

Indigenous Program Tour Report 2017/18

 LiveDifferent



Introduction

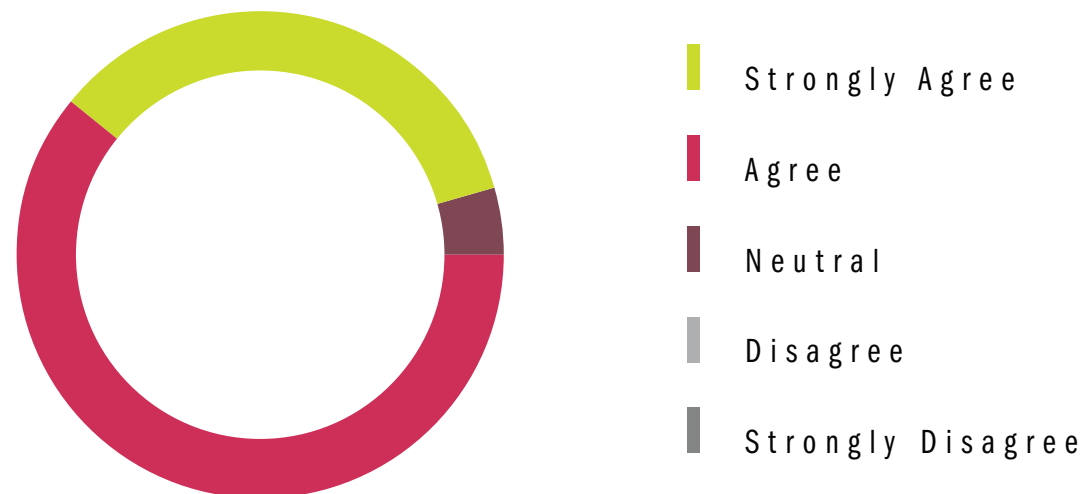
During the 2017/18 Indigenous Youth Empowerment Tour, we were able to visit 52 communities. The Indigenous team travelled across five provinces including Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Following the community visits, educators were sent a survey to complete. 23 educators completed the survey about how the program impacted students, and how we can improve.

There were six main themes that developed in our findings: Life Change, Hope for the Future, Self Worth, Connectedness (to school, peers, and culture), Long-Term Impact, and Evaluation of Live Different's Programming.

Hope for the Future

95.7% of educators reported that, after participating in the Indigenous Program, their youth were more hopeful and positive about their future. (34.82% strongly agree and 60.9% agree)

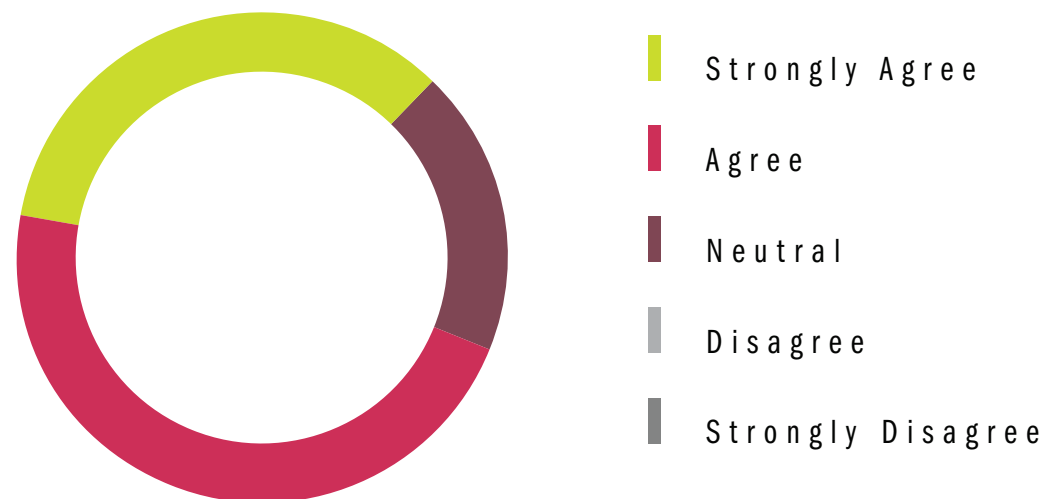
Q. Our youth are more hopeful and positive about the future



Life Change

82.6% of educators believed that lives were changed for the better after participating in the Indigenous Program. (39.1% strongly agree and 43.5% agree)

Q. I feel that people's lives were changed for the better



Life Change (Continued)

Educators were asked, “***What has changed in your community or school because of Live Different’s program?***”. There were four main themes that emerged from educators’ responses. These are what some of the educators reported:



Students are more willing to share their experiences with staff members.

