SOCIETY FOR
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Urban Explorers PPP
Child Engagement in City Planning
Tel: 778-929-5754
email: ildi@scyofbc.org

SCY would like to acknowledge that this curriculum has been developed on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples–Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations.

URBAN EXPLORERS

Teacher Manual

By Ildiko G. Kovacs
Child & Youth Friendly Communities Project Manager
The Society for Children and Youth of BC

With contributions from Shelley Sage-Ricci (Indigenous Education Consultant) and Margie Sanderson (Society for Children and Youth of BC).

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SCY'S URBAN EXPLORERS PROGRAM & PPP CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

By Ildiko G. Kovacs

WHAT IS THE URBAN EXPLORERS' PROGRAM & PPP CURRICULUM?

SCY's Urban Explorers was developed under the organization's Child & Youth Friendly Communities (CYFC) projects. The program is part of the global Child Friendly Cities and Children's Rights to Cities movements. SCY's CYFC initiatives aims to uphold children's rights to participate in decision-making that affects their lives (as outlined in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNCRC). Urban Explorers achieves this by delivering a sustainability and citizenship education program based on participatory planning methods – ensuring that children and youth have a voice and directly provide input for local community planning initiatives undertaken by their city governments.

Thus, the program's Participatory Planning Pedagogy (PPP) and curriculum is essentially education *for* and *from* practices of sustainable city planning and democratic citizenship.

Goal: sustainability & citizenship education to promote young people's active citizenship and motivation to take actions for their community's sustainable development.

Theory of change: through its community-engaged and place-based approach the program aims to foster young people's sense of relatedness (or connectedness) to the land, the people and places within their community. Through a student-led, asset and rights-based approach the goal is to promote young people's sense of autonomy and sense of competence. Together, this increased sense of relatedness, autonomy, and competence can foster intrinsic motivation to take actions that address social and environmental sustainability challenges in a community, thus supporting the growth and development of democratic citizenship where engaged young people strive to be active change-makers in the present and the future. The program is based on the collaboration of local governments who are ready and willing to receive their young citizen's input by fully including them in public engagement for planning.
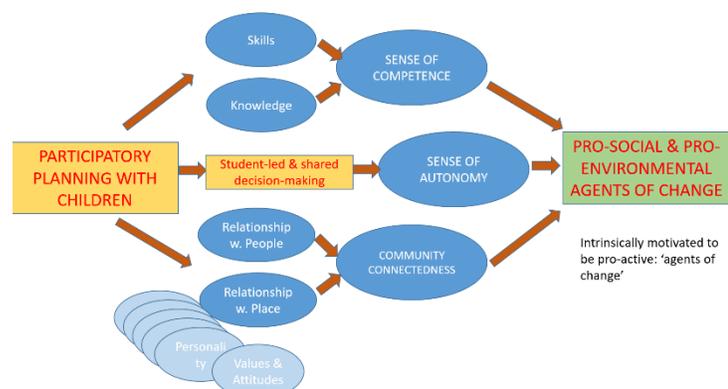
PPP is Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL):

- Student led & autonomy supportive: Student's lived experiences and interests are the starting point for inquiry; students have control and autonomy over the learning processes (i.e., they choose inquiry topics based on interests, knowledge, experience).
- Interdisciplinary: Environmental and sustainability education (ESE) that combines Social Studies/Urban Studies, Social Justice, History (esp. Colonization & Indigeneity), Health Education, Art, and Science.
- PPP focuses on the development of critical thinking and shared problem-solving skills, through collaboration, communication, innovation, and creativity.
- Project/problem-based learning: the driving question (or ill-defined problem) students address with their projects is the urban sustainability challenge. Within this challenge students are active problem solvers leading research to identify issues, causes, and consequences, then designing models to communicate ideas of visions and solutions to city decision-makers.

PPP's Decolonial Framework – Education for Reconciliation

- PPP aims to incorporate global Indigenous and local First Nations' and multicultural understandings related to land, relationships, sustainability, and the natural environment. These include the sharing circle, kinship ethics, and place-based experiential land education.
- Place-based education promotes direct social and physical interaction and embodied experiences within the community, outside of the school context.

PPP's Philosophy:

- Critical pedagogy: that considers the purpose of education to go beyond the individual, aiming to develop self-determined and emancipated critical thinkers who strive to transform society to be more socially and environmentally just.
- Rights-based: Promotes children's rights to participate in decisions affecting their lives – as per the UNCRC – specifically focusing on participation in local governance & planning. Children are viewed as competent and capable to be civically engaged citizens of today.
- Child-centred: Acknowledges children's 'Ecologies of Knowledge,' and considers children to be not merely consumers, but also producers of knowledge.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The resources listed below are excellent sources both for a backgrounder on the Child Friendly Cities and Growing Up In Cities initiatives, and also provide examples of how these programs have been adapted to communities and classrooms around the world.

