

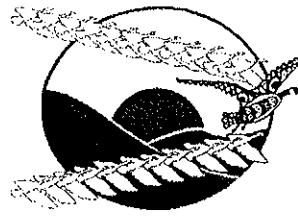
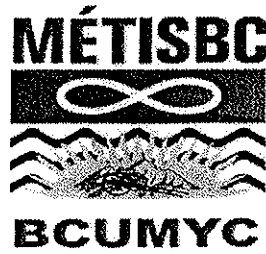
Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective

“Our Culture, Language and Education”

A United Aboriginal Youth Collective Action Plan

Final Document

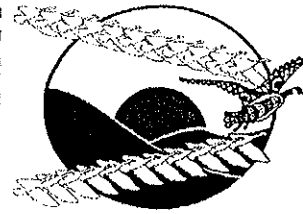
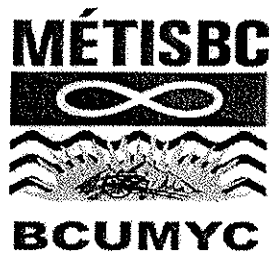
April 22, 2009



Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective

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Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective

History of the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective

The UAYC was established in 2006 when Aboriginal youth around BC expressed interest in working together through a unified forum. Since its inception, the UAYC has worked in partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation. Current members of the UAYC include:

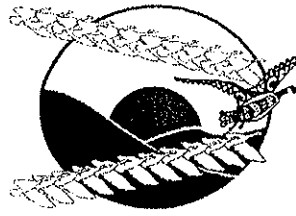
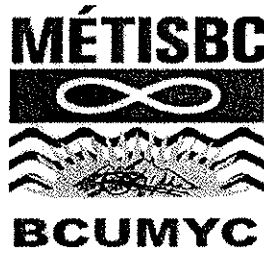
- BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres – Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council
- Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth Association
- BC Assembly of First Nations
- Métis Youth BC
- United Native Nations – Youth Governance

The UAYC has the following objectives:

- To build positive relationships amongst BC Aboriginal groups.
- To support and create opportunities to develop and enhance Aboriginal youth leadership.
- To advocate for youth representation and participation within the Province of British Columbia.
- To represent Aboriginal youth voices in a working relationship with governing bodies in areas of legislation, policy, initiatives, programs, and services.
- To increase and support capacity for the continued growth of Aboriginal youth initiatives, leadership & institutions of governance.

Past and present projects and activities of the UAYC include:

- Support and influence for the development of the Government of British Columbia's Aboriginal Youth Internship Program.
- Hosting an annual provincial youth forum which brings together youth from all the UAYC member organizations to discuss issues of importance to Aboriginal youth.
- Currently developing activities around 5 key areas, including, but not limited to: child and family services, sports and recreation, health and wellness, language and culture, and education.



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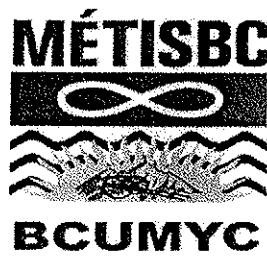
Background

Over 100 Aboriginal youth from around British Columbia representing various Aboriginal organizations came together to create this Action Plan at the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective(UAYC) Youth Forum from February 27- March 1, 2009. This gathering was held in Chase, BC at Quaaout Lodge, and provided youth with the opportunity to network and build relationships as well as voice their concerns, suggested action items and successes.

As Aboriginal youth leaders at the local, regional and provincial level these youth understand the need to take action personally. Although action must be taken by governments, leadership and Aboriginal organizations the need for youth to show their leadership and take action with their peers is at the core of Aboriginal youth leadership.

The UAYC Youth Forum focused on the themes of Culture, Languages and Education. The forum was attended by Aboriginal youth; Aboriginal leaders in the fields of education, culture and language; provincial government representatives; and Aboriginal Leadership. Through discussions at the forum, it became clear that it was important to develop a document which not only highlighted specific gaps in the areas of education and culture, but also provided direction to key stakeholders. Many Aboriginal youth have amazing ideas about how to address these issues and they understand the importance of the development of programs and services which meet the needs of youth.

The Aboriginal youth in attendance at the "Unity in Action" youth forum understand the seriousness of the state of Aboriginal languages in BC and the need to address this issue immediately.



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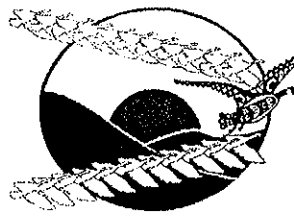
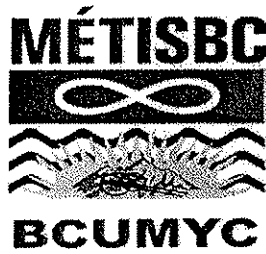
Education

What is required

- Educating educators about Aboriginal people in BC and their history, their culture, languages and way of life would help educate non-Aboriginal youth in schools and also help Aboriginal youth feel recognized and appreciated. This would help provide a better education system for all British Columbians.
- Creating curriculum which incorporates Aboriginal people in BC at all grade levels (from K-12 and post-secondary)
- Stopping the exploitation, discrimination and singling out of our youth in the education system.
- Meaningful engagement and consultation with Aboriginal youth in BC at all levels (local, provincial and federal) about education in BC.
- More funding for all levels of education for all Aboriginal youth, both on and off-reserve, is needed both for infrastructure, post-secondary, programs and services and other beneficial initiatives which would help raise the education success rates of Aboriginal youth.