- 1 **Increased Willingness to Express Their Feelings**
This was the greatest theme that emerged, with 35% of educators reporting that students were more open emotionally and willing to express their feelings.
- 2 **Greater Sense of Self-Worth**
The second theme that emerged from educators responses was that students now had a greater sense of self-worth and pride.
- 3 **Kinder School Culture**
The third theme identified was that educators believed there was now a kinder school culture after our visit. Students were showing empathy, respect and friendliness to one another.
- 4 **Sustained Interest in the Topics**
The fourth theme that emerged was that students were still talking about Live Different and the topics discussed during the programming long after the team’s visit.



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Youth are more open to how they feel.

“

Many students struggle to share their feelings/be vulnerable with anyone, but during the sharing circles, there were students who opened up. Even if the child did not open up, they saw students/teachers share, which got them thinking about their feelings, which is all we want.

“

Students were given a good message with the Team of Live Different. They left the presentation with a sense of self-worth, and a sense of a positive future. They know to speak out and talk about things rather than just keep it bottled up inside. Great Job to your team.

“

...more respect and friendliness toward each other, students toward each other and staff.

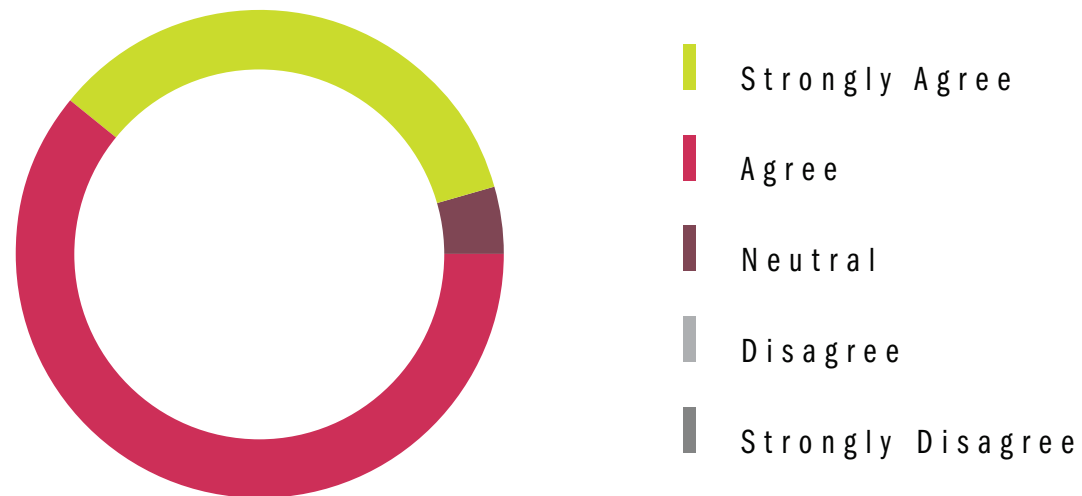
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We have only been in school for a few days since the Live Different program came to Garden River. The day after the program, the kids were still super excited about the concert. They wanted to tell everyone about what they got signed, who they talked to after the show, etc...The presentation was only a couple of days ago so a little early to see a lot of changes. However, I can already see the positivity that the students feel. They are still talking about the presentation so it definitely had an impact on them.

