



Canadian  
Race Relations  
Foundation

Fondation  
canadienne des  
relations raciales

## Event Report

- **Name of the Event:** "Let's talk Race & Racism" - an Anti-Racism Educational Presentation
- **Event Dates:** September 20, October 4, October 11, 2019  
Lester B Pearson School, Nose Creek School, James Fowler School, - Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- **Brief Description of the events:**  
Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation hosted three Anti-Racism presentation for students in high school to help them understand key terms when it comes to race relations, the history of race and racism in Canada (past and current issues), and working together to create solutions and actions, class activities about privilege and racism, engaging with guest speakers, as well as promoting CRRF's Do The Right Thing resource.

### *Itinerary for the days:*

Presentation were about four & a half hours long, breaks and exercises were extra on top of that.

- Land acknowledgement from Indigenous speaker who also explained to the students why we do land acknowledgements, history of acknowledgements, why they are important and how we can all take part in them. We then posed the challenge to students to try and memorize the acknowledgement as we gave hand-outs of it.
- Facilitators spoke about the partners and speakers who brought this presentation together as well as the funder (CRRF) and their resource Do The Ring Thing. Links were also shared with students and teachers in advance and after presentations.
- Followed with presentation agreement to ensure everyone did their best to participate in class and we create a safe space for all to have discussions.
- Activity: 15 min class activity where students created groups of 7 and discussed race and racism in our society. They were asked to list different events that relate to this topic, they could be recent or past events and issues. Here are a few of the things students listed:
  1. Justin Trudeau black face
  2. Quebec Bill 21
  3. Yellow vest coming to mosque
  4. Residential Schools
  5. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
  6. Cultural Appropriation
  7. Indigenous water crisis
  8. N-word and how it's commonly used in schools and music
  9. Police carding
- Facilitators then started explaining terminology and why it's important to understand it in order to understand the state of race relations in Canada. Each term was explained for about 10 minutes and some were accompanied by videos. Several students also engaged in questions about terms and examples of them as the presentation went on. We have listed a few questions at the end of this report. These terms included:
  1. Race
  2. Racism
  3. Racial discrimination
  4. Privilege (different types)
  5. Microaggressions

- 6. Bias
- 7. Stereotypes
- 8. Generalizations
- 9. Intersectionality
- Break: 10 minute break was taken with a lot of snacks for the students
- Activity: 15 minute exercise of unpacking the invisible knapsack of privilege. Students took part in this activity by standing up if they had experienced it or remain sitting down when they had not. We had a total of 25 questions we asked and we went into details about each question so no one was confused. Students enjoyed this activity a lot and many were shocked by the results and it created for a lot of good conversation during the next break.
- 20 minute look at issues of race and racism in Canada in the past. We mentioned specific examples and we went over in detail. A lot of this information was taken from CRRF's Do The Right Thing resource. Examples included:
  - 1. Creation of Canada (Colonial history)
  - 2. Residential Schools
  - 3. 60's Scoop
  - 4. Chinese Head Tax
  - 5. Japanese Internment camps
  - 6. Komagata Maru
  - 7. School Segregation
- 20 minute look at issues of race and racism in Canada in present times. We mentioned specific examples and we went over them in detail. Some of this information was taken from CRRF's Do The Right Thing resource, and some from our own. Many of these the students had already mentioned so it was a great Segway into the conversation Examples included:
  - 1. Ongoing Colonialism
  - 2. Indian Act
  - 3. Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women
  - 4. Overrepresentation of Indigenous inmates in prison
  - 5. Police Carding
  - 6. Bill 21 in Quebec
  - 7. Immigration Policies
  - 8. Not Recognizing Overseas Professional Credentials
  - 9. Anti-Blackness
  - 10. Representation
- Activity: We then looked at everyday examples of racism in Canada in 2019 so far. Facilitators had pulled up 10 new stories from the past year and presented it to the students. Students then in groups had to analyze the stories and have discussions about why it's wrong. They then did short 2 min presentations on what effect it has on the specific communities and why it's a concern. Many of them brought up other examples as well.
- Facilitators then explained the difference between an ally and advocate and how we each have a role to play. We also showed examples of what an ally and advocate looks like from a Canadian context.
- Lunch
- Guest speaker Garret Smith spoke to the students for about 35 mins about Indigenous struggles with race and racism in Canadian society. Garret is an activist, actor, writer and youth support advocate. Garret is a proud member of the Piikani and Kainai Tribes of the Blackfoot Nation in Southern Alberta. He is a 2013 graduate of the Centre For Indigenous Theatre located in Toronto, Ontario; the former Interim Artistic Director for Making Treaty 7, and is the Founder of the "Mohkinstsis Healing Camp" previously located in downtown Calgary, Alberta. He gave everyday examples and engaged the students to talk about their experiences or what they have seen.

