

Seeing the Familiar in a Different Light

# Paradigm Shift Evaluations

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  - Evaluation Advisor
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# CWY's Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program Overview

- Program stemmed from feedback that Canada World Youth received regarding the need for a program which reinforced cultural pride, bridge the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginals, and contribute to developing personal skills and leadership capabilities
- Uses an assets-based approach
- Centered on Aboriginal knowledge and culture
- Delivered in partnership with Aboriginal communities
- Objective of building youth leadership skills so they can return to contribute and strengthen home communities

# Evaluation Purpose

- Help Canada World Youth refine the design and delivery of the program
- Formative, assets-based approach
- Investigate the extent to which the CWY has successfully integrated Aboriginal culture into the program
- If this integration has had an effect on program outcomes
- Determine if youth are returning and contributing to their community

# Theoretical Approach

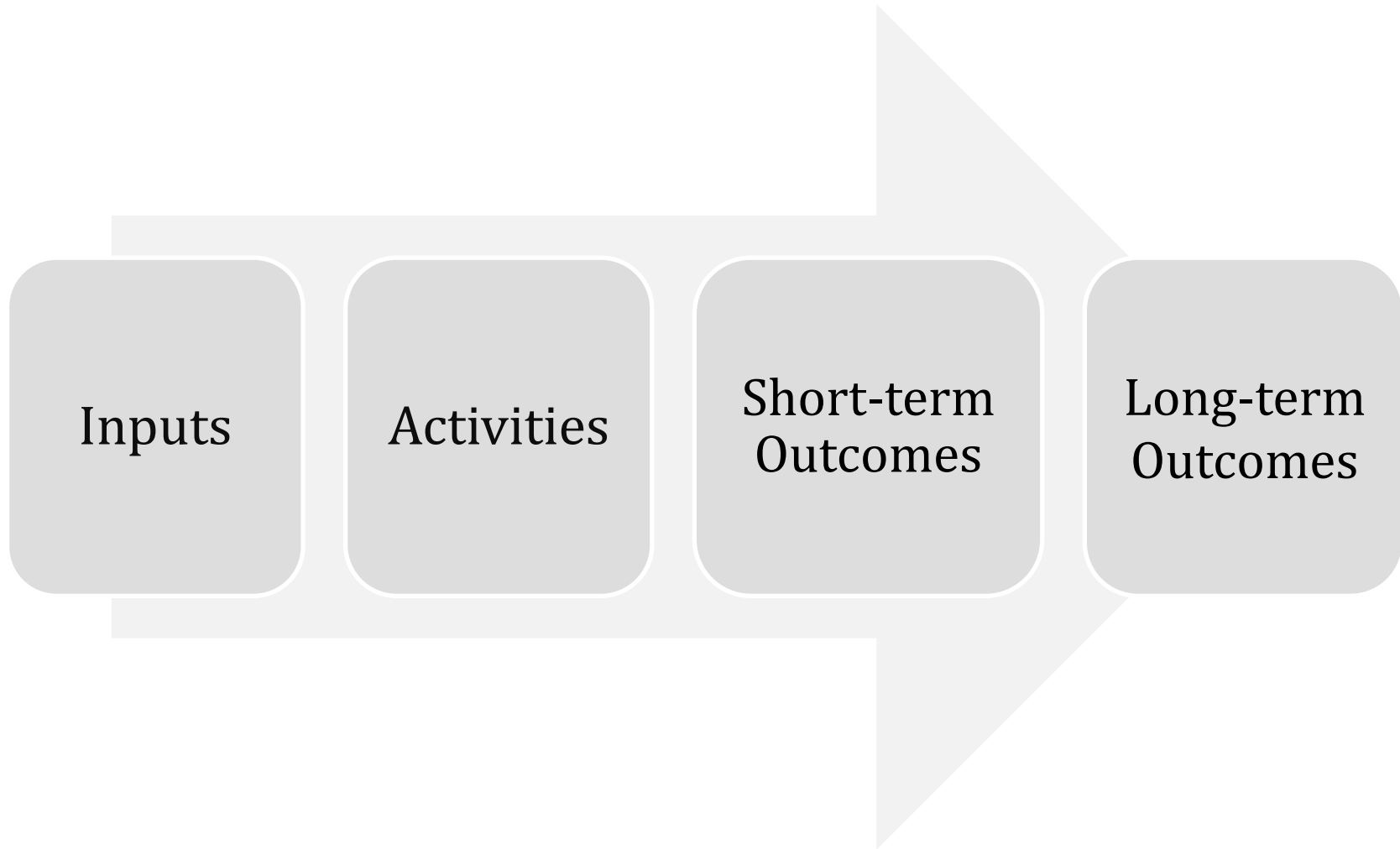
- Collaborative Participatory Action Research
- Empowerment-focused evaluation
- Decolonization approach
- Culturally responsive evaluation (Aboriginal Core Values and Evaluation Practice)

