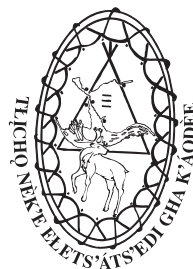


Stories From Our Youth

The Effects of
Addictions in our Community

from

"For the Sake of Our Children"
The Dogrib Addictions Strategy



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Tłıchŏ Community Services Agency
Behchokŏ 2007

The Addictions Strategy Steering Committee would like to praise the courage of the many elders, adults and young people who came forward and spoke to us, often painfully and with great difficulty, of their struggles with addictions.

We prayerfully dedicate this work to our youth and a future when our people can live free of the sickness of addictions.

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ISBN 1-896790-06-2

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Third Printing – March 2007

Introduction

In August 1998, because of growing concerns about addictions in Dogrib communities, the Treaty 11 Chiefs asked the Dogrib Community Services Board to develop an addictions strategy. This strategy was to be presented to the Dogrib leaders and people at our General Assembly in Gameti in August 1999. Our Steering Committee was appointed a few weeks later.

Over the next six months, we visited all the communities to consult with our people. We spent many hours in conversations, conducted healing workshops, carried out research and held numerous planning sessions. Finally, we summarized all the information we gathered in a report entitled, *“For the Sake of Our Children... The Dogrib Addictions Strategy”*.

During our public community consultations, many young people were too nervous to come forward. The Addictions Committee decided to work through the schools in our Board to get their opinions. This publication is the outcome. Students from the Chief Jimmy Bruneau Regional High School in Edzo, the Elizabeth Mackenzie Elementary School in Rae, the Mezi Community School in Wha Ti, the Alexis Arrowmaker School in Wekweti10 and the Jean Wetrade Gameti School in Gameti responded to these questions:

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it?

Their responses speak from the heart and it is their honesty which not only “tells it the way it is”, but also holds out hope for change. In a story told in Alkali Lake, it is the child who awakens the parent to their abuse of alcohol. We hope that these stories from our children will also serve to awaken all of us as parents to the terrible impact of addictions on their lives.

The Editor

Our people are very proud people

In the Dogrib communities, we have many wonderful things but we also have lots of bad things going on. In our community, we have many good strong leaders but we also have some very weak leaders. Our people are very proud people who have dignity and honour. At times, our good elders don't tell us about things but they tell us what is good and bad. We have many good people who are trying to help us and teach us, but some of the bad stuff in the community takes over almost everything. When we talk about addictions, we end up talking about all the pain, hurt and anger. We talk about all the bad stuff we have and sometimes we forget the good stuff we have. We need to have more good stuff develop in our community. We need more activities in the community. Right now we have nothing in the evenings and the town is boring so what else could we do but drink, use drugs, gamble or get into trouble. Why couldn't we have tons of stuff going on every night? The young people would be so busy that they won't have time to think about drinking or doing drugs. Right now they're at the Sportsplex where not much is going on. Maybe playing around with volleyballs and kids running around. In the Sportsplex, they can have lots of different kinds of games and activities such as volleyball, basketball, hockey, aerobics, curling and much more. The Friendship Centre can have activities every night like movies, crib board games, study night and much more. In the elders home, they can have elders story telling night. In the Culture Centre, they can have hand games, drum dances and different kinds of meetings. Leaders, if you care about your community and your people, put all your money into your community development and not into travelling.

I'm no angel

Drugs and alcohol are bad for a person's body. Everyone knows this. I know about this but we continue using it, why? It's a sad story to know. From my own experience with drugs and alcohol, all I can say about it, is that it took my friends and family away, so far away. I tried treatment, counselling, staying home, finding new friends, earlier curfew. I tried everything I could think of but nothing helps. I'm surprised to think that smoking drugs and drinking alcohol was cool, but it isn't. All it did was bring me down. At one point in my life drugs and alcohol was fun, so I thought. The only reason why I keep on doing this is because I've got problems, I know now. It has gotten harder for me to stop. Every time that bottle is in front of me, I feel like I can't resist it, I just have to have it for everyone around me is doing it. I remember coming home drunk and stoned out of my mind and denying that I didn't drink or smoke up and yet it was obvious. My family and I used to fight, argue, swear, cry and hurt each other all the time because of my addictions. Sorry is all I can say, but that will never be good enough. My drinking got so bad that it was almost everyday of the week.

I know I'm no angel, I hide my problems. I wouldn't cry in front of anyone but when I was drinking, crying was so easy to do. Saying everything I wanted, just getting everything out. Then the next day, after realizing what I did and said, I would feel embarrassed, not knowing how to act or who to talk to. So I would drink again and again, just to get the feeling out but it would never leave me. I hate hearing people say, "When are you going to change?" I can't say, because I don't even know, but I wish I did. I remember those tears in my eyes the first time I walked out of my parents' door with all my clothes, it

hurt so much to leave them. On the outside I hated them, I wanted to party and go out, but on the inside I loved them so much. I left my parents' home when I was sober. The moment I closed the doors, my tears fell and kept falling, and I couldn't help it. I wanted so badly to change and I still do. My advice to the community is that if you are gonna drink or do drugs, be careful. Letting go of addictions is very hard, I know. I'm still trying to help myself. I want to get help because I know I need it. I will try anything to change and be a better person. What I really want is my mother's trust and respect back. I will never get it until I change.

Misuse of drugs

- more young people are using drugs
- drugs can kill you
- drugs can be harmful
- drugs are expensive
- it can lead one to commit suicides and/or crimes
- some people become addicted to drugs, it becomes a bad habit
- drugs will make it tough for you to think, learn, walk, talk and see

The problems related to addiction

What we think of the problems that come from drinking, misuse of drugs, gambling and other addictions:

- some people misuse alcohol
- people get into fights
- some go crazy or out of control
- people get into arguments
- family split up
- some are not nice, may have ugly attitudes
- more young people are drinking today

- drinking makes people commit crimes
- some people go to jail
- some people bootleg
- some drink and drive
- some people commit suicide
- kids suffer when parents drink a lot
- drinking causes death
- parents do not listen to their children
- drinking can cause an accident
- some mothers drink during pregnancy
- kids are taken away from home
- drinking makes people become alcoholics
- some young girls become pregnant
- some children are not being looked after properly
- drinking creates more problems at home and in our community

Gambling

- often some parents are not home
- children are left home alone
- some people always gamble
- some kids are unhappy
- some kids get into trouble
- some kids feel unimportant
- some kids don't feel loved
- some kids are so sad, they cry alone
- children miss school and come to school late
- some children don't have good sleep and good meals
- some parents spend too much money on gambling
- some parents don't pay attention to their children's needs
- more money is spent on bingos and card games
- some parents stay out late at night gambling away
- some kids are hungry, when all the money is spent on gambling

What can we do about it?

- talk to our parents and elders about our problems
- parents should listen and talk to their children more
- parents should be more concerned about their children
- people should take alcohol and drugs counselling seriously
- have more resources available in public places
- have a drop-in centre for young people, for help they need
- take serious action against people who bootleg and sell drugs
- people should get help right away before it becomes a bad habit
- have an alcohol treatment centre in our community
- tell our parents to stop doing the bad habits of drinking, taking drugs and gambling
- let no alcohol come into our community
- make our community a dry community, absolutely no alcohol

We, the students from EMES, thought and talked about the problems that have to do with alcohol, drugs and gambling in our community.

We are concerned about these problems and HOPE something will be done about these. REMEMBER, we are the children of the future. Think about us.

Honour me mom

Take care of me
Give me hugs
Show me love.
Talk to me
I beg you mom!!!!

Community addictions strategy for drugs, alcohol and gambling

First of all, I think there has been far too many surveys on this particular topic and not enough action taking place where it should be placed. FACT – all the communities of the Dogrib Region still have gambling, drug and alcohol problems. Especially during any Treaty 11 Assemblies, it's a shame to see our people gambling instead of greeting one another or participating more in hand games and drum dances. Sure it's great to win some money once in a while, but the community leaders should not allow it anymore during treaty assemblies because they are showing no respect towards our land agreement, that's what those people are there for anyway, not for gambling. Winter roads are fine, but when it comes to people bringing alcohol into their community, it's a total mess; meaning people fight, get hurt, etc... Next time when there is a winter road, people should start paying a fee of about \$25.00 to get to Rae or Yellowknife. Like the ones in New York, there's a big bridge, before people cross over, they have to pay. I am only 18 and not excited about turning 19. Anyways, they should raise up the age for drinking, it should be 21 instead of 19.

