

Community of Practice

CHILDREN'S LEADERSHIP CARDS

2019 Project Details

Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education works with child-serving organizations across Canada to increase understanding of children's rights and human rights values, such as inclusion, respect for diversity and cooperation, among staff of partner organizations and their participants.

The City of Winnipeg's Recreation Services Department is a member of Equitas' Community of Practice. Throughout May 2019, front line employees engaged participants in various Free Play programs through a series of rights-based education activities, later used to develop artwork to be profiled through a new resource – **Children's Rights Leadership Cards**.

Developing **Children's Rights Leadership Cards** was a part of a nationwide project, and the objectives were to engage participants in the development of the cards, by providing an opportunity to think about and express what leadership means to them, and to share their ideas related to how they can act to demonstrate leadership in their communities.

PROJECT STAGES

Ten frontline employees were briefed on how to engage their participants and lead them through the development of the Leadership Cards. The project was then split into three parts:

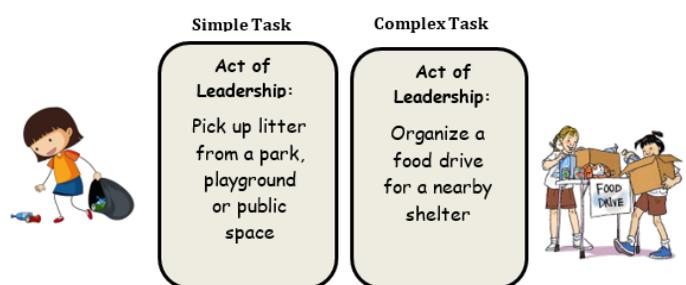
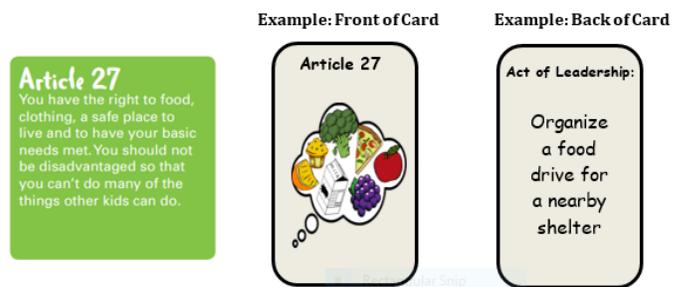
1. Facilitating activities from the Children's Leadership Cards Activity Book

An Activities Book was developed for front line staff to support the creation of Leadership Cards for children between the ages of ages 6 and 12 within their programs. The Activity Book included references about children's rights, participatory activities to lead with children, and response forms in order to gather their ideas and perspectives on leadership. A design template for creating the cards was included in the Activity Book, along with some samples of what the cards may look like.

The activities were organized on a weekly basis and children were provided with additional opportunities to share their opinions about their rights, explore leadership and design more artwork for the creation of the cards!

A total of **five Free Play programs** participated in the activities, and results from the activities and discussions for all five programs were recorded throughout the three consecutive weeks.

Throughout the deck, the intent was to have a variety of tasks, ranging from simple to more complex.



2. Collecting opinions, creating Leadership Challenges and Artwork

After each activity, front-line employees led the participants through a series of questions to help them explore what their needs were to help them be happy and healthy in their community. The questions helped children to explore how everyone is different and unique, the importance of respecting differences and encouraged children share ideas about what leadership and decision-making means to them.

Participants were then provided the opportunity to design Leadership Challenges and artwork for the cards. Each organization was responsible for 15 cards.

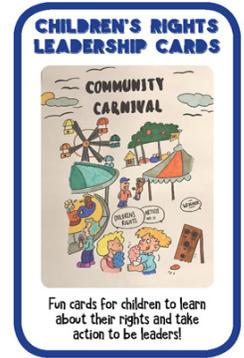
3. Developing the Leadership Cards

Once all of the activities in the booklet were complete, all knowledge and experiences from the participating organizations across Canada was brought together and explored as a Community of Practice.

The information provided was used to create a Leadership Card companion book, designed to help contextualize the cards and explain children’s rights and leadership. The companion book was to be used within organizations as a guide to help put the children’s leadership playing cards into practice.

Equitas selected the most appropriate artwork to use in the final deck to ensure diversity in both Children’s Rights and the leadership challenges.

The Children’s Rights Leadership Cards are the end product of a process in which children across Canada in various organizations learned about their rights and leadership.



SUMMARY – PROJECT OUTCOMES

The Recreation Services Division was one of seven organizations across Canada who participated in the development of the Children’s Rights Leadership Cards. Several pages of artwork designed by children at the participating program sites was submitted. **In total 15 pieces of artwork from Free Play sites were used in the creation of the cards.**

Participating supervisors were familiar with the Play it Fair! program and approach, which enabled them to easily support their front line employees in the execution of this project. Participants enjoyed creating the artwork for the cards. Overall, employees felt that the activities were useful tools to engage the participant in developing the cards, and that the project met its intended goals of increasing children’s awareness of their rights and learning how to be leaders in their community.

Children’s Rights Leadership Card Project Program Locations (5 sites/10 staff)	Number of Participants (Activities, Leadership Challenges, Artwork)	Artwork used from City of Winnipeg Free Play sites
Total Participants	109	15 pieces
Heritage Victoria Community Centre	23	3
Red River Community Centre	20	3
Turtle Island Neighbourhood Centre	2	4
East End Cultural & Leisure Centre	12	2
Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre	2	3

IMPLEMENTATION

The Recreation Services Division rolled out the Children’s Rights Leadership Cards to 12 Free Play sites in Fall 2019. Participating supervisors and front line leaders were educated on the overall project development and the expectations of integrating the cards into their programs. There are plans to fully integrate the Leadership Cards into all future Free Play programs.

ACTIVITIES

What can we do to be leaders and ensure everyone in our group is included in the games we play?

“Create partners or groups, so everyone gets to play”

What are some of the positive things you can do to be a leader in your community, at school, at home, or on a sports team?

“I can be a good role model”

“I can encourage others to do their best”

What can we do with the artwork we create to let other people know about leadership and children’s rights?

“We can hang them up in public places”

“We can read them to other kids”

“Encourage others to make their own”

What could you do if you saw someone in your group having trouble completing a task (tying a shoelace, completing a puzzle, participating in a game)?

“You can hold their hand if they are upset”

What does the “right to participate” mean to you?

“Thinks everyone should be included”

“It means you shouldn’t be scared to say what you want to say”

Why is it important to make efforts to communicate with someone who does not speak the same language as you?

“So they can understand your feelings”

“Because they might have something important to say”