Journal Article on Urban Explorers and its PPP curriculum:

Kovacs, I. (2020). Participatory Planning Pedagogy: A Children's Right to the City Initiative. *Canadian Journal of Children's Rights, 7*(1). Available online at https://ojs.library.carleton.ca/index.php/cjcr/article/view/2576

Books on Child Friendly Cities and Growing Up in Cities Initiatives around the world.
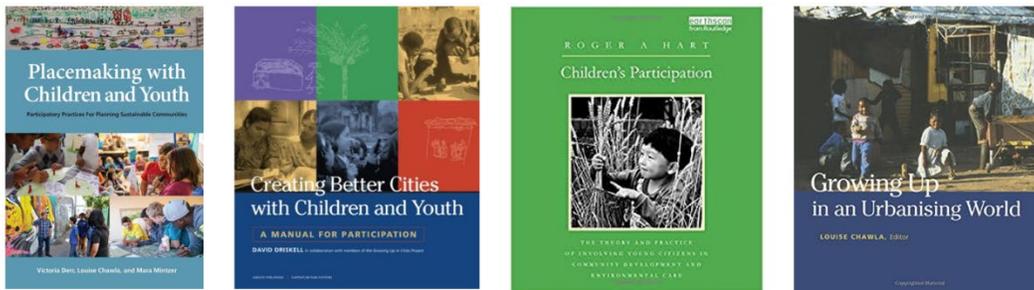
Chawla, L. (Ed.). (2002). *Growing up in an urbanising world.* London, UK: UNESCO-Earthscan.

Derr, V., Chawla, L. & Mintzer, M. (2018). *Placemaking with children and youth. Participatory practices for planning sustainable communities.* New York: New Village Press.

Driskell, D. (2002). *Creating better cities with children and youth. A Manual for participation.* London, UK: UNESCO-Earthscan.

Hart, R. (1997). *Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care.* New York, NY: UNICEF.

Web-based resources:

⇨ The First Nations' Education Steering Committee's teacher resource on BC First Nations Land, Title, and Governance: http://www.fnesc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/PUBLICATION-Governance-BCFNLTG-2019-09-17.pdf

⇨ UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities: https://childfriendlycities.org/what-is-the-child-friendly-cities-initiative/

⇨ Growing Up Boulder: http://www.growingupboulder.org/ see the 'Great Green Neighbourhoods' project

⇨ Society for Children and Youth of BC: https://www.childfriendlycommunities.ca/

⇨ First Nations Child and Family Caring Society: About Us | The Caring Society (fncaringsociety.com)

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URBAN EXPLORERS PPP – Curriculum Outline

General structure of sessions:

- **Territorial Acknowledgement:** Initially have the class recite Indigenous land acknowledgement - invite students to take turns leading this once they are familiar with the process.
- **Circle/Icebreaker:** At the beginning of every session a 10–15-minute circle check-in is held, theme-based when possible and at times tied in with an ice-breaker or a team-building game.
- **Session Activity:** The main lesson (may include a presentation, an interactive discussion, workshop or student inquiry activities, fieldtrips and art/design-based project work).
- **Inquiry**: Additional student individual or small-group inquiry also happens independently of these sessions (i.e. during library hours; or as homework, or an individual/small group assignment. Inquiry may include fieldtrips, some of which are optional, and others a core part of the program).

Module Title	Module Content Overview	Fieldtrip
Part 1/Background Phase: Introducing Cities		
Module 1: Turtle Island - Canadian Cities	- Land Acknowledgement - Creation Stories - Introductory Presentation - City-on-the-Wall Co-design - Begin inquiry => start Timeline Stories	Class visit to your local Indigenous Community (Optional)
Module 2: Kids in Cities	- Survive & Thrive Activity - Human Rights – Child Rights – Child Friendly Cities Presentation - Indigenous Rights, Indigenous Kinship ethics - Kids' Daily Activity Log --- Here (or prior to Module 5's Neighbourhood Walk): - Maps 101 Presentation - Mapping: Favourite places & activities	
Module 3: Sustainable Cities	Sustainable Cities: Presentation and Sustainability Challenges (Local-Global + Social-Environmental) group knowledge co-construction activity	Visit to local landfill (Optional): https://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/landfill.aspx#redirect

