

# **CYCC Network Impact Evaluation Report**



**March 2015**

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## Executive summary

In 2014 the CYCC Network Board of Directors directed Network Staff to conduct an evaluation of the impact of the CYCC Network on member organizations across the country. This evaluation was completed with the goal of systematically understanding the impact we have on our members and partners and developing material that can be used in our 2015 reapplication for funding. The results of this evaluation are interpreted in this report. Quantitative data is available upon request.

### Key findings of the Impact Evaluation:

- Network members have:
  - increased participation in knowledge mobilization activities;
  - increased partnership building;
  - changed policies and practices as a result of engagement with the CYCC Network.
- Involvement in the CYCC Network has caused many members to form new working relationships. 54% indicate having developed a new partnership as a result of involvement in the Network.
- Many Network Partners continue to experience challenges that frustrate effective evaluation. Some Network Members have had success in using the Evaluation Toolkit.
- 69% of Network Members are pursuing new knowledge mobilization activities. Network funding facilitated the development of innovative and effective knowledge mobilization methods by the some partners.

Based upon the findings of the Impact Evaluation Network Staff identified a number of recommendations that could improve CYCC Network activities during the second funding cycle. These recommendations were developed through analyzing findings and combining this with comments made by Network Partners during the interview process. Several Network Partners that participated in interviews were enthusiastic about sharing their recommendations for future Network activities. These were taken into account in the development of the full list of recommendations presented in this report.

### The key recommendations of this report are:

- The CYCC Network should continue to provide support for Network Members to develop innovative, context -specific KMB models.
- The CYCC Network should continue to develop region-specific events with goals related to partnership building and enhancing KMB. The Network should explore effective ways of capturing the energy mobilized by these events.
- The CYCC Network should continue to develop the evaluation support resources that it provides.
- The Network should take steps to further identify and share valuable knowledge created by Network Members.

## Introduction

Since 2011, the Children and Youth in Challenging Contexts (CYCC) Network has worked to strengthen services that improve overall mental health and wellbeing for children and youth in challenging contexts across Canada and around the world.

The Network was founded to achieve three broad goals:

1. To position the CYCC Network to become a world leader in cross- disciplinary knowledge synthesis and knowledge mobilization related to children and youth experiencing adversity.
2. To synthesize the evidence-informed, practice-based and indigenous/local knowledge of CYCC Network Partners, then share that knowledge widely in order to improve services for young people.
3. To become a source of innovation for interdisciplinary knowledge mobilization (KMb) among service providers working with children and youth.

Over the past four years the CYCC Network has worked to achieve these goals by helping Network Members and Canadians discover, self-evaluate, format, share, adapt and adopt promising practices that have shown potential to have a positive impact on vulnerable and at-risk children and youth. The CYCC Network has worked to create an integrated and sustainable community of researchers, practitioners, communities, policy makers, and young people who are working together to share and improve services offered to youth in challenging contexts.

Network staff completed an internal evaluation over an external one at the request of our Governing Board. This decision was taken as a result of having a limited budget and timeline to complete the evaluation. The familiarity of the staff member with CYCC Network activities produced a more detailed quick survey for this renewal and the findings from this evaluation has helped us to identify the aspects of the Network's activities that are the most useful to our members and how we can improve future CYCC Network projects.

## Methods

The Impact Evaluation was based upon both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from Network Members and Partners. In consultation with Contact Consulting Group of Halifax, Network Staff deigned an evaluation strategy based around data gathered from a) a survey; and b) a series of semi structured interviews with Network Partners.

### *Survey*

Network Staff developed an online survey which was circulated to Network Members and Partners. The survey consisted of 25 questions and collected information based around the following themes:

- Demographic information
- Network participation
- Use of CYCC provided resources
- CYCC impact on partnership building, evaluation and knowledge mobilization

Network staff used Fluid Surveys, an online survey tool which allowed them to reach out to partners in an organized and accessible way, as well as perform analytics on the data gathered.

The content survey was developed by Network staff in consultation with Contact Consulting . Three members of CYCC staff and one external consultant were involved in a three-step drafting process to create the survey questions.

The survey was distributed to 140 Network Members and Partners with two reminder emails. 71 people completed the survey. This is completion rate of 50.7%. A complete outline of the survey questions can be found in Appendix A.

