Preparing Our Home by reclaiming resilience: Lessons from Lil'wat Nation, Siksika Nation and Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne, Canada

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Abstract

Indigenous communities in Canada are faced with a disproportionate risk of disasters and climate change (CIER, 2008). Indigenous communities in Canada are also at the forefront of climate change adaptation and resilience solutions. One program in Canada that aids in decolonizing curriculum for reclaiming resilience in Indigenous communities is *Preparing Our Home (POH)*. Drawing on three POH case studies, this article seeks to answer the following question: How can community-led decolonial educational processes help reclaim Indigenous youth and community resilience? The three communities that held POH work-

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shops, which this article draws upon, include: **The Líl'wat Nation**, where Canada's first youth-led community-based POH Home curriculum was developed at the Xe̓tólacw Community School; **The Siksika Nation**, where the workshop engaged youth with experienced instructors and Elders to enhance culturally informed community preparedness through actionable outcomes by developing a curriculum that focused on hazard identification, First Aid, and traditional food preservation; and **Akwesasne Mohawk Nation**, where political leaders, community members, and community emergency personnel gathered together to discuss emergency preparedness, hazard awareness and ways to rediscover resilience. The participants shared their lived experiences, stories, and knowledge to explore community strengths and weaknesses and community reaction and resilience. The article concludes with a discussion section, key lessons learned in these communities, and recommendations for developing Indigenous community-led curricula. These recommendations include the importance of Indigenous Knowledge, intergenerational learning, land-based learning, participatory methodologies, and the role of traditional language for community resilience. We contribute to the Indigenous education literature by providing specific examples of community-owned curricula that move beyond decolonial education to Indigenous knowledges and experiences sharing, owned by the people and led by the community.

Introduction

Indigenous communities in Canada are faced with disproportionate risk of disasters and climate change (Canning, 2018; CIER, 2008; Turner and Clifton, 2009). Indigenous communities in Canada are also at the forefront of climate change adaptation and resilience solutions. The article draws on three case studies of decolonizing curriculum for reclaiming community resilience in Indigenous communities in Canada. The article seeks to answer the following question: How can community- and youth-led learning processes reclaim Indigenous community resilience?

For this article, we use the following definition of reclaiming:

> Reclaiming is a strategy in decolonial education projects that involves recovering who people are (their cultural identities), their practices, and their relation to place (land, cosmos). It is a generative praxis that brings ancestral knowledges together with local, endogenous knowledges in the development of decolonial spaces (Zavala, 2016, p.5).

Resilience is a contested term as described by Yumagulova, Munro, and Whitehair (in press): "We need to use caution when using the word resilience to describe social responses in a system that does not work for those that continue to be faced with some of the highest risks of disasters on Turtle Island". In the context of this article, reclaiming resilience refers to reclaiming skills, spaces, language, and a sense of togetherness that has been and is required to face a disaster. Written by community and youth leaders, with support from academic colleagues, this article draws on *Preparing Our Home (POH)* workshops in three communities: Líl'wat Nation, Siksika Nation, and Akwesasne Mohawk Nation.

POH is a community-based program that connects youth, Elders, and community members, and brings together Indigenous knowledge and global disaster risk reduction solutions. The program is developed and implemented by the participating communities

with support from the program coordinators and the program's Advisory Circle, comprised of Indigenous community leaders from across Canada. The three case studies of POH community workshops shared in this article highlights the importance of Indigenous Knowledge, decolonial education, intergenerational learning, land-based learning, participatory methodologies, and the role of traditional language for community resilience. The cases also highlight the importance of relational ways (Anthony-Stevens & Matsaw, 2019) and having a strengths-based (non-deficit) focus on solutions when developing community- and youth-led curricula.

