



WE MATTER

Annual Impact Report

Year 2 - 2018



CONTENT



- 3** Letter from our Founders
- 4** Our Mission
- 5** About Us
- 6** Our Reach | 2018 At a Glance
- 7** We Matter Campaign

8 Activities

- *Toolkits*
- *Workshops & Presentations*
- *National #HopeForum*
- *Hope Council*
- *Ontario Support Network*

19 Facebook Partnership

20 Moving forward

20 Media Features & Highlights

21 Team & Acknowledgments



Letter from our Founders

2018 was a year of growth, creation, and capacity building for We Matter.

Year 1 showed us the challenges, strengths, and power of Indigenous youth, so year 2 was all about harnessing this knowledge from our successful We Matter workshops, and translating it into accessible and empowering new projects for years to come. We slowed down our number of workshops and presentations in schools and communities across the country in order to bring Indigenous youth together and create resources to build capacity at the youth and community level.



We want to thank everyone who has continued to support our work, and who believes in a world where Indigenous youth know they matter.



By utilizing the We Matter Campaign as the foundation for our work, and our experience working directly with youth, we have been able to focus on resource creation, deep outreach, and relationship building through the launch of our We Matter Toolkits, national and regional #HopeForum gatherings, and Ontario Support Network program.

It has been an incredible year of engaging with Indigenous youth as well as all of those who are actively supporting Indigenous youth. Reaching youth and their supports in a variety of ways en-

ures that we are doing all that we can to get our message and resources to those who truly need it. We Matter Toolkits have proven a unique and engaging means of being able to start conversations on hardship, hope, and healing within youth and community contexts.

We hope this report gives insight into the powerful and much needed work that We Matter has committed to in only its second full year of operations. Sharing, spreading, and encouraging **HOPE, CULTURE & STRENGTH** is how we remind Indigenous youth across the country that they matter, and that anything is possible with the right supports and resources.

We want to thank everyone who has continued to support our work, and who believes in a world where Indigenous youth know they matter. Without your support - in whatever way that might be - none of this would be possible.

We ask that you take the time to reflect, celebrate, and continue to think about the ways in which we can create environments full of love, support, and hope. This journey is still just the beginning, and we have so much more we would like to do.

Marsi cho / Thank you,



Tunchai Redvers, Co-Founder & Executive Director



Kelvin Redvers, Co-Founder



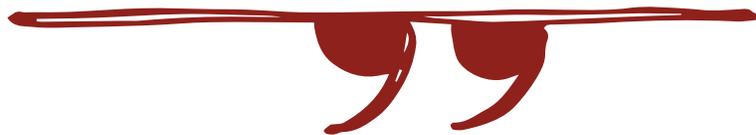
Our Mission

Our mission is to communicate to Indigenous youth that they matter, and provide resources to encourage and support those going through a hard time while fostering unity and resiliency.

We Matter provides a forum for people across the country to share messages of hope and positivity. By sharing stories, words of encouragement, and authentic messages of hope and resilience, we help to make a community and nation stronger.



*We remind youth that I Matter.
You Matter. We Matter.
We prove that we are all
#StrongerTogether.*



We are committed to:

- Connecting Indigenous youth with positive messages of hope, culture, wellness, healing, mental health and life promotion
- Gathering and amplifying Indigenous and Indigenous youth voices
- Creating space and opportunity for Canadians to celebrate and honour the voices and experiences of Indigenous youth
- Creating and distributing materials and resources designed to empower Indigenous youth
- Building Indigenous youth capacity in schools and communities by implementing Indigenous youth-led projects and enabling peer-to-peer support



About Us

We Matter launched on October 18, 2016. We are an Indigenous youth-led and nationally registered non-profit organization that is committed to Indigenous youth empowerment, hope and life promotion. Our key project is the We Matter Campaign - a national multi-media campaign in which Indigenous role models and allies from across Canada submit short video, written and artistic messages sharing their own experiences of overcoming hardships, and communicating with Indigenous youth that no matter how hopeless life can feel, there is always a way forward.

