we get strength. When we’re
alone, and our grandchildren are gone for a long time, or our children are gone long, we struggle more. How can we help the youth grow?] I want to help more, give more. A lot of us think about how we can bring nourishment, like hunting was mentioned. Yes, being out on the land is a perfect example, because when you're out there, it's a totally different environment. Your whole connection is different. You become very aware, and you become well. I have so many other things to say, but I'll end it there. Thank you.

**Host:** (via interpreter) And thank you. We're talking about youth and being proud, because we have to be proud of who we are. I would like to — there's people in Grise Fiord. You're on the line now. Can you hear me?

**Community Focus Group - Caller:** (via interpreter) Yes.

**Host:** (via interpreter) You're on the line now. Can you tell us who you are?

**Community Focus Group - Caller:** (via interpreter) There's four of us in Grise Fiord. We are the focus group.

**Host:** (via interpreter) What did you guys discuss?

**Community Focus Group - Caller:** (via interpreter) We talked about how youth — we spoke about what we thought of — the issues for Inuit youth. Since the education system was introduced into the North, I think that the challenges and issues faced by youth today stem from those experiences and the lack of elders included in the workplace or the school system, the education system. I think that our youth would learn more from them if they have the exposure needed, both in the workplace and in the education system. And be exposed to the elders and also have hands-on experience, have the opportunity to learn with hands-on experience with the teachers. That's how Inuit were taught, and so we think that is one avenue that should be incorporated into the education system. I really think too, here, for our community, there's a lack of facilities and educational resources. Every time we ask for something like that, the government always uses the lack of, or the small population in the high Arctic as an excuse for not giving us what we want. And also, another thing is tournaments. There is not enough representation. There's a lot of interest for them to go to these tournaments, but sometimes we're not even notified, like, if there's a volleyball tournament coming up, they don't even let us know, because they know that it's close to impossible for us to go and participate in that tournament. And because in the high Arctic, we have such a dark season, and we have one extreme to the other, where it's 24-hour darkness, and then 24-hour
sunlight. I think that also has a big impact on the mental health. That was one thing. But there are other benefits [to being here]. We have almost perfect attendance in school. We take a lot of pride in that, and our youth here in the community, because we are a close-knit, a small community, our youth always help the elders. But I can tell you one concern that always comes up is the lack of facilities for the youth or programs. There are many others, but... for some of the things, the solutions that we haven't come to [yet], I think the best way to do it is to talk to the youth directly and come up with solutions with them. And also by being exposed to culture. Instead of just talking to us, they should be showing us. That is one way I learned how. That is one way I learned about our culture — to practice it, be exposed to it. I think that our youth would have more pride. There are many games and computer programs in English I think that are used, and children are very exposed to that, and so they're losing interest in learning about our culture. Those are some of the things we talked about.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you very much for allowing us to hear your issues and things that have worked. Thank you, Peepilie. That's Grise Fiord focus group and what their comments were. That's Peepilie on the line. And we now have someone from Rankin Inlet. Can you hear me? Lori should be on the line from Rankin Inlet. Oh, here she is.

Youth Focus Group - Skyper: Hi.

Host: Hi, Lori. (via interpreter) How are you?

Youth Focus Group - Skyper: Good.

Host: Good. It's good to see you.

Youth Focus Group - Skyper: Now I'm good.

Host: Now, can you give us an idea of what youth can do, and as part of your discussions as a focus youth group.

Youth Focus Group - Skyper: I'm speaking on behalf of our focus group and tonight we're talking about how youth can get involved in making programs to make our communities a healthier and better place to be. We mentioned that getting involved is easier than most people think, because you just have to find out what's wrong or find an issue that interests you, and then you just have to get people talking about it. You could talk to your classmates, your principal, your teacher, and when you talk to people, they usually have some really good input, so they'll give you more ideas, like, where you can do something or activities that you can do.
Or they might know someone you can talk to or they might even know of a group you can join, or they might even want to join your group so that you two can work together and work with other people, so then you have, like, a whole big group or you have more people in your network. And a really important thing when you're doing something in your community is to stay positive. People notice things, notice when positive things are happening, because it affects the whole community. And being active keeps you healthy and keeps you out of trouble. Like, if you're bored, you should get involved. You have all kinds of options. Like, there are school groups, sports teams, workshops, rangers, cadets, and they can include anyone. They use elders and everyone in between. Like, everyone! And most schools have a land program. They always teach the youth traditional skills like hunting, camping, and language, and positive things happen when you keep trying to stay positive and true to yourself and what you want to do for other people. Like, there was this one girl, she was in our group, she was bored and she wanted to help keep kids away from drugs and alcohol, so she started coaching. And then when you start doing things like that, start doing good things, you empower other kids to do the same. And when people start doing good things, they start thinking twice about doing something that isn't so good. I feel like I'm just talking on so... I have a real life example of how it's really easy to get something started. Like this weekend, I was at a conference, and part of the conference was to go back home and do a community project. So this started on Sunday, and so, then Monday, I went to the elementary school and talked to every class about a potential soccer camp and found out how many people were interested. After that I talked to our rec coordinator and he said he was trying to do the same thing, so we're working together. And there's an outdoor soccer field they're building, so we have a place to run the camp, and he mentioned they have a program for skill development, and so now we have potential funders, and it's just working really fast and pretty easy.