Indigenous approaches to community-based learning

Despite the "structural genocide"[2] by the colonial and then Canadian governments, Indigenous Peoples and cultures are undergoing resurgence expressed in growing political weight, legal victories, a growing population, increasing levels of education, increased participation in the business world, and increased cultural notice (Canning, 2018). This resurgence of Indigenous political cultures and nation-building requires generations of Indigenous peoples to grow up intimately and strongly connected to their homelands, immersed in languages and spiritualities, and embodying Indigenous traditions of agency, leadership, and decision-making (Simpson, 2014). In this article, we explore decolonial education and Indigenous education to understand the importance of decolonial approaches to land-based pedagogies. The difference between decolonial and Indigenous education has been discussed in a variety of contexts by Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics around the world (see Smith et al., 2019). The terminology used in these discussions often circulates in academic silos, disconnected from local community contexts. This article attempts to bridge this gap by connecting some of the academic discussions with the direct voices of the community members engaged in community learning. It is important to note, however, that our understandings of decolonial education, Indigenous education, and land-based Indigenous education are primarily informed by the voices, practices, and scholarship of Indigenous Peoples located in Canada. Contextual specificities such as culture, history, place, and language shape these understandings and they cannot be generalized (Poitras Pratt et al., 2018). Nevertheless, we hope that in amplifying these particular stories we can foster dialogue and build bridges across these contextual specificities.

Decolonial education

Decolonial education, according to Zavala (2016) "is a process for community self-determination, at moments materializing in spaces of survival and at other times in the spaces

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[2] Wolfe (2006) describes "structural genocide" as settler colonialism that persists over extended periods of time (rather than an event or a short period of time) and is embedded in the structure that requires the elimination of Indigenous Peoples.

of recovery" (p. 1). As such, decolonizing education entails identifying how colonization has impacted education and working to unsettle colonial structures, systems, and dynamics in educational contexts (Poitras Pratt et al., 2018). Three major methodologies or strategies in decolonial education include counter/storytelling, healing, and reclaiming. Decolonizing education, therefore, is profoundly agentic and challenges educators and educational leaders to stop thinking about Indigenous students from a deficit perspective (Smith, 2016). Rather, Brendtro, Brokenleg and Bockern (2005) recommend the "*Circle of Courage* model which values belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity, [and] allows for educators to view the child as a whole being in relation to all" (cited in Smith, 2016, p. 51). Through this holistic approach, the student flourishes as well as the entire community, particularly since the process of decolonizing education is based on partnerships and collaborations and is driven by listening to Indigenous students' voices (Smith, 2016). Through this process, schools--which were and in certain contexts continue to be tools of colonialism and assimilation--become spaces to repair and restore the damages caused by colonialism and can contribute to cultural resurgence. Decolonial education, therefore, resembles extended families since the knowledge that is of most worth comes from parents, community, and elders (Battiste & Henderson, 2009).

Indigenous education

Indigenous education refers to "understandings of education that are indigenous to particular lands and places, and 'the path and process whereby individuals gain knowledge and meaning from their indigenous heritages'" (Jacob et al. 2015 in Poitras Pratt et al., 2018, p. 4). As a form of Indigenous knowledge systems, Indigenous education is based on respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001; Kuokkanen, 2007). Indigenous education is relational, intergenerational, and interconnected (Smith, 2016). While each community has a different history, language, geography, and confronts different hazards, building on community strengths and developing community leadership is at the heart of Indigenous education and, as articulated by Jacob, Cheng and Porter (2015), "holistically nurturing future leaders who will be able to speak and act on behalf of their people" (p. 2). In nurturing these leaders, principles of mutual respect, humility, openness and cooperation, and pedagogies of "disruption, intervention, affirmative action, hope, and possibility" (Grande, 2015, p. 30) are seen as vital ingredients of Indigenous education. Newberry and Trujillo (2019) note that Indigenous education is situated within a community context, where community-based spiritual education and traditions form the primary support for a community's way of life. Connections to community and land are at the center of these land-based pedagogies.

Decolonial land-based pedagogies

Moving toward decolonial land-based pedagogies requires understanding the fundamental differences that inform Eurocentric and Indigenous approaches to education. As Aikenhead and Michell (2011) suggest, knowledge in Eurocentric science expresses an intellectual tradition of thinking, while Indigenous knowledge expresses a wisdom tradition of thinking, living, and being. While an intellectual tradition emphasizes individual cognition, a wisdom tradition focuses on group-oriented ways of being as practiced by living in harmony with Mother Earth for the purpose of survival.