Our Core Messages for Indigenous Youth:

- You aren't alone
- You carry your own strengths
- You have the capacity to make change
- There are coping skills you can use during difficult times
- Being Indigenous is awesome and something to be proud of
- Taking action can improve your communities and selves
- You have skills and knowledge that can help yourself and others



We Matter Team



Our Reach

2018 At a Glance



432

Toolkits distributed nationally in over 200 communities



25,285

website visits

700

Indigenous youth engaged in-person



2233

#HopePact bracelets mailed to 65 different communities and groups



340

online #HopePact pledges

526

526 people reached out to us for general inquiries

44-68%

increase in people accessing our videos page



We Matter Campaign

Our We Matter Campaign is an ongoing multi-media campaign which predominantly lives on social media. Through filmed and submitted video messages, art and stories, photo series, callouts, articles, and custom content, we share positivity, love, hope, and support with Indigenous youth nationally.

In 2018, we continued to grow our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter followings, building a community of over 27,000 people online who follow and engage with our messaging and content.

Our Top 5 most watched We Matter videos in 2018 were:

1. Rayanna Seymour - Lake of the Wood, ON
2. Caroline Nochasak - Nain, Labrador
3. Levi Marshall - Membertou FN, Nova Scotia
4. Megan Metz - Haisla Nation, British Columbia
5. Taboo - Black Eyed Peas

“
68 new We Matter videos were
filmed and submitted.
”



Rayanna Seymour - Lake of the Wood, ON





Activities



Toolkits

In 2017, We Matter facilitated Indigenous youth workshops in communities across Canada. These workshops were developed to introduce We Matter directly to youth; facilitate discussions around mental health, youth challenges, hope, and Indigenous strength; foster positive identity and identify positive coping strategies; and engage youth in peer-to-peer messaging and support. In 2018, We Matter developed materials based off of the We Matter workshops, and began distributing resources directly to communities, youth, and service organizations in order to better support important conversations on hardship, hope and healing to begin from within communities.

The development of We Matter's set of 3 Toolkits for Educators, Support Workers, and Indigenous Youth took a full year, with the launch of these materials in September 2018. A Toolkit advisory group guided and supported We Matter in the creation of safe, accessible, and relevant content - all of which used the over 200 We Matter Campaign videos as a foundation for facilitating conversations and knowledge on Indigenous

youth challenges, intergenerational trauma, self-care, coping, identity, and hope. These three unique Toolkits were created in addition to a previously developed Mini-Toolkit and We Matter's Lesson Plans: Indigenous Curriculum on Hope & Strength for grades 7-12.



The development of We Matter's set of 3 Toolkits for Educators, Support Workers, and Indigenous Youth took a full year, with the launch of these materials in September 2018.



Between September 2018 and December 31, 2018, We Matter distributed:

- 188** Educator Toolkits
- 187** Support Worker Toolkits
- 55** Youth Toolkits
- 10** Lesson Plans
- 40** Mini-Toolkits
- 187** Soft copies in addition to hard copies



We Matter Support Kits



wemattercampaign.org

Some folks who used the Toolkits with Indigenous youth said:

"My understanding of how to work with the Youth and what was important to them was definitely enhanced by using the Toolkit with the Youth as well as when I looked at the materials myself, I felt I was able to better understand where the Youth might be coming from on certain topics."

"The youth were really impacted by the mental health, mainly about suicide awareness and how to improve themselves and seek the help they need"

"They became very happily surprised to see how many topics and different people participated in the project and just that there were other Youth out there who wanted to raise people up and do something new to relate to where the Youth are at and not trying to do it in a way that doesn't work for Youth."



Workshops & Presentations

Although We Matter moved away from delivering workshops and presentations in 2018, we remain open to visiting communities and gatherings where we are able to connect with a diversity of Indigenous youth directly.

Indigenous Youth Gatherings:

Two Spirits, One Heart, One Mind Conference - VICTORIA, BC

Two Spirit and LGBTQ+ youth are gifted and beautiful young people who are bringing so much light into their communities. We are always so excited to be able to spend time talking love, hope, and support with two spirit youth.