Self Worth & Value

95.7% of educators reported that after participating in the Indigenous Program, their youth had a greater sense of self-worth and value. (34.8% strongly agree and 60.9% agree)

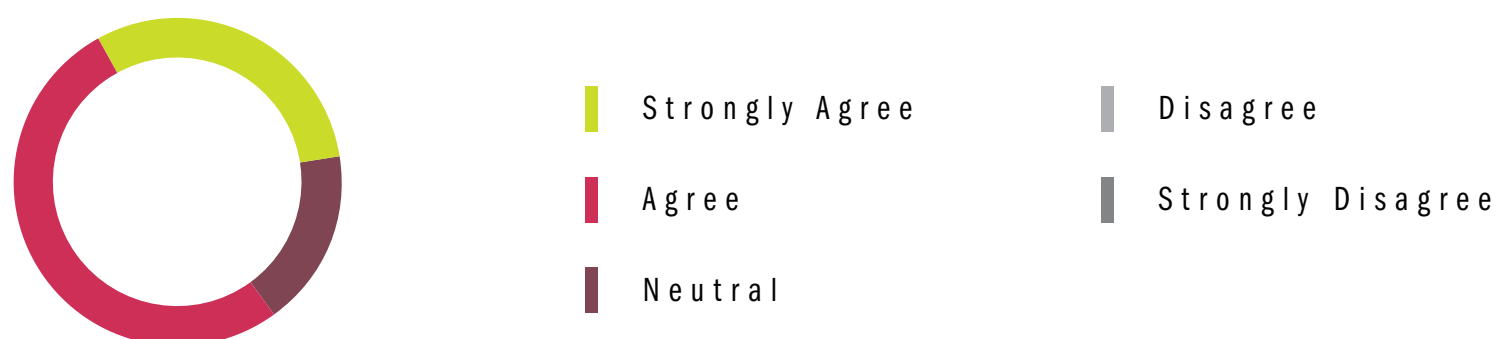
Q. Our youth have a greater sense of self-worth and value



Connectedness

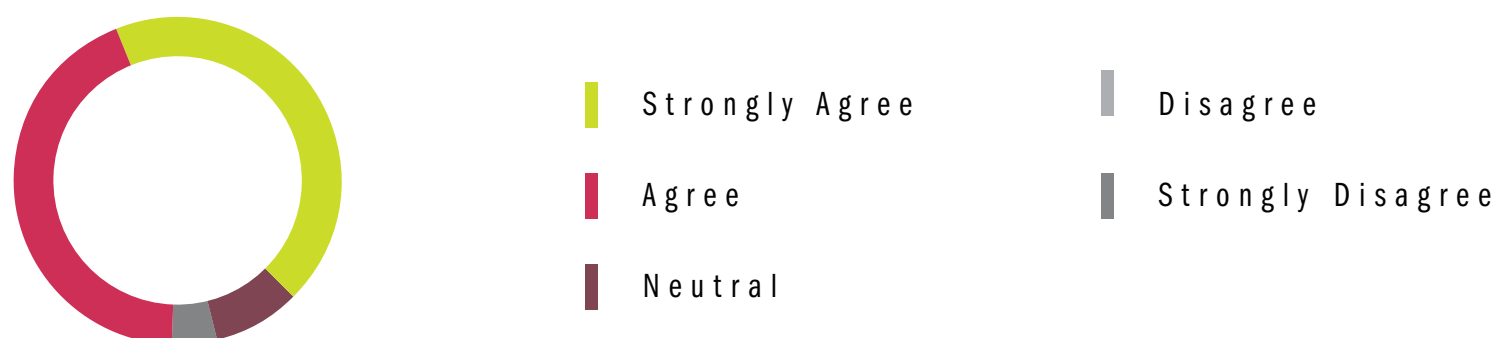
82.6% of educators reported that there is a greater sense of connection in the school and community since Live Different came with its Indigenous Program. (30.4% strongly agree and 52.2% agree)

Q. There is a greater sense of connection in the school or community



87% of educators reported that after participating in the Indigenous Program, their youth felt more connected to their culture or proud to be an Indigenous person. (43.5% strongly agreed and 43.5% agreed)

