



Storytelling is at the heart of **HumanEYES**, an arts-based initiative intergenerational school-centred, that celebrates the diverse life experience of young people in BC classrooms.

Since 2012, 50 teachers, 800 elementary students, 450 elders and 35 artists have participated in **HumanEYES in the Lower Mainland**. Over the course of 300 workshops (which involved approximately 10 instructional hours for each participating class), participants created a series of individual and collaborative art works, and increased their motivation and abilities to build more creatively engaged, connected and inclusive school communities. The project resulted in the creation of hundreds of booklets, songs, photographs, poems and mixed media artworks.

Thanks to support from our funders, in early 2016 we provided 4 Vancouver-area schools (and approximately 120 students) with a fully subsidized opportunity to participate in this program, and create a series of **Intergenerational Cookbooks** (that include photos, drawings, recipes + stories).

The effectiveness of *HumanEYES* is reflected through post-project evaluations and testimonials from both teachers and student participants. The overwhelming majority of student participants in the lower mainland noted that this project increased:

- their appreciation of the diversity in their classrooms and the family stories of their classmates
- their sense of connection to their classmates
- their knowledge of what social ex/inclusion means, looks and feels like, and
- their understanding of what it means to be an 'ally' and challenge exclusionary dynamics.



ALL of the teachers involved felt that HumanEYES “deepened [their] appreciation of the effectiveness of creativity and storytelling in generating compassion, dialogue and understanding within the classroom”, and a significant majority felt that the program “generated discussion/storytelling that enhanced personal connections and empathy within the class” and that programs like these “have an important role in making school communities more genuinely inclusive”.



This program creates an opportunity for families to learn more about each other and to grow closer. This then transfers into the classroom as the students learn that behind every person there is a multitude of stories. This helps create a more accepting and inclusive environment.
Danielle Carrara, Teacher, Hastings Elementary

HumanEYES ...has convinced me that creativity, dialogue and the sharing of our personal histories opens a space where our diversities can truly be honoured.
Sup Sidhu, HumanEYES Facilitator, Artist and Musician

What participants had to say about HumanEYES:

I learned...

- ... about trust, family cultures, safe environments together
- ... about the problems my family has been through and what problems others have been through.
- ... to never judge a person before you get to know them
- ... how to include others, feel more connected to people and be open telling people how I feel.
- ... how to help the community be a better place...



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