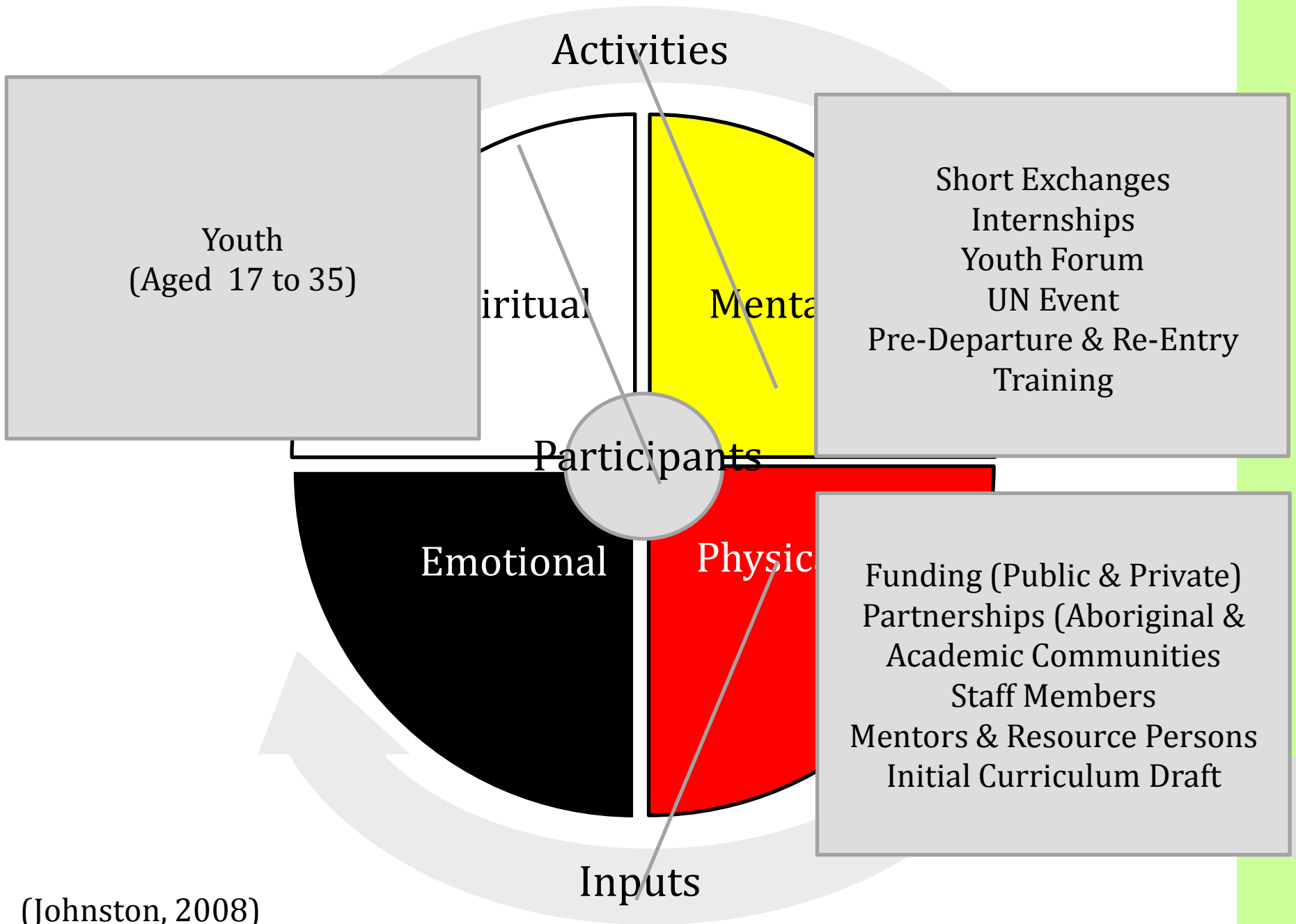
(LaFrance & Nichols, 2008)