Action Items

| Action Steps/Items | Anticipated Outcomes |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and languages incorporated into curriculum (K-12 and post-secondary) • Encourage Aboriginal people to take on roles in schools, school districts, boards etc. • Aboriginal youth need to be involved in all levels of education-federal, provincial, school districts, schools, post-secondary and other council and committees (<i>Just Ask Us campaign-</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More Aboriginal youth graduate from grade 12 ○ More Aboriginal youth attend post secondary ○ More Aboriginal youth participate in trades and other needed positions in BC to help stimulate the economy ○ Aboriginal youth are left empowered, engaged and excited about their futures ○ All students in BC are educated about Aboriginal people in BC ○ Aboriginal youth are involved in the |



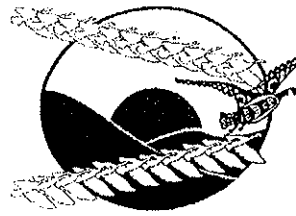
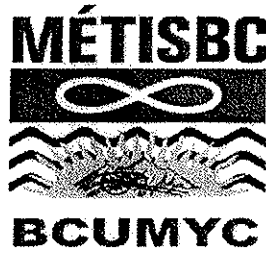
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involving Aboriginal youth in the decisions that affect them by sitting on councils or committees and simply asking their opinions and being involved in the decision making process)

- Aboriginal youth are active players and involved in the creation Aboriginal Enhancement Agreements
- Aboriginal people are involved in Aboriginal specific days in schools (i.e. Aboriginal Day) where communities have the opportunities to display their cultures
- Textbooks that teach children about the Aboriginal people in BC
- Curriculum and education shows commonalities to empower youth to learn about their own culture
- Educate non-Aboriginal people about why we are the way we are and why we get the things we get (i.e. the Indian Act)
- Pushing Aboriginal youth through the education system is no longer an option and research is done to look how many Aboriginal youth were forced through education system when it wasn't necessary
- Ensuring that we do not forget about other ways of education not just mainstream (degree), (i.e. Aboriginal

decisions that affect them the most in terms of the education system in BC

- More Aboriginal people are involved in the education system in terms of boards and committees
- Aboriginal Day in schools become active and participatory of Aboriginal people in those communities
- More Aboriginal youth go through K-12 education and graduate through the same system as non-Aboriginal youth

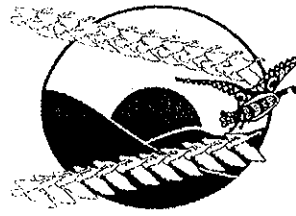
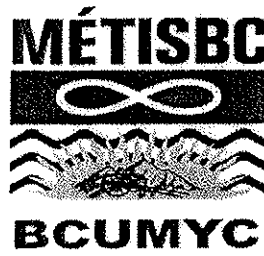


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| <p>Youth Internship Program and living on the land through Indigenous education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop the discrimination and singling out Aboriginal children in school, just because they are Aboriginal does not mean they know everything about every Aboriginal person in Canada. | |
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Responsibilities

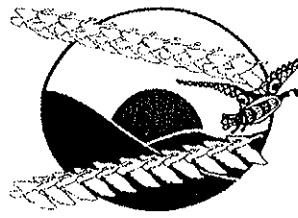
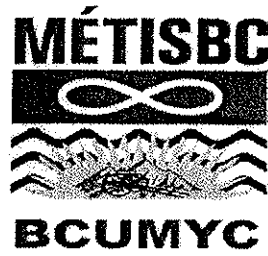
- Aboriginal Youth: must take initiative themselves and encourage more Aboriginal youth to attend school both K-12 and post-secondary.
- Aboriginal Leaders: must continue to advocate for the Education System to have our Aboriginal youth strive for excellence with their education. Must ensure that Aboriginal youth voice regarding education is heard and accepted.
- Government: The Province of BC must create and promote more Aboriginal-specific programs and services for Aboriginal youth in the educations system. Local school districts and schools must involve Aboriginal people more at all levels. All key stakeholders provide input into K-12 curriculum and adjustments should be made to fit the respective needs of Aboriginal people.



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Timeline

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|-------------------------------------|---|
| <p>April 2009-March 2010</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of Aboriginal languages and education is done in BC • Aboriginal funding is increased for languages, culture and education (ongoing) • A “Just Ask Us” campaign is done throughout the Province of BC to have more Aboriginal youth engages and involved in the decision making process at all levels • All Aboriginal leadership commit to making Aboriginal languages a priority in BC • A provincial education campaign/marketing strategy begins to inform all British Columbians about Aboriginal people • Aboriginal language programs are developed throughout BC |
| <p>April 2010-March 2011</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stakeholders invite Aboriginal youth to become active members and decision makers on various boards, committees and councils in terms of Culture, Languages and Education • Curriculum K-12 is revamped in BC with the involvement of Aboriginal youth • More Aboriginal Culture and Language |



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|-----------------------|---|
| | <p>Camps open throughout the Province of BC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Aboriginal immersion schools are opened in BC |
| April 2011-March 2012 | <p>Current educators and University Education Programs require all those participating to take more courses specifically to learn about Aboriginal people in BC</p> |
| April 2012-March 2013 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal education, language and culture policies are assessed or created in BC to help better the relationship and lives of all Aboriginal people in BC (ongoing action) |