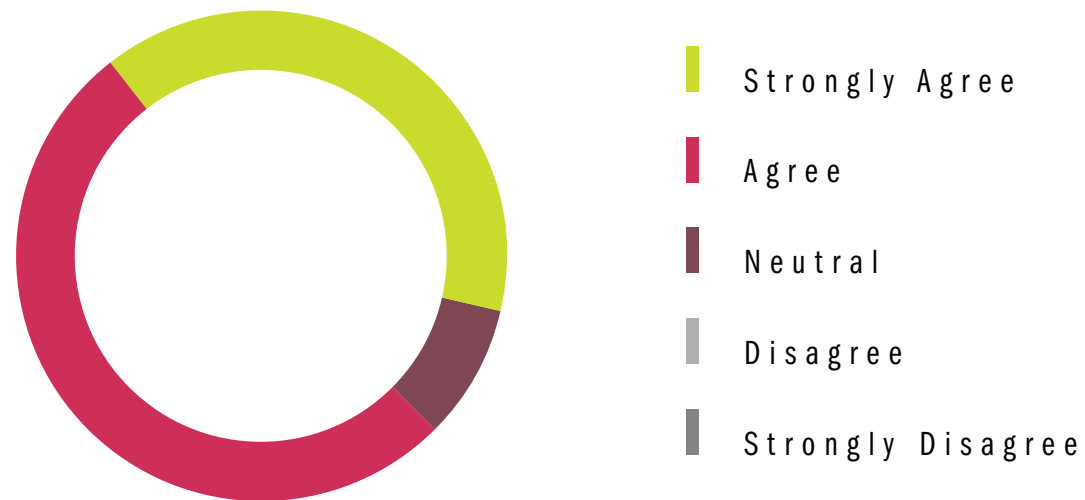
Q. Our youth feel more connected to their culture or proud to be an Indigenous person



Long-Term Impact

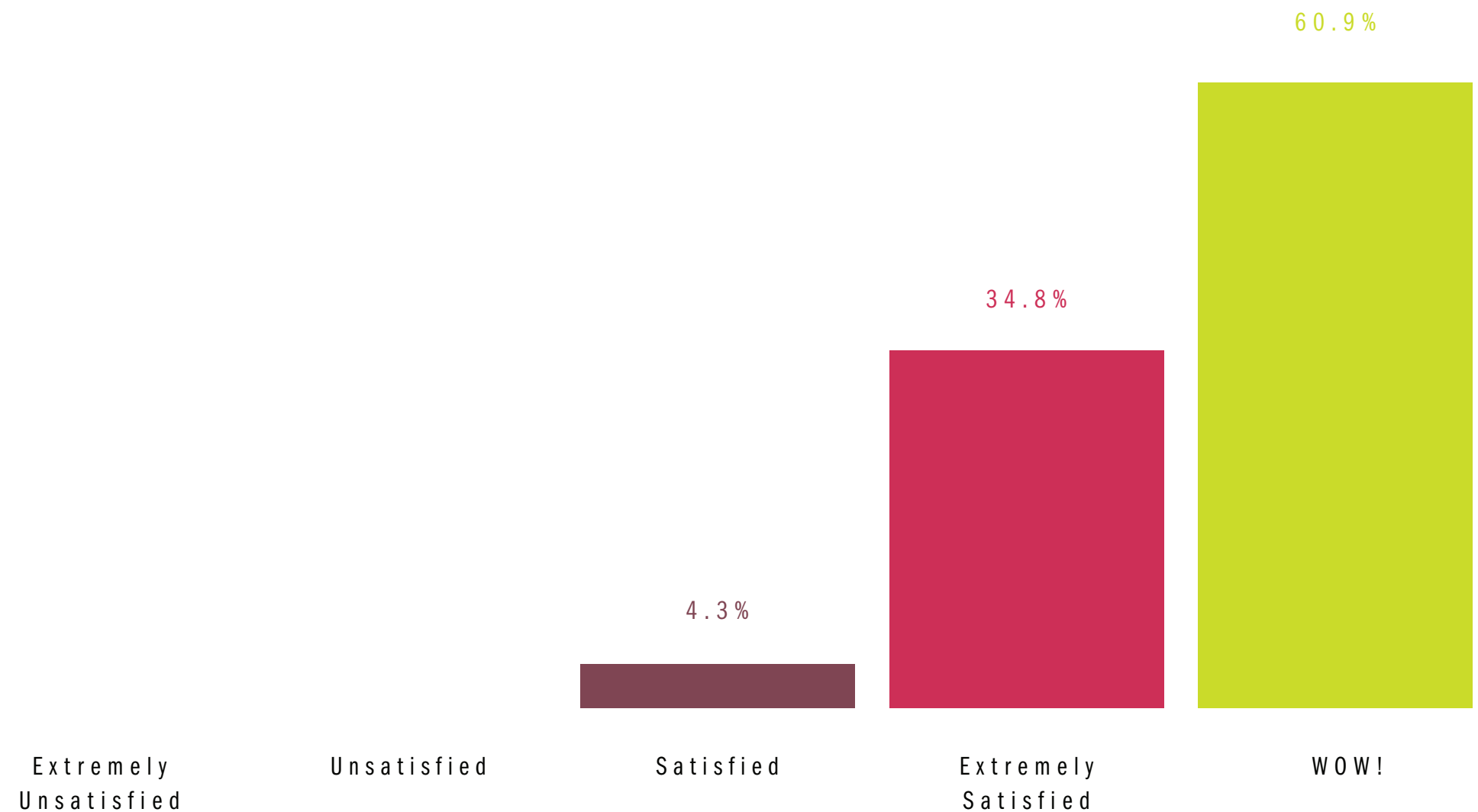
91.3% of educators believed that Live Different's visit will have a long-term impact on their youth.
(39.1% strongly agree and 52.2% agree)