# Stakeholder Steering Committee



# Program Theory



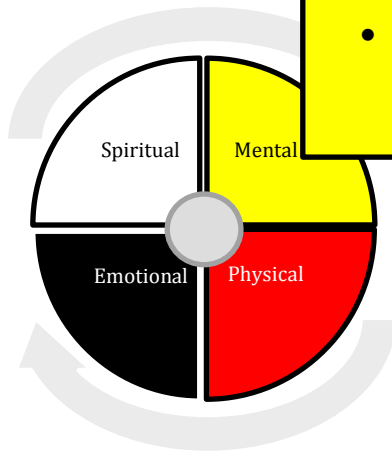


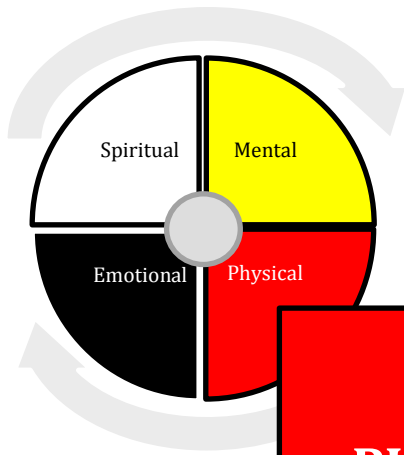
(Johnston, 2008)



## **MENTAL**

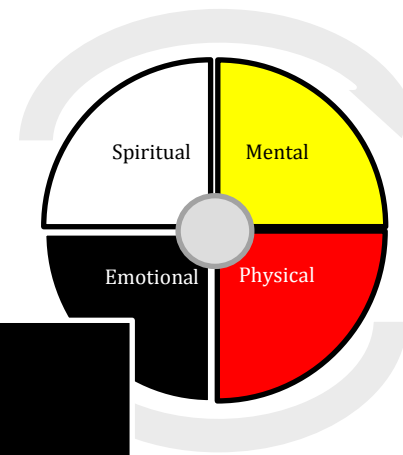
- Increase communication & leadership skills
- Increase knowledge & competencies (employment)
- Increase knowledge of UN mechanisms
- Increase knowledge of Aboriginal peoples and cultures
- Increase preparedness to pursue academic goals





## **PHYSICAL**

- Increase employment skills
- Increase capacity to: plan, implement, evaluate, fundraise, & network

