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Summary of Findings

Ten communities completed pilots of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program between January and April 2012 and 4 of the original communities participated in pilots of the revised 2nd edition of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program in 2013-14.

Areas of Success

- Overall, parents reported that they enjoyed the program, particularly learning about traditional Inuit perspectives on childrearing and healthy parenting.
- Inunnguiniq pilots that regularly involved Elders and the sharing of Inuit parenting practices and traditional lifestyle had the greatest success.
- Parents and facilitators found the session on healing had very strong and emotional responses, often continuing into 1-2 more sessions.
- The strengths-based, group format was very successful. Facilitators reported that listening and sharing stories with others helped parents feel better about themselves and they provided support to each other. Parents reported transferring this dialogue format into their family life.
- Observations highlighted that participants were most comfortable with and responsive to material when they were active and working on something with their hands.
- When men participated, it was observed that they participated with more enthusiasm when activities were on the land.
- The food and nutritional components of the program were very well received. Parents enjoyed cooking together and the different types of recipes to choose from.
- The revised 2nd edition of the curriculum was much easier to work with and to follow.

Future Directions

- The Inunnguiniq facilitator training session has been revised into 2 streams: a) a 10-day 25 hour course for Early Childhood Education students at Nunavut Arctic College and b) A 5-day intensive 35 hour version that is delivered to community organizations
- Continue to raise awareness about the healing component with the Government of Nunavut and offer collaboration to develop a plan for addressing this community-identified need.
- Seek core, sustainable funding for program delivery and on-going evaluation of the program in the long term.

Introduction

History of Inunnguiniq Parenting Program

Qaujigiartiit is an independent, non-profit community research centre governed by a volunteer board of directors. Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre enables health research to be conducted locally, by Nunavummiut, and with communities in a supportive, safe, and culturally sensitive and ethical environment, as well as promote the inclusion of both Inuit Qaujimagatugangit and western sciences in improving the health of Nunavummiut.

Mental health and wellness is the number one priority of the research centre. In 2010, Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre was granted 5 years of funding for a programme of research entitled Child and Youth Mental Health and Wellness Intervention, Research and Community Advocacy in Nunavut. The purpose of this project has been to research, develop, implement, and evaluate child and youth mental health and wellness initiatives in Nunavut that focus on Northern and community-based ways of understanding and knowing about healthy children and youth. Funding for this programme of research was provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The development of an evidence-based parenting support program was one component of the Child and Youth Mental Health Intervention, Research and Community Advocacy Project in Nunavut. The driving force behind this parenting program component were the significant number of requests Qaujigiartiit received from communities to engage in a project to develop a culturally-responsive model for supporting Nunavut parents. Qaujigiartiit worked with many partners to fulfill this need, including: the Nunavut Dept. of Health, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, Arviat Community Wellness Centre, the Cambridge Bay Community Wellness Centre, Tasiuqtigiiit Society, the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven and other community organizations.

The Inunnguiniq Parenting Program is the result of 5 years of research and consultation with many organizations and communities. Qaujigiartiit piloted, evaluated, and revised this evidence-based, culturally-responsive parenting program prior to releasing it for use in Nunavut. This report outlines the evaluation data from the pilots conducted between 2012 and 2014.

The goal of Qaujigiartiit is to continue to operate as a training and evaluation centre for Inunnguiniq Parenting Program, and to continue to revise and update the program over time.

Phase 1

In Phase 1 of program development, Qaujigiartiit collaborated with the Government of Nunavut's Department of Health and Social Services (GN DHSS) for the development of the Nutrition Module of the program, as well as funding and program support for eight pilot sites (Cambridge Bay, Cape Dorset, Clyde River, Coral Harbor, Gjoa Haven, Igloodik, Kimmirut, and Rankin Inlet). Two of these communities were unsuccessful in implementing a pilot of the program (Igloodik and Kimmirut). QHRC provided funding and support for two communities, Iqaluit and Arviat. QHRC provided program support to Iqaluit and Arviat, as well as for the two Kitikmeot communities, and conducted the data collection and evaluation for all communities.

Phase 2

Based on the findings from the Phase 1, the curriculum was revised with the Nunavut Literacy Council to improve the language and flow the material to mirror concepts in adult learning theory. The revised curriculum was piloted in 4 of the original communities in 2013-14: Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, and Iqaluit.

The Goals of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Program

The first goal of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Program is to revitalize the wisdom and practices of inunnguiniq in our lives today. The second goal is to support healing for participants and their families. The third goal is to increase the practice of inunnguiniq in our communities, strengthening the roles of extended family and community in child-rearing.



The Inunnguiniq Learning Model

In the inunnguiniq learning model, Inuit see everyone in a community as interconnected. In fact, Inuit Elders say we are all both learners and teachers. They say we learn from everyone and everything we interact with. Traditionally, even young children are both learners and teachers. This is because Inuit believe children carry the souls and personalities of their namesakes. So Inuit believe children also carry on their namesakes' knowledge.

The idea of continuous learning is also stressed in inunnguiniq. Inuit Elders have outlined five stages of learning. (We introduced you to these in the Section 1 above). People may all be at different stages of learning. But Inuit believe this is a positive situation. It means there are those who can benefit from our experiences. At the same

The biggest lessons we learned were from what we observed. ...Then finally I was on my own to do many things. Of course I made many mistakes because I had not learned everything yet. I discovered that I had many more things to learn and practice. I learned from my own life that I was responsible to teach [others] skills, not by scolding but practicing in order to acquire skills. I had to use myself as an example and suggest ways to teach other skills.

Arsene Ivalu, CSS 2005

time, it means there are others with experiences that can help us.

The role of observation is also an important part of the inunnguiniq learning model. As we mentioned in the section above, Inuit believe practice is essential for the development of proficiency.