Two Spirits, One Heart, One Mind Conference - Victoria, BC



Koorie Youth Summit - Melbourne, Australia

Koorie Youth Summit - MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

The Koorie Youth Council invited We Matter to bring our messages of hope, culture and strength to 200 Indigenous youth from across the state of Victoria, Australia. This was the first time We Matter reached internationally, where we were able to create an exciting new partnership with Koorie youth working for change in Australia. We filmed our first set of international We Matter videos launching us into the possibility of Indigenous youth being able to share and support each other not just nationally, but across oceans.



Workshops & Presentations

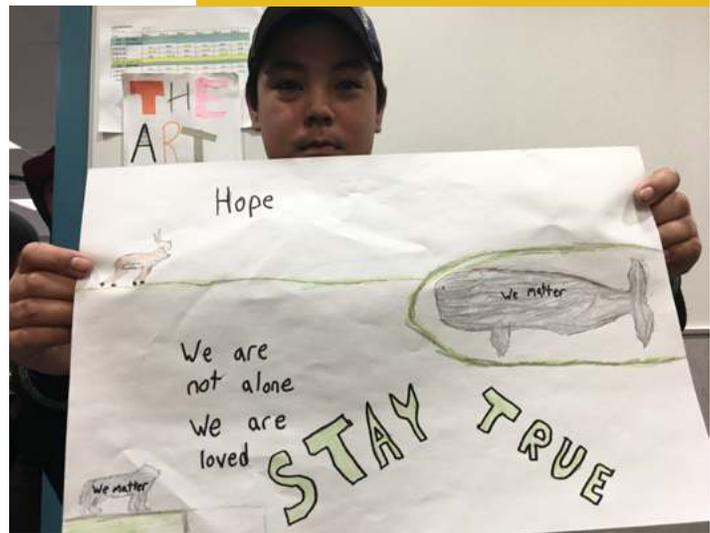
We Matter Workshops:

Naujaat, Nunavut

We spent four days in Tuugaalik High School, learning from amazing Inuit youth and growing together through sessions on hardship, hope and healing.

Vancouver, BC

The First Nations Health Authority and Fraser Health Authority brought together 16 young leaders from across B.C. to learn about We Matter materials and messaging, so that they could feel confident bringing them back to their own communities.



Naujaat, Nunavut



Naujaat, Nunavut



We Matter & Facebook #HopeForum:

A National Gathering of Indigenous Youth on Healing & Life Promotion

On January 21st and 22nd, 2018, 70 First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth between the ages of 13-26 from every province and territory across the country gathered in Ottawa, Ontario for the #HopeForum: A National Gathering of Indigenous Youth Leaders on Healing & Life Promotion.



The #HopeForum was organized in response to the current mental health and suicide realities of Indigenous youth and communities.



The #HopeForum was hosted by We Matter and Facebook, stemming from a new partnership developed between the two, and was the first ever national event for Indigenous youth focused on mental health, suicide and wellness. The gathering took place at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health and was made up of two parts: two days of workshops and relationship-building for youth participants, and a National Indigenous Youth Roundtable event which welcomed the general public, media, and dignitaries.

The #HopeForum was organized in response to the current mental health and suicide realities of Indigenous youth and communities, and in light of the current national dialogue on the Indigenous youth suicide crisis, where these issues have not been addressed effectively. Indigenous youth have often been left out of discussions and meetings on suicide, mental health and wellness. This gathering provided workshop sessions, facilitated by We Matter, Facebook, and safeTALK, for youth to explore their own needs as advocates and leaders of change, as well as identify specific ways to support their own wellbeing alongside the wellbeing of fellow youth. It also provided an opportunity for young leaders to lead the discussion surrounding healing on their own terms, as well as identify actionable solutions and recommendations for change at the community and national level.