I hope everyone will quit

I live in Rae Lakes. I think some people are getting drunk. The woman said she is gonna quit drinking and the man said he's gonna quit drinking. I hope everyone will quit. Then we will be happy.

We are learning it from the older people

I think a lot of people have a lot of addiction problems like smoking pot, drinking and gambling. Even the older people are smoking. I guess that is where we, the teenagers, have learned it from. We are learning it from the older people, besides they always offer us beer or weed. I don't think there is anything we can do about it unless they stop on their own and start realizing this is not worth it. It is just a waste of money and sometimes friends. From an experienced user, I don't think this town would ever stop using things that are addictive. Even the most unexpected people use weed, so we can't help it. But just sit and let them do what they want. The whole town has a choice to make, either to quit or not. I personally think they would still smoke and do other things that are addictive.

He says you can't make me

I saw my cousin drink way too much with his bad friends, when he is sober sometime he's bad or good. I would tell my cousin not to drink but he says you can't make me! And I said O.K!

I am an adult now and I should drink

For a long time now, people in our communities have excessively drank alcohol. Every weekend, the adults are out of the communities (our role models) spending all their money on drinking large amounts of alcohol to the point of intoxication. Why? Adults are raising children, when their children are out of the way, they drink and they invite their friends over. When a child sees that their parents are drinking, it automatically initiates to the child's mind that drinking is O.K.

Tens years later, as teenagers, they begin to drink, because they saw their parents drink. They're thinking, "I'm an adult now, I should drink, beside what's the harm? It looks like fun." Drinking is not all fun and games, it's a serious matter. I'm not saying you should stop drinking alcohol completely, what I am saying is, limit yourself and think thoroughly. Don't drink to get drunk, it's foolish. When you're drunk, you don't know what you're doing, people who are often drunk, tend to get aggressive, and make a public spectacle of themselves. Alcohol is not healthy; it can cause liver and other diseases.

When you drink and drive, that is the most stupid thing anyone can do. You can get killed or seriously wounded. Drinking and driving is a deadly combination. To pregnant women who drink alcohol, they have a high risk factor of having a FAS child (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.) This means that the unborn baby drinks anything you drink, including alcohol. This impairs the baby's mind as well as damages the baby's internal organs. Drinking is harmful to the unborn baby. When dealing with alcohol, think carefully, don't get drunk, it's plainly stupid and being drunk is stupid. To pregnant women who are thinking of drinking alcohol, don't! You're not doing any good, you're damaging your baby, don't drink. Alcohol is one of the many drugs that are common in the North. Just remember to think about what you're doing, drinking is not all fun, it can be dangerous. Teenagers and adults alike smoke drugs that can impair their way of thought. Smoking drugs can literally kill your brain cells, you're stupid even to try, but are you smart enough to stop? These drugs can make you into a total vegetable, so don't even try it. It's the dumbest thing to do. People, who quit all above- mentioned bad habits, have now turned to gambling. Why? They smoke cigarettes and other less

harmful addictions that don't impair one's mind. They play bingo and play and play and play until guess what? They have another addiction to weed out. Bingo is a social game. You see friends play, so you do it to have company. But the sad part is, sometimes the bingo players ignore their child's needs. The bingo money they use, was sometimes meant for groceries or other important things. You have to wonder why you're playing in the first place, bingo is not all that it's cracked up to be. It's dull, it's slow and your back hurts from sitting in one spot. Bingo, I'd like to point out that it's an addiction too. When you do something, make sure you think it through. What will happen if I...? There are a lot of what ifs; you know what's going to happen, so just stay away from the habit. I think that if we had more recreational facilities and more events, then our addictions will fall. Drugs and alcohol have harmful effects and need to have more noticeable warnings. There should be more public awareness about that subject. It shouldn't be left in the dark. We need more role models for the younger generation to show that addictions are bad habits to have. We have to point out plainly that drugs and alcohol are a serious matter. Drugs are not cool, drugs are hazardous to your health and drugs are stupid.

Alcohol doesn't do anything but kill you

I think that alcohol and other addictions are a problem in this community. Why do people drink alcohol? Alcohol doesn't do anything but kill you. People drink because they think it would take away problems and to escape from things. But you know what? It won't happen. Your problem gets worse and you can't get out of things easily cause you'll be so confused. I think drugs are a bad habit to

have. People who do drugs probably already know that drugs aren't good for them but they still do it 'to act cool' and to be like other people who use drugs. Drugs don't do any good to your body. Drugs are just like alcohol, they kill you. My advice to the community is that if you drink or do drugs be careful and think about why you are doing this.

Beaten up for booze

We can try everything we can possibly do, but it'll never stop. We see them everywhere. We try to help by giving them a home, a job, a buck or two, we even give them advice. But we all know that it will always be the same, it's like a virus that will never end. It's just the sensation of it, to be free of problems and reality, but after two hours or so, you'll be back to the real world with more problems that will build up. You'll feel good for a while, that's all. We all need to let the wild demon inside of us free at times, it doesn't need to be through alcohol and drugs. We see many bad things happen when alcohol is around. Every weekend there's always somebody beaten up for booze. So why can't anyone stop or even try to stop it. I wish alcohol and drugs were never found or made.

Stop complaining and do something about it

Alcohol addiction is a very serious problem in our community. I think people should spend more time out on the land. They can stay away from alcohol and drugs and work on themselves. There is always something to do in the bush. In Rae, they always say there is nothing to do and it's boring. All they do is drink alcohol or do drugs. Maybe they think that they are just having fun but they won't know until they start having problems with

themselves. Some people complain about alcohol. Stop complaining and do something about it. Make a bible camp away from town so they can study the bible and learn about how alcohol affects you.

Alcohol and drugs are going way out of hand

I think that alcohol and drugs are going way out of hand. They should isolate this place so no one can go to Yellowknife. That's where they get all the drugs and alcohol. Since the checkpoints are not working, why don't they just ask a cop to sit at the liquor store to check who is from Rae and who is not.

It's time to change your life around

It has been so long now since I watched my family, friends and cousins drink and use drugs. It has been a long time now, it's time to change your life around and think about yourself while you are still young. You have the wisdom and knowledge to lead yourself to where the good spot is and to stay when you have the choice. Do you choose to stay on the bottle for the rest of your life or do you choose to have a good education with a good future ahead? When you get involved with drugs and alcohol try to stay away from it as much as you can before it kills you.

Clean up this town

I think alcohol and other drug addictions are a serious problem in the communities. Many people drink to have fun, but when they drink they would act differently, they would have a fast temper and abuse their family. When they go out, they leave their children behind, children who can't take care of themselves

because of their age. Older people should not do drugs for they are our role models and influence our younger children. If children grow up in an alcoholic family, it could ruin their lives. How would they feel towards their parents? We need a healthy community where children can grow up healthy. If they grow up in a community where everyone drinks, the children just might end up like them. Native people have a reputation. A reputation from our history, culture, language and traditions. But if they drink, what would other people with a European background think of us? Savages? When they drink, their children could be taken away. Why do people drink? What do they want with their lives? What do the children want? There should be a Treatment Centre in each community that offers more counselling for those who need it. A healthy community is a drug-free community with a safe and clean environment. An unhealthy community is just the opposite. We shouldn't let alcohol or other types of drugs take over the community. What would our children's future be like? They should put a checkstop by the Rae junction. Nowadays, more and more people are using drugs and alcohol. It's like losing our traditions. In the old days, the people would be out in the bush, hunting, trapping, teaching young kids how to hunt, trap and other stuff. There wouldn't be any alcohol in those days. Ever since it has existed, people have been drinking. In the old days, we used to help each other, but now we're hurting one another. Most people don't get along; they fight and argue. What are we doing to ourselves? What are we teaching our children, our future generation? If we keep drinking, it could get worse in the future generation. If people drink to have fun because it's too boring, maybe they should open new facilities. When people drink, they don't know

what they're doing. Sometimes they fool around and sleep with people. They could get pregnant, or even get a disease like AIDs or STDs. Why don't they think twice about this? If people want to drink just to have fun, that's O.K. But someone should watch out for them. In the olden days, people and young kids would listen to their elders because they were wise. Now hardly anyone listens to them. If they did, our lifestyles would be different. There wouldn't be drugs and alcohol. Sometimes alcohol can be genetic or heredity. Or it just runs in the family. In my family, my grandpa used to drink and now it's my dad. When I go to Yellowknife, I would see my sister and brother drinking. I used to drink with my friends. For six months now I haven't touched alcohol. I just drink a couple of sips, but I wouldn't want to get myself drunk. It's a crazy world out there and who knows what could happen next.