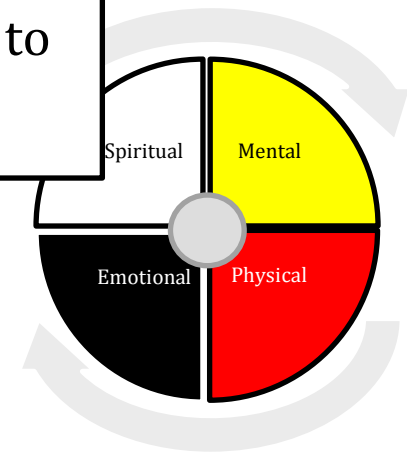


## **EMOTIONAL**

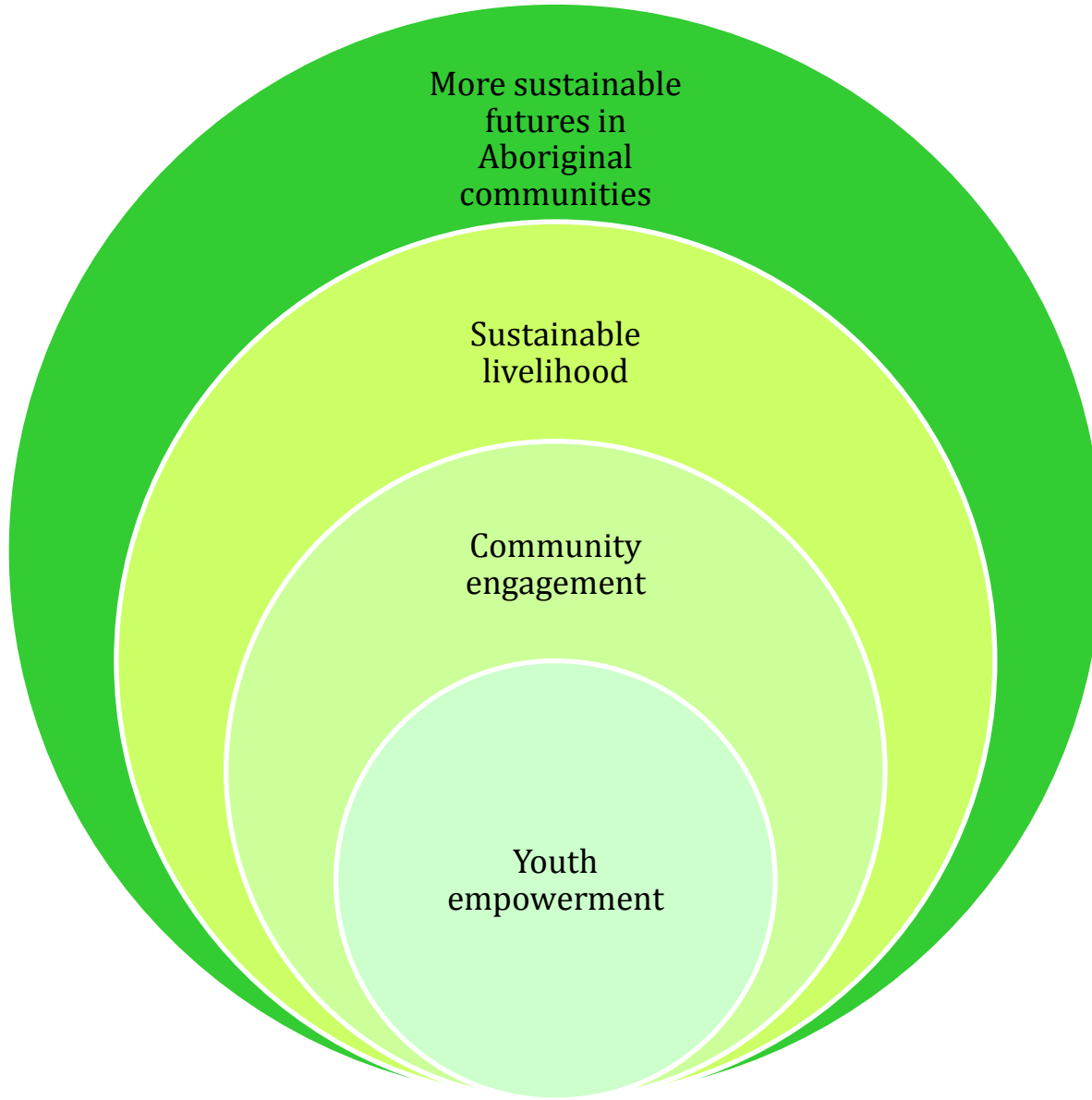
- Increase self-confidence
- Increase respect for culture
- Increase feelings of self-efficacy