Q. I think Live Different's visit will have a positive long-term impact

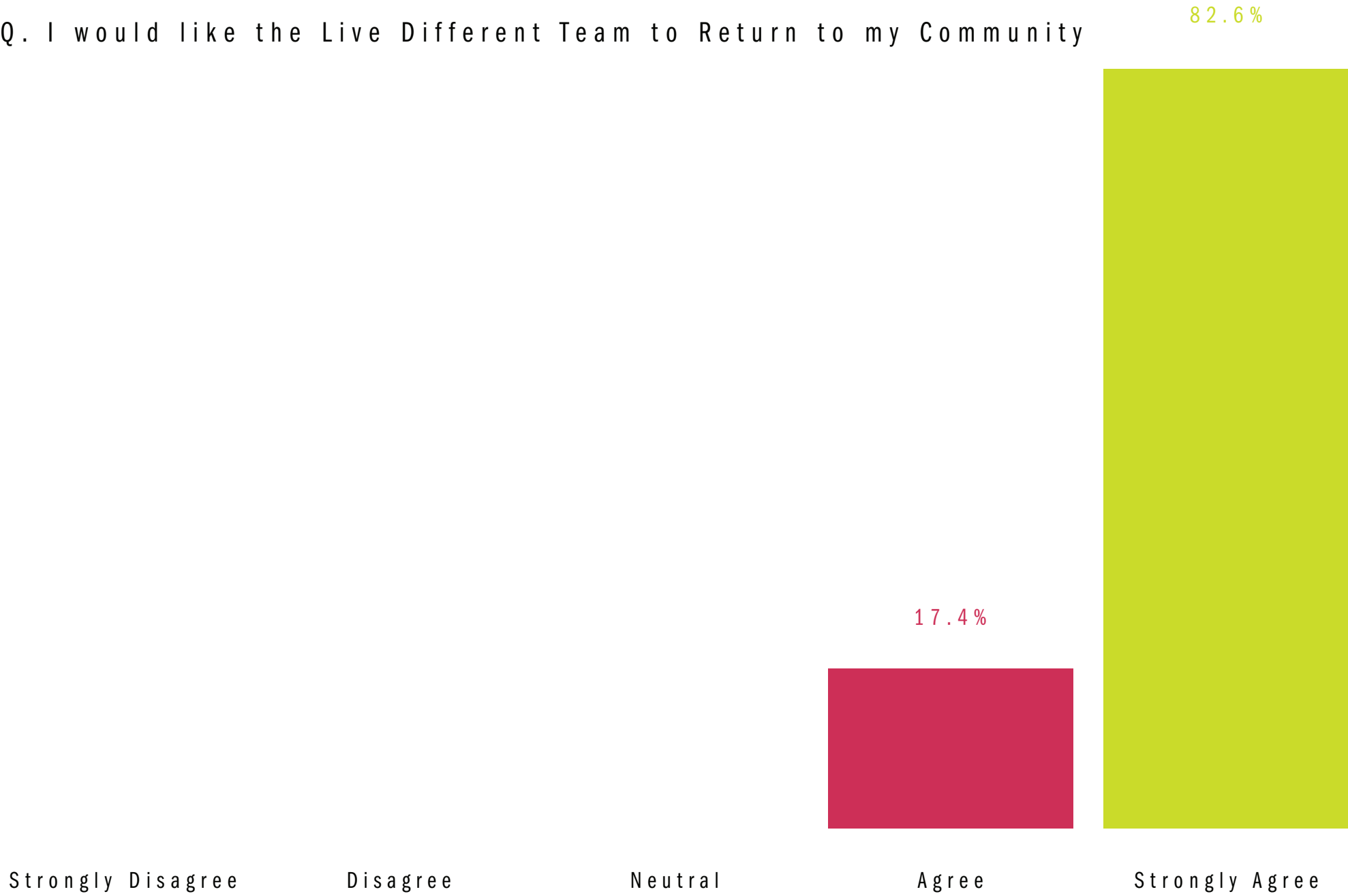


95.7% of educators reported incredibly high levels of satisfaction with us in general.

Q. How Satisfied were you with Live Different in General



100% of educators want us to return to their community.



When asked, “***What was the best part of Live Different’s visit?***”, 40% of educators reported that the various interactions and connections between the team and the students were the best part.



40 %

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Interaction with our students.

“

The connections that they [the team] made with the students.

“

...members were very interactive and made connections with students which will positively impact them.

Equally as valuable to educators were workshops & activities (18%), sharing circles (18%), personal storytelling by Live Different Staff (18%), and the presentation (18%).

“

Having students taking part.

“

The young presenters who shared their lives and lots of music, and lights!

“

Student interaction during sharing circle.

“

Stories from the performers.

“

The sharing circle connecting.

“

The workshop approach and the connection they made with the youth.

“

The story sharing that occurred.

“

Everything from the presentation to the sharing circles and activities.

“

The message and multi-media approach and a cohesive team approach.

“

The community dinner and concert were amazing! The staff also came to breakfast on their last morning, and the students LOVED hanging out with them.