When youth participants were asked how they would describe their time at the #HopeForum, some key words that came up were:





Live Roundtable Event

As a part of the #HopeForum, We Matter & Facebook hosted a national youth roundtable discussion - the only event of its kind to ever happen in Canada, with then Hon. Minister Jane Philpott calling the event "historic". The Indigenous youth leaders participating, facilitated by We Matter co-founders, led a 2-hour discussion on the issue of Indigenous youth suicide and

healing, including personal experiences, thoughts, as well as identifying specific solutions and calls to action. Participating in the roundtable was national leaders and dignitaries, including Hon. Jane Philpott - Minister of Indigenous services, Perry Bellegarde - Assembly of First Nations National Chief, and Antigone Davis - Global Head of Facebook Safety. Though given time to make statements and answer and respond to questions to/from youth, dignitaries were present to listen to the youth voices. The event was also open to the media and public, with many representatives present from various national organizations and federal departments.



The only event of its kind to ever happen in Canada.



The full National Roundtable Discussion can be viewed at:

www.facebook.com/WeMatterCampaign/videos/1179190522214412/

The success of the #HopeForum was huge, with its impact reaching nationally, far and wide. Having 70 Indigenous youth participants present meant that almost 70 First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities were also reached. We Matter created and shared two videos prior to the event, promoting youth to apply and attend, and promoting people to tune-in to the National Roundtable. The application video was viewed 115,000 times and the National Roundtable video was viewed 58,000 times. Through the live broadcast, the National Roundtable discussion was seen by 16,000 people, meaning 16,000 people tuned-in to listen to Indigenous youth voices. Youth participants who attended were able to take home information and materials/resources, to further engage their own communities and regions, ensuring that the reach of the gathering continued beyond their time

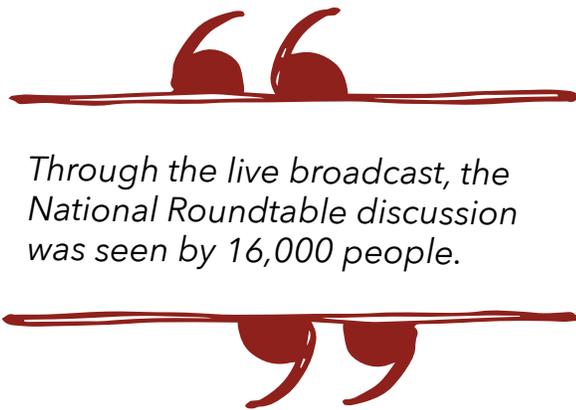
in Ottawa. It is hard to say how many youth and communities continued to be reached through youth engagement and outreach after the gathering, though it is certain many have been.

Calls to action

Out of the 2018 #HopeForum came a set of 12 Calls to Action on Indigenous Youth Mental Health and Life Promotion, created by the youth participants alongside We Matter. We

Matter continues to call on national, regional and local leadership, service organizations, and the general Canadian public to be guided by and implement these calls to action to improve Indigenous youth mental health and prevent suicide.

To access the full 2018 #HopeForum Summary Report including the Calls to Action [see here](#).



Through the live broadcast, the National Roundtable discussion was seen by 16,000 people.





Hope Council

Out of the National #HopeForum in Ottawa came the decision to create a national We Matter youth council, called the Hope Council. Representing various First Nation, Métis and Inuit regions across the country and meeting once a month,

Hope Council provides ideas, review, consultation, and feedback on We Matter’s social media content, materials and resources, and activities to ensure that everything we do is relevant and representative of youth across contexts.



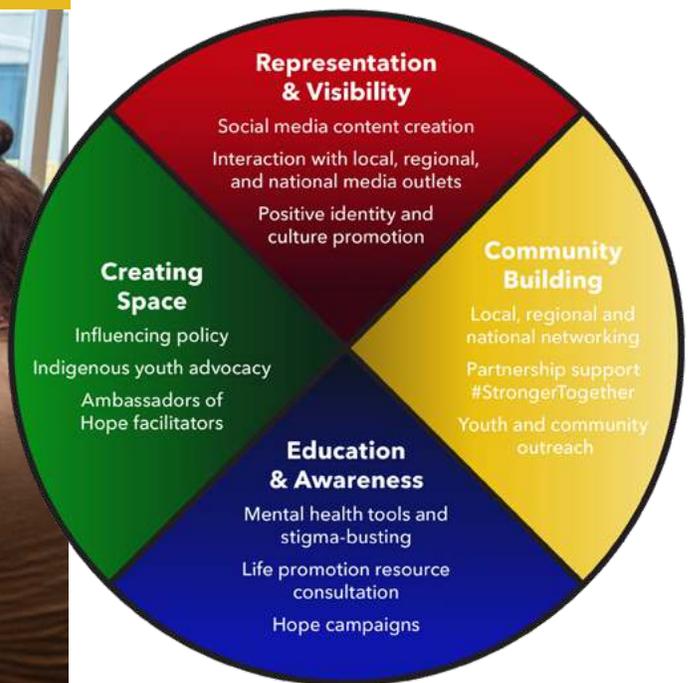
The Hope Council is an advisory group of Indigenous youth leaders ages 16-26 behind the ideas, content, and vision of We Matter.