Let's bring the community together

I think that alcohol becomes so addictive that it gets out of control as well as bingo. Families should spend more time together with their families. The thing that we can do about it is to have more workshops and a lot more drum dances. I think that the drum dances can bring the communities together and people learn to have a good time without alcohol or drugs. I really have nothing to say and that's all I wanted to say. One more thing to say is that people that really count on doing drugs, we can't force people to stop, they have to do it themselves but I really don't think they have the self-discipline.

If you want a happy family, be with them

The problem in Rae is that parents don't think about their kids, they just want to win some money to go to the bingos that are coming up. In any town, when there is a meeting going on, people go out at night and start playing cards or start playing bingo. Some parents, who don't make bingo or never win any money in gambling, get mad and take it out on their kids and they don't buy anything for them. Even some parents who have the last bit of money and don't have anything to eat in their house, they think that they are going to win the bingo. So they go out and start playing with the last bit of money. If they don't win anything, they start asking for money and go out again and lose again. It's the same with alcohol and drugs. That's why there's a problem with our town. Whatever the parents do, the kids follow their parents and learn from them. So I'm saying this, be with your family and they should always come first in every way and everything. Not gambling or using drugs and alcohol. If you want a happy family, be with your kids and they will do the same thing to you.

Which I'm recovering from...

What do I think? I think that alcohol is affecting everyone's life, I mean the residents of Rae-Edzo. I know that it's easy for them to get the booze and drugs in Yellowknife. The reason why I know this, is because I am a user myself, which I'm recovering from. What can we do about it? People of Rae can do a lot to put a stop to it. They can have a lot of police working on checkpoints, not only on weekends but everyday except for Sundays. Set up meetings and workshops every week and a big workshop once a month. Kids also need places to hang out.

A lot of problems

I think there are a lot of problems in the community of Fort Rae because there are a lot of alcoholics and drug addicts. Most of the middle aged people are drug addicts and the old people are alcoholics. There is nothing that we could do but smoke a joint with them and offer them a beer. The only thing us kids do is smoke dope, play in the gym, then go home and have a good night's sleep. During school hours we go on one of our Nature walks and have a good blast.

Think about your children's future

I know that there are a lot of serious problems going around in our community. If the community people want to stop this alcohol why can't they have a public meeting every weekend? At the meeting, try to get a lot of young people or teenagers to talk about themselves or about their parents' addictions. I know there are a lot of young people with their problems, because they blame their parents. I know some parents can do their best to stop their young people from drinking or doing drugs. Parents need to stop playing bingo on the weekend and spend time with their children. Your children are more important than playing bingo every weekend. If there are any AA meetings going on, go there with your children and see what's going on in their minds. Anyway my two suggestions are shut down the liquor store and have AA meetings every weekend. Think about your children's future. Children are more important.

Drugs are bad for families

I live in Rae Lakes. I think drugs are bad for families in our community. If some people use alcohol they can cause problems or kill themselves. I hate alcohol and drugs. Please stop it.

They party every weekend

I think that there are lots of problems regarding drugs and alcohol. There are lots of young and middle age people smoking pot and drinking. There is nothing we can do about that, the only thing we can do is smoke them a joint or give them a beer. As for me, I smoke a joint or two a day with my buddies and drink every weekend. My friends and I party together every weekend. I think there are a lot of drug dealers in our community who are selling to mostly teenagers. About 50% of junior high are smoking joints everyday, or other drugs. About the alcohol situation, there is a lot of young and old drinking every weekend with some drinking everyday. There are lots of bootleggers selling to minors. They don't care who it is, just as long as they make money and the young get drunk off it. The only thing we can do about it is to send them to treatment and ask the drug dealers and the bootleggers to stop selling so that the young people can try to stop drinking and stop smoking. The people that are supporting our habits are our parents and grandparents. People that smoke; smoke in public places or on the road while they walk around. They go out for parties and party while they're walking around. They get their supplies from YK such as drugs and alcohol. When people are doing drugs or alcohol they sometimes do crazy things like break and entry, break or bust car windows or get into a big fight.

It's true, alcohol is the problem

Its true, alcohol is the problem. A problem they can't handle but there is another side to it too. Some people grew up with alcoholism, being abused and growing up with low self-esteem. These people also turn to alcohol, which they thought would help, but it turned out to be a serious problem for their family, friends and the community. But what about the family victims? They should do something about it because they are the ones who put them there!! Parents should be responsible for the children's sake because they are the ones who taught and educated their children how to live in this world. They should help them, instead they let the community do their job. Point it out, there are some things that will help them only if the whole family gets involved. But, sometimes families don't realize that there is problem because they don't know how to help others.

Get together

The thing we can do about drug and alcohol addictions is to get together and talk about what alcohol and drugs can do to people who are close to us like our friends, family and other people. Many people can go to places like Edmonton for different kinds of help, which could help them with their personal and addiction problems. People who use drugs become more violent and get out of control with themselves. People get abused, physically and sexually, because of the alcohol and drug use. When they pass out, they get raped and sometimes they don't even know it themselves. People started it because they see other people do it and they think it's cool, that's why they start.

Sometimes I don't like my dad

Sometimes I see people drinking on the week-ends. I have used drugs and alcohol before when I was 13 years old. Sometimes my dad likes to drink lots but my grandparents would leave him alone, they won't talk to him and I would leave him alone too because it's none of my business. I am living with my grandparents and I love living with them because they don't drink or do drugs. Sometimes in the winter my grandpa and I would go caribou hunting. My grandpa often tells me stories about long ago. He talks about how people used to live in the hard times. My grandmother, who stays home a lot, takes care of the house. She makes clothing for me to use in the bush. I like the fact that my grandparents are not drinking because they always have a lot of money for me and always have a lot of food in the house. At night we are able to have a good sleep, which I really appreciate. Sometimes I don't like my dad when he goes to Yellowknife because he likes to drink. Sometimes I go to Yellowknife to see my mom, I like my mom, and my grandparents. I see my mom and I like to clean the house for my mom. Sometimes people in Rae Lakes do drugs or alcohol because there is nothing else to do for it is so boring. In the evenings our parents are not gambling, drinking or doing drugs but most of the kids are left home alone with nothing to do and it's so much easier to get the drugs or alcohol. We need our leaders and elders to create more activities for us in the communities. We should have lots to do in the evening, then our young people might stop using drugs or alcohol.

Drug and alcohol problems

I feel sorry for the kids who are addicted to alcohol and drugs. What can we do about it? We can stop the drinking by banning alcohol

in Rae-Edzo. We can put the police on the highway so they can check vehicles for alcohol or drugs, so that people can't bring drugs or alcohol in the community. Then they would not be drinking or smoking drugs in Rae-Edzo once again. Describe how it has affected you? I know some kids who smoke drugs or drink. It affects them because they look at their friends and copy them. That's how they drink and do drugs. I know some friends who never did drugs or drink before but now they do drugs and drink because they want to copy their friends. That's how they start doing drugs and drinking. I don't do drugs or drink because I don't want to copy others.

They can do better than that

I think there is a problem with drug and alcohol in this town because I see people high on drugs or drunk almost everyday, well, I only see drunk people on the weekend but I also see them during the week sometimes. I sometimes see my friends drunk or high but I don't usually stay long. Just to say hi, because they might tell me to get drunk or high with them, so I try to get away fast when I see they are using drugs or alcohol. I don't like it when my friends are drunk or high because they can do better than that. I think there should be something done about it fast.

When he drinks, he doesn't know what he's doing

I have a friend in my class that drinks, smokes up and smokes cigarettes. When he drinks, he doesn't know what he's doing. When there are kids around him, they steal his money and go away from him when his pockets are empty. When he gets home his parents get mad at him. When he wakes up in the morning his head is sore and he feels pretty bad.

