



STAND UP AND LEAD!

**YOUTH ACTION, MULTICULTURALISM, LEADERSHIP AND
COMMUNITY GROWTH PROGRAM**

Somali Canadian Education and Rural Development Organization

The broad purpose of the *Somali Canadian Education and Rural Development Organization* (SCERDO) is to promote the educational needs of all Somalis and Canadians at home and around the world. SCERDO advocates the needs of rural Somalia and Canada including economic development, community enhancement, environmental protection, and effective use of available resources. SCERDO believes that education and rural development is a pre-requisite for the social and economic development of Somalis at home and abroad. SCERDO is a valuable addition to the many agencies and organizations that are engaged in assisting and nurturing the development of Somalis and Canadians around the world.

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Youth Action for Fostering Multiculturalism, Leadership and Community Growth
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This workbook contains program outline and goals, workshops and speaker information, mentorship discussion guidelines, lifeplanning worksheets, and public education and outreach planning sheets.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY GROWTH

BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Somali Canadian Education and Rural Development Organization (SCERDO), and the Alberta Somali Association for Advocacy and Support (ASAAS), in partnership with the Community Partnership Enhancement Fund and Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op, conducted a needs assessment which focused on: highlighting the challenges faced by Somalis (particularly women and youth) in their resettlement process; increasing the profile of the Somali community; identifying needs and proposing solutions; establishing cross cultural relations; and, supporting service providing agencies to improve their service delivery to the Somali community, and the refugee / immigrant community as a whole.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDED RESPONSES

To address the needs established, the following recommendations were made by Somali youth:

1. **Crime prevention:** Somali community organizations, government, and law-enforcement agencies could work together to establish Somali youth violence prevention programs and strategies.
2. **Employability:** All levels of governments and service providing agencies could put increased effort in helping young Somalis attain interpersonal skills in order to get meaningful, sustained employment.
3. **Leadership:** Somali community organizations could involve youth in designing and creating innovative and experiential programs and activities where youth can exchange ideas and develop a sense that they are the future leaders of the community. In order to boost the morale and self-esteem of Somali youth, Somali parents, community leaders, and respected elders could be more positive and encouraging. Youth would like to be respected for their ideas, recognized

their efforts, and acknowledged for their achievements.

4. **Mentorship and guidance:** Somali scholars and academics, University/College students, and other professionals could play a leading role in creating an effective mentorship program for Somali youth and children.
5. **School-based counselling:** Edmonton Schools where a high number of Somali students are enrolled, could consider hiring counsellors who have a better understanding of the issues faced by Somali youth, and the root causes of their problems.
6. **Safe, personal space:** Many Somali families live in overcrowded homes, thus, children often don't have their own rooms or even relevant space to do their studies. Afterschool programs and a homework support system for Somali students could help to improve their academic achievements. Studies show that afterschool programs keep youth out of trouble, and engage their learning through informal means.

YOUTH ACTION FOR FOSTERING MULTICULTURALISM, LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY GROWTH PROJECT

This project provides youth with programming and opportunities to enhance their personal growth, life skills, formal education experience, employability, and community relations. It also aims to decrease the likelihood of our youth becoming involved in negative activities leading to crime and violence. The long term impacts then, will lead to constructive community involvement by youth, more confidence within our immigrant and refugee communities, and greater appreciation of diversity and inclusion within our mainstream society. With all of our parts working together, our communities and our City will become stronger as a whole.

My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together

~Desmond Tutu

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Stage 1: Empowerment

Lifeplan delivery and Mentorship

Delivery of the Lifeplan program and concurrent mentorship sessions to youth

Goal: To provide youth with informative and motivating leaders, and interactive discussion in pursuit of developing their individualized Lifeplans, with the aim of increasing personal empowerment.

Activities: Development of Lifeplan programming; 10 informative, interactive workshops; concurrent one-on-one Mentorship sessions; and individualized Lifeplans*.