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Creating the council and council structure with members has been a learning process for We Matter. With an initial 11 members stemming from the #HopeForum, numbers have dwindled due to the many commitments and challenges that members have experienced over the year. A process is being led by the council in order to recruit more members representing diverse regions and experiences for the coming year.

The Hope Council has developed the following 4 Directions wheel to guide the process forward as we look to increase engagement and activities rolling into the next year.





Ontario Support Network & Regional #HopeForum

In 2018, We Matter received support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to launch a brand new regionally-specific three-year pilot project called the Ontario Support Network.

The Ontario Support Network (OSN) is an exciting new project that hopes to build deeper partnerships between We Matter and a select number of Northern Ontario communities and deeper relationships between youth and their supports across communities.

The Ontario Support Network mentors Youth Ambassadors and Community Guides to bring conversations of hardship, hope and healing to schools and communities and lead Indigenous-youth led mental health and life promotion initiatives focused on culture, community engagement and peer-to-peer support.



“
The Ontario Support Network (OSN) is an exciting new project that hopes to build deeper partnerships between We Matter.
”



A Time-line of the OSN Year 1:

1

We Matter conducted a Needs Assessment on Indigenous Youth Life Promotion Across Northern Ontario including two virtual focus groups with youth, service providers and community members. [Read here.](#)

3

Community Teams travelled to Thunder Bay, ON for a 4-day #HopeForum gathering to get to know each other, participate in skill and knowledge building, and begin to create their project plans with support from We Matter..

4

Community Teams received up to \$2,500 each to put towards their youth-led activities.



2

An application callout was launched on social media to recruit Community Teams. 5 Community Teams, each made up of 2 Youth Ambassadors and 1 Community Guide (an adult mentor), were selected for the first year: Red Lake, Whitesand First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, Kashechewan First Nation, and Rainy River First Nation.

5

Community Teams returned to their communities to implement and lead their project activities, which ran until May 2019. Youth Ambassadors and Community Guides continued to stay connected and receive support through monthly Virtual Sharing Circles and through a private Facebook group.

We look forward to sharing how the full 2018/2019 OSN year went! To read more about the OSN #HopeForum in Thunder Bay, [see here.](#)



Facebook Partnership

Facebook Canada Summit

As a part of Facebook Canada’s 2018 Summit in Toronto, ON, We Matter co-designed an installation featuring portraits of participants from the 2018 #HopeForum as a part of our first ever #IndigenousYouthRise series. #IndigenousYouthRise is a portrait series which aims to highlight the beauty, strength and wisdom of Indigenous young people in order to challenge some of the broader public stereotypes and narratives. In addition to the photos, We Matter got to feature Indigenous youth voices through We Matter videos.



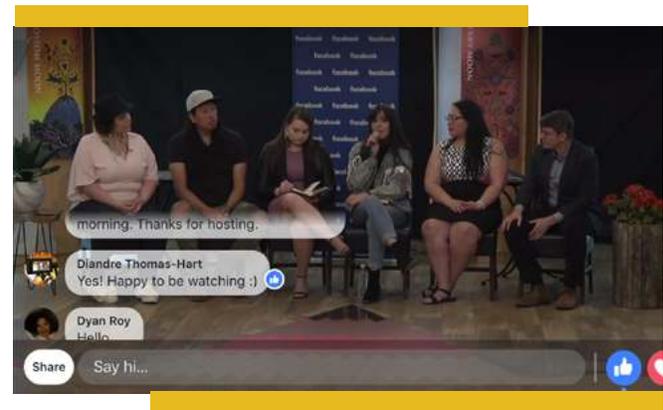
Suicide Prevention Reporting Tools

In March 2018, We Matter took part in an international advisory meeting at Facebook Headquarters alongside leading mental health profes-

sionals from across the globe, in order to review and advise on Facebook’s wellness and suicide reporting tools. We were able to bring forward Indigenous youth perspectives, as well as recommendations and feedback which came directly out of the 2018 #HopeForum