### *Interviews*

Evaluation interviews were conducted with representatives of CYCC Network Member organisations. All Network Partners (30) were approached for interviews. In total 23 interviews were conducted over a four-week span in January and February 2015. 21 interviews were conducted with the executives of Network Partner organisations, or with project managers closely involved in specific CYCC-related projects or events in. The CYCC Network interviewer was directed to 2 additional staff within Partner organizations that had been closely involved with an activity developed as a result of interaction with the CYCC Network (eg. implementing use of the Evaluation Toolkit, managing funding received from the Network).

Each of these interviews was semi-structured. Network staff prepared an outline for interviews, and used this as a basis for conversation on Network impact. In most cases the outline questions were used as a rough guide; the specific experience of each Network Member was focused on. Interviews were not recorded. Instead Network staff maintained written notes. Interview participants were contacted through follow up emails to verify the accuracy of quotes and anecdotes presented in the final evaluation report. A list of standard interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

### *Synthesis*

An central part of the evaluation process involved organizing and synthesizing the data collected from the survey and from interviews. The data was synthesized around 5 themes:

1. Sketching out the network
2. Partnership Building

3. Evaluation
4. Knowledge Mobilization
5. Constructive Criticisms

Four of these themes (Sketching out the Network, Partnership Building, Evaluation and Knowledge Mobilization) were chosen on the basis of being reflective of the goals of the Network. The remaining theme (Constructive Criticisms) was chosen to communicate valuable insights that emerged during the interview process.

#### *Limitations*

Network staff identified several limitations in the evaluation strategy:

First, the Impact Evaluation was not planned into Network activities from the beginning of the NCE funding cycle. Although the evaluation strategy did engage people who have been involved in the Network since its inception and involved in activities that took place since the beginning of the Network funding, the Impact Evaluation presents a snapshot of the Network at a specific moment in time, rather than over the whole period of operations.

Second, the data collected for the Impact Evaluation does not capture the motivations of those who left the Network. Collecting this information was deemed to be a relatively low priority by Network staff given the constraints of the evaluation timeline and budget. Network staff chose to focus on collecting data relevant to our currently existing network. A future evaluation strategy could include network exit interviews.

Third, Network Staff feel that the survey provides an inaccurate representation of the level of youth participation in the Network. Only 7.5% of survey respondents identified with the label 'youth.' Anecdotally, Network staff report a larger number of youth engaged in Network programming, particularly as a part of the Youth Advisory board or as participants in specific projects. This may be as a result of a failure to clarify the definition of youth that is used by the CYCC Network on the survey.

## Findings

### Key Findings

The key findings of the Impact Evaluation are that:

- Network members have:
  - increased participation in knowledge mobilization activities;
  - increased partnership building;
  - changed policies and practices as a result of engagement with the CYCC Network.
- Involvement in the CYCC Network has caused many members to form new working relationships. 54% indicate having developed a new partnership as a result of involvement in the Network.
- Many Network Partners continue to experience challenges that frustrate effective evaluation. Some Network Members have had success in using the Evaluation Toolkit.
- 69% of Network Members are pursuing new knowledge mobilization activities. Network funding facilitated the development of innovative and effective knowledge mobilization methods by the some partners.

The figure below outlines several other significant findings from the Impact Evaluation.

Note that 53.5% of Network Members who completed the Impact Evaluation reported forming a new partnership as a result of their participation in CYCC Network activities.

20% of Network Members who completed the survey reported changing a program or practice as a result of involvement with the CYCC Network. This finding can be interpreted as an indication of the practical outcomes of the Network's knowledge mobilization work. A future evaluation might investigate which facet of CYCC programming effected this change.

Several partners indicated that, although their involved in the CYCC Network had not yet effected substantive changes within their organizations, they expected changes to occur as a result of participation in CYCC activities within the foreseeable future.

Together these finding illustrate that the CYCC Network's approach to achieving its core goals is successful.

Has your involvement in the CYCC Network influenced you or your organisation in any of the following ways? (check all that apply)



More detailed findings are organized into the following subsections below:

1. Sketching out the network
2. Partnership Building
3. Evaluation
4. Knowledge Mobilization
5. Constructive Criticisms

### ***Subsection 1: Sketching the Network***

Survey respondents were asked a number of demographic questions. This allowed Network staff to outline a picture of the CYCC Network based on:

- the geographic areas in which member organisations focus their work;
- the professional backgrounds of Network members;
- the populations with which Network members work.