Drawing on Nishnaabeg culture, Simpson (2014) suggests that this kind of pedagogy requires a radical break from state education systems that are primarily designed to produce communities of individuals willing to uphold settler colonialism and to reclaim land as pedagogy to nurture a generation of Indigenous peoples that have the skills, knowledge, and values to rebuild based on Indigenous world-views and values. Decolonial land-based pedagogies assert Indigenous relationships with land to reclaim Indigenous homelands, governance, and nation-building (Simpson, 2014). Access to land is the most important step required to decolonize Indigenous education and bring about reconciliation as justice (Tuck & Yang 2012; Corntassel & Bryce, 2012, p. 152). However, as Simpson (2014) notes, "by far the largest attack on Indigenous Knowledge systems right now is land dispossession" (p. 21). For land to be a teacher and teachers to support youth in developing right relations with land (Bang et. al, 2014), Indigenous presence can no longer be erased from Indigenous homelands and Indigenous rights must be the highest priority (Snively & Williams, 2016). This relationship between land, rights, Indigenous identities, and Indigenous knowledges is clearly expressed by Potawatomi scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer:

> In the settler mind, land was property, real estate, capital, or natural resources. But to our people, it was everything: identity, the connection to our ancestors, the home of our nonhuman kinfolk, our pharmacy, our library, the source of all that sustained us. Our lands were where our responsibility to the world was enacted, sacred ground. It belonged to itself; it was a gift, not a commodity, so it could never be bought or sold. These are the meanings people took with them when they were forced from their ancient homelands to new places. Whether it was their homeland or the new land forced upon them, land held in common gave people strength; it gave them something to fight for (Kimmerer, 2013, p. 17).

Since community and personal well-being are directly linked to the well-being of the land (Kuokkanen, 2010), reclaiming Indigenous lands and rights is part of decolonial education and a move toward asserting viable Indigenous futures (Bang et al., 2014) that resist erasure, assimilation, and enclosure. To assert Indigenous futures requires an Indigenous ontology of land-based pedagogies, summarized by Bang et al. (2014) as "Land is, therefore we are" (p. 45). This process restores and restories relationships with land based on "actively protecting the source of our knowledge - Indigenous land" (Simpson, 2014, p. 22). Based on the above discussion, decolonizing education informs POH programming by centering understanding the impact of colonial practices of erasure on community re-

silence. Through land-based education, cultural teachings, and language, we have developed a community-led curriculum for understanding risk and reclaiming resilience in our communities.

Methods

Three main elements constitute the development of the POH curriculum: the overall approach, a peer-learning component, and community-led initiatives.

The overall approach was developed by the *Advisory Circle* comprised of experienced Indigenous practitioners from across Turtle Island working in the fields of emergency management, public health, and community resilience. This process identified key elements of a strength-based curricula that fostered youth leadership at a community level. The main methods included creating a community-specific process that would best explore the following questions: What are community strengths? What is around the community? What can harm the community? How can youth help and lead?

The peer-learning component happens at an annual gathering that brings together around 20 Indigenous youth leaders from across Canada. The leaders are put forward by their communities through an open program call. The youth spend this week with Indigenous mentors such as protocol keepers, cultural guides, experienced emergency management professionals, and Elders. Peer learning is the main focus of this week: the youth learn from each other about their lands, communities, traditions, and community resilience measures. The youth cook together, build cultural crafts, and participate in land-based learning from the host nation. In the words of participants, this week has been a 'life-changing' experience, and some participants have become elected leaders in their communities, public figures, and key champions of emergency preparedness.

At the community level, the questions outlined above are discussed and explored through various community-specific processes such as participatory asset mapping, youth-led hazard identification, photography, video, and craft. This exploration is then shared with peers, families, the community, political leadership (such as chief and Council), and other communities. For example, a community feast that displayed the work by the youth was one of the most common ways of community sharing. In the next section, we focus on the Canadian context to help international readers situate this program within key recent developments that inform settler-Indigenous relations.

National Context: Understanding risk, resilience, and 'education' in Indigenous communities in Canada

Indigenous communities in Canada face some of the highest risks of disasters and climate change. The communities are often located on marginal, hazardous lands that were undesirable for colonial settlement. This forced relocation and confinement to a 'reserve' denied seasonal mobility across the land to accommodate seasonal settlement patterns, such

as winter villages, which could accommodate changes in foods and changes in hazards. Indigenous communities across Canada have been and will be disproportionally impacted by climate change due to a heavy reliance on the environment for subsistence, maintenance of culture, and other important aspects of livelihoods (CIER, 2008). With our Elders passing, the knowledge held in our communities about our traditional ways of learning and relating to the land is vulnerable. There is an urgency to include this knowledge and pass it on to the next generation for our communities locally and in the global context (Snively & Williams, 2018).