The Structure of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Program

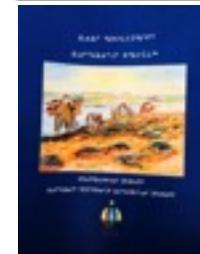
All of these traditional beliefs are reflected in this course. The program has an open structure. It can have a drop-in approach. This allows parents to join at any time and engage at any level. They then can take time away from the course and practice what they learned. Parents can return at a later date to join a different module. Other participants may continue directly from one session to the next. Participants are able to move forward at their own pace.

The basic structure of the Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program is as follows:

- Facilitator pairs offer the program together in English, Inuktitut and/or Inuinnaqtun as they desire.
- The format is a strengths-based, group discussion design. Each session begins with a central theme that is explored through a range of activities and dialogue over the course of 2-3 hours.
- The target audience is parents/care-givers/foster parents/extended family. Anyone who cares for children full- or part-time. This is NOT a program for 'high-risk' parents, but is designed for ALL individuals who care for children. Group size should be approximately 8-10, 2 facilitators and a minimum of 1 elder.
- Inunnguiniq is not a counselling program.
- The program consists of 6 modules taught over 19 sessions (offered 1-3 times per week depending on facilitator comfort/availability)
- Each session is to include an elder if possible. In some cases, dvds of elders speaking or telling stories were incorporated into sessions where elders were not available or were not comfortable speaking on a topic.
- Each program is to incorporate land components in a minimum of 1 session, but can expand to more.
- The parenting program must provide childcare at each session to support parents who wish to attend.
- Each session must incorporate a food component (a snack break). The snack must be nutritious and should be country food when availability allows. Recipe ideas are included in the curriculum.

The resources provided to each program included:

- Each pilot program received 2 copies of these documents in English and Inuktitut at the



training:

- Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program Curriculum (Modules 1-5 and a separate volume for Module 6)
 - Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program Handbook (additional material for parents and facilitators which included additional stories from elders; additional activities; and an appendix of recipes from community cooking programs in Nunavut)
 - Inunnguiniq Child Development Pamphlets from 0-18 years
 - Inunnguiniq Evaluation Booklet
- Each pilot program received a bin of resources, such as food guides, dvds, cd, posters, pamphlets, and more to complement the activities in the curriculum.

Evaluation Approach

Information was gathered from each of the communities via the following:

1. Weekly telephone calls from support coordinators to facilitators. Calls lasted approximately half an hour each; notes were recorded on a computer by the project coordinator.
2. An Evaluation Materials book was given to each facilitator at the training. This included written evaluation questions for facilitators to complete after each session (questions were the same for each session); a pre and post Nutrition Module questionnaire for facilitators to ask parents; and a parent exit questionnaire to be completed by parents.
3. Teleconference: During the last week of February all facilitators were invited to join support coordinators for a conference call. Eight facilitators and two program leads called in. Seven communities were represented. Agenda included a sharing of program successes and ideas for overcoming challenges. Support coordinators listened allowing facilitators to provide peer support.

Weekly Phone Calls

This was the primary mode of data collection and generated the most data. Facilitators shared perspectives, successes and challenges during the phone calls than was expressed in the written documents that were collected.

Evaluation Materials Booklets

Booklets were submitted from seven of the eight communities. Many facilitators did not answer the questions as asked; they used the pages to record their thoughts and what they did in the session. It became evident that evaluation paperwork was a difficulty for many facilitators. Phone calls proved a more effective method of information collection.

Parent Exit Questionnaires

The parent exit questionnaire could be administered one-on-one by the facilitator or a parent could fill it out individually. Low literacy and writing skills were reported by some

facilitators so they gathered the exit data either in interviews, by conversation, or by observation (See Appendix A for results).

Measuring Success

The idea of success in this evaluation was based on the following:

- Number of participants / repeat participants
- Involvement of Elders
- Level of facilitator engagement and enthusiasm with program
- Ease of use of the curriculum materials
- Participant comprehension of and responses to the content and how it is presented
- Level of participant responses/interaction with other participants in the program
- Participant and facilitator self-reported satisfaction with the program
- Stories articulating positive parenting experiences with family during and after the program

Recruiting Parents

Each community implemented a recruitment strategy that was most appropriate for them.

The methods for recruitment included:

- Flyers/posters
- Radio announcements
- Word of mouth
- Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) contacts
- Social services/Public Health referrals

Many facilitators began by inviting people to register. Most programs eventually opened participation to anyone who wanted to attend. Recruitment was often ongoing throughout the program via radio and word of mouth.

Messaging about program content that was distributed by the facilitators in each community varied from community to community: some noted that it was simply a parenting program and did not mention that it was about support as well. Some did not mention the cultural content while others championed this part noting it was about learning traditional Inuit ways. One facilitator noted it was not only about parenting but about better futures. Many mentioned that the teachings were from the Elders.

The Spectrum of Parents (low risk to high risk)

The target audience for this program was anyone who had children in their care full- or part-time. This program had been described as a cultural revival program as much as a parenting program by some facilitators. This program was developed for parents, guardians, foster parents, and/or extended family. Parents/care-givers who were interested in leadership and learning about Inuit perspectives on childrearing, healthy meals for families, communication strategies, and child development were the key audience. This messaging

was not clear in many communities during parent recruitment. There may have been a misconception that high-risk parents were the target audience in some communities. Some facilitators developed their own guidelines for recruitment by only advertising for couples, excluding extended family or single parents, which was not the intention. In addition, a significant number of social workers in the communities requested the opportunity to refer parents to the program as part of meeting Plan of Care requirements for children in protective custody. This was permitted for one of the pilot sites, however

Single Parents

One community was overwhelmed with phone calls from single mothers wanting to participate in the program. Many participants of the Inunnguiniq program in all communities were single mothers.