This information is presented with the caveat that the picture of the Network is based only on survey respondents, and so excludes Network members who have not completed the Impact Evaluation survey.

*Geographic focus of the Network:* The membership of the Network is spread across Canada. Many members focus their work nationally or in multiple provinces. Further, Network Members that work directly with youth work with populations in both rural and urban areas. The geographic breakdown of Network membership is as follows:

What province(s) or territory(ies) does your organisation work in? (Choose all that apply)





### Professional focus of Network Members:

Members joined the Network in a variety of capacities. 67% of Network Members who completed our survey identify as working directly with youth. Particularly well-represented in our membership are Researchers/academics and staff of youth serving organizations.

In what capacity have you joined the CYCC Network?



*Population Focus:* The specific populations served by Network members vary widely. Many Members identify as working at the level of national or provincial policy. In many cases their work affects youth who belong to multiple population groups. The foci of member organisations vary. Members that work with Aboriginal youth, with youth dealing with addictions and with youth who are subjected to abuse are particularly well-represented in the Network. A majority of Network members report working directly with youth.

What specific populations of youth does your organisation serve?





*Youth in the CYCC Network:* A relatively small number of Network Members identify as youth. The limited involvement of youth was noted as a concern by the NCE in the 2012 Annual Monitoring Report. Although youth are not well-represented in terms of formal Network Membership, the Network has grown to include youth in programming in several ways. In particular, the Network has formed a youth governing board with youth representatives from across the country and ensured youth membership in local Wisdom2Action planning teams throughout the country. Further, one member of the youth governing board sits on the Network Board of Directors as a full member.

### ***Subsection 2: Partnership Building***

The data gathered through the Impact Evaluation show that:

- 1) *Involvement with the CYCC Network helped facilitate new partnerships and collaborations;*
- 2) *Network-led activities helped organizations confront context-specific challenges to relationship building;*
- 3) *The relationships facilitated through involvement with the CYCC are regarded as valuable by many partners.*

#### ***1) Involvement with the CYCC Network helps facilitate new partnerships, collaboration or linkages***

Of those partners who participated in the Impact Evaluation survey, 54% indicated that they have developed a new partnership that has influenced them or their organization. 57% indicated that involvement in the CYCC Network has encouraged them collaborate more. 39% of partners noted that participation in the CYCC Network has changed the nature of their partnerships. 88% of survey respondents felt that the Network has facilitated increased collaboration. These figures suggest that the CYCC Network is achieving its goal of helping facilitate new partnerships, collaborations and linkages between individuals and organizations working in the sector.

### *A Successful CYCC Network Brokered Partnership*

One CYCC Network partner organisation works in partnership with the Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqaatigiit Embrace Life Council, a non-profit suicide prevention organisation based in Iqaluit, Nunavut. The project on which these organizations are collaborating brings core violence prevention training to schools in 26 communities across Nunavut. **In addition, the team is working on a unique community engagement process to define each hamlet's priorities for a healthy community.** Exposure to trauma, stressful life events, mental illness, sub-stance abuse, poverty, and cultural loss are risk factors that influence suicidal behaviour, and suicidal rates are particularly high among indigenous populations in northern communities.

In a connection that was brokered by the CYCC Network, one of the collaborating partners gained access to the Evaluation Tool basket developed by the Resilience Research Centre (RRC). As of January 2015 the tool basket has been used in a pilot capacity to evaluate programming in a single community in Nunavut, with plans to expand usage of the evaluation tools to other communities in which Embrace Life works.

The Partner who collaborates directly with the CYCC Network noted that: *“Having access to the tools provided by the RRC is like a gift.... It is extremely important that communities have the opportunity to identify their own priorities... there are limited resources that can be used to*

## *2) CYCC Network-led activities confronted challenges to relationship building that are rooted within specific contexts*

Some contexts pose particular challenges to developing effective working relationships within the sector. In Nunavut for example, the cost of travel is high. This limits the abilities of people, organizations and community members working in northern communities to meet face to face and develop relationships that can form the basis of productive collaborations. As one partner located in Nunavut stated:

*“The cost of travel is high. A lot of work happens at the community level. It’s not just about getting organisations to meetings, but also about getting people to them. There is a need to look beyond the usual suspects and engage communities.” – Nunavut W2A Participant*