It hurts me really bad, when I see people drink

Yes, I see a lot of people doing drugs. Especially near the warehouse by the Sportsplex. Most of the teenagers between 13 and 19 years old are doing drugs as well as older people. I think that teenagers and adults should stop doing drugs. If they don't, people could get hurt or even get killed. I wish I had an idea how to stop this but I can't think of one. I also see a lot of people drink whiskey, beer or vodka. It hurts me really bad when I see people drink. I want to cry, but it wouldn't stop, it will probably make it worse. I just hope that someone could destroy drugs and alcohol. Sometimes when I'm feeling mad or really down, I would smoke a cigarette. I know it won't make me feel good but I don't know how else to calm myself down. I have a cousin whose name I can't mention who smokes drugs and drinks, and a lot more, which I do not know about. She knows that it's not good for her but she doesn't care. I hope that she quits doing all that because I don't want it to harm her and her body. Before she started to do drugs and drink alcohol, I thought she looked really pretty and beautiful. Ever since she started drugs and alcohol, I thought she's started looking terrible. Sometimes I would think of what a terrible looking thing is right in front of me. But she still looks a bit pretty, not all that terrible. I guess drugs and alcohol does that to your body once it gets into your system. We used to be just like sisters, but not anymore. She's the one who got me started smoking, but I quit because of the taste and the stinkiness of it. I smoke once in a while but I'm not saying that I am a smoker. I keep telling her that smoking, smoking up, drinking and all that is going to rot her brain and could kill her but she still won't listen to me. I hope

people would stop this right away, I feel as if I am the only one that isn't drinking or doing drugs. But I am smoking cigarettes. I don't like it when I see people drink because they go CRAZY!! If I had one wish, it would be to destroy all the different types of drugs and alcohol. When I'm old enough to make my choice to do whatever I want to do, I won't do anything to harm me or my baby. If you're a smoker or/and an alcoholic, it would make a big difference if you quit. You'll probably have more friends and you'll save a lot more money and you'll smell clean, not stink like a skunk. That's my story, Thank you for taking your time to read it.

I'm scared I might lose my friends to the booze

I think people have problems with alcohol, drugs and gambling. Some people drink or do drugs just to get rid of their problems. Sometimes I think that the problem is with booze. Some teens drink and do drugs to have fun cause it's too boring around here. There's no activities happening for the youth. I think families should spend more time with each other and try to have an alcohol and drug free home. Let's all help to make this town a better place before it's too late. I'm scared I might lose my friends to the booze or drugs and I don't want that to happen.

These are part of my problems too

There are some things I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. There are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. These are part of my problems too because I don't like it when they bring it to my house. Because they are drunk they swear at us. When they

drink, they go crazy. When they're drunk and come into my house we throw them out. One time last year my dad was drinking and he tried to break the window because he wanted to go in but we didn't let him in. When he is in our house he gets crazy like that when he's been at a party.

Don't drink, they might rape you

I don't really care if my parents or friends drink because it is hard to stop them when they are addicted. Most of my friends in Rae buy drugs, which is the worst one to stop. They like to buy drugs because it's cheap. What can we do? I can't really do anything about it because it is not my business or my body. If my friends smoke up or drink, I walk away from them. I have a lot of friends who smoke up but a few friends who drink. We can have meetings and they can talk about their problems. Describe how it has affected you? I'm scared something might happen to them. I try to stop them by saying something scary like, "Don't drink, they might rape you." "No they aren't," is the response I get from my friends. Please help us. Make our community better.

I see people drinking

I see people drinking. Some get killed by accidents or fighting. Drinking is bad. I don't like people drinking. I think we should have RCMP because people drink too much. We should have more activities to do. We want a treatment centre.

Drugs and alcohol

I live in Rae Lakes. People there normally don't drink. My dad used to drink a long time ago, but he quit. At the pool hall no one drinks there. I've never seen anybody drunk there, but I've seen people standing around selling drugs in Rae Lakes and the price is for \$20 a joint. It's a waste of money so we want a treatment centre in the Dogrib Region.

Bingo has affected people

Some people are addicted to bingo. In my town, people are addicted to alcohol and drugs. The chief should send the alcoholics to the treatment centre. Stop and get rid of all the addictions because they are not good.

Addictions bring you down

Yes, I see a lot of people drink in Rae or Edzo. It makes our community look really bad when we have visitors. I wonder what they think about us. People should go to treatment to stop drinking and doing drugs. On the weekend, that's when I usually see people drunk and or high, staggering on the road. Usually I see old people and young people and they are not with their friends or anything, but in Yellowknife. I think it's worse when I see ladies with other men, not with their lady friends or when I see men with lots of other ladies. When I grow up, I don't want to be like them, a bum on the street, roads or hitchhiking. Women could get picked up by men and get abused or something like that. I have a cousin who lives in Edmonton and I think he does drugs and drinks. I heard that my cousin went to jail but he's out now. I don't usually see him but he's a criminal. I also have another cousin who is a criminal and lives in Fort Smith. I heard that his friend stole a vehicle but not him. He was with them

but only watching. They drove it all the way to Hay River. Now he's in the place where little girls and little boys go to jail, the juvenile jail. That's where he was last time but I don't know why. There's always a checkstop when you're leaving Yellowknife road. I hate that, we always have to stop and it takes forever. Why doesn't anyone just stop buying alcohol and drugs for one whole day? Just one whole day. It is not hard but maybe it is for some people.

Damage your body

Alcohol and drugs cause problems because these things are bad for you. They damage your body and your brain. I'm scared of it.

My best friend told me not to trust anyone, not even my best friend

Really, I don't mind that people do drugs and alcohol. But when it gets out of hand that's when it really bugs me. Because I know these people and some of them are my loved ones that had their lives torn apart for what? Drugs and alcohol did it to them. I grew up in a home where my parents fought and until this day, I really don't understand why they do this? For my friends who bum around for money and look for drugs to smoke, it really got to me because they can't support their own habit. Then why do they do that? I have quite a bit of neighbours living on my street who deal drugs to teenagers. Where I live is around the school area and they live near me. I don't know if my friends, brothers and sisters are getting the drugs off of them, or if they're even doing them. That really scares me. Why? Because these children that I know that are in grade five and six, they are the ones that will be the people that will looked up to in the future. When I entered the school of CJBRS,

I knew that I was in a good school but when I took a real good look again, I know I'm not in a safe place. There are still drugs going around the halls and the teachers don't know about it and no one talks about this. Because the one that brings it forward will be the one with blood on the face. I also know this one girl that got raped and didn't know about it until she woke up after passing out from drinking. There was a big party and a lot of guys were there. This girl got really drunk and blacked out. The guys that were at the party told her to do some mean stuff, she did and the next thing you know, she got it. Her girlfriends left her behind and I don't know why. In this life that I live, I was told by my best friends not to trust anyone, not even my best friend, now that's very scary...

Mixed with other stuff

I'm concerned about why people and kids drink alcohol. Well all I know is that people only drink when they want to have fun or if they're mad and stressed out. I know alcohol is something that makes you feel good but there are some things that you people or kids should know. Alcohol is bad and it can get you in trouble or kill you. Especially drugs because when you buy drugs you might buy it mixed with other stuff. The dealer might put sugar or baking soda or even rat poison in the drug so you might not get high or you might get killed. It happened in other places before. So think about that before you go out to get it.

We are forced to lie for each other

My brother is addicted to drugs and alcohol. He started doing marijuana because his friends got him started. A couple weeks ago, he came in at 2:30 a.m. and I was watching him for

a few minutes and asked him, "How come your eyes are red and small?" He told me to lie because he didn't want to get caught and he was scared. My mother asked him, "How come your eyes are red and small?" He told my mom that he was tired and sleepy. Sometimes we are forced to lie for each other, just to protect each other.

We want a treatment centre

I'm from Rae Lakes and like to play soccer. I don't like to drink because I see people stoned or drink sometimes just to have fun. I've lived in Rae-Edzo and during weekdays people like to drink and smoke up. People think it is a good feeling but often times it causes problems all around you and for your family. Sometimes people drink and drive! That's scary, so we want a treatment centre here in our communities.

Why do these things happen?