Fathers/Men

The few men who came to the program enjoyed it and often returned. On a number of occasions the men who came spoke to their friends/relatives and invited them to the program. Sessions that included men tended to have fuller discussions delving deeper into the core content. One community planned to have a men/fathers only session where they would show the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCA) DVD With Dad¹; they had an experienced male facilitator lined up but were unable to follow through.

Radio

In communities who had active community radio stations, this was an effective way to share information about the program. Radio was also used to recruit childcare workers and Elders and notify the community if a class was cancelled. One community used the Inunnguiniq materials to conduct radio shows on Parenting. They offered prizes and reported this was well-received and increased program participation.

General Program Comments

Program Planning

At the training, facilitator pairs were encouraged to meet either in Iqaluit with the Inunnguiniq Coordinators or upon return to their home communities to begin planning the implementation of their pilots. Facilitators who planned well in advance proved to have lasting programs with better attendance. Most facilitators scheduled a weekly planning time; those who followed through saw greater success.

Introducing the Program

Each community created their own introduction to the program. An introductory

“We [have a choice and] can start now!”

- Inunnguiniq Parent

¹ a resource provided to facilitators with their program materials

recruitment open house format provided a common first meeting and often involved food, games, and prizes. One community implemented a 2-day introduction to the program over a weekend focusing on the healing component of Module 1. Elders and parents were invited to come and learn about the program and were provided opportunities to share their stories. This weekend was well attended and provided a strong foundation upon which to start the program for that pilot.

Most communities expressed the program had a slow start. After the first module was completed, most facilitators described a better cohesiveness and responsiveness among the group. Many parents and facilitators struggled with the concept of 'Inunnguiniq', as many had never heard it before. It took most parents a few sessions to begin to understand the meaning of the term and all that it carries. For many, this was a moment of profound realization, particularly for parents who had experienced trauma in childhood.

Childcare

It was essential that childcare be provided as part of the program and has been included in the program structure. It was recommended to facilitators that childcare be made available in all communities; some communities did not think this was necessary but discovered it helpful. When the children and parents were in the same building, this allowed for parent-child interaction as needed/wanted. A few other community groups brought parents and children together for their snack break together. One community decided to leave the parent and child rooms open to each other.

Childcare workers were often difficult to find and reliability was low. Best practice was to have a number of workers on call; this was helpful when a large number of children were present and two workers were needed. Facilitators who called to remind the childcare workers had best results. Childcare workers with child-related education/certification were ideal.

One community planned their session during the times that the Aboriginal Head Start program was in operation. This allowed their pre-school age children an opportunity to learn traditional teachings at the same time as the parents.

“When the parents were quiet, body language spoke to us and told us that the parents were receptive”

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator

Child: “mom, how come you are so calm when you come home from parenting?”

Mother: “It must be working”

- Reported by Inunnguiniq Facilitator

“When they were busy working, they were also busy talking“

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator

“Go out, eat outside, walk and talk, berry picking and chatting...let the kids play while parents talk in a natural relaxed setting“

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator recommendation

It was recommended by a facilitator that childcare workers submit a criminal record check before attending to children alone.

Land Component

Most facilitators were keen about this aspect of the program and many started planning and talking with their group about land excursions early on. Participants became engaged during planning; some offered to contribute personal belongings and equipment (sleds, snow machines, camping/fishing gear, etc), as is natural in most communities.

At one pilot, the participants included mothers and one father. It was observed that the father especially enjoyed being able to contribute to the land component of the program. He volunteered to guide, made equipment and planned for additional equipment to be available from community members on the day of the land trip. This may be one approach to attract men into the program, and has proven successful with other parenting initiatives in Nunavut². It was noted in one of the NCCAH DVDs that the group was successful in involving fathers by saying they needed things done. When they identified a need for assistance it was easy to bring men into the program under the auspices of helping, but not participating. Once at the program the participants and facilitators would keep them working on projects while they listened in on the discussions at the program.

“I’m noticing that young people are wise and want to hear from us. They are very welcoming of us and want to learn from us.”

- Guest Elder at Inunnguiniq Parenting Pilot

Due to the weather and time constraints only a few groups were successful in leaving their communities to enjoy the land. Many improvised and had a celebration including fun, food and games at their local community hall where all family members and friends were invited to join in.

Food

Planning for a snack break was delivered differently in each community. It was found that country foods were a favorite but difficult to find in some communities; facilitators often asked how they could get country food from coordinators or other communities. Many families were hungry and appreciated the opportunity to eat at the parenting program and take food home afterwards.

Participation Levels

During the first sessions, facilitators reported that parents were hesitant to contribute. As familiarity grew among participants and with the program content, so did discussions and parent engagement. Toward the end of the program pilot more parents provided support to one another; and facilitators used words such as ‘teamwork’ and ‘eager to help’ when describing interaction. This reinforced the considerable evidence for the strengths-based group setting for parenting support programs. With time and the establishment of a sense of belonging, facilitators reported that many of the parents in most communities became more open and shared ‘what they really needed to talk about’; they ‘let go of some long

² ‘Fathers and Sons on the Land’ program developed and run by the Clyde River Ilisqisvik Centre

held hurts’.

Table 1: Factors Affecting Participation Levels

| Factor | Comment |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Self-esteem | Facilitators identified that some of the participants appeared to lack confidence or have low self-esteem. When these individuals did share their voices were so soft they were difficult to hear. |
| Quiet times/no response | Facilitators reported that they would often ask questions and receive no response or experience periods of quiet. |
| Elders | Most communities noted that parents were keen to listen to and ask questions of the Elders. Participants were very interested in hearing and learning about how life was lived in the old ways. Communities who involved Elders had greater success with parent participation. |
| Energizers | Many communities reported using games and other energizers. This had the effect of relaxing the group and in turn facilitated discussion. |
| Activity | There was a high level of participation reported from all programs during the cooking components. Participation increased with program delivery that included experiential active learning. |

Facilitator Perspectives

Two facilitators from each of the ten identified pilot communities attended the Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program Training in Iqaluit, November 2011. After the training, eight of the ten communities delivered the pilots. The training for the revised 2nd edition of the program was delivered in Iqaluit in 2013 to 10 facilitators, 5 of whom were from the original pilots.

