Final Summary Report

Northern BC Indigenous Youth Science and Health Camp
Pilot Program, July 2019

Thank you

to all of our partners, sponsors, and contributors

Thank you to all the partners, sponsors, and contributors who made the Northern BC Indigenous Youth Science and Health Camp a great success. We are deeply grateful to: The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Northern Health (NH), the University of Northern British Columbia, the Health Arts Research Centre (HARC), The Exploration Place, The College of New Caledonia (CNC), Two Rivers Gallery, the Rural Coordination Centre of BC, and the Northern Interior Rural Division of Family Practice (NIRD).

Thank you to the NALS laboratory at UNBC, the group at the UHNBC Simulation Lab, the FNHA Environmental Health Team, Kyle Sam, Elder Darlene McIntosh, and the Khast'an Drummers, as well as our wonderful facilitators: Tamara Ketlo, Stephanie Erickson, Vince Prince, Warren Hooley, Marion Erickson, and Lorisha Desjarlais.

Special thanks to our camp coordinators and leaders, overnight chaperones, and the many camp volunteers, as well as the members of the Health Arts Research Centre, who supported the planning and facilitation of this first summer camp. The success of the camp comes through every contribution made by so many people.

A huge, awesome, fun
SUCCESS

An overview

Who came?

Over 24 Indigenous youth signed up for the camp and 18 youth entering into grades five through eight (approximately age 9-13) travelled to Prince George from communities across northern British Columbia.
Many of the youth travelled eastward to Prince George from Prince Rupert, Terrace, Houston, and Fort St. James, while others travelled south from Moberly Lake and Mackenzie, as well as from within the greater Prince George area.

Many of the camp facilitators and presenters travelled a distance for camp as well. Elders, knowledge holders, presenters and campers represented numerous northern BC First Nations, including Nakazdli, Nadleh Whut'en, Stellat'en, Takla, Gitsegukla, Laxgalts'ap, Tlazten, Lake Babine, Witset, Wet'suwet'en, West Moberly, Saulteau, Gitxaala, McLeod Lake, and the Heiltsuk Metis Nation.

Camp staff and volunteers were all either past or present UNBC students or staff, including multiple students aspiring to study medicine and work in the north.

When, where, why?

The camp ran Monday, July 15th through Friday, July 19th, 2019. More than half of the camp attendees arrived Sunday evening, July 14th, prior to the first day of the camp and these same campers departed on Saturday, July 20th to allow for travel accommodations.

The camp was hosted primarily at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) with youth staying at the Keyoh Residence on campus, having meals in the Agora Dining Hall, and taking advantage of the many facilities and outdoor spaces the university has to offer. Throughout the week activities and learning opportunities were also held off-site at various locations around Prince George.

The purpose of the camp was to introduce northern BC Indigenous youth to a post-secondary environment and encourage them to learn more about health and sciences, potentially inspiring them to pursue health and science-related education and careers.

Day 1

Campers began the week by attending an opening ceremony with a traditional welcome to the territory by Lheidli T'enneh Elder Darlene McIntosh and drumming by Kyle Sam. Following the welcoming, campers toured the UNBC campus with their camp leaders and competed in a "UNBC Amazing Race", which had campers discovering and solving riddles and puzzles while exploring the various university buildings.

After lunch, knowledge holders Charrine Lace, Wanda Nikal and Elder Helen Nikal shared about harvesting and using medicinal plants. Campers then prepared for an afternoon hike where they could try to identify and photograph some of these plants.

Campers were lent digital cameras to take pictures of their choosing during camp activities throughout the week. Many of the wonderful photos in this report were taken by campers themselves.

Day 1

The outdoor guided walk to Shane Lake through Forests for the World included Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) from the FNHA as well as staff from the ECHO Network. Once the group arrived at Shane Lake they had time to explore the area, take photos, and interact with knowledge holders, presenters, and camp leaders.