## **SPIRITUAL**

- Increase connection with Aboriginal cultures
- Reinforce cultural pride
- Bridge gap between Aboriginal & Non-Aboriginal peoples
- Increase empowerment to be an agent of change



# Program Theory of Change



## Assumptions

- Diverse groups have similar needs
- Labour force needs
- Youth will return to communities
- Outside collaboration desired

## Internal & External Factors

- Prejudice & discrimination
- Living in two worlds

**“If you are going to design an evaluation it must be verbal and it must be visual ... because our lives are.”**

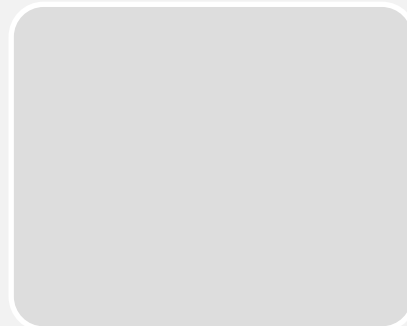
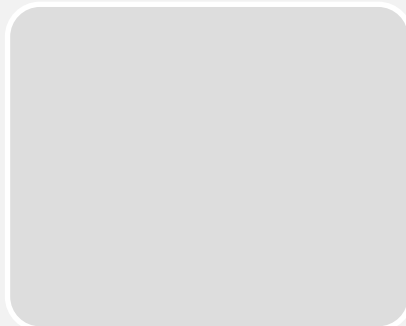
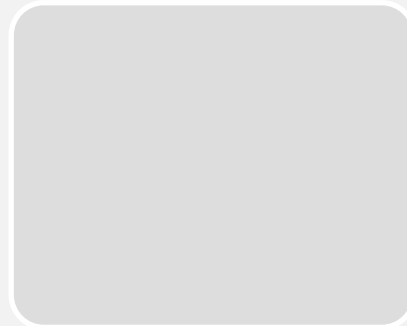
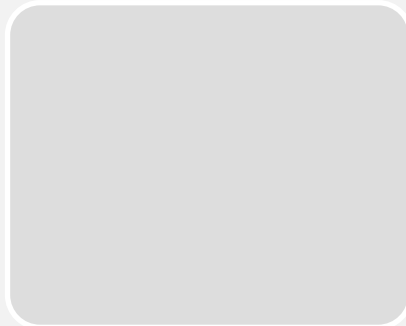
**- Elder Geraldine Standup of the Hodenosaunee as  
quoted in Johnston, 2008, p. 54**

# Methodological Framework

To what extent has CWY successfully integrated Aboriginal culture, language, traditional knowledge, and identity in the AYL?P?