“We are learning a lot when we are teaching. We are learning so much from participants.”

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator

Despite challenges, most facilitators enjoyed delivering the Inunnguiniq Parenting Support Program and many expressed interest in providing this program again. The most common themes are reported below. Additional facilitator and parent requests and comments can be found in the appendices.

Group Type & Number

Many facilitators wanted to market the program to a particular demographic (open, closed, couples only, single parents, etc.), which was not the intent. However, these facilitators also were uncertain about what kind of group they wanted. Discussions over time revealed that open groups were most effective, where participants came and left the group over the course of the program in a drop-in format. It is worth noting that the most successful group had a very close core group of parents with high attendance, participant retention, and little turnover.

Elders

Sessions were more engaging when Elders participated and contributed. It was reported that their presence had a relaxing effect on parents and facilitators making classes more enjoyable. Parents were more engaged when Elders were teaching and sharing stories; they had many questions for the Elders and were keen to learn from them.

“When Elders speak, it makes everyone feel good.”

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator

For some communities it was difficult to find and retain Elders. Reasons included:

- Elder was sick
- Weekends were not good for Elders
- Elder became tired – session was too long
- The Elder remembered the story differently and this caused concern for facilitators³
- Elder was unsure of their role
- Language barriers/Difficulty finding translators

Facilitators noted it helped when they contacted the Elders prior to class as a reminder and when the Elder knew they were not expected to stay for the whole class.

Meeting Elders

Elders involved with Inunnguiniq who were/are part of the Elders Advisory Group⁴ brought an incredible amount of significance to the program. Each time Moses Koihok, participant in the Elders Advisory Group for many years, attended an Inunnguiniq session and shared stories, participants shed tears (this was interpreted by facilitators as tears of healing and a release of long held hurts). Moses said he was grateful to be asked to come and share his knowledge.

Healing

Many facilitators identified the need for healing (often both for themselves and for the parent participants) and wanted to offer a healing session but did not know how to approach this. It was recommended by the Dept. of Health and Qaujigiartiit program coordinators they invite local professionals (mental health workers, counselors, wellness/addictions workers, social workers, etc.) as guests to the program to meet parents and make connections. Facilitators noted that some Elders who attended the program may also need support to heal from trauma.

“When we teach our children something, like correcting them when they are bad, this melts their heart because we show them we care.”

- Inunnguiniq Parent

Food

The food components of the program were well received by facilitators and participants. Some facilitators reported it was the food component of the program that kept parents coming. Snacks, leftovers, and in some communities take home items in the form of a door prize, etc., provided additional food resources in the community that were needed. Country food was sometimes difficult to obtain but always appreciated. Activity around food preparation was reported to provide respite for the more strenuous, internalized parts of the program. Participants talked more openly during periods where they were preparing food as a group.

“Eating together with family and Elders helps with family communication.”

- Inunnguiniq Facilitator

Facilitation and Group Skills

A considerable amount of time was spent on building facilitation and group skills during the Inunnguiniq Facilitator Training workshops. The group of facilitators who implemented this series of pilots possessed a range of skills and abilities. Attributes of facilitators who felt successful and those who experienced greater challenges are identified below.

⁴ The Elders Advisory Group was created by the GN Department of Education to gather information about traditional Inuit life. They have been convening since Nunavut became a Territory (1999). Many of the stories and teachings in the *Inunnguiniq* program were derived from recordings of the meetings of this group.

Table 1: Attributes of Facilitators Who Felt Successful

| Attribute | Comment |
|---|---|
| Age | Young Elders - people who have been through the parenting process and have adult children. |
| Elder(s) | It was requested by an Elder that a male and female Elder team is most effective; an Elder buddy approach is useful as it provides internal peer support to the Elders. |
| Men | To create balance it is best if there is at least one man on the facilitation team; when men were involved with the group they were always well received. |
| Group facilitation experience | Knowledge of group dynamics and the importance of observing and responding to group needs. |
| Counseling skills and/or experience: | Successful groups tended to disclose feelings around serious issues; facilitator teams need to be ready for this and able to offer individual follow up themselves or provide appropriate referrals to community professionals. |
| Self-confidence | Ability to handle a group on their own if other facilitators are unable to attend. |
| Teamwork | Prior experience working together is an asset; facilitators who know and are comfortable with each other produced the best results. |
| Translation | Facilitator teams that include one bilingual person who is comfortable translating as needed. |
| Cooking experience | Confidence in reading and following recipes and leading a group in healthy cooking and nutrition related content. |

Table 2: Attributes of Facilitators who Experienced Challenges

| Attribute | Comment |
|--|---|
| Appointed to act as facilitator | Facilitators who were 'appointed' to the program (i.e. those who did not volunteer or self-nominate) proved ineffective. |
| Planning | Facilitators who did not spend time planning their program sessions in advance, with each other and/or with guest speakers (elders), experienced more challenges. |
| Healing | Facilitators who had unresolved grief or traumatic experiences reported having a more difficult time delivering the program. It is important to note, however, that they were referred to counselling support, with whom they could discuss their feelings if they wished. All facilitators who faced this scenario were committed to delivering the program and decided to continue with it. In the end, they reported the program was helpful on their healing journey. They also noted the need for greater healing supports in their communities. |

Challenges

The need for healing

Universally the need for healing was highlighted among facilitators and participants. Wanting to be responsive to parents, but not having the resources available (i.e. counsellors or trusted professionals) to refer participants to, contributed to challenges for facilitators. One facilitator recalled a session that naturally turned into a healing session where everyone became emotional and felt compelled to support the participant in need, including the facilitator (see text box next page), however, also noted that this was not the intent of the program and no one in the room was equipped with the skills to support a seriously distraught person in the event that this was needed (it wasn't). They also noted that they had made connections to professionals in the community to whom the participants could be referred.