'Education' and 'school' need to be understood in the context of the Indian Residential School system in Canada that was used as a state mechanism for cultural erasure and genocide by removing children from their families, their traditional ways of knowing, their language, and the land. As described by Snively and Williams (2016), prior to residential schools, children worked alongside the family and community members and they learned by observing and copying the experts who modeled how to live on the land, including the pertinent teachings, stories, and songs that accompanied each activity. This removal has had a devastating effect on community resilience, since "*the human ability to adapt to new situations is dependent on the cultural teachings of the older generations*" (Snively & Williams, 2016, p. 17, emphasis is added). While reclaiming resilience in this context is particularly challenging, it is a critically important aspect of community education.

To further understand the context of decolonial and Indigenous education in Canada, it is important to highlight some of the key recent processes. Created in 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was intended as a process to guide Canadians through the difficult truths of the residential school system and serve as a foundation for lasting reconciliation across Canada. As part of their Final Report and 94 Calls to Action released in 2015, the Commission outlined the following principles for drafting a "new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples":

i. Provide sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
ii. Improve education attainment levels and success rates.
iii. Develop culturally appropriate curricula.
iv. Protect the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
v. Enable parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
vi. Enable parents to fully participate in the education of their children.
vii. Respect and honour Treaty relationships.

In response to TRC, multiple guidelines for respectful and meaningful engagement have been created across Canada. For example, the Indigenous Youth Voices project applied these principles to respectful and meaningful research principles. Another example is the Touchstones of Hope reconciliation movement, which encourages grassroots approaches to caring for Indigenous children, respectful collaboration and work with Indigenous peoples, and young people participating in reconciliation initiatives. The Touchstones of Hope principles include the following (Auger et al., 2019):

Culture and language: affirming Indigenous cultures and languages by ensuring that community sessions were conducted in a culturally safe and specific manner.

Holistic approach: endeavouring to work holistically by making space for participants to drive the community sessions

Self-determination: affirming Indigenous self-determination by making space for participants to determine how the learning process is organized and how it should be conducted with themselves and their community

Safe spaces: community sessions are held in spaces identified in the community as safe ones.

In the next section, we describe our three communities, beginning with a brief history of each nation, the activities that were part of the POH program, and the key elements of the curricula. It is important to understand that while land and place are central to Indigenous decolonial pedagogies, our curricula are specific to particular Indigenous place relations, Indigenous cosmologies, relationalities, lands, and experiences of colonialism (Nxumalo and Cedillo, 2017). Due to these specificities, land-based pedagogies are ungeneralizable and based on Indigenous knowledge systems that are dynamic rather than static repositories of cultural knowledge (Tuck et al., 2014).

Community Contexts

This paper focuses on the POH experiences of three communities: the Líl'wat Nation, the Siksika Nation, and the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne. Some of the key community characteristics are presented in Table 1. While the communities are very different in terms of their history, geographies, and population size, all three Nations have strong governance systems that strive to prioritize language and culture within community initiatives and the education delivered in schools. Children and youth are the largest demographic in these three communities.

Table 1. Key community characteristics

	Líl'wat Nation	**Siksika Nation**	**The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne**
Present-day location	British Columbia, Canada	Alberta, Canada	Quebec/Ontario, Canada and St. Regis, New York, United States

Popula-tion	2000	7500	The Mohawk Council of Akwe-sasne -12,000; the St. Regis Mo-hawk Tribe - 11,000.
Govern-ance and identity	Interior Salish people, a sepa-rate and distinct nation with cul-tural and kin-ship ties to the Státyemc.	A part of the Blackfoot Confederacy (the Piikani and Kainaiwa of southern Alberta and the Blackfeet in the State of Montana). Blackfoot Self-deter-mination process initi-ated in late-1980s (ongoing).	Complex background: St. Lawrence Iroquoian – Pre-Contact to Early Contact; Haudenosaunee (Kanien'kehá:ka) – Pre- Contact to Present; Seven Nations of Canada – New France/British North America; Mohawk Nation – Pre- Contact to American Revolution; 1888 to Pre-sent; Present governance system: Mohawk Council of Akwesasne – Canada Recognized Band; St. Regis Mohawk Tribe – U.S. Recognized Tribe Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs – Haudenosaunee Recognized Na-tion
Nation's slogans	"The Land and People Are One"		"Land Where the Partridge Drums"
Language	Ucwalmícwts	Blackfoot	Kanien'kehá:ka