What should you, and we as children, do to stop this? We could always have an AA meeting and have a place like an outreach place that people could turn to, talk to someone and sleep if they are scared or in danger. But it can't be run by our people. One more thing that I've learned is that people around here like to spread news and talk about one another. That's, like, so very sick! I'm 15 years of age and as a girl I've learned more in one year on the streets than a parent could teach in an entire lifetime. Drugs, where to get them, smoke, the same with alcohol. Even if I write this, nothing would change if it hasn't for the past 15 years that I've been here. I'm just writing this so you could know and maybe think about it. I hope so. I also know another girl that went through the same thing and is also the same age as me, only 15! 15 man! And she doesn't know about it but she found

out and hasn't told anyone. Why? Because she was scared of what was going to happen to her! Why do these things happen? I ask myself and wonder why people hate one another? I thought they were supposed to be a family living in a small town, but we're not. At times I even ask if there really is a God. All of my hopes and dreams, I thought were in God's hands. But now I realize that it's in my hands and my people's hands. And for God, He's just there to give us that hand to help us achieve that and to let us know we've got everything we need. As for ourselves, we've got to change ourselves, not just for ourselves but for others as well. I know why they do that shit, to kill the pain, to take care of what's hurting them so bad. I feel scared to write all of this but I know what I write is in good hands.

I really hate it

Nowadays a lot of our young people are using drugs and alcohol because there is nothing to do. They just want to look good but all it is doing is fucking up your life. It is so boring in the evenings, our parents are out gambling, drinking or something. Most of the kids are left home alone with nothing else to do and it's so much easier to get drugs and alcohol. Why don't our leaders and elders put their heads and money together to create more activities for us so that we're kept busy. I am going to tell you a story of drugs. On the weekends, I see young kids my age doing drugs. How do I know? They laugh for no reason at all. They look tired and their eyes are low and red. I really hate it when I hang around with people that are so stoned. They think they look cool but their lives are fucked up already and it's going to get worse if we don't do anything about it.

My mom is addicted to bingo

My mom always goes to every bingo game, my mom is addicted to bingo and told me so herself. One day my mom was in a bad mood because she didn't have any money to play bingo so I went out of my house to get out of her way. I felt really bad, so I went to the bush. I was playing around in the bushes for a few hours. Then I went to the Sportsplex. It is a place like an arcade. I stayed there for one hour and then I felt better so I went home. When I got home my mother was out, so the house felt peaceful. I had something to eat, watched TV and then I went to sleep.

Bad for you

I live in Rae Lakes. Alcohol causes problems as well as gambling because these things are bad for you because you might do something to others.

I know how to take care of myself when I see people drinking

All of my life I have seen a lot of people drinking alcohol in my community called Rae. Some of them are really violent, some are sad and some of them are just acting crazy. I always thought when I was a little girl that drinking is always scary for me. But right now I just think it's just a little scary because I know how to take care of myself when I see people drinking because when I see drunk people I just walk away from them. I don't even look at them and/or I look at them mean. But now I am a teenager. I see alcohol and drugs on the loose for people like us now. Oh sure I tried alcohol before but I only tried it twice. When I tried alcohol, I only took a sip and then I felt like throwing up after a while. So right now

I don't drink and I don't intend on trying to because I have a life to take care of. And I don't want to become like my other friends who drink all the time if it's a special weekend and they always smoke up drugs. Drugs are one thing that is really hard to quit! All of my friends like to smoke up, they even smoke up right in front of me. I haven't smoked drugs either. Why? Because I hate the smell and the way people act when they smoke up. I hate it when they laugh for nothing and I especially hate it when they smoke up to show off to people and to think that they are cool. So right now I am trying to prove something here, I don't want people to do stuff that is really bad for them, so lets put an end to this!! We should check vehicles for booze or drugs when they come back from Yellowknife. Other people should help their friends from not using drug and alcohol. So I have one thing to say to you. Please take care of yourself.

They are learning this from grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters...

In the community, I see a lot of changes in people. Right now I see drunk people on weekdays and especially on the weekends, which I really hate!! It is sometimes hard for me to see people that are my age having fun with alcohol. What can we do to prevent this from happening? I suggest that we should have checkstops on the highways daily but especially at night because I know kids my age usually come back on weekends with alcohol, late at night.

Drugs: On weekends I see kids my age on drugs. How do I know? They laugh for no reason at all. They look tired, their eyes are red and low and watery. I really hate it when I hang around with people that are so stoned,

they sometimes ask me if I want to chip in and do drugs. There are a lot of friendships broken-up that I see and then the next day they don't remember until they realize that they hurt their friend's feelings. What can we do? Well, what I do is make them talk together alone and tell them what is wrong and what is right with drugs.

Gambling: There are a lot of young kids that are starting to learn how to gamble with money. I think that they are learning this from grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters and other role models. When I go to places that I hang out, I see kids playing cards, coin toss and so on. And I don't like it at all. What I do? I talk to my friends and I tag along with them until they get bored and then their mind don't want to gamble and then they just want to go home so the best solution is to find other activities.

Why, why?!

I think that we should make a law that there should not be any alcohol sold to younger adults because a lot of guys are getting young women pregnant. There is a lot of this happening in our town. I know some people that sell alcohol, but I'm not the person I used to be. I always used to drink and do drugs but all that just made my life really bad, like some guys always tried to take advantage of me but I just walked away. Well, a lot of older guys try to take advantage of younger girls. Just a month ago, three younger boys died from smoking marijuana and there was cocaine in it and you never know if some people might just do the same thing in our town and we don't want that to happen here. What I'm trying to say is there should be more police and undercover people because I know a lot of older guys that are selling drugs and

alcohol to younger people. Like there are three friends of mine who go to Yellowknife, get people who are old enough to go into the liquor store to buy them alcohol. And some younger girls and boys are getting fake IDs to get in the liquor store or the bar. Like two of my friends are getting fake ID to get in the bar this weekend. I don't know where they get it from. Well, last year in between August and September my friend got pregnant. I told her not to go out with these guys, whom she doesn't even know that well, but she didn't listen. She said the last thing she remembers is that they gave her alcohol and were smoking marijuana, and she told me she should have listened to me because of what happened to her. I know a lot of women who are getting hit by their husbands or boyfriends. Because my mom's old boyfriend always used to go out and drink and then he came back drunk. He always used to think that my mom was seeing other guys but she wasn't so he starts putting all his anger on her and sometimes he would put it all on me as well, so he started to hit us. Sometimes he would touch me on my private parts and everything. I haven't told anybody because he threatened me. He said if I ever tell anybody he would do something really bad to me or even call the police. When I was about nine or ten he took some pictures of me which I didn't really like. I was crying and telling him not to bother me anymore or else I'll call the police. When I said that he just started hitting me and kicking me and then my mom came home from work. He went downstairs and my mom asked, "What's going on?" and he said, "Nothing we're just having a little fun." So that day I moved to my grandma's until he moved away.

"STOP" the alcohol and drugs in our community

I think they are right because there is a lot of drugs in Rae-Edzo and alcohol. So I think they should "STOP" the Alcohol and Drugs in our community. People always go to Yellowknife and buy booze and go back to Rae and sell it to their own people. Also people sell drugs as well in Rae-Edzo and always sell it to kids and adults. In the past years, in '97, my cousin and I bought marijuana just to try it out and when we started smoking it, we started to feel high and when I went to Sportsplex I went to the washroom. When I looked in the mirror, my eyes were just red and low, then I went into the gym, my friends asked me if I wanted to play volleyball with them. Then my friends asked me, "How come your eyes are red and low?" I said that's because I'm stoned. When I went to play volleyball with my friends, I couldn't play because I was too high on drugs. Then my cousin said to go look for a cigarette so I went out to look for smoke. I asked my friend, "Do you have a smoke?" and he said, "Are you stoned or something?" When I went back to my cousin, he said, "Spark your smoke." "Do you have a light?" I asked him. When we were done I was feeling hungry and my throat was dry and I needed a drink. Afterwards I felt tired so I went to my grandma's house and ate caribou meat and watched TV. and went to sleep. The next day was Friday, that's when everyone parties around town and my cousin asked me if I wanted to drink that night.

What could be more important to you than I

Mom, when you leave me alone I'm so scared that a monster will come in and hurt me. Why do you always leave me? I need you at home

with me so that I can sleep well at night. I need my sleep but I also need your love and warmth at night. Where do you go? What could be more important to you than I?