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	• Intro to Inquiry • 'Cradle-to-grave assessment' of my food or my furniture, or clothing, toy, etc – Inquiry Activity e.g. https://ecochain.com/knowledge/life-cycle-assessment-lca-guide/	
Module 4: City Planning – Our City's Past, Present & Future	• City's Past-Present-Future: Presentation on city or site history (also continue Timeline Stories) • Indigenous Land: Timeline Stories assignment • Introduce the specific city planning project • Cont. Inquiry of sustainability challenges activity (module 3)	• Visiting local First Nations community • Museum visit • City tour with an elder
Part 2/Inquiry Phase: Let's Investigate!		
Module 5: My Neighbourhood	• Maps 101 Presentation • Mapping: Favourite places & activities -- • Route planning: cont. of mapping activity (module 2 or beginning of 5 here) • Neighbourhood/Site walk and photo documentation	• Neighbourhood Evaluation Walk (Core)
Module 6: Transportation	• School travel modes – past and present Inquiry/Activity (include parent/relative interview & applied math exercise). • Active Sustainable Transportation Presentation (Translink Guest Speaker if available) • Optional activities: SAT planning with fieldtrip/fieldwork (e.g. school-area hazards; bike-walk-transit audits of major school routes); Walk-Bike-Roll-Transit audits	• SAT – Safe Active Travel field-assessment at school, and/or on common routes to school • Walk-Bike-Roll-Transit assessment of selected other routes (to important places/activities)
Module 7: Housing	• Housing Form: activity (survey) + optional fieldtrip • Housing Affordability: presentation and math budgeting exercise	• City Evaluation Fieldtrip (select area eg False Creek, Olympic Village, DT, other… compare various housing forms and how CF the area is

Module 8: City Government	• Local Government: presentation/discussion • Fieldtrip 2: City Hall and selected city area (inner-city/downtown) evaluation walk	• City Hall Fieldtrip (can be combined with above city evaluation walk for a full-day outing)
Module 9: Nature & Urban Biodiversity	• Urban Biodiversity/Wildlife Activity: Animals & Plants • Native-Non-native species: student inquiry • Fieldtrip #3 -Park/Urban Greenspace Assessment • Optional: Habitat Mapping and Evaluation Activity (school-yard, back-yard or park/public space)	• Optional add-on to fieldtrip: Plant walk – with Indigenous Knowledge Holder • Optional field-based project: Habitat Enhancement/Restoration
Module 10: Public Spaces & Play	• Presentation on Public Spaces • Outdoor Play: Past & Present Inquiry/Activity (include parent/relative interview & applied math exercise); Play presentation • Play (Playgrounds/Playscapes) visual preference survey (co-created with students)	• Fieldtrip: Parks and Public Spaces play/playability assessment (can be combined with habitat evaluation Park fieldtrip OR with the public space assessment can be part of the inner-city fieldtrip 2) • Optional field-based project: Tactical Urbanism – Public Space/Play Activation project
Part 3/Projects Phase: Creating Our Future		
Module 11: My City Project	• Presentation on Project: goals, past projects, showcase. • Abstract Modelling Workshop • Begin Student projects – ongoing work	
Final Projects	• Project building: 2-6+ sessions	• Showcase w. Student presentations

INDIGENOUS CURRICULAR CONTENT

In the introductory section of every module you will find a green box with additional Indigenous curricular content notes, including inquiry and deep discussion topic suggestions, questions, and links to additional web-based resources. The Indigenous worldview is woven in through the entire curriculum. With Education for Reconciliation in mind, we encourage educators or facilitators of all backgrounds to explore these topics in more depth for themselves and with respective their classes.

FIRST NATIONS' PRINICIPLES OF LEARNING

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Learning involves patience and time.

Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

For more information on perspectives and worldview, and what does this look like in the classroom, please visit:

- https://learn.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/96/2017/09/First-Peoples-Principles-of-Learning-for-Teachers.pdf

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FACILITATION RESOURCES & GUIDE

AUTONOMY SUPPORTIVE TEACHING

Autonomy supportive teaching requires a willingness to prioritize the learner's perspective and control over the learning process. This entails power-sharing with students, which is perhaps one of the hardest things to achieve in a classroom because teachers need to continually balance the tensions that can arise from this duality of student autonomy and teacher authority. Knowing when to step in to lead, guide, and keep students on track, and when to step back allowing students to self-direct and organize is a fine balancing act.

A major goal and benefit of this teaching style is that it supports students' intrinsic motivation. When successful, autonomy supportive environments will lead to a class full of highly engaged and enthusiastic students. A major misinterpretation of autonomy supportive teaching style is that it is highly permissive, lacking structure and guidance from the instructor. In fact, the opposite is true: autonomy supportive teaching is successful when students have choice to make their decisions and self-guide their learning *within* a well-structured framework that supports and guides their learning process.