In Montreal the challenges to effective knowledge mobilization are very different. Within the city there is a divide between organizations that operate in English and those that operate in French. The Wisdom2Action Montreal event sought to bring organizations working on either side of this divide together to develop relations and collaborations that can challenge the linguistic divide. In an interview one W2A Montreal participant stated that:

*“Organisations working in only French or in English don’t do a good job of sharing information, even though they work in the same city. (My organization) has a four-year plan to transition toward working bilingually. The CYCC event in Montreal was like a fast-track in developing relationships to move toward this goal.” – Montreal W2A Participant*

*3) The relationships facilitated through involvement with the CYCC are regarded as valuable by many partners*

A recurring theme in the interviews conducted with Network Partners was the value of relationships created through involvement with the Network. The aspects of the relationships that were valued varied among partners. One partner remarked upon the breadth of Network membership, the importance of having context-specific conversations and the value of breaking down disciplinary barriers:

*“I am impressed by the broad mix of partners that the CYCC brings together, and by the way the Network manages multiple conversations with multiple stakeholders. It is important that these conversations do not just happen from a clinical point of view, but that they take into account larger ecological factors” – Director KMB organization*

Several partners from various backgrounds noted challenges in finding time to develop local networks, to share information and to critically reflect on their work. Some partners found that Wisdom2Action events, as well as a series of local service provider meetings convened in Halifax provided opportunities to engage in these activities:

*“Sometimes we need help getting beyond the tunnel vision of day-to-day work... (we need) a space to think about the bigger picture.” – Academic researcher*

*“We have a lot of work to do and it can be difficult to break up the normal cycle of work to make time for networking” – Project Manager, Youth serving organization*

The value of forming relationships to conducting productive knowledge mobilization was a theme that emerged throughout the evaluation. For some partners developing relationships based on trust and mutual interest was a necessary condition for engaging in effective KMB. As noted earlier, a significant number of Network members reported forming new relationships (53.5%), in addition to engaging in more KMB oriented activities (70%). One partner framed relationship development as a necessary condition for effective knowledge transfer:

*“Only through relationships will people get to meaningful substantive exchange of information which helps them to do a better job, these relationships are pivotal” – Executive Director, Youth serving organization*

### ***Subsection 3: Evaluation Practices of Network Members***

The data gathered through the Impact Evaluation suggests that:

- 1) Most Network Members do evaluation of some nature. However, a large amount of this evaluation occurs on a project-by-project basis and is not used to construct a larger picture of organizational impact;*
- 2) Many organizations have well-developed evaluation strategies. These tend to be the larger, more established orgs;*
- 3) Some Network members have used the RRC's Evaluation Tool Basket, offered by the CYCC Network, to positive effect. Many members are not familiar with the tool basket.*

*1) Most Network Members do evaluation of some nature. However, a large amount of this evaluation occurs on a project-by-project basis and is not used to construct a larger picture of organizational impact;*

74% of those who completed the survey indicated that they engaged in some form of formal evaluation. However, a significant number also indicated that they encounter challenges in performing evaluation effectively: 63% indicated that the costs of evaluation are a problem, 61% indicated the time to complete evaluations is a problem and 33% indicated knowledge of evaluation methods to be a challenge.

An important distinction emerged in interviews: Some organizations have developed a cohesive framework for organizing and synthesizing evaluation data in order to develop a larger picture understanding of their impact. Others are only able to do evaluation on a project-by-project basis which does not allow them to develop a larger picture of their impact.

Several Network Partners described well-developed organization-wide evaluation strategies, including having in-house teams dedicated to evaluation. Other partners described struggling because, although evaluations are funded, they tend to be funded at the level of the project which makes synthesizing evaluations and using them to learn about the overall impacts of organizational work is difficult.

The upshot of this is that, while many Network Members do conduct evaluation of some sort, the Impact Evaluation shows that there remains a considerable potential for the development of effective evaluation supports within the sector.

*2) Many organizations have well-developed evaluation strategies. These tend to be the larger, more established organizations;*

Various partners interviewed described extensive evaluative systems which are designed to gather longitudinal data and employ the lessons learned from this data in the design of subsequent programming.

The broad trend is that relatively large organizations that have core (as opposed to only project-based) funding seem able to develop a comprehensive evaluative frameworks. Many other organizations struggle to complete evaluations that are useful beyond satisfying the needs of funders. This disparity may provide an opportunity for the Network to mobilize existing evaluative knowledge effectively.