I just watch them fight

Do you know what I think? I think it's not your business and is not your problem and it's not your life. So allow the people to have fun and let them do what they want to do. That's their problem and their life. Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to stay in my house, sit on the sofa, be lazy and watch TV all Friday night and I will not do drugs or alcohol. For all my life I never did drugs or alcohol and I'm proud of that. But I smoke cigarettes twice a day and I tried to quit smoking forever. I should have done it three years ago. Every Friday night I look out of my window and guess what I see. I see people walking around and fighting, teasing, calling names, swearing, pushing and yelling. When I see people fighting, I just watch them fight because I don't know them. They have friends with them. Their friends don't stop them, they're just watching them, drinking whiskey and laughing. What a world!! Adults these days, they don't know when to quit drinking and doing drugs.

Close the bar, make everyone stop

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. My friend is addicted to drugs like marijuana and alcohol, just because of his friends and girlfriend. They like to do drugs almost every weekend and then they would drink too. I think it is bad for their health. They could die from doing drugs or the can get very sick and die. I don't like what's

happening to my friends. I really don't like it. We can stop people from doing drugs. Close the bars. Make everyone stop. Burn all the drugs.

Throw that stuff away

I have been worried about my people in this community because they use drugs and alcohol. Every weekend drunk people walk around and some people are high. Why did drugs and alcohol come into this world. My parents use to be alcoholics, they always drank and I didn't like it because they always fought. My mom used to cry, my dad always use to beat up my mom. She used to get a black eye and blood all over on her body. Yesterday, I went to visit my grandma and grandpa. I talked to them about drugs and alcohol, because I was wrong to touch those kinds of drugs before. I did that everyday. I started doing it when I was 11 years old. I though it was cool but it's wrong. I always wanted my people in this community to be clean. Throw that stuff away, like drugs and alcohol. I hope one of these days everything will be OK. Because I just know that you can get better, instead of using drugs and alcohol. It's OK to be relaxed, playful and have a fabulous time. You have a right to change and grow. I think it's time I asked you why I have been disruptive at school. Something is wrong because you keep asking me, "What is the Matter?" The reason I haven't told you before is that I am too embarrassed to talk to you in the classroom in school. I know how drugs and alcohol make you feel bad and it's wrong. Please, just stop doing those kind of bad habits. Drugs and alcohol, it came to be but how is it that everything is going to be OK? I don't know what is going to happen with me but I just know that my people are still going to be doing drugs and alcohol. That

is crazy because I know that's going to ruin everything. What are you doing is so wrong because that's bad stuff. They should have AA meetings, because people need to listen to people who had experience with alcohol and drugs. I know people have a lot of problems, they should talk about their problems. That's all I have to say. Thank you. Masi cho

Addiction screws up everyone

I think we need more police and we need more bylaws and parents need to discipline their kids over the weekend. Parents need to spend more time with their children, take them out to bush even just for a day or go camping. Teach them how to do things in the bush otherwise nothing will change. There is always something going on like fighting or boyfriends hitting their girlfriends or kids hitting their parents because they want some money for drugs and/or alcohol to get high. Once I had a friend who got into a fight with his best friend over a girl. He had a broken arm by a lousy cop. When you are drinking and smoking drugs, you can't remember anything the next day. Then when you wake up, you ask your so-called friends what happened last night. Then they say you made a total fool of yourself at this party we were at. Then they say this guy is going to beat you up because you fooled around with his girl. Once my cousin and his stupid friend stole a bike from this dealer in Rae and the dealer almost stabbed him with a knife. When you're drinking with a friend, sometimes he loves to fight, especially when he gets so drunk, so you walk away from him. Then the next day he says, you miss a big party man! Almost everyday in Rae, they play cards for money. The kind of games they play is called blackjack, seven cards and high/low. Sometime people walk around for two

straight days without any sleep. Sometimes parents drink and they hit their kids. Some people try to go out and have a good time but it ends up to a bad time. The End

My parents are my role models

There is a problem with drugs and alcohol. People who have problems with alcohol and drugs should go to treatment or attend AA meetings. Well, that's what my parents did. I used to hate it when they drank. My dad used to always beat up my mom. My parents used to have parties all the time. I started babysitting when I was eight years old. My sister would sleep over with friends when my parents drank, so I always had to watch my brothers. My mom always used to beat me up all the time for no particular reason. They weren't there for me when I needed them the most. One time, when my parents were drinking, my cousin molested me. He raped me while I was home alone with my little brother. I was afraid to tell, so I kept it to myself until two months ago. I told my parents. Before, I used to drink every weekend, I thought it would help but it just got worse. Now, I think I have the best parents in the world. They quit drinking and now we have more money than we used to. They also quit smoking. To tell you the truth, my parents are my role models now. We had rough times and good times but I love them dearly. When they used to drink, I thought no one loved me. I used to think about killing myself all the time. I thought no one would care. I thought about it for years, even when they were sober and when they stopped drinking. One time I got drunk and I almost killed myself but my friends stopped me. I cried and cried. They hugged me a lot and it felt good just to be hugged. A couple of months ago I tried again, but I changed my

mind because a person came into my life and made me change my life around. Now I don't drink or do drugs and I'm happy. But I DO GAMBLE!!!

Just for the hell of it

I think that there is too much drinking and smoking drugs, like marijuana and drinking hard stuff. I think that there should be police at the junction so they can stop vehicles so that they won't have any alcohol or drugs with them to bring into the community. Because there is too much bootlegging in town and then they won't have to drink or smoke drugs anymore. There are too many teenagers that drink, smoke up and smoke cigarettes. Many times I have seen older people buying cigarettes for younger people. I think the older people should stop buying cigarettes for children. There are so many children that smoke drugs and drink every weekend. I don't know why they do it but they drink just for the hell of it. When children buy a pack of cigarettes, they sell one cigarette for fifty cents or a dollar. They even sell cigarettes in the school for fifty cents or a dollar. Some young people even bootleg too.

We all need to get our life back

We can blow up the liquor store or shut it down for a couple of years or for good so that we could keep our people away from it. We all need to get our lives back, whatever that is or used to be?

We can throw every drunk person in the drunk tank

I think there is a lot of drinking and drugs in our town. We can throw every drunk person who are on the streets into the drunk tank to

keep them off the street and keep our street looking clean. Maybe they should build the jail or drunk tank somewhere, where there is nobody around but the trees and animals. I don't know what to say about drugs because there are some people who don't need it.

I realized he was trying to get me drunk to rape me

Drugs came into my life at the age of 12. The first time I smoked a joint with four of my friends, nothing had happened to us because one of my friends told us that all we had to do was smoke it as a cigarette. We did but nothing happened though. We were all feeling the same as we did before we smoked that joint. The second time, I smoked a joint was with my boyfriend, his brother and one of my friends. My boyfriend did drugs and I didn't mind. He sparked three joints and it was going around. When we were done smoking, I felt a lot different. I was scared yet at the same time I wanted to laugh at myself for being scared. Months passed and I started to smoke a lot. When I moved to Rae, I was a heavy smoker, I smoked everyday. If I missed one day, I would get mad at people. Right now, I smoke up only if I want to, that is only on special occasions. Alcohol came when I was fourteen years old. I was still staying in Rae. I started drinking with my friends in Rae and only drank on weekends. When I drank, I became a different person. The person who I liked being when I was drunk, I was not shy or scared of anything. I was not scared to do anything. I hate that person I turned into when I was sober. I was shy, scared, embarrassed and always in a bad mood. The only time I was happy was when I'm drunk. I had always thought that drinking would take problems away, but it doesn't. It just builds up more inside you. Last year, I drank with my boyfriend and friends of mine.