- 10 mins break
- Guest speaker Sachin Sudra spoke to students about the importance of cultural appreciation vs. appropriation for about 15 minutes and engaged in an activity for 25 minutes with the students about working together regardless of our differences. Sachin is the founder of Namaste Cooking, a grass roots, community based company set out to educate and inspire people on the Indian healing arts. Sachin teaches, empowers and inspires peoples of all diversities on cooking Ayurvedic food, lifestyle & yoga practice. Sachin is a community advocate for preserving ancient Indigenous Indian cultures symbols through public demonstrations & talks.
- Last exercise: Facilitators presented the Three R's of Social Change about how to "reflect" "recognize" and "respond" when trying to make social change. Students were then asked to reflect on this exercise give examples of how they can make use of this in their everyday lives in the school setting.
- CRRF's Do The Right Thing was put on screen and facilitators went over again on how the resource can be used in classrooms for both teachers and students.
- Presentation ended and questions were asked. There was a lot of engagement and some of the questions were very thoughtful. The teachers had also indicated that they enjoyed the presentations, were thankful and appreciated the opportunity.
- **Speakers & Moderators:**
  - Iman Bukhari (Anti-racism speaker/facilitator)
  - Jacquie Aquines (Anti-oppression speaker/facilitator)
  - Hajra Qureshi (Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation moderator)

**Keynote Speaker:**

Garret Smith (Indigenous speaker)  
Sachin Sudra (Cultural appreciation speaker)

- **Audience:**
  - **Number of the attendees:**  
210 in total over the three days
  - **Who were the main audience?**  
High school students ages 15 - 18

● **Strategic Impact**

**CRRF Strategic Objectives 2017-2020**

The CRRF will ...

- 1) Identify key issues of racism and racial discrimination
- 2) Be recognized as the leading national comprehensive resource on racism, race relations, best practices and recommended solutions
- 3) Engage Canadian Youth and other groups in addressing racism and race relations using a variety of means
- 4) Develop and promote education on the content of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Multiculturalism Act, their inherent values as a source for building a common understanding of our individual responsibilities, and as a tool for exploring the nature of rights and their limits in Canada with respect to speech, religious beliefs and discrimination

- **Which of the above strategic objectives were met?**

1, 2, 3, and 4 – all four of them were met during the presentations. Students had a long time to engage in the knowledge we presented to them and the guest speakers made the experience even better as they had real life experiences to talk from, as well as engaging activities.

- **Please assess the strategic impact. Describe why (or why not) the event was a success? How did you measure the success? What metrics were used to measure success?**

The events were a success. We had a lot of positive feedback and students really enjoyed the presentations, especially the guest speakers as they were very engaging and the kids loved that. It was a great way to teach them from directly impacted communities and how to work towards solutions together. Here were the questions we asked teachers to collect for us after the presentations:

1. What was the most important thing you learned today?

Some answers included:

- Racism is still alive in Canada
- Race is a social concept
- How to work together to end racism
- How to be an ally and advocate
- Difference between racism and racial discrimination (now I know why reverse racism isn't real and will use proper term racial discrimination)
- Racism affects Indigenous community in different ways
- The Indian Act is still here and why it affects Indigenous people
- I didn't know about the Komagatu Maru till now

2. How will you implement the knowledge you have been presented today in your schools?

Some answers included:

- We are thinking of doing an Instagram campaign around Halloween about why cultural appropriation is wrong
- When I hear my friends say the N word, I will ask them to stop
- I will listen to my native friends when they talk about racism and be an ally
- I will report racism when I see it
- I will talk to my friends outside of school and parents about these conversations so it goes beyond this room
- I will share the resources

3. How can we make this presentation better?

Some answers included:

- More food
- More videos
- Less text in resource, more pictures
- Can we do a big school conference on anti-racism. It would be good to get together with students across the city and discuss ideas.
- I feel shy bringing up my experiences because I think people might judge it so I appreciated that we could write it down instead in the activities

Furthermore, here were some questions that students asked during the presentations that we noted as they were quite engaging discussions:

- Why do you think the government doesn't do enough for Indigenous peoples? How can we better get along?
- What can allies do to help Indigenous peoples in Canada?
- Why was Trudeau's blackface wrong?
- Why does Quebec government not want people to wear hijabs and turbans?

- You have spoken about having representation but also brought up tokenizing people, where is the line?
- Is it ok for a black person to say the N-word?

- **How can this event be improved in the future?**

They were really great overall. If we had a little more time, we could have had longer activities and discussions.

However, for the resource perhaps it could be a little more “fun” and “engaging” to students as papers aren’t always the best way to engage with them. Overall it was great however.

*Here are a few photos from our presentation on October 4 as we had permission to share these photos only:*