Diana Kutzner of the ECHO Network led an educational discussion about water, watersheds and environmental health, as well as connecting environmental health to community health. The FNHA EHOs added to the discussion and elaborated on the different types of water advisories campers might experience, such as do-not-use notices and boil water notices.

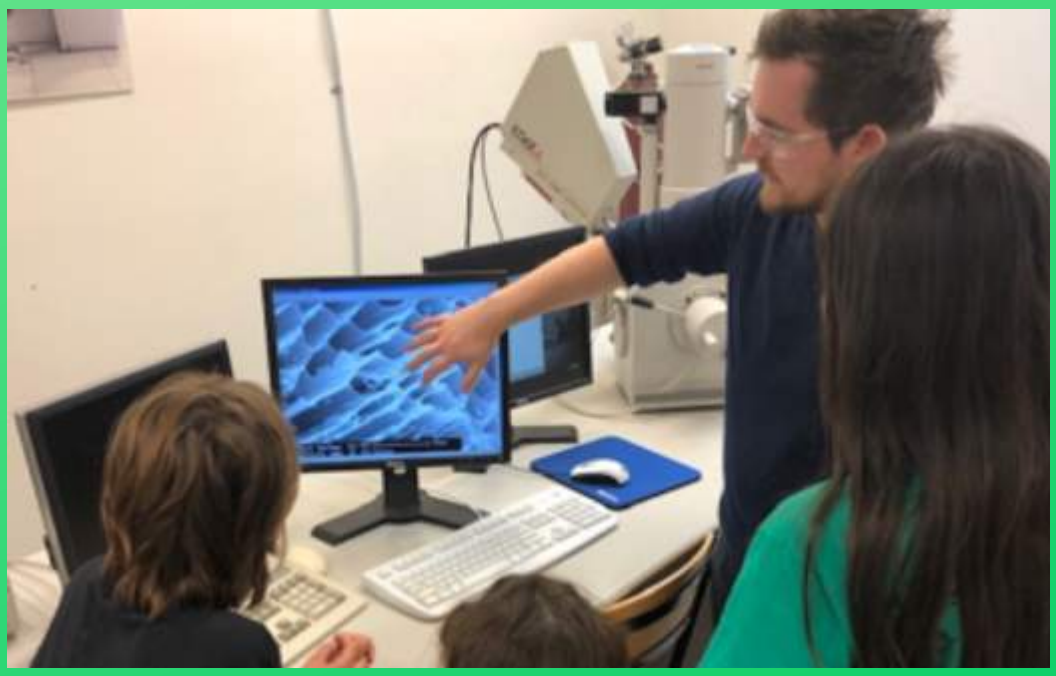
Campers were then given sterile plastic jars to collect water samples. Each camper could choose their own sites to collect samples, which would later be tested for bacteria with the help of the FNHA Environmental Health Officers. As the final event of Day 1 ,Warren Hooley hosted an ice-breaker presentation that centred around getting to know each other and the importance of respect and acceptance of self and others.

Day 2

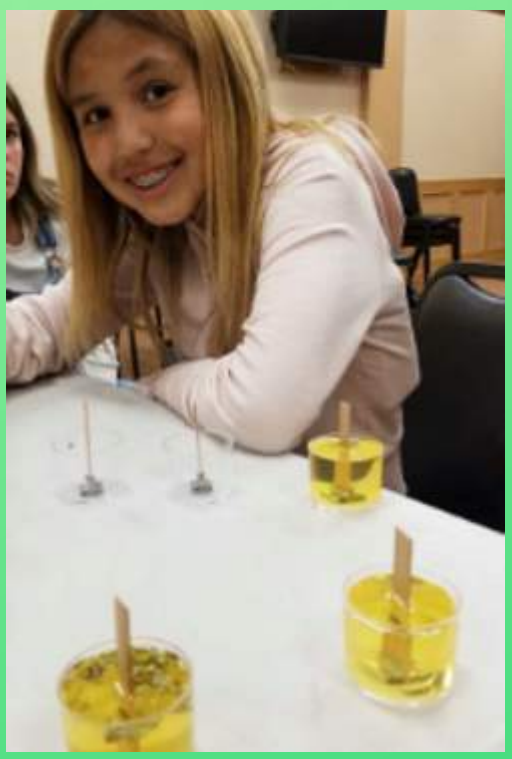
After breakfast in the Agora Dining Hall and a fun outside game, campers had the opportunity to tour the Northern Analytical Lab Services (NALS) Laboratory on the UNBC campus. The tour was hosted by Dr. Hossein Kazemian with help from UNBC undergraduate and graduate students. Campers learned about high tech microscopes and computer equipment, as well as mineral testing of water, and got to see many interesting pieces of lab equipment, even robots, that assist with the NALS laboratory work.