Communication or Language Barriers

Some facilitators reported that they experienced difficulties with resources that were not available in Inuinnaqtun or in a specific regional dialect of Inuktitut. These are common reports among all programs offered in Nunavut, and regional dialect differences are a common discussion point both within our organizations and in Nunavut as a whole.

Some facilitators were difficult to contact and slow to respond to messages for follow-up and teleconference calls.

Cancelled Classes

Most programs experienced a high number of missed classes due to the following reasons:

- Illness
 - Facilitator/medical travel/family illness
 - Parents with sick children
 - Community illness (ex. Flu going around and everyone staying in)
- Weather
 - Storm days (at least two in each community)
 - Weather too cold (no taxi in community)
- Death(s) in community
- School closed (in-service)
- Community events (winter games, trade shows, etc)
- No one, or only one person came so they decided not to have class
- Facilitator away
 - Travel commitments (i.e. work or medical)
 - Having to attend to family concerns (some felt it took too much time away from their family)
 - Two facilitators left the position to take on other full time jobs (both reported to enjoy this job but needed the extra income and could not commit to both)

Timeline

Facilitators reported that the amount of material in the program was too large for the time period provided. Some sessions ran longer than the planned two hours and a few facilitators were unhappy with extra time commitment.

Resource Bins

Due to a number of factors: lack of organization within the bins; short time frame of program; and facilitators with other full-time jobs; the resource bins were reported to be as much of a hinder as a help. Many facilitators did not know where to start, were confused by the many papers, and had difficulty finding the right books. Some reported that resources mentioned in the curriculum were not included in their bin.

Technical Difficulties

Some pilot programs experienced unavoidable infrastructure or technical difficulties while implementing the pilots.

- Internet down
- No email address
- Low computer literacy for email communication (power point presentations)
- Fax machine in another office
- DVD & TV unavailable or difficult to access

Successful Approaches

The implementation of each specific pilot became unique to each community as the facilitators were responsive to the needs and resources available to them. Successful delivery was dependent on facilitator literacy level and teaching style, comfort level in leading groups, community resources, and parent needs. There was a wide spectrum of delivery methods: one community read the curriculum directly from the book and, on the other side of the spectrum, one community chose a module topic such as “Living the Good Life” and then asked an Elder to come and share on this topic. GN and QHRC support coordinators continued to recommend that facilitators follow the curriculum as much as possible while remaining sensitive to parent needs.

Soft starts

Some groups opened with prayer and took time to do a ‘round table’ check-in about how each was feeling and if anything was bothering them or their children. It was reported that this allowed participants to ‘get things off their chest’ after which they were more clear-minded, not as pre-occupied, and ready for new learning. One group started each session with food and slowly eased into the discussion of program content.

Group work - Circle discussions

Facilitators noted that participants were more comfortable staying together in a large group. Many chose not to break into smaller groups and discussed things as a whole. This was reported to benefit group unity.

Activity-based learning

It was noted in almost every group that activities naturally fostered communication and group dialogue. Participants felt more at ease while cooking, interacting with their children, or doing other kinds of activities. Facilitators felt this mirrored ‘traditional’ or familiar modes of learning in Inuit communities, where a knowledgeable individual would share knowledge, such as the role one plays in a family, to younger members of the community while simultaneously teaching an activity, such as sewing clothing or repairing equipment.

Recognizing and acting on opportunity

When wellness professionals arrived from out of town, some facilitators invited them in as guest speakers. In all instances, guests were well received by participants.

Partnering with professionals

Participants enjoyed visits and information provided by local professionals: CHRs, Social workers, Mental Health and Wellness workers, CPNP workers, Addictions specialists and Counselors, Nutritionists, etc..

The importance of a safe and comfortable space

One community group felt awkward in the meeting space they were allotted, so they partnered with the CPNP Program, which facilitators and participants were familiar with. This also helped with attendance. Another community responded to low attendance by partnering with another successful program. The benefits of collaborating with other community programs was noted as helpful not only to provide a safe a comfortable space

for participants, but also increased comfort level and made participants feel at ease in a familiar space.

Elders

Elders who understood the purpose of the program and who were comfortable sharing traditional stories were essential to the program. Parents were significantly more engaged during these sessions and valued the links to traditional practices and ways of knowing.

Food

The inclusion of food was a critical component for success for a number of reasons including: participants needed the food or the meal (possibly because they had not eaten in some time); when the opportunity arose, they took food home to their families; sharing food is a traditional Inuit custom that is about harvesting, accomplishment, and celebration - sharing food at sessions made participants comfortable and contributed to increased participant retention.

Responsive to immediate needs of the parents

Facilitators reported that when they were responsive to parent needs and flexible with the program material, the order of the sessions and the mood of the group on any given day, the group was more unified, which resulted in a greater sense of belonging and increased participation.

Facilitator sharing & honesty

A facilitator for the most successful pilot, while leading a group on her own, shared her own feelings about her difficult week telling participants that '[she] almost did not come, but did so because of the people in the class and that [she] knew [she] would feel better after the group'. Parents were very responsive to her honesty and the facilitator reported that they "felt like a little family" as a result.

Door Prize / Incentive

Many communities provided a door prize or other incentive to recruit and retain participants. Most often this prize was healthy foods/groceries which parents were always grateful for. One community chose to always have a fruit basket door prize; this was very well received and had the added benefit of introducing new fruits to the homes.