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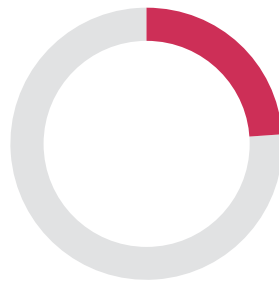
Very wonderful group of young adults. They presented themselves with poise and class. They were very easy to talk to which made the connection with our students great! Would love to have them back!



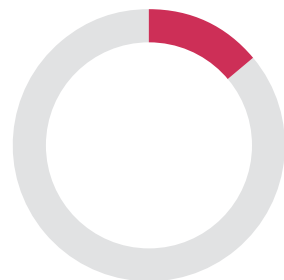
When asked “***What would you change or improve about Live Different’s Program?***”, here’s what educators said:



57% of educators reported that they **wouldn't change anything** about the program



24% of educators reported that they **would like to see Live Different spend even more time** or have even more activities in the program



14% of educators reported that they **would like more pre-arrival or post-departure material**

Each year, students reach out to us with stories of how they were encouraged and inspired.



I like the fact that they [Live Different] are so positive, and that **they're positive role models and you can look up to them**, knowing that sometimes in life you can get over obstacles and that you can make it through this downpour of life as long as you have some positive thoughts.

I learned that there are many ways to relieve stress. Some things are music, positive self-talk and constant relaxed breathing. I also learned that a lot, and I mean A LOT of people go through drama and losses of loved ones. **I always used to think life just chose one certain person to hate and I always used to think that person was me.** It turns out there are 91% of people who lost someone important in their lives. Not everyone is perfect. People go through things...

