

Evaluation Tools from Roots to Harvest

FARM TO CAFETERIA CANADA (F2CC), with the input of over 140 individuals from diverse sectors across the country, developed the Farm to School Evaluation Framework for Canada. This framework articulates priority outcomes and indicators that people want to see measured relating to 4 impact areas: Public Health, Education, Community Economic Development and the Environment.

To complement the Evaluation Framework, F2CC has asked community organizations to share tools that they use to evaluate their school-based food programs. This document shares some of the tools used by Roots to Harvest. It accompanies Roots to Harvest's *Sharing Evaluation Tools to Support Farm to School Programs* webinar, which was recorded in March 2022 and is publicly available.

Roots to Harvest (R2H) offers young people the opportunity to engage meaningfully in the food system as growers, market gardeners and lifelong learners.





Evaluation Tools

Head Heart and Hands / Feet (with Photovoice)

This activity is used extensively in Roots to Harvest’s programs in a variety of ways. It can be used as an initial activity, a mid way check in activity or as a final reflection. It can take 5 minutes or it can take 1 hour depending on how you structure the activity and how you intend to use the results. Roots to Harvest only uses it once in a program as they like to pair it up with other evaluation tools so that they can reach people in different ways.

R2H often partners up this activity with the reflective activity called Photovoice - [Download the Toolkit by YouthREX here](#). This tool can be a great way for youth to express their points of view by highlighting photos of the activities related to an evaluation. R2H has noticed that some youth find it easier to place a picture to a thought to help to clarify their thought. Sometimes the youth have photos that they can use for this but often R2H uses the photos the organization has taken during the program if time permits. The photos will then get displayed on the Bristol board head, heart and hands for each participant. (See Description B below for an example)

For more info about the activity:

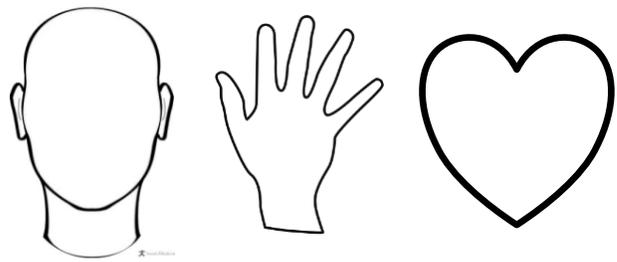
- [Evaluation Sheet - Head-Heart-Feet](#)
- [The Power of Reflection: An introduction to participatory evaluation techniques](#) by HC Link (page 7)

What R2H uses this activity to measure:

The Head Heart and Hands activity allows R2H to measure the different ways youth are engaging with the material and experiences. It’s both a good self reflection tool for the participating youth and it allows those delivering the program to notice themes that are emerging. R2H can then use this info to create additional evaluation tools such as surveys and interviews to find out the specifics around what they want to start, stop and continue with program delivery.



Forest Meets Farm – Head, Hand & Heart Closing Activity



Handout that is used in Forest Meets Farm Program of the Head, Hand & Heart Closing Activity. This is used as a final reflection for the 10-session program to allow youth to think about what they learned, what they felt and what they are thinking about after participating.



What we've learned!

I have learned some basic life skills such as: washing veggies, making pizza dough and being more social. I use these, and many others everyday. I have also become more independant and learned how to work with others. I have also gained alot of gardening skills.

I felt really happy and proud with the work we did. I also felt accomplished when we finished a hard days work at the Farms. When we all would show up to work, everyone was in such good moods, and ready to work. It was so tiring when we would be in the gardening weeding in the hot sun, But we found ways to make it fun.

Before joining R2H, I wasnt all that social, or interacted with people my age. But now, I have a bunch of friends I will have for life. I have also realized that I can do just about anything if I put my mind to it. I have also realized what I want for myself, and how im going to aenive it.

R2H





An example of how Roots to Harvest has included Photovoice in the Head, Heart and Hands Activity. This was completed by a youth to reflect on their time in the R2H program using images taken from their experience as well as meaningful thoughts, skills and knowledge they are leaving the program with.

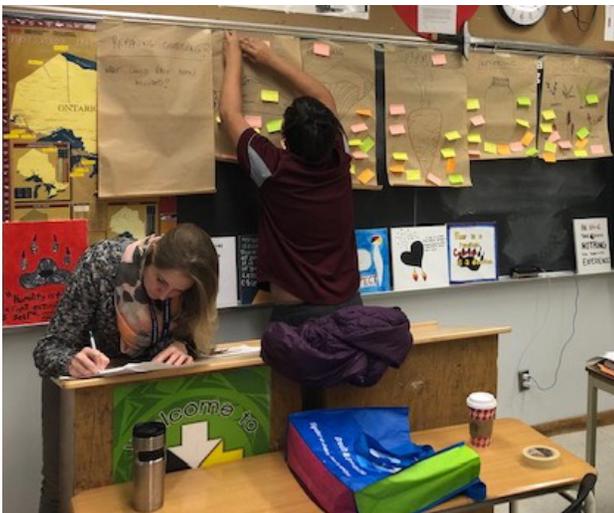
Summary Wall

When completing evaluations with students, R2H often needs to remind the students of what activities they have done together. R2H starts by having students brainstorm what they have experienced over the past few sessions to start the reflective process. In this exercise they come prepared with posters with topic areas that they want the participants to reflect upon. They then hand out post-it notes for the youth to write out what they remember from each topic area - it could be one word or a longer description. The categories change to reflect the activities that have been completed with each group depending on the focus of the program.