Campers then made their way to the Dr. Donald Rix Northern Health Sciences Centre atrium to analyze the results of their water samples collected the day prior with the FNHA EHOs. Different types of bacteria found in water and watersheds were identified in the campers' samples and further discussed. Campers had labelled their individual samples with their names and were excited to see the results!

The EHOs helped prepare the group for the next activity, food preparation and food safety, with use of a glow germ kit. The glow germ powder was used so campers could learn about the importance of proper hand washing technique, as the powder remained on areas of campers hands if they hadn't washed thoroughly enough. The youth enjoyed the challenge of trying to get all of the glow germ powder off!



Day 2



Marion Erickson then guided youth through traditional meal preparation of lake char that was caught locally. The char preparation was followed by a fun-filled competition where campers raced to make the fastest and highest ranked soap berry ice cream!

That evening, Tamara Ketlo, Organic Health and Wellness Specialist (Natural Obsessions), guided youth through an interactive workshop where they had the opportunity to make their own natural ingredient anti-itch salve and candles. The salve was put to use right away on campers' and leaders' bug bites!

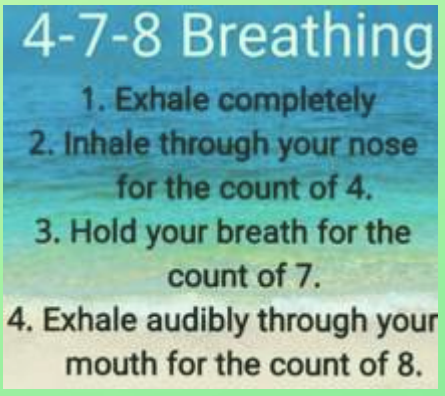
As a pre-bedtime activity the campers painted river rocks, choosing to either make a "pet rock", an inspirational rock with a word or statement, or an abstract art rock.

Day 3

Wednesday morning campers tried out one of the primary modes of transportation for university and college students alike - public transportation. They embarked on the Prince George Transit buses to travel to the Exploration Place Museum and Science Centre.

The first activity at the Exploration Place gave the campers a learning opportunity about different types of vacuums and more specifically, a zero pressure vacuum that actually exists in space. Balloons and marshmallows were used to demonstrate the effects of different pressures and zero pressure. The second activity had campers working together with camp leaders in teams of 4-5 to build their own rocket. The youth were asked to build a rocket model out of paper, tape and various other materials but keeping their budget in mind. Each piece of paper or inch of tape used to build the rocket was associated with a cost - a great method to allow the youth to make their own connections about science and the financial challenges to making advances.

After testing the rockets designed by the different teams, the campers enjoyed themselves exploring the rest of this wonderful museum, especially excited by the sturgeon tank and dinosaur exhibit, as well as the live animals and pelts that they were able to touch and study up close.