I look up to them [the Live Different team] and **they inspire me to do greater things in life** and do something that feels right. Basically, I love them and I look up to them a lot. They are my idols.

Giving students hope and encouraging them to reach their potential is why we do what we do.

“

...you six people [Live Different team] have **convinced me that it is worth it, to keep going**. You six are telling me that no **matter what, I will never be worthless**, that everybody deserves to live their life, right until their last breath. You people are telling me (and more people) that we all have value, we have worth, we will always matter and I just wanted to say, thank you. Thank you so much. And I mean that. I hope that you guys help even more people. **You guys are my heroes**.



Discussion and Conclusion

Overall, we are very satisfied with the outcomes of the Live Different 2017/18 Indigenous Tour. We have seen that change has begun in new communities and continues to grow in communities we've returned to. Although there is still much more to do, more students to reach, and many ways we can evolve and grow, we are excited about the change we have seen so far.

Statistics say that suicide and self-inflicted injuries are the leading causes of death for Indigenous youth in Canada. One of the leading causes of teen suicide is hopelessness, so when 95.7% educators shared that their youth now have more hope and a more positive outlook for the future, we are confident that our programming will bring about life-saving and life-changing results. This hope is the spark we hope will ignite within students an understanding that there is more to their life than they know. This is just the beginning - they have so much time and so much to do. We offer a new way to see their world and a fresh lens to view it through. This new way of seeing the world causes students to wake up from their everyday life and get excited about the possibilities that exist for them.

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Educators have reported students are now more willing to be open emotionally and express their feelings.

Another important protective factor against teen suicide is self-esteem and self-worth. Educators reported that students have a greater sense of self-worth and value than they did before participating in the programming. We know that low self-worth is also a barrier to growth. It may result in less school engagement, poor friendships, and eventually a higher rate of unemployment. Any initiative to improve student's self-worth has long-lasting impacts against suicide and for the entire community.

Connectedness to their school, to their community and to their culture was another positive result educators saw in the youth as a result of Live Different's Indigenous Programming.

Students who have a positive connection to their peers and community have a higher school attendance rate, are more likely to engage in extracurriculars, are less likely to suffer from depression or suicidal thoughts, and have an overall more positive outlook and mental health. Within the school, educators are witnessing a positive life change within the students. Educators have reported students are now more willing to be open emotionally and express their feelings. In fact, educators are saying that their school culture has become kinder. The lessons and messages that were heard from Live Different are still being discussed among the students even after we left.

Through our programming, youth engage with other Indigenous young-adults who are positive role models and have shared in many of the same struggles, but who have persevered and who are doing something different with their life.

Educators reported that part of the life change they've seen is in how students are now experiencing greater self-worth and pride. It is that pride and connection to a cultural identity that Indigenous scholars and educators say are vitally important to the development of youth. Through our programming, youth engage with other Indigenous young-adults who are positive role models and have shared in many of the same struggles, but who have persevered and who are doing something different with their life. This interaction with positive Indigenous role models helps students to be proud of their culture and to connect with it in a more positive and hopeful way. Cultural identity gives students direction and purpose and increases the likelihood of a positive future for Indigenous people. For example, a student who feels connected to their culture will demonstrate more positive mental health, will reduce the risk of suicide and is more likely to pursue an education, career, or a voice in Indigenous affairs. The sense of belonging that comes with a strong cultural identity is powerful in shaping the future of one youth, or even an entire community.

91.3% of educators believe that Live Different's visit will have a long-term impact on their youth.

The impact of Live Different's programming is widespread and reaches a large number of youth. The results are particularly notable because the impact is being achieved in a short (1 to 2 days) time frame, yet 91.3% of educators believe that Live Different's visit will have a long-term impact on their youth. Very few other programs achieve a significant long-term impact in such a short time frame.

During the 2017/18 school year, Live Different fully booked both tours in each semester and was able to reach 52 communities and thousands of Indigenous youth. For this reason, we look forward to expanding our reach each year so that we may continue to see positive developments in Indigenous youth right across Canada.

Thank You to Our Partners

The Youth Empowerment Tour would not have been possible without the generous support and engagement of a number of partners.

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