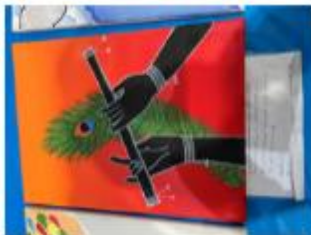


## Kids and Families with Confidence (KFC)



## Project Report



Centre for Research,  
Education, and Social Services  
(CRESS Centre)

Funded by



## Executive Summary

*The Kids and Families with Confidence (KFC) project aims to enhance the social inclusion of children and youth from racialized communities by engaging them in skills development activities with their parents. The project started in October 2024 and ended in January 2025. The key activities in the project include craft sessions (10), home-alone safety training (3), and a multicultural art competition (2 cohorts) focusing on mental health.*

- A total of 27 kids and youth attended the craft sessions along with their parents.*
- Nearly 90 youth attended the Home-Along Safety Training program.*
- Over 50 youth participated in multicultural arts competitions.*
- Over 100 visitors (participants, their parents, and the audience) attended and observed the artworks of the competitors.*
- Collaboration with six organizations developed and strengthened, leveraging resources to make the project successful.*
- Majority of the parents agreed that the project activities reduced the kids' screen time (74%), reduced their level of anxiety (67%), developed confidence (79%), and improved mental health (81%).*
- The age of the participants ranged from 7 years to 15 years.*
- Participants in the project activities represented over seven racialized communities in Calgary, reflecting multiculturalism.*

## Background

There is a growing recognition of the importance of providing opportunities for at-risk children and youth to develop essential skills beyond traditional educational settings. However, many children and youth, particularly among the racialized communities, lack access to avenues that foster the development of these crucial skills. In today's digital age, children and youth increasingly spend excessive time with screens, including smartphones, computers, and televisions. While technology offers many benefits, prolonged screen time has been associated with various negative outcomes, including decreased physical activity, social isolation, and diminished cognitive development. Most parents keep themselves busy at work, have limited time to closely watch their kids and youth, and offer the best course of action. Even if they have time, they do not have other alternatives for their kids and youth. The mental health of the parents gets worse. These after-school activities offer diverse opportunities for kids and youth to explore their interests, develop new skills, build friendships, and have fun in a structured and supportive environment.

## Goal and Objectives

The Kids and Families with Confidence (KFC) program aims to enhance the social inclusion of at-risk children and youth from racialized communities by engaging them in activities that have the potential to reduce screen time, develop life skills, and strengthen social connections. The objectives of the project are to:

- Build and strengthen creative arts and crafts skills among the participants through structured sessions led by the instructors
- Offer training on Home Alone Safety for the youth
- Reduce screen time of the kids and youth by motivating them to make use of their leisure time in creative activities
- develop confidence in the participants and their parents by improving their mental health and enhancing skills

## Delivery Method and Collaboration

The project activities were communicated and promoted through the CRESS Centre email list, social media channels, and collaborative partners. The poster was prepared in advance of the activities and posted in Genesis Centre, Village Square, a couple of community hubs, and word of mouth. We believe in the power of collective action and collaboration to create positive change and enhance the well-being of the vulnerable Calgarians. Accordingly, collaboration was developed with multiple organizations to implement the project activities: Trellis Centre, Nepalese Community Society of Calgary (NCSC), Planet Youth, Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth (CBFY), CCIS, Pamir Canadian, and Genesis Centre.

The action planning meeting was hosted with the collaborating partners to define the course of action and the resource-sharing mechanism. Given the approved budget, resource sharing from collaborative partners, and convenience of the participants, project activities were hosted at Genesis Centre in liaison with the Trellis Society.

A Google form was designed, and a link was promoted via different channels asking for the participants' registration. An evaluation expert designed a survey instrument and it was administered to the parents/guardians of the participants. A Likert scale was used to collect the level of agreement on key items required to ensure the project moved the needle. Open feedback and stories were collected from the selected participants and presented as verbatims in this report.