Ten tips for autonomy supportive teaching (Kusurkar, Croiset, & Cate, 2011):
- Begin by identifying student interests,
- Minimize external reward systems,
- Encourage student-directed active learning,
- Provide structured guidance,
- Ensure that challenges are neither too easy nor too difficult,
- Give positive constructive feedback,
- Provide a safe space for dissent,
- Avoid control,
- Offer a clear rationale for mandatory activities, and finally,
- Whenever possible, provide choice.

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THE CIRCLE

There are several types of Sharing Circles for various purposes - some are for sharing stories, for learning, for healing, for making decisions and voting.

- Circles are considered sacred spaces where everyone is equal. No one is better than anyone else, no one is less than anyone else.
- All voices and shared knowledge is welcome and respected. Everyone gets a chance to speak, to share, to shine.
- Often a talking piece - a rock, feather or talking stick is passed for each participant to have a turn (everyone is encouraged to participate). Who ever is holding the talking piece, is the one who speaks while the rest practice active listening, sitting still, listening with ears and eyes respectfully
- Comparison can be made to observe all the circular things in our world – the sun, the full moon, clocks, buttons, wheels, frisbees, coins, jewelry, bubbles, iris, seeds, ripples in water, patterns on the wing of an owl or butterfly, orange slice etc.

https://aboriginal.abbyschools.ca/sites/default/files/Sharing%20Circle%201%20and%202.pdf

SHARED DECISION-MAKING

Traditional consensus style decision making was practiced by many Indigenous Peoples before contact. Leadership was often hereditary, and children were mentored and taught from an early age – it was earned, learned and/or inherited from within families, clans and nations. Some followed patriarchal lines while many followed matriarchal lines.

"Consensus is not the same as unanimity. Consensus means a group or community arrives at a consensus by listening to the opinions and concerns of others - they work towards a suitable decision. Not everyone is necessarily pleased with the outcome, but they realize it is the best decision for the community. Unanimity requires that everyone involved agrees."
https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-does-traditional-consensus-decision-making-mean

FRAMING for SUSTAINABILITY

Healthy and sustainable cities work for people and work for the environment. When talking about sustainability we include both social and environmental aspects, understanding that only by addressing these together can we actually achieve sustainability.

It is also of importance to note that what is often considered the 'third' pillar of sustainability: economics here is viewed to be merely a part of the human social system – essentially socio-economic system. To help understand the importance of these 2 (or three) pillars we often ask students: "Can the environment (environmental/ecosystem) exist without the human social system?" then "Can the economic system exist without the human social system?" and finally ask them then which of the two images below is a more accurate depiction of how these 3 aspects of sustainability related to each-other:
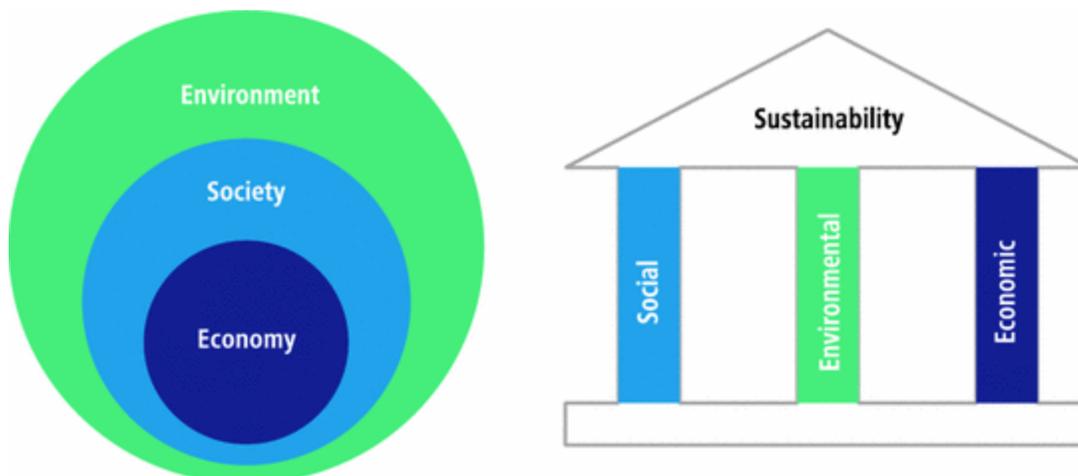
In fact, my approach is that since we cannot have an economic system without a social one, but it is also arguably true that we cannot have a social system without an economic one, therefore social and economic are merely two sides of the same coin – or are altogether the same thing, meanwhile both exist within the larger environmental system or ecosystem. The latter system would continue to function fine without this or these systems embedded within it. Then the economic system is merely there to make the social system work – it is a function of, or a tool for it, or perhaps is one aspect of the social system.