

Reflecting on the CYMHSU Collaborative Congress

MARCH 9TH AND 10TH

The CYMHSU Collaborative Congress was an event characterized by reflection, celebration and energy for continued work. Below are some key learnings gathered from the Congress evaluation.

NEW VERSUS RETURNING

Most of the attendees were not new to our learning events - 76% had attended a learning event in the past. This marks the highest proportion of returning attendees to date and demonstrates the longevity of Collaborative participants in general.



WHO PARTICIPATED

A whopping 84% of Congress attendees were members of LATs, testament to the amount of community-level sharing integrated into these events.



REGIONAL ATTENDANCE

As with past events, the Fraser region, representing 12 LATs, made up the largest cohort at 26%. The North had the next highest proportion at 21%, Interior and the Island followed with 20% and 17% respectively. The Vancouver Coastal region represented 9% of attendees and 8% indicated they had 'other' or provincial roles.



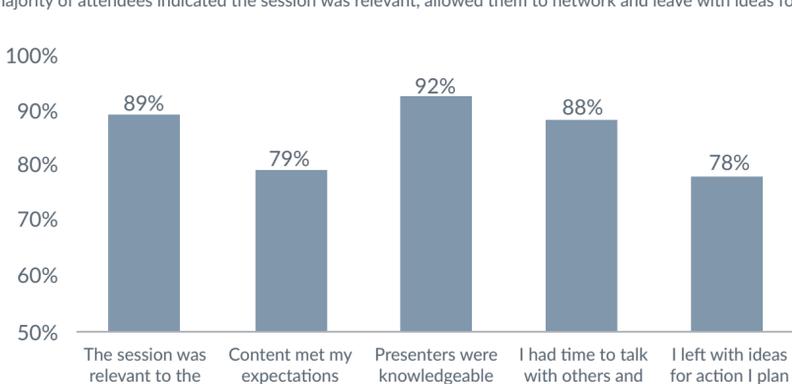
PARENT AND YOUTH REPRESENTATION

29% of those who completed the Congress evaluation were youth or parents with lived experience. This strong presence reflects the Collaborative's desire to ensure youth and parents are at the centre of our work.



Overall Feedback

In the graph below you can see the overall feedback on the Congress. The responses match previous sessions where the vast majority of attendees indicated the session was relevant, allowed them to network and leave with ideas for action.

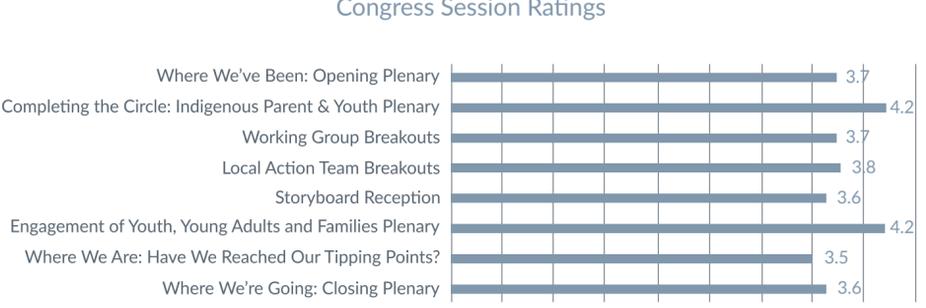


HIGHLIGHTS

Hearing stories of lived experience was a definite highlight for attendees. Two sessions specifically highlighted the lived experience of youth and families, (1) Completing the Circle: Indigenous Parents, Youth and Family Paths to Wholeness and Wellness and (2) Engagement of Youth, Young Adults and Families: The Moments, the Learning and the Impact, both were well received with an average score of 4.2/5 on the session evaluation. These were closely followed by the Working Group and LAT Breakouts and the Storyboard Session.



Congress Session Ratings



Average rating on a scale of 1 'Not for me' to 5 'Awesome'

Written feedback on the sessions also reinforced the impact of youth and parent stories, and hearing from peers about work underway. Here are some comments in response to 'What was the best/most effective part of the congress for you?':



Hearing the stories of the youth with lived experience and their strength.

The respect. I felt talked to and not at. The use of real human stories and the humour and acceptance of those experiences.

The Legacy Magazine! Such a great gift to all those that participated to use to share the message and further the work and have a one place to review all the projects..... Leaves you wanting more.

The youth and family stories, and the break out sessions. It is so inspiring to see what others in the province are doing.

Hearing what other LATS have accomplished - some large scale and some just getting started - but powerful starts. Hearing some of the struggles.

Hearing the personal stories and lessons learned from the LAT teams was both motivating and informative. It provided valuable reminders about why the work is important, personal and urgent. It also provided hope and motivation to move forward.

Respondents shared their comments on how they plan to keep the energy alive and what work still remains:

HOW TO KEEP ENERGY ALIVE

Engaging more youth, using what we have to continue efficiently.

Planning for sustainability. Ongoing small tests of change towards existing objectives.

Leveraging partners for continued support.

Our community is very committed to the values and projects that have been started and will continue to look for funding to prioritize the learning and change that our community needs.

Our youth group is going to be connecting to another LAT Youth group, and they are going to share ideas.

WHAT WORK REMAINS

Improving rural health access for youth and continuing to have youth and family voices be at the centre.

Helping make legislative changes and increased funding support by government to support local programs.

Bringing child mental health work into the "Primary Care Home" in a real way.

This amazing group of people could be doing this for the next 20 years in my opinion, continuing their valuable research, work and information sharing for best practices everywhere.

ALL!! This work is never done. I think we all need to keep pushing for change and support in all of our communities for children and youth.

Ensuring that the work doesn't end here.

Don't stop pushing until the system is improved.

