

## Maskwacis Youth Photovoice Project

In the face of negative media attention, community members and Elders from the First Nation community of Maskwacis identified the importance of promoting community strengths and reframing perceptions of their community. Two research questions were addressed: (1) How do youth in Maskwacis view their community strengths? and (2) To what extent can photographs be used as a tool for reframing perceptions of an Indigenous community? A community-based participatory research approach was used for the current photovoice project, through which two Elders and eleven youth were engaged. Indigenous photographers trained youth participants, and Elders mentored youth to capture photographs that represented their community's strengths and resilience. Youth selected forty photos to display at a total of six photo exhibits, where feedback was gathered from 392 attendees using brief questionnaires. The content of their photos was analyzed using thematic analysis. This resulted in four themes that described the strengths of Maskwacis, reflecting the community's strong relationships, commitment to culture, the beautiful natural world that is a part of Maskwacis, and the community's ability to look toward the future. In addition, findings provide foundational support for the use of photographs to reframe perceptions of an Indigenous community. The majority (93%) of survey respondents provided examples of ways that viewing the photos had positively changed their perceptions of Maskwacis. This study prompts consideration of the strengths and resilience of other Indigenous communities facing similar social and health issues. Therefore, findings are highly relevant to paediatric health care providers seeking to provide culturally responsive care.

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