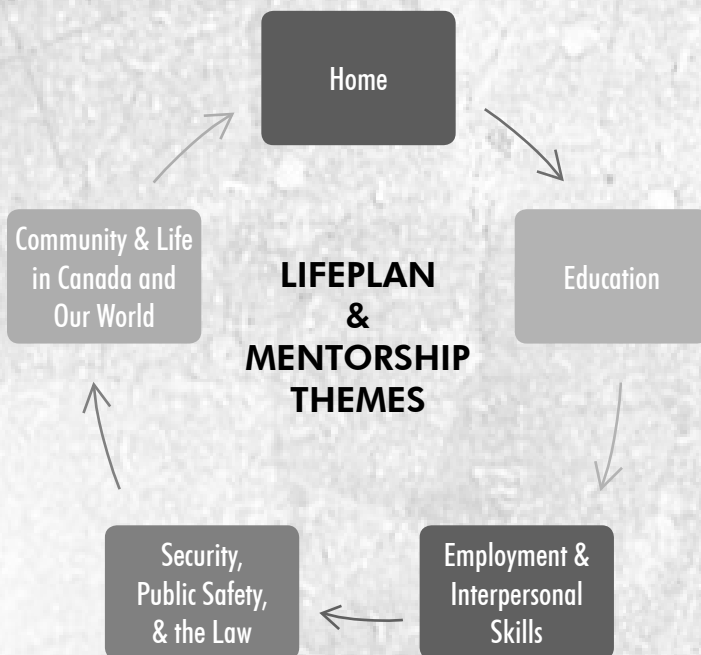
Stage 2: Public Education

Institutional engagement and community outreach

Development and delivery of public education program to stakeholders by youth

Goal: To assist youth to form a group and help them develop a program they will deliver to key stakeholders, partners, peers, and policy-makers, with the aim of community outreach and increased institutional engagement.

Activities: Creation of Youth Group out of participants; drafting and approval of Vision and Mandate; Production of core materials to be presented; partnerships; Report; meeting plan and timeline; and minimum of 5 meetings with 5 different groups.



* A Lifeplan is a way to set order, achieve realistic goals, and celebrate accomplishment in life. The purpose of Lifeplan programming to enable you to achieve success in all parts of your life, and enable you to become a leader in your community.

Graduation

Upon successful graduation of this program, you will receive:

Official Certificate of Completion

Professional resume with references

Network of highly skilled and well connected professionals

Peer support system

WORKSHOPS

MONTH	DATE	TOPIC / DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS	TIME
March - August		One-on-one Mentorship Sessions	Somali Students' Association	Determined with your mentor
March	14 th	Home	Oliver Kamau, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association / Marcus Fung, Music teacher K'naan Warsame, Somali Poet and Hip Hop Artist	2:00 – 7:00 pm
April	4 th	Employment & Interpersonal skills	Nene Ernest Khalema, Assistant Professor, University of Calgary Social Work	2:00 – 6:00 pm
	18 th		Marlon Wilson, Music for Mavericks, Politic Live	3:00 – 6:00 pm
May	9 th	Education	Malcolm Azania, Author, Journalist	3:00 – 6:00 pm
	23 rd		Malcolm Azania, Author, Journalist	3:00 – 6:00 pm
June	6 th	Security, Public Safety & the Law	Zak Sheikh, Muslim Chaplain, University of Alberta	3:00 – 5:00 pm
	20 th		Abdullahi Roble, Teacher, Educational Consultant	3:00 – 5:00 pm
July	4 th	Community & Life in Canada	Jonathan Rivero, Qi Creative, Occupational Therapist	3:00 – 6:00 pm
	18 th	Community & Life in Our World	Vladimir Gomez, Program Manager, Canada World Youth, People's Poets	3:00 – 6:00 pm
August	8 th	Home	Somali leaders! That means YOU!	3:00 – 6:00 pm
	22 nd		Oliver Kamau, Edmonton Immigrant Services Association / Marcus Fung, Music teacher	3:00 – 6:00 pm
September ~ Break				
Please note: Unless advised otherwise, all workshops will be held at the SCERDO Office 12052 Fort Road, 780-491-0233				

SPEAKERS



Malcolm Azania is a writer, journalist, broadcaster, community activist, and author of the acclaimed novels *From the Notebooks of Doctor Brain* and *The Coyote Kings of the Space-Age Bachelor Pad* published by Random House.

Malcolm has worked with numerous community groups across Canada on issues such as former child soldiers in Sierra Leone, famine relief in Ethiopia, war-relief in Iraq, and humanitarian assistance in Palestine.



Marcus Fung is a music teacher and musician who facilitates personal development and community strengthening through art. Currently, Marcus is conducting a number of afterschool programs in Edmonton, and is

working to expand his programming to include more youth and adults.