*3) Some Network members have used the RRC's Evaluation Tool Basket, offered by the CYCC Network, to positive effect. Many members are not familiar with the tool basket.*

Of the Members and Partners who completed the survey, uptake of the RRC evaluation tool basket was low. 34% reported having knowledge of the RRC tool basket and 10% reported having used it in whole or part.

Several cases in which the evaluation tool basket has been used to positive effect were revealed in the impact evaluation. One partner who works with the Red Cross on a project in Nunavut reported using the tool basket in a pilot capacity with plans for expanding its use across the territory. This case is examined in more detail above under the heading of Partnership Building.

Another partner working with a small service-delivery organization reported finding some components of the Tool Basket to be useful. While the partner was quite supportive of the idea of the tool basket as a whole they found it to be non-cohesive and requiring of a greater investment of time than they were able to provide. This comment suggests an area in which future CYCC Network efforts may be productive.

#### ***Subsection 4: Knowledge Mobilisation (KMB)***

The data gathered through the Impact Evaluation suggests that:

- 1) Involvement in the CYCC Network encouraged members and partners to adopt new KMB or to think critically about existing KMB practices;*
- 2) Funding provided by the CYCC to encourage innovation in KMB was quite successful. Several funded projects had significant positive KMB impacts;*
- 3) Network Members remained interested in receiving additional KMB support.*

*1) Involvement in the CYCC Network encouraged members and partners to adopt new KMB or to think critically about existing KMB practices;*

The Impact Evaluation Survey provides insight into the impact of the Network upon the KMB practices of Partners and Members. Of those members and partners who completed the survey:

- 49% accessed resources provided by the CYCC Network. These resources include Knowledge Synthesis reports, Summary Documents, Policy Checklists, Videos, blog posts and social media.
- 48% of survey respondents took part in CYCC events related to knowledge mobilization. These included Wisdom 2 Action events which took place in 2013/2014 (in Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax, Surrey, Iqaluit and Montreal), service provider meetings in Halifax or the knowledge mobilization simulation which took place near the inception of the Network in 2012.
- 20% of survey respondents accessed Knowledge Mobilization Innovation funding or Best Practices Video Competition funding.
- 70% of survey respondents indicated that they are exploring more Knowledge Mobilization activities as a result of involvement with the CYCC Network.

In Impact Evaluation interviews several partners noted that their engagement with the CYCC Network has been valuable as related to KMB. The specific aspects that partners interviewed found valuable varied. One partner noted that:

*“I appreciate the way the CYCC has framed the evidence question... (and) honoured the knowledge that comes up from the field, honouring practice informed evidence and pushed back on the pressure to develop randomised control trials in circumstances where they are not possible.” – Project Director, National level service provider*

Another partner noted the value of the Knowledge Synthesis reports to their research work:

*“The report in youth engagement with technology was very useful – it helped bridge the gap between a project involving youth in New Zealand and one involving youth in Labrador. Without the influence of this report lessons from these projects might have remained separate.” – Academic Researcher*

2) Funding provided by the CYCC to encourage innovation in KMb was quite successful. Several funded projects had significant positive KMb impacts;

Several recipients of KMb Innovation Funding from the CYCC Network reported that this funding had significant impacts which benefitted their projects and fostered knowledge exchange within the communities in which they worked. One academic partner noted the impact of KMB Innovation funding on a research project with youth in Nunatsiavat, Labrador. The Network Partner has an ongoing relationship with the community in which research took place. Funding provided by the CYCC Network was used to complement this work by supporting intergenerational knowledge exchange within the community:

*“The work funded by the CYCC was a project that developed cultural mentorship relationships. This project involved sharing stories of resilience, reclaiming cultural skills and reclaiming language. The project involved developing connections between youth and other older members of their communities to learn Inuit cultural and traditional skills.” –Academic Researcher*

Several other example shared by CYCC Network Partners in interviews speak to the impact that KMb Innovation Funding had on knowledge mobilization within their projects:

*Engaging community members in medical research*

One recipient of KMb Innovation Funding manages a research project which studies the vaccination practices of mothers in a low-income neighbourhood in Toronto. Funding from the CYCC Network was used to involve community members in the research process in a new and interesting way. Instead of the usual research practice of hiring undergraduate students to do outreach for participation in the study, researchers used funding provided the Network to train mothers from the community.