Recognizing accomplishments of participants

The most successful group finished the program with a formal sit down dinner open to all family members. Their Elder said a prayer and read out a thank you note in their language. This note was laminated and presented to each participant as a keepsake. Parents were also presented with certificates of appreciation. Some gave a little speech and spoke from the heart. Each participant received a bag with health promotion items to take home with their thank you notes and certificates.

Curriculum Specific Feedback

General Comments

The depth of the material as presented in this curriculum was noted to be somewhat difficult for parents. One reason that was identified was that many parents had not been exposed to this kind of traditional learning before and they were not sure how to digest and react to it.

The parent exit questionnaire responses showed that each module was liked either “quite a bit” or “a lot”.

Facilitators who conducted the parent evaluation as a group exercise also noted the following comments: “really liked the modules”, “good advice”, “helps a lot”, “more interested in Elders”, “healthy food”, and “kept me sober”.

A number of facilitators used the sessions in the modules loosely and wove their way through the material as they felt best-addressed parent needs.

Below are the highlights reported from facilitators for specific activities in the curriculum.

Koihok Story

This story was received with mixed feelings among different groups. Some found it too emotionally difficult. Facilitators who were uncomfortable delivering the story were facilitating without Elders. Some participants also noted it made them feel uncomfortable (it was recommended they bring in an Elder to explain). Other groups were moved by the story. In one group it was reported to be emotionally touching; this worked to bring a sense of cohesion to the group.

Inuit Values cards

One group, who were slow to engage with other content, responded very well to the Inuit Values. They began speaking to each other in Inuktitut language and expressed interest in learning how the values related to the pictures. In this group when parents were asked “What does it mean to have a good life?” facilitators noted responses were mostly material; however after the values cards were introduced, the direction of the discussion changed and the parents looked deeper into the relationship between values and a “good life”.

Rhoda Karetak’s Fragile Egg and Hard Rock:

This was a favorite all around and generated good discussions about attachments that parents could relate to. Many enjoyed the drawing activity and showing where each family was in this continuum.

Naming

This session has been one of the most popular sessions among parents and facilitators and often initiated in-depth discussions. Many expressed how they had never been taught the naming tradition, and now that they understood it, felt its’ significance and wanted to make it a part of their lives. Parents and facilitators in every program shared their own naming relationships and those of their children. When an Elder shared personal stories about naming, participants were engaged and moved, Elders speaking to this greatly deepened understanding. One of the most interesting observations from this session was that some

parents had forgotten about or disregarded their relations through naming, and said the exercise highlighted the web of supportive relationships among people in the community.

Ages and Stages Questionnaire

This tool was reported useful in communities who tried it, though time did not allow for all communities to do so. One pilot asked parents to bring their children to the program and helped parents work through the short questionnaires with their child(ren). This was fun and reported a great success.⁵

Inunnguiniq child development pamphlets

These were well received in all communities. Parents were engaged and conversing over the text. Parents commented that the pamphlets would be useful as their children grow and develop.

Rhoda's Dream – Story of Burying the Baby

Participants related well to this theme. Some communities had deep discussions about their culture dying; parents opened up to share personal difficulties with this. An Inuinnaqtun community noted the DVD was in Inuktitut and found it inaccessible.

Parenting Styles

This tool was useful for promoting discussion. Parents liked to talk about where they were, and where they wanted to be in this continuum.

Eating Together as a Family

This poster was used in some communities and generated discussion around eating practices. It proved very useful in one community where it sparked a positive conversation about how this is still a common practice and healthy way for families to spend time together. Discussion followed regarding using mealtimes as opportunities for family communication.

Child's 'puuq/sack'

Participants found this attachment concept interesting; they could understand and relate well to this idea. Good discussions followed.

Inutsiapagutit

These concepts were well received, especially when shared by an Elder. Some parents remarked how well they remembered these ideas from their childhood and commented that they were not using them with their children and how they would like to do so. One community linked this into to the CBC Legend radio show recording of "The Two Sisters and the Orphan Shaman"; this was very successful in generating in-depth discussion about the importance of teaching children.

Kiviuq Story

⁵ Parent-child interaction during or after parenting sessions was noted as a valuable practice in parenting program research. Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre (2010). *Parenting Support Programs in Nunavut: A Review*. Iqaluit, NU: Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre p. 24.

Some of the younger parents had not heard of this story before and enjoyed it. In one community a facilitator re-wrote it in their own dialect and participants recognized and enjoyed hearing the story again. Another community read out the story; parents were interested and a good discussion followed. In a community without Elder support, this story was not well received.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Many had no previous exposure to this idea and were interested.

Household Responsibilities Chart

This activity was welcomed and enjoyed in all communities who presented it. It was evident that most homes do not share responsibilities equally and that most of the house work was carried by the mothers. Parents shared their desire to think about how they would be able to include other family members in sharing household responsibilities.

Budget Planning

Most facilitators and parents reported that they had never developed a budget before. This activity was appreciated by both facilitators and parents, and found useful. One group noted liking the part about identifying wants versus needs; they had not thought of this concept before. The example given was, "While a teen child might want a cell phone, is it something they absolutely need, like electricity or food."

Role-playing

One community created a little book for each participant that the participants chose to call a "Plan of Care Agreement". In this book were the Inunnguiniq principles, the household responsibilities worksheet, and the budgeting worksheet. This group understood the concept of sharing responsibilities, and liked the idea, but was uncertain of how to go about making this happen. The facilitator and guest instructor jumped into a role-play: One said, "I'm the

One instance where a woman was experiencing a particularly difficult time in her life, the group asked to just have a sharing session to support this one person (this was a close-knit group). The facilitator (who was on her own that week) knew of a visiting counsellor who was well-known and received by the community.

She called to see if he was available to come and help. He was not available at that time but asked if he could see the woman in need later in the day.