Vladimir Gomez and his family came to Canada as refugees from Chile, an experience that shaped his political and educational formation. Vlad has a Master of Education in International and Global Education, is the Program Manager for

Canada World Youth, and an MC in the People's Poets.



Oliver Kamau was born in Kenya and taught high school for several years before coming to Canada in 1997 to pursue his graduate studies. Oliver is an experienced facilitator who uses

experiential techniques to teach in areas such as anti-racism, diversity, and immigration. In 2005, Oliver published the widely used *Race and Respect: An Anti-Racism Resource for Teachers*.



Nene Ernest Khalema is an Assistant Professor at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work. Ernest's research interests include immigrants, refugees, and community health.

He has several years experience working with youth and educational institutions, helping to enable minority students and reform out-dated education practices.



Jonathan Rivero is an occupational therapist who uses diverse mediums to encourage personal development. Jon has produced a number of programs for the Family Linkages Foundation and is currently operating his own

company, Qi Creative, which uses rehabilitative techniques to help youth reach their full potential.



Abdullahi Roble is originally from Somali and has 25 years of teaching and community service experience throughout Canada. He also has 15 years experience working as an educational consultant with a diversity of immigrant communities in the Greater Toronto Area. Abdullahi is a highly respected educator, leader, and community representative and is currently serving as the Educational Consultant for SCERDO.



Shaykh Zak Sheikh is the Muslim Chaplain at the University of Alberta. He grew up in Egypt, studied horticulture at the University of Cairo, and traveled widely in Europe before coming to Canada in 1978. Since then, Zak has

been involved in Edmonton's inter-faith and multicultural communities through the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada and the local law enforcement and judicial systems.

The Somali Students' Association (SSA) is a youth-led group with students from the University of Alberta, Grant MacEwan College, and NAIT. The SSA promotes education and social prosperity among Somalis, providing opportunities for youth to connect, mentor each other, and collaborate on issues that affect the Somali community, and the youth population at large.



Marlon Wilson is part of one of Edmonton's most nationally recognized hip-hop acts, Politic Live, and is the co-founder and co-CEO of Music For Mavericks Entertainment, a record label which

has worked to improve the economic and social conditions of Edmonton's less fortunate. By making music that is socially conscious, Marlon has helped bring to light important issues that affect our local communities, and by organizing events such as Hip Hop for Hunger, Marlon has become an important role model for our youth.



K'naan Warsame was born in Mogadishu, Somalia and spent the early years of his life trying to avoid death and listening to hip-hop. After coming to Canada, he began producing music in the tradition of his family

and homeland, calling his work "urgent music with a message". His lyrics focus on real life, the state of the world, and are a call to ending unnecessary violence. He has performed at the United Nations, and has produced two highly celebrated albums *The Dusty Foot Philosopher* and *Troubadour*.

MENTORSHIP GUIDELINES

The mentorship sessions are a vital part of the Lifeplanning process because they will be an opportunity for you to discuss some of your main concerns and learn how you can overcome your challenges. Here are some important guidelines that will help you get the most out of your mentorship sessions.

What is a mentor?

A mentor is a trusted friend or guide who can coach you through some of the difficulties you are facing. A mentor can help you work through problems you are having in school or with teachers, questions about jobs and your career, or issues you are having with your family or your friends.

Why are mentors important?

A mentor is an encouraging peer, someone who understands where you are coming from, provides you with respect, positivity, and support, and someone who offers you constructive feedback and advice. By being a positive role model, the mentor plays an important part in your personal growth, empowerment and eventual leadership.

Talking and listening about life

The relationship between you and your mentor should be a listening and evaluating exercise for the

mentor, and an encouraging and learning exercise for you. The mentor should listen to you very closely, and work with you to come up with plans for positive outcomes for your life.

Being honest with yourself

One of the most important parts of your mentorship sessions is that you can be honest about yourself, your experiences, and your thoughts. You can talk about your frustrations, things that make you angry, and instances when you have been hurt. These are not easy to talk about, but feel free, feel safe, and be honest with yourself and your mentor. This way, you will learn who you are and who you really want to be.

Shifting attitudes, being positive

After discussing some of the negative aspects of your life, your mentor will ask questions and guide discussion that will make you think positively. The goal is to focus on positive things in your life, what makes you happy and complete, and makes the people around you feel comfortable. By thinking positively, you can focus your energy on what is good about your life and how you can make more of it happen.