Youth narratives  
Elders' confirmation

Sharing Circles  
Photovoice  
Interviews



# Methodological Framework

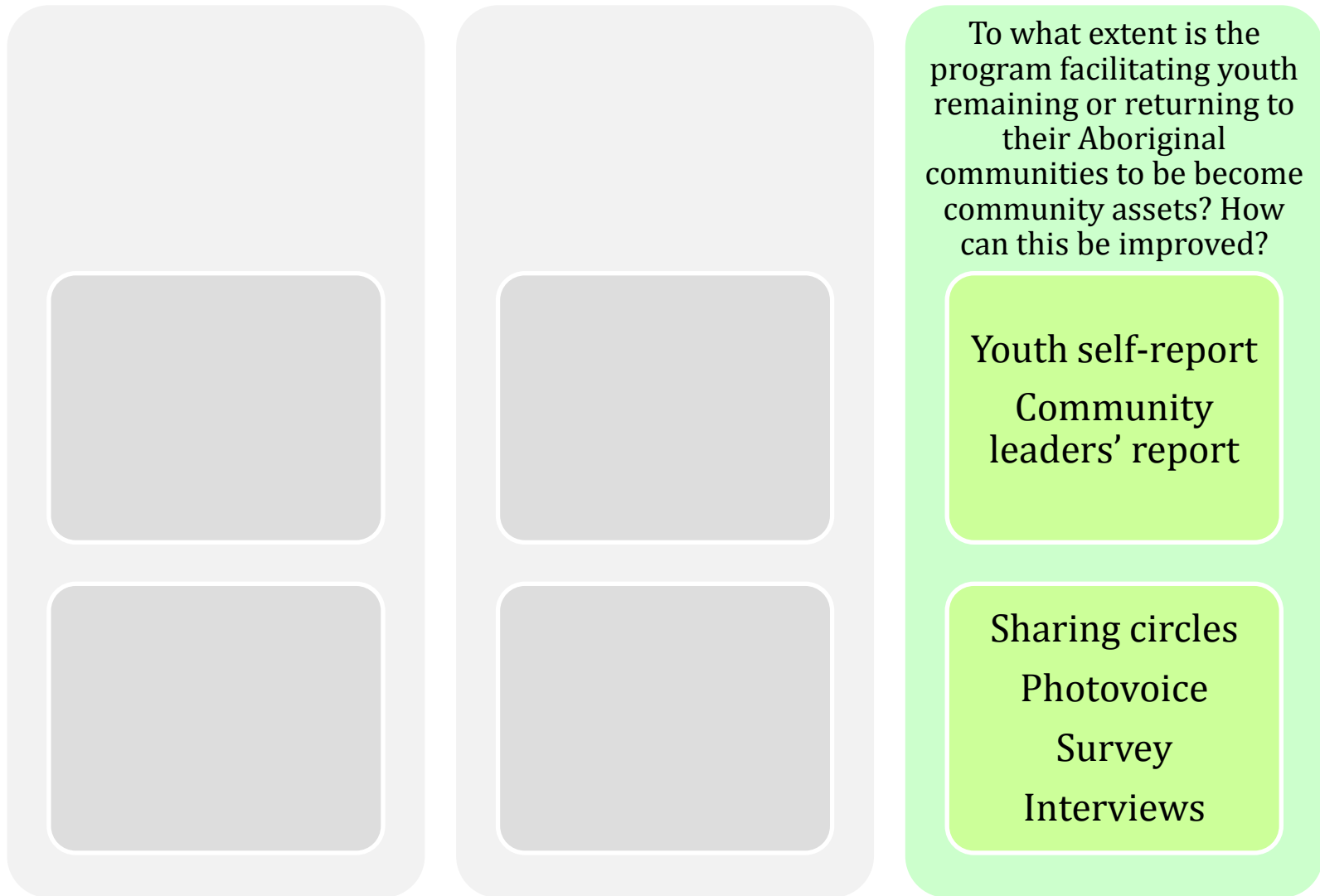
What impact is the  
Aboriginal grounding  
having on youth's skill  
acquisition and further  
educational aspirations?

Youth narratives  
Elders' confirmation  
Staff members'  
perceptions  
# of youth aspiring to  
further their education