When the facilitator offered a gentle reminder to return to the planned program, one participant said,

"We are talking about parenting: healing, residential school...it's all parenting."

The parents were clear that they felt that this discussion was what parenting was all about, "living life and getting through hard times". They continued to share and support the woman and finally all hugged her. It was reported that the discussion involved overcoming grief associated with suicide, residential school abuse, sexual abuse, arranged marriage, and children born to women who experienced sexual assault.

The parents left the session reporting feeling much 'better and lighter' than when they arrived. By creating a safe and supportive space and being responsive to group needs, parents were able to begin a healing process within themselves that they associated with being a better mother/father.

- Reported from successful pilot

mom and I'm good at cooking and cleaning so these will be my jobs". The guest said "I'm the dad and I'm good at hunting and fishing so I will supply our meat" (this started the group laughing). The 'parents' labeled the participants as their 'children' and modeled by going around the circle asking each 'child' what they were good at (strengths), or what they liked doing. Each participant 'child' replied "I'm good at..." and then the pretend parents replied, "then your job will be to ...". The participants thoroughly enjoyed this activity. It brought them understanding of how they could do this in a fun way with their family, how it would identify and bring out individual strengths, and how it would help in the home by sharing responsibilities. The role-play made it fun and easy to understand. The parents were pleased with this and looked forward to working with their families on their 'Plan of Care Agreements' standing by the Inunnguiniq principles.⁶

Storyboard / Book-making

At this point in the program, facilitators were aware of literacy levels; many who reached this part of the curriculum incorporated creative methods included acting stories without words (mime), modeling how to tell stories without books, and telling stories from books using only the pictures.

One community had well-known story-teller Donald Uluadluaq come in and talk about his storytelling experiences. He discussed how his storytelling skills originated from hours of lying in the iglu at night listening to his parents tell stories. Participants were mesmerized. Donald's storytelling creativity came from the oral tradition; he spoke about strengthening language and how sharing personal stories built relationships and connections with children and improved family communication. This motivated parents to share their own stories and life experience. This energy was transformed into storybooks that were shared with the group and brought home for families. The typical 'story builders' that looked for the elements of plot, setting, character, etc. were not used; instead, Donald and the oral tradition inspired participants.

"I'm telling him after the classes and he's doing better now as a father, spouse."

- Inunnguiniq Parent

Focused Discussion: Four Family Communication Scenarios

The scenarios were well-liked and created discussion; suggested delivery format was adapted.

How Does Language Develop

In a small group who had challenges getting discussions going, the facilitators role-played the different ways communication can be received and expressed. It was reported the group 'had a lot of fun' with this.

Healthy Family Nutrition

In general, the Nutrition sessions were very well received by both parents and facilitators. A number of facilitators noted that parents loved to cook together; it was as a convenient

⁶ Role-plays have been identified as a successful tool in parenting programs. Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre (2010). *Parenting Support Programs in Nunavut: A Review*. Iqaluit, NU: Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre p. 25,28.

break from the content that some participants felt was more emotionally taxing; and that it was relaxing. Parents were talkative and shared stories more easily when their hands were busy with food preparation.

One pilot decided to group their regular parenting class with their regular weekly community cooking class (participants were identical for both groups except that the parenting group was beginning to decline in numbers). The result was that parents became more comfortable talking about the material.

Nunavut Food Guide

Most communities shared this and participants were reported to be interested in learning about what was offered in the guide. The portion sizes were found interesting and helpful.

What I ate yesterday

This was a fun activity enjoyed by participants who tried it.

Kitchen Hygiene

One community, experienced at running cooking classes, added in an additional hygiene component that included hand, and fruit and vegetable washing.

Other Comments

One pilot used their own ideas and were successful in combining learning with fun activities while teaching about healthy foods and budgeting. They asked parents to do a meal plan and budget for 7 days. The parents enjoyed this challenge and it proved a good learning experience. The group was also challenged to create a list of what they would buy with \$100, then given the actual prices. They brainstormed how to cook different meals with the grocery list provided in the curriculum. When they made a game of learning, parents enjoyed it and appreciated the healthy food prizes⁷.

During a guest presentation it was noted there wasn't a section about leftovers and not wasting food so 'they decided to look through the fridge and cupboards and make something with what they found'. The group was very happy and excited to be doing something different 'not following a book'. They took out all the leftovers and had a good conversation about them. Cooking without a recipe was a 'big hit' for this group.

⁷ For Nutrition Evaluation results see Appendices.

Future Directions

Based on the data collected for these evaluations, the following recommendations are put forward for the next phase of pilots:

- The Inunnguiniq facilitator training session has been revised into 2 streams: a) a 10-day 25 hour course for Early Childhood Education students at Nunavut Arctic College and b) A 5-day intensive 35 hour version that is delivered to community organizations
- Continue to raise awareness about the healing component with the Government of Nunavut and other service providers. Qaujigiartiit will continue to offer collaborative support for the development and implementation of a plan for addressing this community-identified need.
- Seek core, sustainable funding for program delivery and on-going evaluation of the program in the long term.

Appendix A - Parent Evaluation Questionnaire Results

Three things I liked most about the program are:

1. Being around groups (people helping each other, sharing) 17
2. Elders & stories of times past 14
3. Learning / Parenting 11
4. Food related – cooking, learning healthy snacks, country food 11
5. Activities 4
6. Bringing children was allowed 2

You could improve the program by:

1. Recording the Elder stories/voices
2. More teaching by Elders
3. Teaching traditional activities like animal skinning and sewing
4. Playing more games
5. Having more healing
6. Adding more time to the schedule
7. Giving gifts to people who attend the program
8. Doing it in the warmer time of the year, during the day, during the evening, everyday, during the day in the summer

Some tools that helped me were:

| <i>Tool</i> | <i>Not at all</i> | <i>Somewhat</i> | <i>Quite a bit</i> | <i>A lot</i> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Inunnguiniq pamphlets | | 1 | 8 | 13 |
| ASQ assessment | | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| The PATH | 1 | 1 | 8 | 7 |
| Budget Planning | | 4 | 10 | 9 |
| Responsibility Sharing | | 3 | 6 | 15 |
| Good Habit Building | | 2 | 7 | 16 |
| Recipe ideas | | 1 | 8 | 15 |
| Storytelling ideas | | 1 | 6 | 17 |
| Storybook/Writing ideas | 1 | 4 | 6 | 10 |
| Group discussions | | 5 | 5 | 14 |
| IQ Handbook | 2 | 2 | 5 | 11 |
| Self-assessments | 1 | 1 | 5 | 8 |

If this program offered a second phase I would attend: Yes No
Each person who answered this question circled Yes.