Goal-Oriented discussion: Imagining what is possible

Once you feel comfortable with your mentor, you will focus on setting goals. It is important for

your mentor to help you imagine what is possible for your life. Your mentor can help you think about what you want in your life, and then work with you to come up with a plan to get there. This is called goal setting and it is a vital part of personal development.

What is mentorship?

Why is it important for personal development and community growth?

Why are we doing it in this program?

Mentorship is an opportunity for youth to learn about life through relationships with more experienced, trusted peers and teachers.

Mentorship is a powerful way for youth to gain a variety of personal and professional skills that will help them become better at who they are and who they want to be.

In fact, mentoring is one of the oldest forms of guidance.

Scholars have noted that mentorship was a common learning tool in Africa, long before in any of the other ancient civilizations.

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

Things to think about when you are meeting with your mentor

Greetings

Think about 5 good things that happened to you last week.

Think about 5 things in your life that make you happy.

Home

Key questions: What kind of life do I have? What's going on in my life right now?

Key words: Self, family, mother, father, brothers, sisters, lifestyle, food

Education

Key questions: What kinds of things do I want to know? How am I going to know them?

Key words: teachers, subjects, learning, information, interests, thinking, class, friends, lunchtime, peers, relationships

Employability & Interpersonal Skills

Key questions: What kind of work do I want to do? How am I going to feed myself and my family? How am I going to provide?

Key words: job, work, income, money, salary, finances, mortgage, computers, emailing, boss, co-workers, the office, professional development, career

Security, Public Safety, & the Law

Key questions: What makes me feel safe? What makes my family feel safe? How can I make my community more secure?

Key words: law enforcement, laws, penalties, jail, safe, free, walking down the street, friends, children, park, schools

Community and Life in Canada and Our World

Key questions: In what kind of community do I want to live? In what kind of world do I want to live? How am I going to make a better community? How are we going to make a better community?

Key words: family, friends, peers, building together, group, economy, betterment, human networks, participation, planning together for a bright future

Home

Key questions: What kind of life do I want? What are some things I want to do more of in my life?

Key words: Self, my own family, children, husband, wife, parents, house, Islam, Somalia, music, laughter

Action plan

Key questions: How am I going to be better? How am I going to make my life happen?

REFLECTION

What was the best thing the mentor said to you?

What do these discussions make you feel like doing?

Did anything make you happy?

Did anything make you angry?

Did anything make you smile?

What would you tell your friends about your discussions with your mentor?

Do the discussions make you look at things a little differently?

Do you feel different?

Do you feel better?