Source: Siksika Nation, 2020; Líl'wat Nation n.d.; Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, n.d; Francis, 2019

The Líl'wat Nation

The Líl'wat7úl (or Líl'wat) have called their territory home since time immemorial. For millennia, the people enjoyed an economy based on trade between other First Nations. And, as today, they valued the importance of family life (Gabriel et al., 2019). Capacity building through education and training is a priority for the Nation.

Since 1972, the Líl'wat Nation has operated Xeťólacw Community School (XCS), a Kindergarten to Grade 12 school. The school's educational model is built on Nťákmen (Our Way), incorporating Líl'wat cultural learning, traditional values, and language into a strong, standardized academic curriculum. From pre-school to Grade 12, students take part in Ucwalmícwts (language) classes and culture courses, learning to embrace and cel-ebrate what it means to be Líl'wat7úl.

Some of the Líl'wat Principles of Learning, identified by Líl'wat Nation scholar Dr. Lorna Williams and used by the Líl'wat Nation's Xeťólacw Community School, include principles that are central to community resilience as a broad educational concept. For example, Kamúcwkalha means the acknowledgment of the felt energy indicating group attunement and the emergence of a common group purpose; A7xekcal means valuing our

own expertise and considering how it helps the entire community beyond ourselves; Cwelelep means recognizing the need to sometimes be in a place of dissonance and uncertainty, to be open to new learning; and Emhaka7 means encouraging each of us to do the best we can at each task given to us.

Preparing Our Home curriculum

Between 2017 and 2018, the Líl'wat Nation developed Canada's first youth-led community-based POH curriculum at XCS. This curriculum draws on Indigenous knowledge and traditionally-held skills needed to address pressing challenges such as wildfire risk, flooding, and social risks by empowering youth to be change leaders in their communities.

The community resilience curriculum developed at XCS focused on multiple dimensions of resilience: cultural resilience, self-sufficiency, lifesaving skills, firefighting skills, traditional medicine plants, among many others. The curriculum also focused on key hazards such as flood risk (for parts of the community located in low-lying lands), water shortages (wells drying out during summer months, especially for people located on the mountain slopes), and fire risk. Fire risk is a major concern throughout the community due to the fact that, in 1986, the Xet'ólacw community relocated from the regularly flooded floodplain to higher ground, which unfortunately has led to a high risk of wildfire and droughts due to its location on a forested mountain slope.

From January to April 2018, Casey Gabriel (Líl'wat youth worker) and Sandy Henry (Educational assistant at the school) held an elective class with a dedicated group of students (13 – 17 years of age, male and female volunteers) that worked collaboratively with key community members to design a community resilience curriculum. The students met three times a week for one hour and focused on developing resilience and preparedness at personal, family, and community levels. The Xet'ólacw Community School created a School Safety Committee with an intent to work on the emergency plan for the school to address priority hazards identified as part of the workshop: floods, fires, and the development of school lock-down procedures.

The workshop strengthened connections between the school, the Líl'wat Nation volunteer Fire Department and the community leaders in emergency planning. As part of the workshop, the youth sorted emergency supply bins stored at the school that had not been opened for over five years, itemized the inventory, and identified what was missing. The youth also identified the need for a secondary access road and/or a new evacuation route in the case of a wildfire.

The Siksika Nation

The Siksika refer to themselves as Niitsitapi or "the Real People." This is because they are equal partners to the universe with all the other Beings. Many stories and legends have been passed down through generations about Creation and the early days.

The Siksika Nation POH workshop engaged youth with experienced instructors and Elders to enhance culturally informed community preparedness through actionable outcomes such as developing a curriculum that focused on hazard identification, First Aid, and traditional food preservation. Recognizing that Elders have a wealth of traditional knowledge and experience to teach and share with the youth, the workshop provided an opportunity to share community stories and experiences by reclaiming strength from ancestors.