Sharing circles  
Photovoice  
Interviews  
Survey



# Methodological Framework

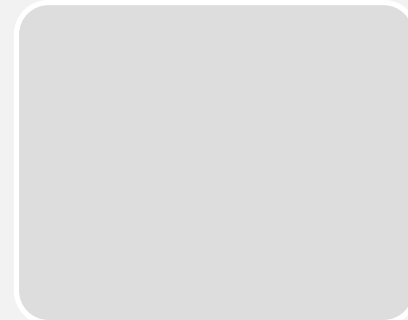
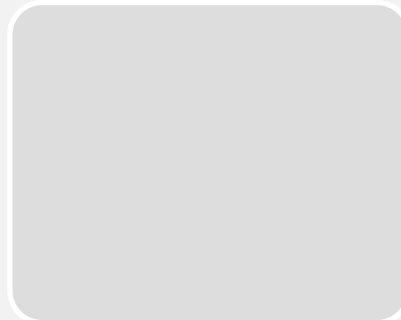
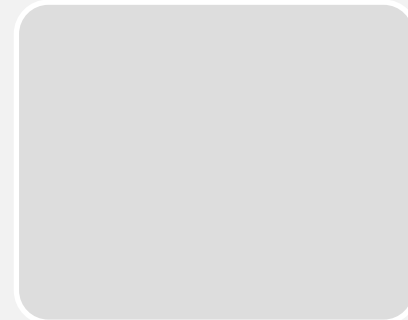
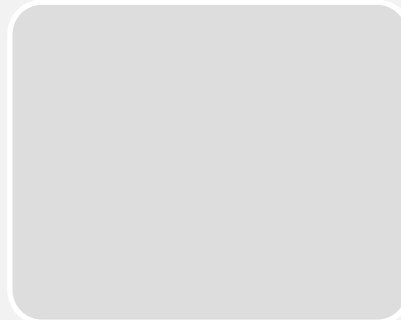


# Methodological Framework

Are the activities  
being  
implemented as  
intended?