**Host:** Thank you, Lori, is that your little brother?

**Youth Focus Group - Skyper:** Yeah. He just walked in.

(Laughter)

**Host:** Let's see him too, because I see him in the corner. Thank you, Lori. That was Lori calling from Rankin inlet. We have been able to go on the Internet, with the virtual youth group online. That was Lori. What do you feel about what's going on in the community to improve the health and wellness of youth, Jesse?

**Jesse Mike:** I'm on a board, so a lot of work they are doing in community initiatives is helping them [with] administration and funds. And I mentioned this earlier about how young people
often come to their friends first when they really need help before going to that next level of getting professional help, because that's a lot easier and you trust that person already. And then you have all the programs that are available at the community level. I'd like to really try and encourage young people that when you feel you're not getting the help you need from your peers or from your family or from your community, that you go to that next level as much as that service isn't available in your community all the time, go to that next level of going to your health care providers and requesting that. You know, you need that extra help because your friends aren't able to do it, and I think that's something that's very important to remember, because often when we feel like we can't get help from our communities, young people in Inuit communities, especially, often give up, and I think that has a lot to do with the suicide rate as well. But just to remember, young people remember that there's help out there with whatever it is you feel that you can't be helped with, and that you feel like there's a lot of hopelessness. There's help for anything nowadays, and I'm very thankful for the community counsellors and things like that that take all their time, are available 24/7 and do their best and have all that, but remember that there's extra help beyond your community sometimes, that you really need to search for, unfortunately. But it is there if you really, really needed it. So I just kind of wanted to talk about that. But remember that there's awesome community programs that are keeping young people going on a daily basis that we need to recognize.

**Host:** You know, it was all started by someone who actually took the initiative to start something.

**Jesse Mike:** You need one person with a passion and a support group, and that always comes in communities.

**Host:** Exactly. (via interpreter) Please, we would like you to call 1-800-337-6186, you can call this number, and youth, what do you do? We have Thomas from Rankin Inlet on-line. You're on-line now. Can you hear me? Hi.

**Caller:** (via interpreter) I cannot hear you. I could hardly hear you.

**Host:** (via interpreter) I can hear you though.

**Caller:** (via interpreter) Yeah, I can hear you now. Thank you. I want to give a very brief comment. Thomas is my name, I'm very proud of the young people who are on the panel tonight. One other thing, for about ten years now — when I was turning 65, I've been doing this for ten years now, and I was living in Kitikmeot East. If we were able to live together as next-
door communities — there's too many sort of anti-feelings between some communities. [We go against each other, even though we don't want to be like that. Because we go against each other, and are not thinking about each other, suicide happens,] and I've seen that for myself firsthand. However, the young people, I really want them to think [about how to deal with hard times], because I've done that myself. If you have parents, or if you have relatives, try to talk to and connect with your relatives, not only to young people but include all the family members as much as possible. If you have a relative that you really love and care about, connect with them and communicate with them on what you see, and don't think that if you say something that relatives are going to start going against you. Don't think that way. And that's what I really want to share with the young people. I had a life where my father was blind and I had an older brother who was about four years older than I was, and he's not with us anymore. I had difficult experiences in my life myself, but young people, I would like to request that you embrace the healing process. We all have different beliefs and different values. Let's try to connect with our spirituality and go from there. Thank you.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you. We have a caller from Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Ken, can you hear me?

Caller: Hello.

Host: Hi.

Caller: Yes. I want to get on the program.

Host: Yes. You're on the program.