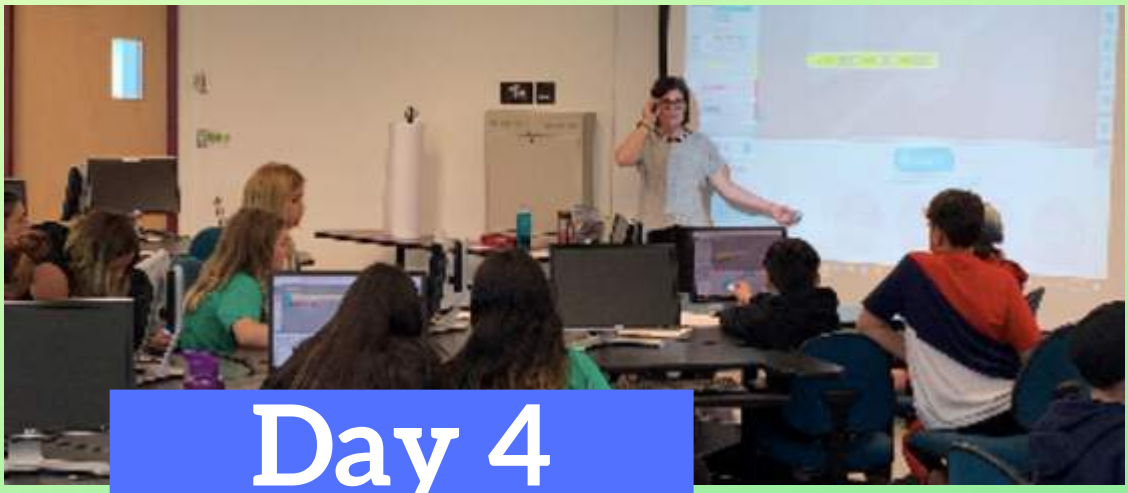


Day 3

Once back on campus in the afternoon, campers watched two short documentary films about understanding the earth and space exploration at the Canfor Theatre, a large lecture hall for UNBC students and special events at the university.

After dinner, campers made their way to The Gathering Place to learn about mental health and mindfulness with Stephanie Erickson, a Master's student studying psychology at UNBC. Stephanie is Dakelh from the community of Tl'az'ten. She hosted an activity where campers created their own personalized mindfulness jars. The mindfulness jars were used during a discussion about how thoughts and feelings can affect our brains and how we can work to regulate our emotions. Campers also learned the 4-7-8 breathing technique to help them calm down or ground themselves when desired.

To complete the day, campers listened to traditional Indigenous stories about space and creation shared by Marion Erickson.



Day 4

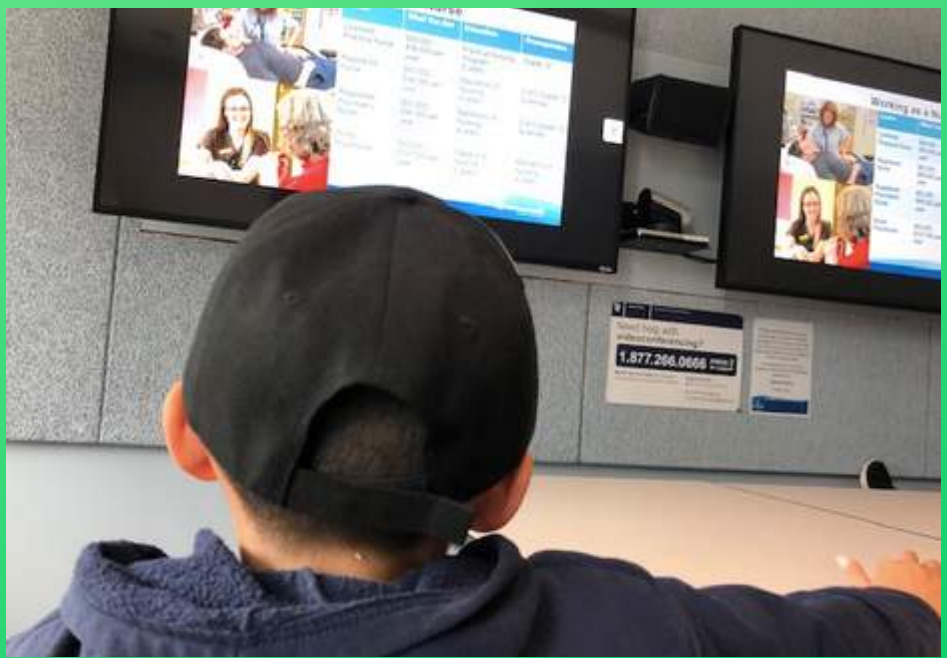
After breakfast, day four began with campers going to the UNBC Computer Lab to explore computer science and coding activities hosted by an Exploration Place staff member. Campers impressed us with what they already knew about coding, controlling their small robots, and computer science!