## Results

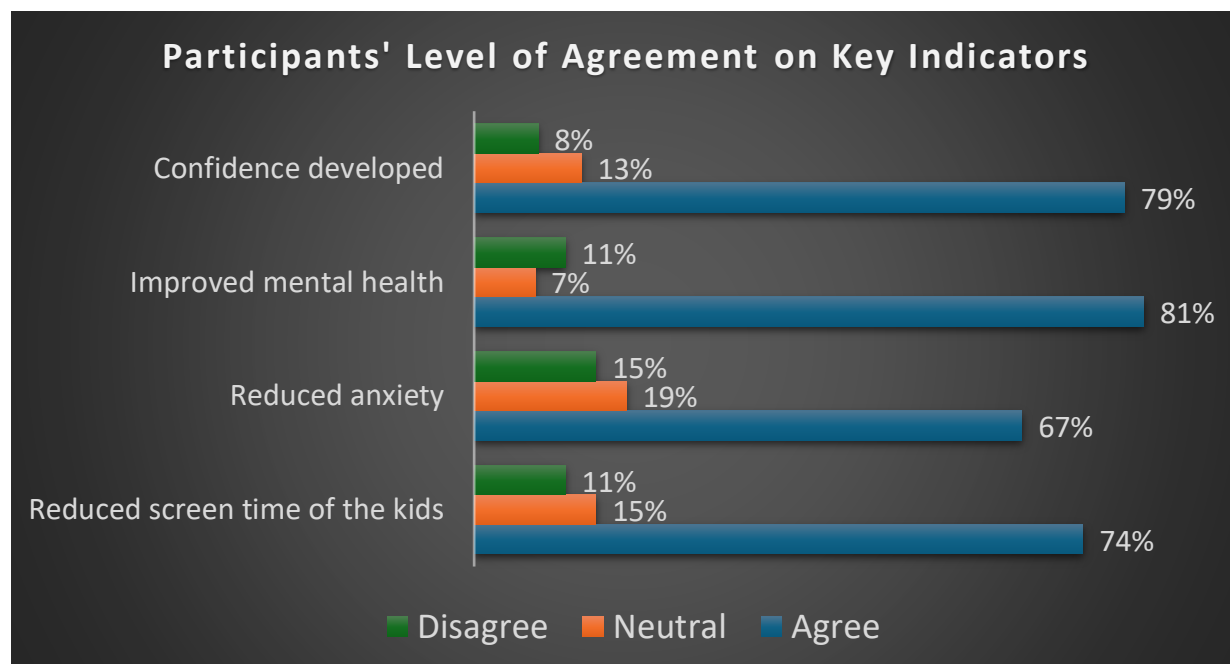
The action planning meeting decided to run two Home-Alone Safety Training sessions, each with 30 participants. Given the overwhelming number of registrations in the first session, we decided to run three sessions, covering 30 participants each. The sessions started in October and ended in December 2024. Parents were engaged in the last one hour of the training session.

Starting in mid-November 2023 and weekly thereafter, the community expert ran ten multicultural crafts sessions with 27 participants. The parents were encouraged to engage with their children to learn together. The diversification of craftwork was hoped to increase social and emotional outcomes such as social skills, self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward others.

CRESS Centre also collaborated with multiple partners to host a multicultural arts competition on mental health for two cohorts of youth: 10-12 years and 13-15 years. A total of 50 submissions were received. All submissions were scored by a panel of judges, and awards were distributed to the winners. Nearly 100 participants attended the event. Given the nature of the program, we did not administer surveys but collected feedback from selected parents.