I would recommend this program to others: Yes No
Each person who answered this question circled Yes.

If a friend asked what this program was about I would tell them:
In order of response frequency:

1. Learning from Elders / Learning traditional parenting
2. Getting together with other people
3. Eating and cooking healthy foods
4. Building self-esteem and encouragement

After taking this program my children are:

- Spending time listening to the stories I tell them from Elders
- Really believing their namesakes and knowing that they have to help Elders when they need help
- My number one priority
- Touched, I don't call him by his given name as much as I used to, he noticed [that I call him by his namesake or relation name] and he likes it. Thank you very much;
- Closer and loving, caring, changing, behaving better, helping me, understanding about parenting
- Healthier, happier, listening more, still teaching them
- Eating healthy food I cook for them and healthy snacks
- I started teaching my child to sew, make bannock, cut fish

Appendix B - Nutrition Evaluation Results

Few of the pre- and post- nutrition module evaluations were returned; the ones received revealed that some of the questions were not understood.

Pre Nutrition Module Questionnaire

1. Most parents reported that they knew what foods were healthy.
2. Barriers to obtaining healthy food included:
 1. no means of transportation for harvesting country foods
 2. single mothers had more difficulties in obtaining country foods
 3. lack of money
3. Most participants reported 'yes' that children had skipped meals due to lack of money.

Post Nutrition Module Questionnaire

1. Healthy foods recorded included:
 1. Fruit & Vegetables
 2. yogurt (tubes), milk, cheese
 3. granola bars, crackers, bannock, cereal
 4. ham
 5. macaroni salad
 6. country food
2. Ways to help children make healthy choices included:
 1. child size plate
 2. hand sizes
 3. frozen fruit slushies
 4. putting out healthy snacks
 5. buying healthy foods
 6. eating country foods
 7. cooking healthy foods for young children
3. Regarding the ability to afford healthy foods for the family, there were close to the same 'yes' and 'no' responses.
4. Changes to help the family eat more nutritiously included:
 1. make a list
 2. cook from scratch/make own meals and snacks
 3. stop eating at the Quickstop
 4. eat more country foods.

Appendix C - Requests & Comments from Facilitators & Parents

Facilitator & Parent Requests

Most communities requested:

- More DVDs/audios of Elders - parents thoroughly enjoyed seeing and hearing Elders in video. The Elder present could listen to the story and then comment and/or share a similar story. The CBC legends CD was recommended
- More games, fun, and hands on activities, sewing while at class
- A way to acknowledge dedicated parents, the ones who came regularly and showed noticeable efforts in implementing program material; ideas for this were certificates and food baskets
- More hands-on activities, sew while at class
- Help/ideas about recruitment and retention

Some communities requested:

- To connect with other program facilitators to learn from each other
- Prizes for games

Responses from parents: “What more do you want to learn”:

- How to manage children
- How to teach our children
- What is right/healthy for my children
- Communicating
- Relationship building
- How to stop spoiling kids
- Single parenting
- How to deal with stress
- First aid and CPR training

Facilitator Comments

- “When the Elders speak it makes everyone feel good” (multiple comments like this one)
- “I learned a lot about Inuit culture. It is a very Inuit program” (multiple comments like this one)
- “They can find what they are looking for in a story”
- “One community reported that they were thinking about using social media (Facebook) to remind people about the program. Parents on Facebook were

mentioning they missed parenting class when there were 3 cancellations (weather-related). We feel like a little family ... With this group there's a lot of healing and it would be good to see other parents out there go through what this group is going through [in a positive way]."

- It's not always easy for them to connect the material to their lives, responses are sometimes superficial
- One day a group experienced participants who were not happy with each other. A facilitator shared a personal experience and then the ladies cried and apologized to each other. After they laughed visualizing the ladies chasing each other down the street with their walkers if they were still fighting many years from now.

Parent Comments

- I'm really learning about me right now
- It's important to talk with someone I trust
- Parents were saying their children were learning from them
- Parents reported that after a session they would go home and their children would praise them
- One parent who was going through a particularly difficult time said she almost didn't attend a few sessions but said to herself 'I know I'll feel better if I come', and so attended the program and reported feeling better after attending.
- They loved the program and said they would attend every day... 'Too bad it's going to end, we go away from here feeling so good'.
- 'She is really standing up for herself now and her culture'. - Facilitator
- 'Participants were saying that it was difficult at first to make clothing – you learned how to make beautiful things if you keep on trying ... They started remembering what their Elders told them, they started to remember things about parenting that they were told when young.'
- I've learned that alcohol isn't healthy and creates more anger.
- Never give up on your kids.
- It's good to teach children to do things for themselves
- When we forgive others we heal ourselves
- Tell the truth.
- Tell [children] not to do bad things
- My parenting style is better now that I am attending this class
- Multiple comments about how they want to learn how to be good parents
- If we keep doing our traditional activities and talking in our dialect then we won't forget our traditional ways, so our children will know who we are. Out on the tundra long ago they survived, it was great out there, they learned a lot from their parents