GOALS

Right now, I want to
change

Tomorrow, I will

By next summer, I will

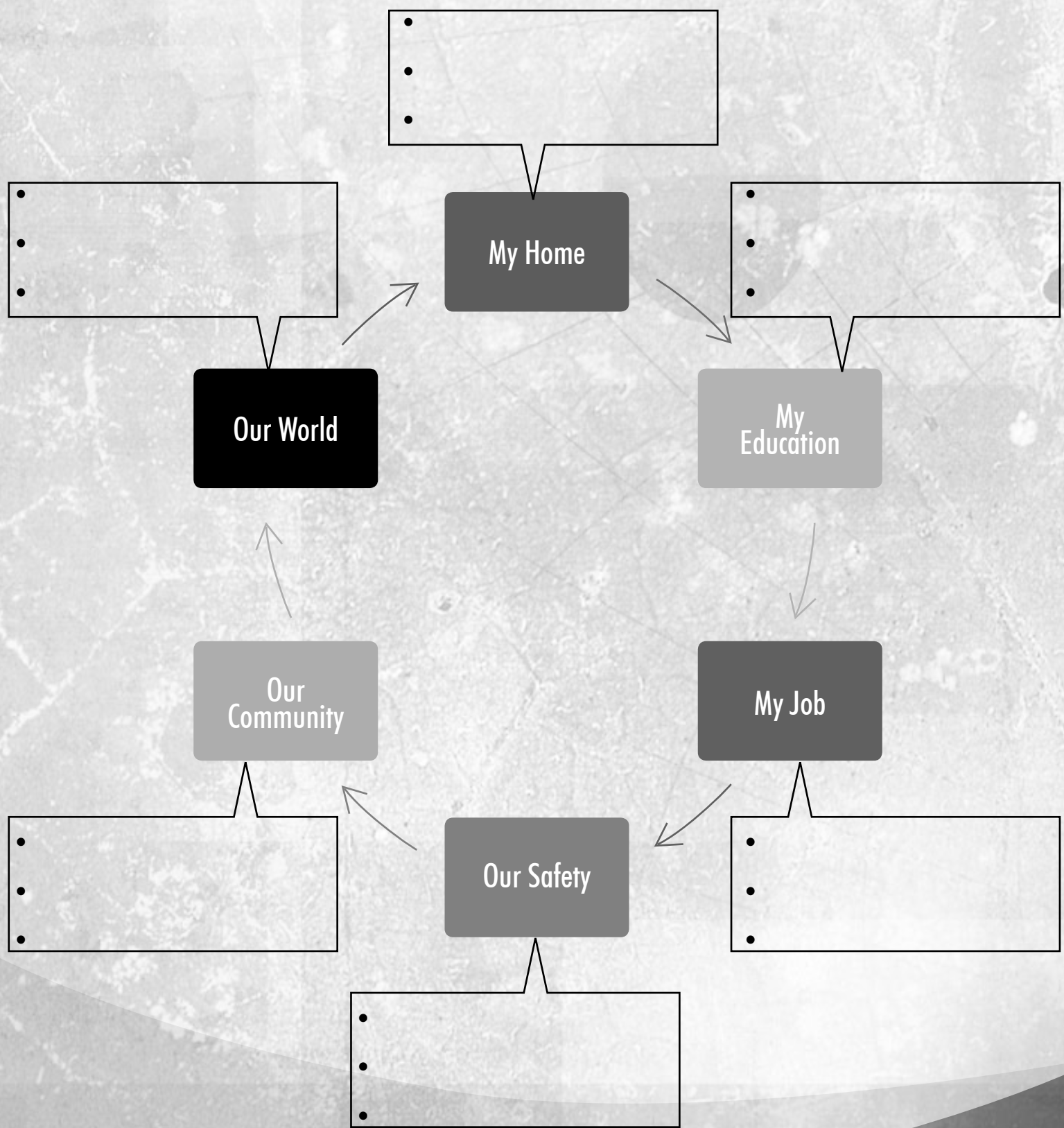
In five years, I will

When I am 30 years old,
I will

When I am old and
grey, I will



IMAGINING LIFE

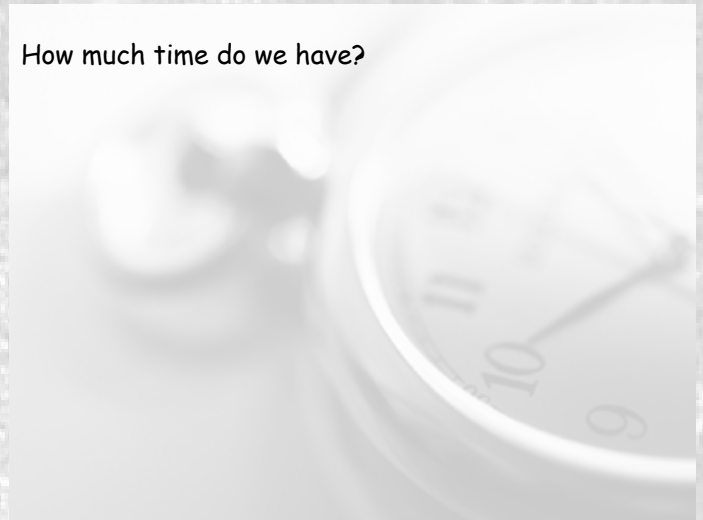


PUBLIC EDUCATION PLAN

What do we want to do?



How much time do we have?



Who needs to be involved?



Do we need money? How much do we have?



A grayscale background image showing three basketball players in action. One player in the center is jumping high to shoot the ball into the hoop. Two other players are also jumping, one on the left and one on the right, attempting to block the shot. The basketball hoop and backboard are visible at the top right.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PLAN

Our name

Vision

Mission

Objectives

Actions and Activities

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PUBLIC OUTREACH SCHEDULE SHEET

MONTH	DATE	TOPIC / DESCRIPTION	GROUP	LOCATION	TIME
October, November		Youth Group formation; approval of Vision and Mandate; founding documents; and public education, institutional engagement and community outreach plan			
		Meeting 1			
December		Meeting 2			
		Meeting 3			
January		Meeting 4			
		Meeting 5			
February					
March		Compilation of results Final report			

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