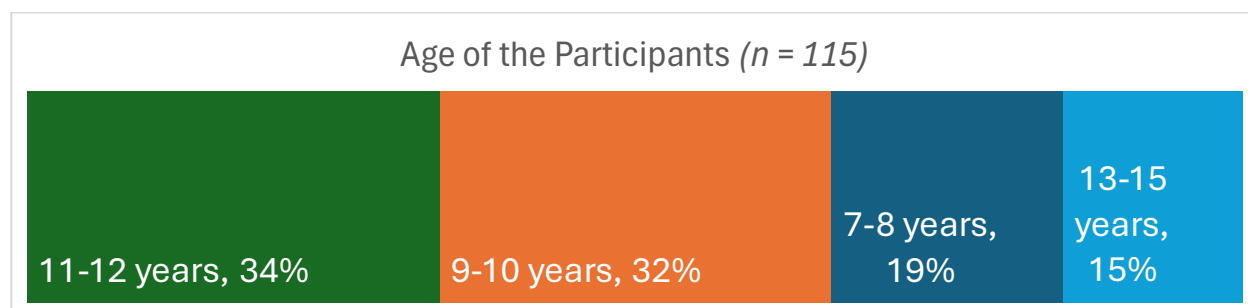
Due to the project funding, collaboration with six organizations was achieved and strengthened: CCIS, CBFY, Trellis Centre, Genesis Centre, Pamir Canadian, Nepalese Community Society of Calgary (NCSC), and Planet Youth. The strength of collaboration achieved during project activities will be further strengthened and leveraged further in the coming days.

A post-activity survey was implemented with the parents/guardians of the kids and youth in the Home Alone Safety and Crafts activities of the project. A large number of parents agreed that the project activities reduced the kids' screen time (74%), reduced their level of anxiety (67%), developed confidence (79%), and improved mental health (81%).

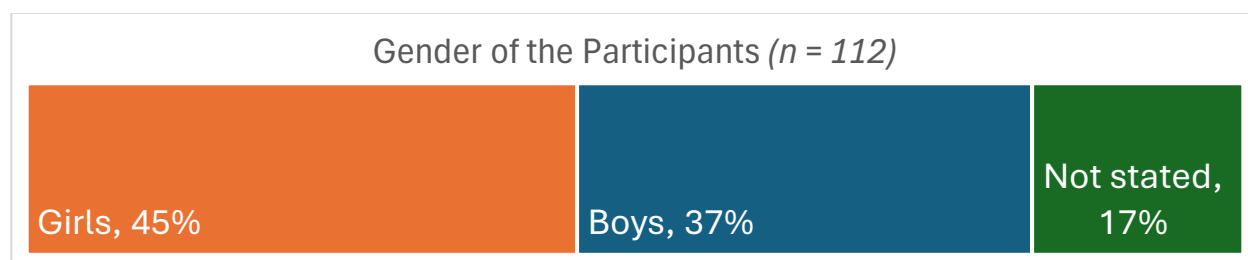


### Demographic Information

Participants from ages 8 years to 15 years were covered in the project activities. Nearly one-third of the participants were 11 to 12 years old, while another one-third were 9 to 10 years old, and the rest were 7 to 8 years old and 13 to 15 years old.