This approach provided a direct benefit to the mothers who received training and also allowed researchers to develop relationships with mothers in the area and gain greater insight into their life experiences. One outcome of this change was recognition of the difficulties mothers face in bringing their children to a clinic to be vaccinated. This led to a pragmatic change – instead of requiring mothers to bring their children to a clinic for vaccines, researchers brought the vaccines to the mothers in their homes.

In the words of the manger of the research project: *“The CYCC funding allowed us to take a risk on trying out a new methodology. This has ultimately left the study in a stronger place and allowed for a more meaningful incorporation of community members into the study. This work has created a new paradigm for reaching out to parents for mental health” - Academic researcher and recipient of KMb Innovation Funding*

### *Mobilizing lessons among caring professionals*

A CYCC Network Partner based at a Canadian college used funding received through the Best Practices Video Competition to produce a video that documented best practices with children and youth in care. This video was developed with a significant degree of youth involvement and has been shown to students in studying Human Services. Plans are in development for increasing the viewership of this video in colleges across the country.

The video produced in this project was based upon the stories of youth involved in care. In collaboration with a local community based media organization and with Voices, a youth led youth-in-care network in Manitoba a strategy was developed to engage youths who had been involved in the social services in telling their stories. These stories were used as the basis for the video. Including young people in this manner provided an opportunity for youth to share knowledge of their experiences in the care system with others.

In the words of the coordinating researcher: *“The funding provided by the CYCC made this project possible. It allowed us to try a new approach which proved to be very effective.... We are planning on taking this project further and bringing this video to (organizations) across the country.”* – KMb Innovation fund recipient and researcher

### *3) Network Members remained interested in receiving additional KMb support.*

Data from the impact evaluation suggests that many network members have an ongoing desire for more assistance with KMB work. Several partners expressed an appreciation for the synthesis of academic work that the Network has conducted. One Network Partner stated that: *“There are many sources of emerging resources that are relevant to our work. The work the CYCC does serves to make this more manageable and creates more meaningful, specialized links.”* – Network Partner, W2A Participant

One partner qualified this sentiment by saying that, while they value the work done in the knowledge synthesis process, they think there is a more pressing need to mobilize readily accessible knowledge than to continue working to synthesize it.

One partner who appreciated the role of the network added that it is essential that the network doesn't remain focused on itself, but that it engages with the reality of work in communities:

*“The big thing is moving beyond just having a network – getting down to the nitty gritty and using the network to empower work happening at the community level”* – Project Manager, northern service delivery organization

Overall most members seem satisfied with the work of the Network with 90% answering yes to the question: “Would you encourage other organizations that work in the sector to join the CYCC Network?”



## Constructive Criticisms

Impact Evaluation interviews allowed an opportunity for partners to share criticisms of the CYCC Network activities that they participated in. Without exception these criticisms were made alongside comments about the value of the Network, and comments about hopes of what the Network could achieve. Criticisms made during interviews can be divided into three themes.

### ***There is a need to foster more multi-directional information exchange within the network***

Several partners who were interviewed expressed concern for the limited use made by the Network of the resources existing within the Network. One partner expressed a belief that the value of a network lies in the pooled knowledge and assets of its members, and in the ability of the network to mobilize these. In the words of this partner:

*“The value, benefit of this network is what individual partners and orgs are bringing to the table. CYCC is its membership. Generally I find that there is not enough language in our MOU, general communication to partners for instance, that reflects that.”* – Executive Director, youth serving organization

One theme which emerged several times in interviews was the tendency of the Network to focus on mobilizing CYCC-produced knowledge. A partner mentioned that this focus may come with the opportunity cost of mobilizing network member-produced knowledge.

### ***Evaluation assistance provided by the Network has some impact but there is a great deal of room for improvement***

While some partners expressed satisfaction with the influence of the RRC’s Evaluation Tool basket, offered by the CYCC Network, several outlined limitations imposed by the design of the tool basket.

One partner noted that the tool basket required a large investment of time in order to be used as instructed. Another partner noted an appreciation for the possibility of customizing the toolkit to incorporate context-specific information into the evaluation.

There is a clear tension here: while some users desire a customizable tool which they can adapt to their own work, others would prefer a tool that is more straightforward to use. These comments should be seen in light of the low uptake of the toolkit (approximately 10% of Network Members who participated in the survey).