Caller: I'm calling from Labrador, and I'm an elder, and I feel that our youth today, growing up, need a lot of help. And I always felt that when you go back to our traditional ways in life, it has a lot of healing effects for modern-day problems, with drugs and alcohol and things like that. And I often speak to youth groups and I try to encourage them to go get education, stay clean, and always — never forget where you came from, your traditional ways. Always keep in mind your traditional ways. We can never go back entirely to the traditional ways, but never lose sight of where you came from. Be proud of who you are, and I'm of mixed ancestry, part Inuit, part European and part Mi'kmaq, and I try to teach the traditional ways to all our people up in Labrador, the young people, because today they're growing up into a very modern world. And when we grew up, there was no temptation with drugs and alcohol around like today. People need more programs for our young people to get involved in and take them out on the land. It
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will have a healing effect on a lot of our problems today, and I feel that [you should] never lose sight of where you came from and keep up the traditional way of life. Thank you very much.

Host: Thanks, Ken, for joining us. Now we have the last caller, (via interpreter) we have very little time, from Rankin Inlet — Clyde River, I’m sorry. If you’d like to comment. Welcome.

Caller: (via interpreter) Can you hear me?

Host: Yes, we can hear you, that’s very good.

Caller: (via interpreter) I’m calling from Clyde River. I have been dealing with youth too for quite a time now, and I want to say to the young people, and for us as parents and elders, we need to take better care of them and for us to start providing more guidance and mentoring and teaching. I believe we need to incorporate the elders and the youth, and when I dealt with youth for quite some time, [what was often said was], “I have not been taught properly by my father or my mother [— they didn’t teach me.” When this is said, it can be hurtful to us as parents. It is obvious,] let’s provide more guidance to our sons, to daughters, and furthermore, because we’re from the land, that’s been our life historically. We as parents need to teach and instruct young people more on how to survive out on the land. And [another thing that is often said, when we work with the youth, they say “I am not] from Clyde River, I was born in Iqaluit. I know my roots are in Clyde River, but I was born in Iqaluit.” That hurts a lot when a young person says that — the relatives [feel] hurt. A lot of young people have been delivered in the Baffin Regional Hospital, and there’s a feeling in there that I was born in Iqaluit, even though I’m originally from Clyde River or from Iqaluit, but I was born in Iqaluit. I want to say — I think I got my point across. Something to think about for all of us.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you so much for sharing this. We have very little time left and at this time I want to ask Catherine to give her closing remarks.

Catherine Carry: On behalf of Inuit Tuttarmingat of the National Aboriginal Health Organization I’d like to thank our funders for making this project a success. The Government of Canada, Health and Social Services, Nunavut Government, [the CIHR Team in Circumpolar Health Research,] Canadian North, First Air. And many thanks to the academics who helped us along the way, our partners and especially our community focus groups in [Inuvik,] Cambridge Bay, Grise Fiord, Clyde River, Inukjuak, Nain, our youth focus group, all of you in the audience, the panelists, the interaction and this has been incredible.
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Host: (via interpreter) We have a few more words to go. Thank you. Shawn, what do you think you can do in your communities?

Shawn Kuliktana: What youth can do in the communities is start little organizations. You know, youth attending little meetings, like a sports program, drum dance, brainstorm ideas, and also, look for what goal you want to achieve. So a little story that I had was that, youth, ‘enough is enough’ — it happened a little over a year ago that we did this. Our goal was to stop the suicide rate that is going on in the community. It was powerful that youth came out and said ‘enough is enough’, not the adults, just the youth. It showed how much power that youth have. And that's our little organization that happened a little over a year ago, and I'm still proud of it — to show that. These little kind of organizations have come a long way, and in the next couple weeks, which I’m proud to say, the Governor General will be going up to our community and congratulating our youth.

(Applause)

So this shows youth [can make] powerful organizations and youth are our future.

Host : (via interpreter) Thank you very much. It is time to wrap up. I think you had a few words to say briefly if you could.

Allen Auksaq: (via interpreter) Yes, I'd like to say to Inuit youth: try and get involved in what you enjoy. Get involved, include your elders and your parents. Go to them when you're facing difficult situations. And help your friends. Be with them, ask them what they want to do, and ask them how they're doing. And I think the most important thing is to do things that you enjoy doing. You are youth. Be proud. Be proud of being in the North, living in the Arctic, because we have a bright future. Thank you.

Host: (via interpreter) Thank you.

(Applause)

Host: (via interpreter) Yes, yes for the last few nights we talked about Qanuqtuurniq. It was very pleasant, and the discussions have been enlightening, and we've learned a lot. For those of you at home, thank you for being with us. If you want DVDs or audio transcripts, you can go to InuitWellness.ca; you can go to our Web site and check out the resources for youth. [Thanks to] this panel, and there are many other people that were involved, who you don't see. Thank you to all of you. Wellness has been our focus. And the technical crew, thank you so much, all of you that have been involved in this production and the funders. Thank you.

[For Credits, see the separate file on the InuitWellness.ca site.]