My boyfriend went home and I was trying to hitchhike back to Edzo with a friend, who was very drunk, and his friend came along. We couldn't find a ride so my friend's friend and I went to someone's house and dropped my friend off. I was left alone with my friend's friend but I wasn't scared. I live in Edzo so I had nowhere to go in Rae. This guy I was left alone with took me back to his house. He brought me into his room. He had 12 oz. bottle of Smirnoff. I really wanted to go sleep but he didn't let me. He took one shot of that Smirnoff and passed it to me, so I took a shot and went to sleep. After a while he took another shot and gave it to me, so I too had that shot again. He kept on doing this until I got drunk. I didn't realise that he was trying to get me drunk until I woke up at 12:00 noon the next day and I was sleeping beside him with no clothes on. I realized that he was getting me drunk to rape me. That's when I became really scared. I didn't know what to do. I thought I might get pregnant, and I didn't want to get pregnant at age 14. I was so scared, I started to cry until I fell asleep. By the time I took off from that house, it was 8:00 p.m. and it was dark outside. I had not learned my lesson after what happened to me. I still drank and two weeks ago, I drank in Yellowknife with friends of mine. There were guys I fooled around with. I fooled around with my best friend's ex-boyfriend whom she still loved. She found out and now she doesn't talk to me because of that. I told her I was sorry and the alcohol took over my actions. Now she's gonna beat him up. If I could change anything that had happened, I would have changed my weekend around when I had been raped and changed my weekend around where I had fooled around with my best friend's ex-boyfriend. Not only that, but I would change everything around in my life. Drinking runs in my family, all my relatives drink. I guess it runs in my family.

All my relatives drink but some had to get their education done. Now it's my turn to quit and get my education and finish grade 12. That's all I want in life, is to finish grade 12, achieve my goals and dreams. With drugs and alcohol in the way, I don't think I can do it. So I decided to quit alcohol and drugs before I go into grade 10 so it would be easier to finish school. I almost got pregnant from drinking and it ain't gonna happen again. Three years, I have been through a lot of bad things but not in my senior years, it's gonna be different.

Community problem

Once I was at my friend's place with all my friends. We all had money, so my friend (A) asked, "Do you girls wanna drink?" So we all said yes and we all put our money together. I guess we had \$70.00 all together. So my friend (A), friend (T) and I went out to look for friend (R). We went to the Sportsplex, we saw friend (R), friend (A), and friend (E). So we asked friend (R) to buy Smirnoff for us so he said yes. So friend (A) gave him \$50.00, so we had \$20.00 left and friend (A) said do you guys wanna buy two joints (marijuana)? So we agree to say yes, so we did. While we waited at Sportsplex, we saw a drug dealer, so we asked him if he had marijuana? He said yes. So friend (A) bought two joints and a couple minutes later, friend (R), friend (A), and friend (E) came back with the Smirnoff. We took off back to the house where we were. We took the Smirnoff out to drink it. We started drinking it. I guess, I drank too much of it and a couple of girls, we all got half-cut. So friend (A) said lets smoke outside so we all went outside to smoke a cigarette but instead friend (A) took out two joints, so we smoked up. Later on I was getting drunk and high, but I was still drinking the cup I had in my hand, so I told those girls let's go for a walk.

They said OK, so we all got up and left. I was just staggering and friend (A) kept on falling down to the ground, but I was drunk! Drunker than friend (A) so I kept on falling down on the snow. I got tired of it, I saw this truck passing by me, but they stopped and it was two ladies, my next door neighbour. They picked me up and put me in the truck and they took me home. When I got home, there were a lot of people gambling (playing cards). One of my aunties grabbed me and I kept on falling and people were just staring at me. My auntie took me to my room, so I guess they phoned my dad and told him to come over to the house. I don't know what I was doing so I got blacked out. The next morning I woke up and everything that was in my pocket was gone, my pipe, lighter, cigarettes and money was gone. So I went to the living room. I asked my grandma, "Where is my cigarettes and money?" She said your cigarettes are in your room, under your pillow and your dad took your money. She said not to drink anymore, she wasn't my mother but I listened to her. She said, "When I was about your age, there was no alcohol but in a couple years there was alcohol coming around Fort Rae. She drank and drank until I was about three months old and she stopped just to take care of me." I told her, "O.K., I will stop just for you." So I did. That day was in the year 1997 in December. I never drank and never did drugs since then and I am proud of who I am cause I am a sober and healthy teenager.

It makes you crazy

I think alcohol is bad for you because it makes you want to drink more and it's like fighting another person. The alcohol you're drinking goes all over in your body and it makes you crazy.

They might do something stupid

I don't like it when people drink because they fight and argue. If they get drunk, they might do something stupid, like stab each other, speed with the truck or skidoos. They could even argue with someone who said something bad about them a long time ago. They even commit suicide if they can't solve their problem.

Drinking hurts everyone

When my brothers used to drink alcohol, I would cry because they would get mad and fight. My grandma would get mad and she would cry too because my brothers didn't listen to her. My whole family would get mad and fight and say bad things to each other. My sister and I would cry, trying to stop them from getting mad and fighting. My auntie would call the RCMP for us and the police would take my brothers. Now my brothers don't drink. But sometimes my family would get mad at each other and I would get mad at them. I would say things like, "I am going to drink too, if you guys don't stop fighting and getting mad at each other." One of my brothers would smoke up and he would get crazy. He would say, "I'm going to jump out the window and kill myself," or he would say, "I'll kill myself with a gun," then he would say, "Where is the gun?" All my family would get scared of him. But then the Medicine Man stopped my brothers from smoke up and drink. It's different. My brothers don't drink or smoke up anymore but I don't like it when my brother sells alcohol because I know that they would start drinking again and they did start again. They drink and drink and drink. So I started drinking. When they found out that I was drinking, they stopped drinking, smoking

up and selling alcohol, because I know that they don't want me to drink. So people would not drink alcohol and do drugs.

It is a very serious problem

I think that there is too much drugs and alcohol in these communities and it is a very serious problem. I think to stop these problems they should have a checkstop 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And if anyone was caught in town with these illegal drugs, they should spend a lot of time in jail and have a hefty fine to pay. Another way to stop these things would be having more police officers and/or community constables.

Stories about myself

When I was growing up I used to get my butt kicked almost everyday because when I'm doing something wrong, like stealing or other bad things, and I didn't like it at all. When I turned 15, I started drinking and I enjoyed what I was doing to myself and didn't care about anybody or anything. I didn't even care about myself too. I didn't care if I die, all I wanted is alcohol in my life. When I get drunk I do stupid things like stealing, break things or drink and drive and beat up my girlfriend. And the next day I don't remember nothing but I don't like what I did to my girlfriend and other things when I was drunk. I hope they forgive me someday for what I did. Once I tried to kill myself with a knife in front of my parents because there is too much problems with my life like drinking all the time and getting shit about it all the time. A couple years have passed and it got worse because I went to jail for beating up my girlfriend. And when I get out from jail, the next seven months passed before I went back to court again. They sent me somewhere to change

my life around. When I got back from there I was sober for ten months and I was proud of myself for everything I accomplished while I was there. Everything went the wrong way after I was sober for ten months and I start drinking again. It's like starting all over again, like right now I still drink and I just want to quit again but it's too damn hard for me to stop. It will always be in your head but someday or somehow I will stop for good and I will be proud of myself. ALCOHOL always messes you up. Please don't end up like me. Stay sober, stay clean and enjoy life.

They can kill you

I live in Rae Lakes. I think that alcohol is a problem. It can kill you by doing drugs and alcohol. So you better not do these to yourself and don't do these for your family.

This is a life story of myself

It started when I was nine years old. We moved to a new house and I was trying to fit in. Days passed and I got to know a few kids and as I got older I realized that drugs and alcohol were becoming a big problem. One day, a friend and I were sitting outside the Sportsplex and this guy asked us if we wanted to buy marijuana. We said no. Then he said just try it, then he threw it to us and said you might change your mind. Then he took off and we didn't know what to do. Then we went to the rocks and we were talking about what we should do about it and we didn't know what to do or say. We sat there for an hour and then he said let's smoke it and check out what is the big deal about smoking dope. Then we smoked it and we got stoned. We were walking on the road and I looked both ways but she didn't and there was van coming and she could have got ran over by

this van if I didn't grab her. Then my parents started to drink every other month, then they got to drink every month and then every other weekend, then every weekend and they weren't even close to us. They didn't talk to us about drugs, alcohol or sex. They didn't even talk to us about what problems they had or what is important and what was not. They didn't even talk to us and they didn't tell us where they were going until the last minute and they always put themselves first. They never asked us what do we think of this. As I grew older, I started dating. I started to let my boyfriend in and they didn't say anything to me. The only person who got mad was my sister and she stopped after awhile. She got to know him and they accepted him and they let him in. They talk with him, they exchange their suggestions about unimportant thing like sports and hockey.

Drugs and alcohol addictions

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it? Describe how it has affected you?