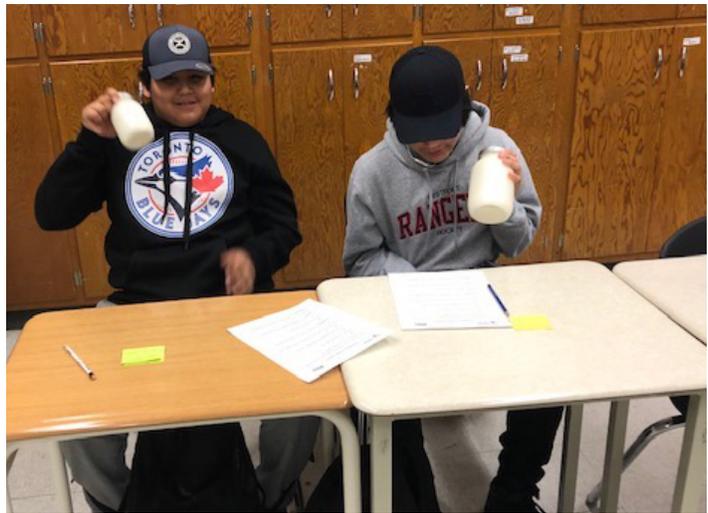
Additional Suggestions

Activities to do while doing an evaluation

Having an activity to do when you begin an evaluation helps give some time for students who need time to reflect before putting their answers down. R2H sometimes involves students in seed cleaning, butter making in a glass jar or taste testing as an activity to fill in this time.



Students use post-it notes to summarize what they participated in during the program. R2H will often do this with groups that they have been with over a period of time as a way to remind the youth what they are asking them to reflect on. R2H will come with pre-made topics areas for them to sort their thoughts and learnings onto.

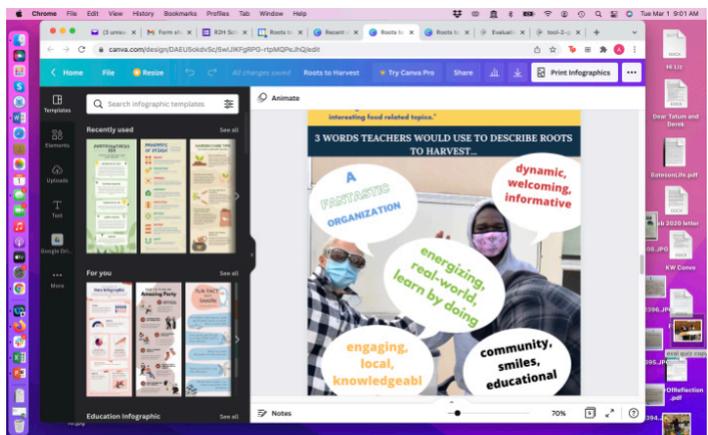


Students make butter while doing the evaluation. This activity could be used for students who are done early, for students who need some time to think beforehand or for students who need to be moving while thinking/doing.

Presenting Evaluation Findings

With the development of easy to navigate presentation tools, R2H has adopted the use of Canva (www.canva.com) to lay out and present its findings. This has made it very easy to create versions of the organization's evaluations to share with different stakeholders. R2H often make a version for teachers, for the school boards, for funders or for internal reference through Canva.

Example of the Canva interface as R2H creates a final school report to be distributed to schools.



Roots to Harvest School Programming
 Academic Quadmesters 1&2 Sep 2020-Jan 2021

OVERALL IMPACT OF ROOTS TO HARVEST CLASSROOM PROGRAMS IN THUNDER BAY AREA



Example of a Summary page for a Semester 1 school report. This report is sent to teachers, principals, superintendents and directors of the school board whose schools participated in Roots to Harvest programs..

NUMBER OF STUDENTS REACHED: 474

Total number of students our staff interacted with during quadmester 1 and 2. Includes middle school and high school classrooms, gardens, alternative education and outreach programs.

CLASSROOM VISITS: 62

Number of lessons prepared and delivered, including gardening activities, indoor and outdoor cooking, food education and sustainability workshops.

TOTAL HOURS: 148

Time Roots to Harvest spent delivering food-focused, hands-on experiential lessons in schools this year.



WHAT DO TEACHERS THINK OF ROOTS TO HARVEST IN CLASSROOMS?



Example of how R2H uses qualitative and quantitative data in a Semester 1 school report. This is sent to teachers, principals, superintendents and directors of the school board whose schools participated in Roots to Harvest programs.

80% OF TEACHERS SAY ATTENDANCE IMPROVES WITH ROOTS TO HARVEST

TEACHERS HAVE STATED:

"It is always refreshing for the students to have outside community partners in the class to present and work with the students."

"My attendance is always better when R2H is doing a workshop."

"...the day when we set-up the grow towers there were many students that were actively participating that wouldn't typically be engaged."

"...the fire making and making and eating bannock was super cozy and it allowed students to connect to their class at the beginning of the school year."