Dancing Deer Disaster Recovery Centre

Following the devastating flooding disaster in 2013 that washed away two main bridges, affected 171 homes, and required the evacuation of over 1000 people, a unique community organization was formed called Dancing Deer Disaster Recovery Centre. Funded by Siksika Family Services, this multi-disciplinary center assisted flood-affected people by visiting them in their homes. Services were provided in Blackfoot and English. Despite the success and the acute need for the services, the program was discontinued due to a lack of funding. Key staff from this program came together to organize the POH workshop in Siksika Nation. The workshop was held with Siksika Outreach school students at the Ittasinno'p foodbank. Ittasinno'p historically referred to a place where food rations were given out to community members.

Storytelling, language, and smoking meat

As described in Munro (2019), the POH workshop provided an opportunity to share community stories and experiences and look collectively for solutions to address challenges that we face today and into the future by reclaiming our strength from our ancestors. The Elders also spoke Blackfoot and encouraged the students to repeat the Blackfoot words as it related to learning about community resilience. In Blackfoot, Sopoksistotsi means to have knowledge about an activity through one's experience. Another word, iiyika'kimaa means 'To try hard to learn', and is a word of encouragement used to tell one another to do the best we can at each task. The highlight of the Siksika workshop was preparing and cutting the meat. The Elders explained that they learned by listening to their parents speaking Blackfoot at home. If they were unsure about what a Blackfoot word meant, they would ask their mother what it meant. There were much laughter and many questions from the youth regarding our culture and preparing smoked meat. The youth expressed the need to do more hands-on teachings; by participating and preparing the meat, their learning was more meaningful and educational than reading about how to prepare smoked

meat. What they have learned has given them the knowledge and experience to be able to prepare smoked meat, important skills to ensure food security, emergency preparation skills, and the Siksika language The Elders shared stories of their fathers and brothers hunting deer and how they prepared the deer meat, snaring rabbits, tanning hides and how our community is losing our language. They stressed the importance of learning our Siksika language and Siksika Way of Life.

Akwesasne Mohawk Nation

The Mohawk of Akwesasne have a very unique history. Located on the St. Lawrence River, Akwesasne borders the countries of Canada and the United States of America, the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and the American State of New York. Some have called the nation the most stubborn native community in North America, not only for the enduring commitment to Ancient Mohawk Territories and Resources but also for the strong positions we maintain over the Aboriginal Rights of our community and Kahniakehaka (Mohawk) Nation. On a community level, the Nation persistently battles to maintain the integrity of the Mohawk language and culture.

Community amid external government interference

The Akwesasne Mohawk Nation has been fragmented by colonial borders and provincial boundaries on both banks of the St. Lawrence River. This presents unique challenges for disaster planning. Despite the very real and apparent difficulties of this multi-jurisdictional location, the community of about 13,000 people has worked hard and responsibly to build and manage infrastructure, health and social services, education, the judicial and law enforcement system, environment and conservation, and housing and economic initiatives. The Mohawk people have many gifts, talents, knowledge, experience, and expertise in a wide spectrum of fields and interests.

Youth perspectives and community-based learning

At the youth-led workshop, organized by the Akwesasne Youth Council, the political leaders, community members, and community emergency personnel gathered together to discuss emergency preparedness, hazard awareness, and ways to rediscover resilience. The workshop brought elders and leadership together from the community of Akwesasne to develop a community-based resiliency plan looking at the following questions: What are community strengths? What is around the community? What can harm the community? How can youth lead and help? What are potential solutions? The participants shared their lived experiences, stories, and knowledge to explore community strengths and weaknesses and community reaction and resilience. Keywords in Kanien'kehá:ka related to this workshop included: Kanikonhriio'htshera (Teachings of a Good Mind);

Tekaienawa'kho'ntshera (Cooperation); Attokha'htshera (Responsiveness); and Kari-hwaienta'hkwen (Responsibility).

The POH workshop, held in June 2019, was a first step in enhancing resilience as a community and preparing the future generation. As one participant suggested: "Our world is rapidly changing due to the effects of humanity and global warming — it is important to include youth in disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts as they will be the ones growing up and being directly affected in the future." The workshop gave the youth a voice to share their ideas and concerns about emergency preparedness in our community. From mapping safety concerns throughout Akwesasne to a site visit of a recent flood, it was empowering for our young people to see the impact and opportunities they can create for themselves and others before a disaster strikes.