Youth perceptions  
Staff members'  
perceptions  
Evaluator  
assessment

Sharing circles  
Interviews  
Observation of  
Activities  
Records Review



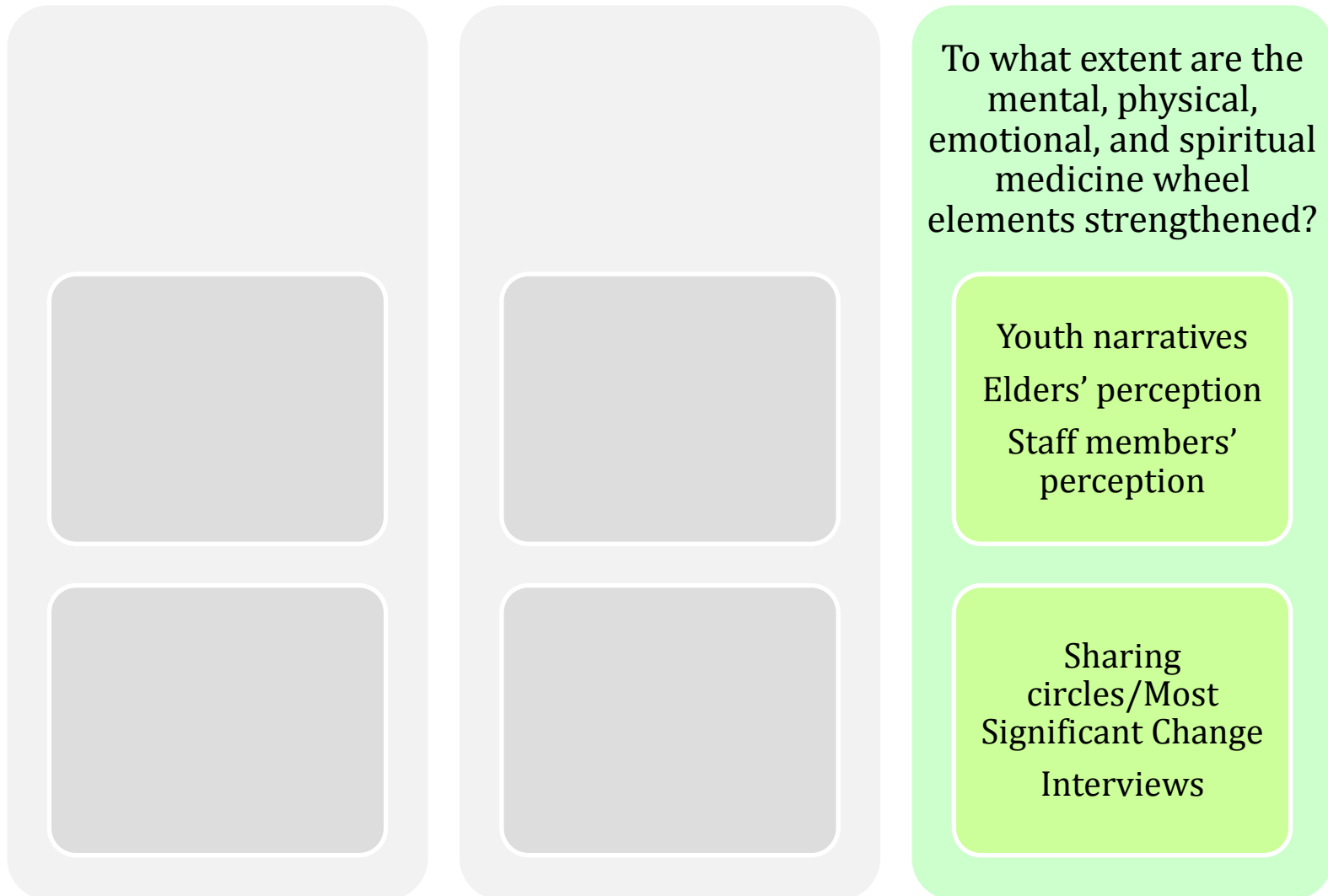
# Methodological Framework

Is the program curriculum based on best practices in youth leadership and endorsed by Aboriginal communities?

Evidence in the literature  
Comparison to similar programs  
Elders' confirmation  
Community leaders' perception

Literature Review  
Environmental Scan  
Interviews

# Methodological Framework



# Methodological Justifications

## Literature Review

- Objective/accurate information source
- Easily accessible

## Surveys

- Efficient data collection
- Provides quantitative information

## Interviews

- Allows for emergence of unanticipated issues
- Detailed and informed responses
- Appropriate communication method with Elders

# Methodological Justifications

## Environmental Scan

- Objective/accurate information source
- Easily accessible information on best practices

## Sharing Circles

- Culturally appropriate
- Allows for a breadth of participant input

## Photovoice

- Provides visual data
- Culturally appropriate

# Methodological Justifications

## Records Review

- Objective/accurate information source
- Easily accessible

## Observation of Activities

- Allows for rapport building
- Increases evaluator familiarity/understanding

## Most Significant Change

(Dart & Davies, 2003)

- Culturally appropriate
- Assesses impact in participants' own words
- Allows for stakeholder/community participation

# Challenges & Solutions

## **Role of time**

- Recognition that results may be tentative

## **Difficulty in gaining trust**

- Participatory observation and evaluation

## **Conflicting ideas about what constitutes ethical behaviour**

- Collaboratively develop code of conduct and ethical guidelines for evaluation with stakeholder steering committee

## **Conflicting ideas about what constitutes scientific methodologies**

- Integrate traditional Aboriginal epistemology with academic Western research methods

## **Appropriation of voice**

- Use of Photovoice, sharing circles, and Most Significant Change

## **Power differential**

- Use of Participatory Action Research and decolonization approach



# Professional Evaluation Competencies

**1.6 Aware of self as an evaluator (knowledge, skills, dispositions) and reflects on personal evaluation practice (competencies and areas for growth)**

**5.9 Attends to issues of diversity and culture**

# Thank You!

- CWY's Aboriginal Youth Leadership Program
- Canadian Evaluation Society
- Canadian Evaluation Society – Saskatchewan Chapter
- University of Saskatchewan & Department of Psychology
- Dr. Karen Lawson