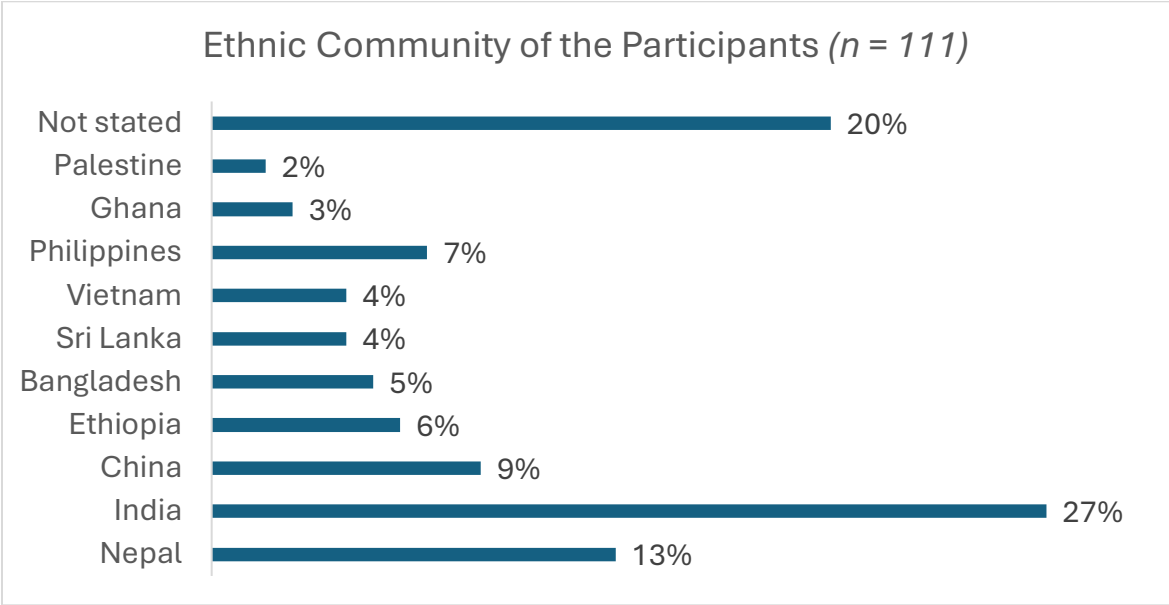


Around half of the participants were girls, 37% were boys, and the rest did not disclose their gender.

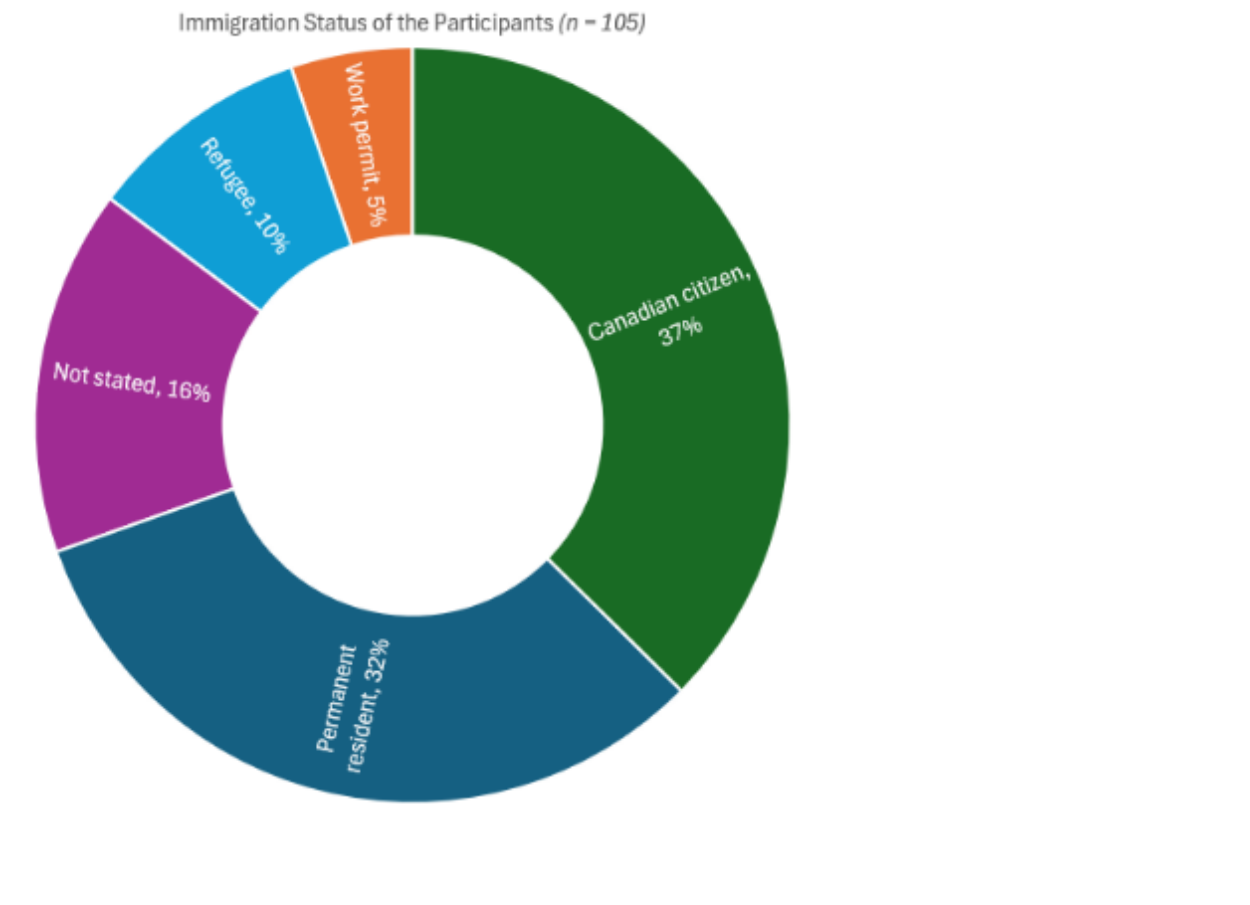


Around one-quarter of the participants belong to the Indian community, mostly the Punjabi community, followed by 13% from the Nepalese community. Other participants belong to the Chinese, the