Campers then took Prince George Transit once more to travel to Two Rivers Gallery in downtown Prince George for an exciting Stop-Motion Animation Workshop where they worked in teams of two to use clay, creativity and computers to create their own amazing stop-motion stories and videos!

After the workshop at Two Rivers Gallery, campers walked to University Hospital of Northern BC (UHNBC) and visited the Teaching and Learning Centre Simulation Lab. There were three stations for campers to rotate through - one station involved learning about CPR through practicing it on a VERY lifelike simulation robotic patient, another was on learning about different health career options, and the third involved engaging learning activities from two speech and language pathologists.

After dinner, campers walked through Forests for the World to visit the traditional pithouse. The group spent the evening singing songs led by Vince Prince, playing drums, listening to stories, and making bannock over the fire. It was a very special evening for campers as well as staff.

Day 4



Day 5

The morning of the final day of camp, Lorisha Desjarlais led campers through a reflective art activity of creating “Paper Roses”, which asked campers to write notes about what they were grateful for in one another. Campers also created vision boards for their own futures and wrote messages on a large thank you poster for staff and sponsors of the camp.

In the afternoon, campers attended a Health and Science Mentorship Fair in the Dr. Donald Rix Health Sciences Centre. The Mentorship Fair included interactive tables from the Exploration Place, College of New Caledonia, UNBC Aboriginal Recruitment and Support Services, First Nations Health Authority Environmental Health Team, Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) West, Northern Health Recruitment and Retention Department, and the ECHO Network.

Older Indigenous youth involved in the Outland Youth Employment Program (OYEP) West shared their personal experiences with campers and guided them in a fun outdoor relay where they hurried to put on and race in personal protection equipment.

Day 5

After the fair, campers attended a closing ceremony which involved panel talks from inspiring Indigenous guest speakers, both working professionals and current students, who shared personal stories, experiences, career paths and encouragement for youth. Speakers included Nicole Cross (FNHA, Northern Regional Director), Margo Greenwood (VP, Indigenous Health, NH), Cori Johnson (FNHA, EHO), Alexandra Luggi (EMT), Stephanie Erickson (masters student, Psychology), Laura McNab-Coombs (student, Medicine), Dawn George (CNC Aboriginal Resource Centre), Tsatia Adzich (student, Interdisciplinary Studies), and Paneena Harding (graduate student, Community Development and Environmental Studies).

Campers and attending family also watched a compilation video of the week, which included photos and video taken by camp staff as well as many wonderful images taken by the campers themselves! After the video, the closing ceremony closed with group singing and drumming led by the Khast'an Drummers, who did a fantastic job of bringing the campers and staff into the performance and celebration!

Following the closing ceremonies, campers and family members enjoyed a final meal together at the Agora Dining Hall before gathering their things from the residence hall and heading home after a week full of fun, new friends and learning experiences!

Camper Feedback

Loved:

What was your favourite part?

The tower marshmallow competition

Where we got a cream to help with your cuts

Learning about stop motion

Bannock

The soccer game

The rock painting

Clay

Pit house - fire and bannock

Learning and storytelling time

I liked most of the activities there were none I hated

Two Rivers Gallery and hospital

Meeting new people

Making bannock at the pit house

The water gun game

Arts and crafts

Less Loved:

What part did you NOT like?