Discussion: Key lessons learned about process and content from the Preparing Our Home initiatives

Across the three communities, several key themes emerged in developing Indigenous education for community resilience. We discuss them below across three categories of Indigenous curriculum that emerged in our communities. These categories include key learning principles, key learning process enablers, and curriculum content. We discuss each one below and situate them in the broader literature as part of the discussion.

Key learning principles

Key learning principles identified through this program included the following: (1) the importance of Elders as Knowledge Keepers; (2) learning as intergenerational and a community activity; (3) Learning is holistic, relational, and solution-focused, and (5) learning is carried in language. We discuss each one of them below:

Elders are Keepers of Knowledge: Elders and knowledge keepers are an integral part of learning for POH as facilitators of lifelong learning by teaching responsibilities and relationships among family, community, and creation, and reinforcing intergenerational connections and identities. As Williams and Snively (2016) suggest, "Elders and knowledge keepers can identify methods of teaching and learning according to an Indigenous worldview, can help students see themselves in the school curriculum, and help set goals for future generations" (p. 37).

Learning is an intergenerational, community activity: POH is a community activity that brings together children, youth, parents, Elders, professionals, and community members. Indigenous education prepares youth to take up adult responsibilities within their home community and to be able to speak and act on behalf of their people (Jacob et al., 2015).

Learning is relational, holistic, practical, and solution-focused: The POH workshops are about understanding the relationships that sustain the community during 'normal' and in times of emergency and disasters. 'Knowing home' requires understanding the web of relationships that make up the home (Williams & Snively, 2016). This incorporates technical knowledge as well as an emphasis on reciprocal relationships with both human and natural communities (Cajete, 2005 in Smith et al., 2018).

POH engages and develops all aspects of the individual—emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual. Individual learning is viewed as but one part of a collective that extends beyond the family and community to establish shared goals to which youth can contribute through solutions (such as community preparedness). Knowledge is not classified into hierarchical competencies or disciplinary specializations but is framed around relationships such as the interconnectedness that encourages generosity, resourcefulness, courage, compassion for others, and living harmoniously with the environment (Williams & Snively, 2016).

Learning is carried in language: Language is an important part of POH. Through language, Indigenous peoples make sense of the world and transmit cultural knowledge from one generation to another, thus serving as the vessel and application of knowledge. Knowing the Indigenous names for places and keywords that characterize the sense of community togetherness was a focus in all of the three workshops: "Language comes from the land and contains the unique knowledge of each place and acts as a continuous living repository for all of the collective knowledge and experiences that a people, a society, or a nation has" (Williams & Snively, 2016, p. 40).

Key learning process enablers

Our cases show the importance of community-led educational initiatives for reclaiming resilience. By leveraging community resources and talents, by engaging with broader partnerships, and by supporting local champions, increased personal, family, community, and institutional preparedness was achieved. Across three cases, key factors that enabled community-led Indigenous education include the following:(1) local champions and leaders; (2) strong support from local organizations and community; (3) partnerships; (4) flexible format; and (5) youth involvement.

Local champions and leaders: The program would not be possible without the dedication of local leaders and champions. In Líl'wat, Casey Gabriel, a fire captain at the volunteer fire department, an educational assistant at the school, and the Líl'wat Youth coordinator was a central leader for the Líl'wat program, in collaboration with Sandy Henry and support from Rosa Andrew, the principle of the Xet̓ólacw Community School. In Siksika, Darlene Munro, an Elder and the former director of the Dancing Deer Disaster Recovery

(DDDRC) Centre, Calvin Smith (former DDDRC youth worker), and Astokomii Smith, a youth leader, all worked together to bring a remarkable team of Elders and youth to learn from each other. In Akwesasne, Mia Francis (a youth leader) worked with the support of Chief Connie Lazore who leads the public safety portfolio.

Strong support from local organizations and community: The POH initiatives in our communities would not be possible without the support of the many community members, Elders, and professionals that were part of this learning journey in helping youth navigate their way to reclaim resilience by incorporating cultural learning, traditional values, and language into the curriculum.

Partnerships: In Líl'wat, the POH program and International Sustainability Education Foundation partnered with Water Youth Network, the World Meteorological Organization/Global Water Partnership Associated Programme on Flood Management, and the Integrated Drought Management Programme for the development of the curriculum. For the delivery of the Líl'wat program, we partnered with the Líl'wat Nation volunteer Fire Department, First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS) for the Fire Boot camp experience, as well as the Pemberton Fire Department and members of the local Wildland firefighting chapter.