Philippines, Ethiopian, Bangladesh, Sri Lankan, Vietnam, Ghana, and Palestine. The project activities have reflected the essence of multiculturalism.



Slightly over one-third of the participants were Canadian citizens, and another one-third were Permanent residents. Some participants were refugee claimants and work permit holders.



## Verbatims

*I have never heard of a Home-Along Safety Program for children aged 8 to 12. Thanks, CRESS Centre, for raising awareness about this important program. I am a single mom with two kids, ages 8 and 10. I used to work full time before, but it was challenging to manage a full-time job as I had to be with my children after their school time. Now that my boys have taken Home Alone Safety Training, they can stay home for a few hours, letting me work full-time. This will provide me peace of mind working full time, which is essential for my economic well-being while making me worry-free for my boys at home during my absence.*

*The Home Alone Safety Training Program is very important for families with small children at home. Many people do not know about this program, and you guys have to put more effort into raising awareness first through different channels. This training will certainly give my family much-needed peace of mind starting tomorrow as my kids have taken this training, and we can leave them at home without worrying about them for a short time. We used to request assistance from our circles when we were away to take care of our kids. Since this training lets them stay alone, we won't have to bother our friend circles on this.*

*I am on a study permit with my wife and daughter, who is turning nine. My wife has a work permit, and it is difficult for us to manage time for my daughter, especially after school hours. I had not heard about the home-alone safety program before, and there are limited opportunities for students like me to enroll in the program, which is provided free of cost. Thanks to the CRESS Centre for bringing this program to needy families. Now that my daughter has taken this training, we will feel comfortable leaving her alone for a few hours. This will help improve our mental health while focusing on my research.*

*Creative arts and crafts are essential skills for everyone to keep them engaged and be creative. Many non-profit organizations or communities offer these programs but focus on their clients. The current creative crafting program offered by the Genesis Centre seems to be multicultural, as I can see kids and youth from diverse ethnic backgrounds. While kids and youth and we as parents learn essential crafting skills, we get to know people from different ethnic backgrounds, letting us know their cultural perspectives while making crafts. Many thanks to the organizers, and I would expect this program to continue down the horizon.*



*The organizers of arts and crafts sessions deserve special thanks for offering a program for kids and youth in ten sessions free of cost. The interesting part is that they provided all the required materials, and whatever arts and crafts our kids prepared during the sessions were given to them. Kids engaged in the program today may not consider this, but they will feel refreshed to see their arts and crafts once they grow up. My son and daughter got engaged in the session, and we backed them up while they learned. This provided an opportunity for both generations to learn together. We also increased our social network with other parents from diverse ethnic backgrounds. I have observed that my son and daughter spend time at home practicing arts and crafts, reducing their screen time and making all of us mentally refreshed.*

*I felt honored to have my daughter receive a winning prize for the artwork. While this will motivate my daughter to keep engaged in creative arts in the coming days, it is a matter of pride for us as a parent. Thanks to the organizer of this competition, we anticipate such work in the future, too. Thanks to the Genesis Centre for its idea of showcasing all the artwork on the wall of its building. The youth will get to see their artworks far into the future.*

## Some Snapshots

### Arts Competition





### *Home Alone Safety Training Sessions*



### *Guided Craft Sessions*



## Acknowledgment

CRESS Centre acknowledges the funding contribution from Genesis Centre Community Grant for making this initiative a success. We also acknowledge our collaborative partners (Trellis Centre, NCSC, CCIS, CBFY, Pamir Canadian, and Planet Youth) for their volunteer support, venue, expertise, in-kind, and cash contributions. Accomplishing the collective outcomes we envisioned would not have been possible without their support.