### ***More can be done to capture the energy of in-person events***

Various participants remarked on the energy mobilized through in-person events and several noted that the CYCC Network didn't fully capitalize on the energy mobilized. In the words of one partner:

*“One of the struggles of small organizations like mine is that it is easy for the day to day to take over; it is difficult to dedicate time and space to what W2A was trying to achieve.”* – W2A Participant and Network Partner

Several suggestions for harnessing the energy of in-person events were shared:

- Establish regular in-person follow up events (ex. coffee houses).
- Establish working groups around specific regionally-relevant issues.

## Conclusions

The goal of this evaluation was to understand the impact that the CYCC Network has on its members and partners, and the results confirm that not only has the CYCC Network had an impact, it has had a positive impact. This Impact Evaluation asserts that the CYCC Network has helped Network Members and Canadians discover, self-evaluate, format, share, adapt and adopt promising practices that have shown potential to have a positive impact on vulnerable and at-risk children and youth.

Findings from this evaluation show that the CYCC Network has improved the child and youth serving sector through enhancing the KMB capabilities of organizations working in the sector. Through involvement in the CYCC Network, successful partnerships have been formed, collaborations have been initiated, and evidence-based knowledge has been shared with a wider audience than it would have been without the existence of the CYCC Network. The CYCC Network has been a key instrument in program and policy changes in community based organizations, which results in better services for children and youth in Canada. Information from the evaluation also shows that involvement with the CYCC Network has helped many partners develop innovative ways of engaging in KMB that are relevant within specific contexts. There remains an appetite for funding that can drive this innovation.

While the Network has made a substantial contribution, evidence from the Impact Evaluation shows that the child and youth serving sector in Canada has unmet needs related to Knowledge Mobilization. For many community based organizations, engaging with academically produced knowledge remains a challenge, as does transforming lessons learned through practice into evidence that can be beneficial to other organizations. Further, many small, grassroots community organizations struggle to complete effective evaluations which could help them learn if and how their programming works. Evaluations could help to translate the lessons learned from one program into evidence that could be used to inform programming in other contexts.

The biggest recommendation from this evaluation is that the CYCC Network should continue its activities and efforts; to provide support for Network Members to develop innovative, context-specific KMB models, to develop region-specific events with goals related to partnership building and enhancing KMB, to continue to develop the RRC's evaluation Tool Basket and should expand and share the valuable knowledge created by Network Members in ways that can assist and support the agencies that serve Canada's most vulnerable children and youth.

## Recommendations

1. The Network should continue to provide strategic KMB support to member organizations.
  - There is a continued desire for knowledge mobilization support amongst Network members.
  - The Network should continue to investigate ways of developing the KMB capacity of member organizations
  
2. The CYCC Network should continue to facilitate the development of KMB relationships between member organizations.
  - The Impact Evaluation showed that members regard relationships as important to effective KMB
  - The Impact Evaluation showed us that many members struggle to find the resources to develop KMB centered relationships on their own
  - The Impact Evaluation showed us that there is a great deal of KMB expertise within the Network.
  
3. The Network should take steps to further identify and share valuable knowledge created by Network Members.
  - Several partners identified having skills for mobilizing knowledge that they have developed through their activities
  - Several partners suggested that the Network could share these skills and knowledge more effectively.
  
4. The CYCC Network should continue to provide support for Network Members to develop innovative KMB models that are effective within their contexts.
  - The Impact Evaluation found that CYCC Network support for developing effective KMB models has been effective for some members
  - Network Members have ideas for developing productive KMB models but lack the resources to pursue these ideas
  
5. The CYCC Network should continue to develop region-specific events and should explore effective ways of capturing the energy of these events.
  - Many Members reported benefiting from their W2A and KMB Simulation experiences
  - Some members communicated doubts about the extent to which the energy mobilized through these events was harnessed
  
6. The CYCC Network should continue to develop the evaluation support resources that it provides.
  - Many Network Members struggle with finding the time and resources to conduct effective evaluation
  - The Network should investigate the development of evaluation resources that are: a) more user friendly b) remain adaptable to the context in which they are employed.
  
7. The Network should investigate mobilizing the evaluation-related knowledge that exists within the Network
  - Many Network Members have well-developed evaluation systems
  - Many Network Members struggle with developing evaluations system of their own