

## **ART AND CREATIVE SKILLS COLLECTIVE (ACSC)**

### **LEARNING PEDAGOGIES AND PROGRAM FRAMEWORK**

Art and Creative Skills Collective (ACSC) uses Art-based programming and learner-centric pathways to enhance Mental Health well-being and develop 21<sup>st</sup>-century life skills among Canadian youth. Developed in consultation with Mental Health counsellors, artists and facilitators, each program has been carefully curated to have a preventative approach to tackling mental health issues, thus addressing the root causes of the problems.

Critical learning pedagogies for ACSC programming –

**Reflective Learning** - The programs offered by ACSC encourage the participants to share (when and if they feel ready) and explore their reflections and lived experiences with their fellow participants. The designed activities and prompts help the participants contemplate a lived situation, unexpressed experience, or a personal perspective. This learning pedagogy helps participants develop self-awareness through structured reflection, understand different standpoints, and build empathy and meaningful connection with others.

**Collaborative Learning** - Each workshop aims to promote social, active, and self-owned engagement among the group participants. The participants are exposed to diverse individuals and experiences to help them develop higher-level thinking, leadership skills, and civic involvement. It deconstructs the authority of one individual or narrative and encourages learning as equals, making it easy for participants to interact with and trust each other. It transforms the physical space into a high-trust circle where every participant feels safe and welcomed.

**Integrative Learning** - To thrive in the complex social networks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, ACSC implements integrative learning techniques so that the participants critically evaluate their strengths and challenges; connect to self - past, current, and future across diverse contexts. It helps participants define their purpose, be agents of personal learning, manage cultural complexities, quickly adapt to changes, and apply higher order thinking to real-life problems.

In the learner-driven environment developed by ACSC, the role of the facilitator is to guide by asking the right questions. They stimulate the learning process by considering the local context, the number of participants, the physical environment, cultural sensitivity and available resources and tools.

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Competencies -**

ACSC draws inspiration from the transformative view outlined by [C21's](#) Shifting Minds: A vision for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning in Canada, which prioritizes seven competencies required by youth to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship** - This competency involves the ability to turn ideas into action to meet the needs of a community. It encompasses the capacity to enhance concepts, ideas, or products to contribute new-to-the-world solutions to complex social, ecological, and economic problems. This involves leadership, taking risks, independent thinking, soliciting, and incorporating feedback, and experimenting with new strategies, techniques, or perspectives through inquiry research. Entrepreneurial mindsets and skills focus on building and scaling an idea sustainably (Source - New Brunswick Global Competencies - Govt of New Brunswick, Canada)

### ACSC Framework

- Participants learn to express their experiences through innovative artwork.
- Participants use their creativity to shine a light on the social issues such as Human Rights, Mental Health, social justice, economic, and climate crisis.
- Participants learn to lead, follow, or support their team members as per the need of the situation.
- Participants are involved in creative activities that help them reduce stress and anxiety.

**Critical thinking** - It is the ability to assess, gather, analyse, synthesize, and evaluate information to reach unbiased and logical decision-making. It enables participants to be prepared and provide new and creative solutions to complex real-world problems.

### ACSC Framework

- Participants are encouraged to observe complex issues from many perspectives.
- Participants learn to analyse, synthesize, and empathise in the process of creating a compelling and layered work of art.
- Participants become resilient, tolerant, and open-minded in the process of creating art.

**Collaboration** - It is the ability to come together to interact with a diverse set of participants, learn from each other, understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, and yet work together to achieve a common goal or instigate a change. It helps participants develop cultural sensitivity, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills.

ACSC Framework

- As a part of learning, participants work in small teams to finish a project.
- Participants engage and learn to receive and give feedback to build a positive learning relationship.
- Participants come together to formulate a collaborative creative solution to complex issues.
- Participants understand their responsibilities and duties as global citizens and thought leaders.

**Communication** - In current times, learners have to learn to communicate effectively in virtual and in-person spaces to build a common ground of understanding and consensus. Participants engage and use listening skills, non-verbal cues, and interpersonal knowledge to construct a meaningful conversation.

ACSC Framework

- Participants learn to communicate effectively with the members of diverse communities.
- Participants recognize the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Participants understand the nuances of culturally sensitive conversations in both in-person or virtual settings.
- Participants receive training on the correct use of technology and tools.

**Character** - Learners of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have to apply evolved character attributes to address novel and complex world issues. It becomes essential for learners to enhance leadership, responsibility, adaptability and ethics, a strong sense of self, and resilient Mental Health.

ACSC Framework

- Participants learn to be resilient, empathetic, sensitive, and proficient in decision-making.
- Participants understand the essence of mental and physical well-being.
- Participants become self-confident and realize their role in small or large-scale community interactions.

**Culture and Ethical Citizenship** - To be recognized as global citizens, learners should understand socio-economic issues, human rights, sustainability, environmental concerns, and the histories of different cultures. Applying these learnings will impact the leadership style and decision-making of the learners in the present world.

ACSC Framework

- Participants exhibit skills for working and leading in a multicultural setting.
- Participants understand the concepts of social justice, human rights, equity, and inclusion.

- Participants contribute to solving complex issues related to representation, race, access to opportunities and global sustainability.
- Participants develop cultural sensitivity towards other communities and support co-existence.

**Computer and Digital Technologies** - Learners have to exhibit proficiency in using digital tools, amplifying solutions and their reach. They have to harness the power of technology to combine traditional and new knowledge and connect with experts and peers worldwide.

#### ACSC Framework

- Participants learn to use tools and digital platforms for the betterment of communities.
- Participants utilize available technology to engage with peers and experts and create a fully equipped global community.
- Participants use resources to promote their work and amplify social impact.