I did not like the walking part it hurted my legs a lot

Listening

Going into town because it was tiring

Walking

Waking up and walking

Camper Feedback

Learned:

What is one thing you learned?

To be respectful and nice

Plants

You can make First Nations ice cream

The painting is harder than it looks

Making bannock

Songs

Space!

Water samples when they have bacteria they turn yellow when they go in the incubator

Mosquito salve- how to make it

Learning about medicine

Space and health

Coding

CPR

A lot of people have stress

Would love to learn more:

Is there anything else you would have liked to learn about?

More coding

More about doing stop motion

I would have liked to learn some tips on drawing

Learning about animals

Through the Camper's Lens

Thank you!

Saving simon in the hospital!

Are you breathing!

I Love Healthcare!

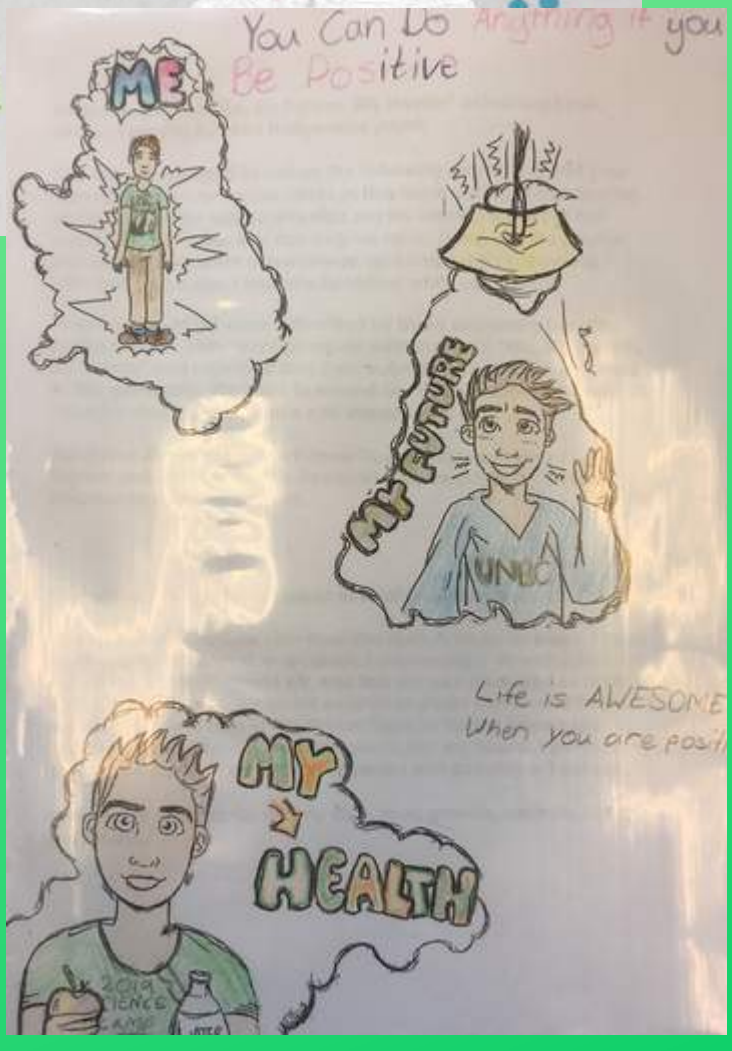
thx 3D Fivers Gallery
I really enjoyed the stop motion animation workshop - I want to explore animation work or university courses to take for a career in this field!

thanks a bunch

Thank you for teaching me how to draw and Sing, and new Songs!

Thank you for everything during the Hunter JHKW

the Pitbull because he smells bad.

Thanks for teaching new songs and making bahook !!

Thank You for every thing. I can't wait to come to university. I wan't to Stay in the Dorms!! :)