Facebook Indigenous Content & Culture Online Roundtable

In May 2018, We Matter was invited to take part in a nationally broadcasted roundtable on Indigenous Content and Culture Online, where we got to share some of the challenges and best practices of in creating safe and supportive spaces for Indigenous youth online.



Moving forward

It has been an incredibly busy year of growth for We Matter, as we work to create space and resources for Indigenous youth to feel loved, supported, and like they matter. Indigenous youth continue to experience challenges that are unique to them and their communities, and our efforts to bring hope and healing forward have really only just begun. With continued support, increased team capacity, learning from our pilot projects and programs, expanding content and resources, and more targeted outreach, our goal is to create a sustainable organization which Indigenous youth and those who support them can count on for years and years to come.

MEDIA FEATURES & HIGHLIGHTS

"You don't have to be anybody to be somebody": Indigenous youth stand up to suicide crisis: <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2018/01/23/news/you-dont-have-be-anybody-be-somebody-indigenous-youth-stand-suicide-crisis>

'We matter a lot': Indigenous youth gather in Ottawa to tackle suicide crisis": <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/we-matter-hope-forum-1.4497523>

"We Matter: Indigenous youth raise their voice in the fight against suicide": <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-monday-january-22-2018-1.4495693/we-matter-indigenous-youth-raise-their-voices-in-the-fight-against-suicide-1.4495702>



"My proudest accomplishment would be being my Mother's son. I grew up learning from her, the right from the wrong. She showed me exactly what it is to be strong and the willingness to always move forward no matter how hard life may get."
- Dakota Laliberte, 22, Ile-a-la-Crosse SK



"Don't ever let anyone make you feel like your potential stops, your potential is limitless. Your emotions, experiences, & values are always valid. We're all flawless & we all matter."

-Trina Qaqqaq, 24, Baker Lake Nunavut





Team & Acknowledgments

We Matter would like to say Marsi Cho / Gila'kasla / Chi Miigwetch / Thank You for believing in a world where Indigenous youth live and thrive.

Special thanks to our friends, partners, and sponsors:

facebook

BDO

Assurance | Accounting | Tax | Advisory



Canada



NCCT
NATIVE CANADIAN CENTRE OF TORONTO

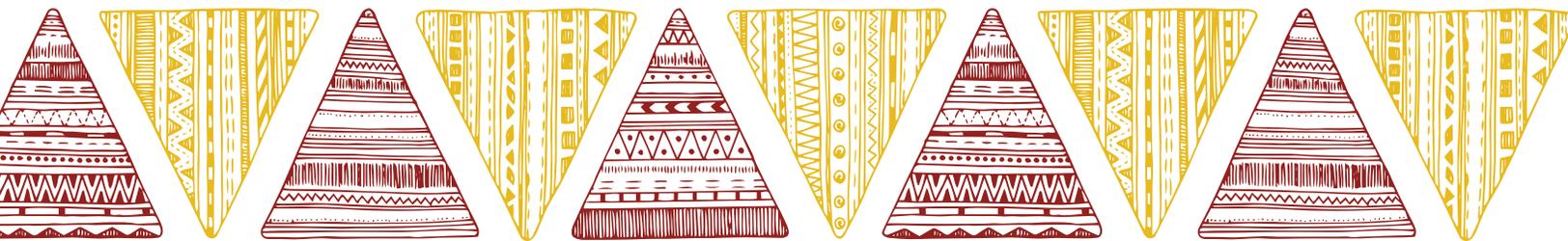
Ontario Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

An Agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

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WE MATTER

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