Safe spaces: Each community decided what format worked best for them given their resources and capacity: from a multi-month program in the school in Líl'wat to a week-long workshop in Siksika in partnership with the foodbank and the outreach school to the Akwesasne Youth Council playing a leadership role for the introduction workshop.

Curricula content

Our curricula content includes a variety of elements that are needed to develop a holistic understanding of community strengths, key hazards and risk, and community-led solutions. Across these three workshops, the following Indigenous curricula elements have been identified: (1) What can nourish and heal ourselves, our families, and our communities? (2) How do the land and communities change and adapt in response to cycles, seasons, and climate? (3) What can harm the community? (4) Respectful behaviours on the land; and (5) How can youth contribute – solutions. These are described in more detail in Table 2.

Table 2: Elements of Indigenous curriculum for Preparing Our Home workshops

What can nourish and heal?
• Medicines and medical procedures, herbology • Edible plants, harvesting, and preparation • Knowledge of food preparation (drying berries, canning, smoking meat) • Knowledge of tanning hides; Knowledge of wood products;

• Traditional fish harvesting and preparation, agriculture, knowledge of soil types • Cultural craft: paddle carving • Knowledge of historic adaptive and resilience practices (such as winter villages) • Community connections, language, and stories
How does the land and communities change and adapt in response to cycles, seasons, climate? • Animal behaviour, life cycles, habitats, distribution, animal migration • Lake and river dynamics over seasons, Elder's stories of historic floods • Forest relationships, the role of forest fires in renewal • Ecological knowledge, environmental change over time, climate change • Erosion, landslides, and relocation • Knowledge of weather and seasonal changes
What can harm the community? • Hazards, risks and disasters (floods, fires, oil spills, rail accidents, etc.) • Impacts of residential school; colonialism as an unnatural disaster   o Cultural and language loss and need for revitalization through curriculum and pedagogy • Abuse, lateral violence; substance abuse; teenage pregnancies; diseases; suicides
Respectful behaviours on the land: • Wilderness survival, shelters, making fire • Use of controlled burning to enrich soil, enhance wild food crops, control insects, control forest understory • Geology, knowledge of soil types, rocks, location of rockslides
How can youth contribute – solutions: • Storytelling to inspire resilience at the personal, family and community levels (photography, digital storytelling, sharing stories at community gatherings) • Self-care, self-respect, listening and healing journeys • Building community and sustainability practices • First Aid courses, use of medicinal plants • Fire Safety in community; Firefighting courses • Door-to-door notifications, evacuation alerts • Servicing the community after the disaster (food, shelter, Elder and children care)

Source of inspiration: Snively and Williams (2016)

Our discussion illustrates three main pathways for reclaiming Indigenous community resilience in the Líl'wat Nation, the Siksika Nation, and Akwesasne Mohawk Nation. These include key enablers such as Indigenous learning principles, community- and youth-led processes, and Indigenous curriculum content. Overall, it can be argued that in these three communities, by bringing ancestral knowledges held by Elders together with youth-led action in the development of decolonial safe spaces, Indigenous education has moved from space of 'survival' and 'recovery' (Zavala, 2018) into spaces of affirmative action,

hope, and possibility (Grande, 2015). With climate change, increasing disasters, and now under the conditions of a global pandemic, these experiences in our communities illustrate the importance of reclaiming resilience through land- and language-based pedagogies for increasing community preparedness and fostering community partnerships.

Conclusions

Our article provides an overview of three cases that share a common decolonial and Indigenous framing in which certain learning principles, learning process enablers and Indigenous curricula enabled youth leadership for reclaiming community resilience. Our experiences with the POH workshops illustrate that when Indigenous youth participate in Indigenous-led, community-based initiatives in their home communities, they have opportunities to lead their communities in land-based education and learn in their own languages from Elders. Our article highlights the importance of Indigenous education where youth, parents, and community have access to land and the right to control their educational institutions in a way that is reflective and supportive of their cultural methods of teaching and learning. We hope that this article will help your community to rediscover its strength and reclaim resilience in the face of challenges and opportunities ahead.

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