Bingo: My mom is always playing bingo and not spending money on food. She doesn't take care of her grandson or even buy milk for him or stay home and spend time with us. Or to clean up because other visitors might come in and say you have a nice house instead of a junkie house with garbage all over the house.

Drinking: My dad always drinks and gets my brother, his son and girlfriend mad. He always drinks when he gets his big check and gives out lots of money to other people he doesn't even know.

My Problems: I smoke lots of cigarettes and marijuana. I also drink when my friends drink. It all started because of my dad, he always drinks in front of us. He use to abuse my mother, like he pushes her, he hits her, pulls her hair and forces her to drink. When my dad use to abuse her, she cried. That was when they were young and my dad use to work at Co-mine near Snare Lakes as a carpenter. That's all I know about my family and myself.

They got family problems

How does it affect us? It causes family problems, and it affects all of the adults and the children. What can we do about it? We have to stop the drinking because it's affecting all of us. What do you think about alcoholism and what is it? I don't like it when people are drinking all night because they drink too much. Alcohol makes you feel sad and alone. Mom and dad fight and get mad.

There are more young people than adults that used

In the community of Rae, there are problems with drugs and alcohol. A lot of young people drink and use drugs. There are more young people than adults that use drugs or drink. They think that it's fun or cool, but it's not. Young people do that because their friends are doing it. If a friend tells you to try it, you should just say no. If you don't do drugs or alcohol, don't start! You will never know what is going to happen. Almost every weekend in Rae, there are a lot of young people and adults that drink or use drugs to think that they are all that but they're not, they're just a loser. There is another big problem in Rae, that is gambling. People just go out on weekdays or weekends to go and play cards and they just

leave their kids home. The kinds of games that people is seven cards, black jack, poker, 14 and high and low. They just go out because they just want money. Almost everyday or weekend there is always card games in Rae.

It makes me feel embarrassed

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? It makes me feel embarrassed, frustrated and angry and all those other things that could make me really angry. What can we do about it? I hope the people would stop, no, I wish they would stop because I don't like seeing this around my own people. Instead of drinking or smoking up, they should spend time with their family or go do something for their family. Maybe clean up this town, there's too much garbage lying around. Describe how it has affected you? The thing that has affected me around this town is people drinking, smoking up, and the people hanging around or just walking around this town or staggering around. The people who drink are always walking around and they look really gross, even my dad drinks. If he is, I don't go near him because I'm embarrassed by him and this town. I don't like seeing it around my town, they even fight with other people. Even the smoking up too, they yell at night or scream at night. That's why I feel embarrassed by this town, when I'm walking around and seeing people staggering around. PLEASE help this town, make it a better and safer town for us!!

I feel sorry for them

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? I know that some parents go out to party. What can

we do about it? Their kids and parents should go to treatment. Describe how it has affected you that parents go out to play bingo or drink every weekend. What do you think? I feel unhappy for the little kids, for their parents who drink on weekends. It seems like they hardly spend enough time with their kids and I hear them shout at their kids and it's hurting the kids more than we know. What can we do about it? Their kids should talk to social services or go see counsellors or their family should go to treatment. Describe how it affected you? My parents ask me to go down to my friend's place to see if she's all right. I really hate visiting my friend's place because my friend is always cooking for her family and cleaning up. When I go into their house, it smells like booze. There is too much yelling, making jokes, the music is full blast, shouting, puking and fighting. I feel really sorry for them. My friend was crying, so I always try to cheer her up and sometimes she wants to get the heck out of her house and she changes her mind. She doesn't want to let her little brothers and sisters down. She often wishes that she wasn't the oldest one and I feel sorry for her. I always help her when she needs help. Often, she misses school because of her parents because they like to drink everyday.

I want to sleep on my own bed on weekends

Not every weekend do my parents drink, only once a weekend but every time my parents drink, my dad always beats up my mom and sometimes my mom gets bruises or a broken nose. Sometimes my mom wants to move away from my dad because my dad always beats up my mom. But sometimes my mom gets drunk and she tells me that she doesn't love me and it really, really hurts my feelings and it makes me cry. I know that my mom

loves me but it is because of the alcohol that she is saying that. When my parents are sober, my mom tells my dad that you beat me up and my dad says I am so sorry and my dad cries and he says he loves her and my mom cries and she says don't beat me up again. My dad says yes, I won't do that to you again. That is why I don't like it when my parents drink. Sometimes when I go home after school, my parents are drinking and my dad doesn't want me to go out. When my mom passes out my dad tells me to come, so I go to him and he talks to me and sometimes he gets mad at me or he gives me a beating. That is why I don't go home on weekends because my parents drink. Sometimes I sleep at my auntie's house. Please help us to have a better life so that our parents can take good care of us and keep us safe and so we won't be scared of them. I want to sleep in my room on the weekends and right now I can't because I'm scared.

It's really bad

I go to school in JWGS and that means Jean Wetrade Gameti School and is the only school in Rae Lakes. Whoever I'm writing to, I can tell you I don't know who drinks or smokes up marijuana but it's really bad and it's not healthy at all. We want a treatment centre.

Because it will affect the kids

I think that alcohol is not good for your health and other stuff like drugs. People should stop using it because it will affect their kids and the kids would probably end up doing the same thing their parents are doing. Every time I go out walking around, I see my uncle drinking a lot and it makes me very sad because I worry that something bad might happen to him and others.

We can try to stop it

What do you think? I feel sorry for the little kids because their parents are using drugs and alcohol and they have an addiction. What can we do about it? We can try to stop it and let their family become better by going for treatment. Describe how it has affected you? Drugs, alcohol and gambling has affected my family and me because we watch them drink in our house. Our parents go out to gamble almost every night because they have the money to spend but no money to spend on our food or on us children and our needs.

How I feel about my grandparents drinking

Hi. I'd like to talk to you about my community. I have lived in Rae-Edzo all my life. In my town, there is a lot of addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. Sometimes when I see people drunk, I don't feel comfortable around them because I'm scared that they might grab me or hurt me. I don't really like people like that. When my grandparents drink, I don't like to talk to them because they like to argue a lot and I don't really like that. So I act cheeky or tough, but deep down inside, I'm scared to death. When my grandfather yells at me, I say go to sleep or don't talk to me. I speak to them in Dogrib. Sometimes I just walk away and walk out of the house. When I'm far away from them I feel bad inside and when I do, my heart feels pain and I have to hold my heart to stop the pain. When I go home I tell myself in my head, "I'm sorry for hurting my grandfather, please stop the pain. I'll never hurt his feelings ever again," and then my heart's pain goes away. So when my grandparents drink, my mother tells me then not to go there, only go there if I need to go to the washroom, when I'm walking around

with my friends. But I just ignore them and go straight out. But I don't go unless I say goodbye or see you tomorrow. After saying those things I just leave and then I think about them drinking. In my head I sometimes act like I could talk to my grandparents, with my head and not my mouth. I think they could hear me and they sober up. Sometimes I talk to myself saying, "I'll never drink in front of my kids or I'll never want to drink," but when I see my family drinking, I stay away from them. I sometimes stay with my friends or my aunt's that don't drink. Then I feel better because both my friends and auntie keep me safe. I like staying with my auntie because I get along with her and her kids, especially with my auntie. But when I'm with my friends, I feel safer because they're funny, nice, protective and we all watch over each other. Sometimes when my mother goes to Yellowknife, she comes home drunk or she comes home sober. She hardly drinks. She only drinks on school vacation because she knows better not to drink while her kids are at school. I'm so glad that she's my mother because she know how to take care of her kids and she raises us up like adults except for my brother. Though he is learning to behave when my mother drinks. My brother and I go to my grandparent's house or to my aunt's or uncle's house. So we're safe wherever we go. That's the way I feel about my community. You've heard and read everything in my feelings about the alcohol, drugs and gambling. I'd like to thank Jim Martin for the assignment that he gave us. I feel much better for getting all of this out of my body, so thank you for reading this. I hope you read this story about my community. Jim, can you please ask the Government to clean this town for the summer because it's too trashy around here. There's too much pollution around.

I feel sorry for the kids

What do you think? I feel sorry for the kids whose parents drink every day or play bingo or cards. The kids won't learn from drinking or playing bingo or cards. What can we do about it? What we can do is let the parents seek treatment or the kids should see a counsellor and talk about the problem or the kids can talk to Social Services. Describe how it has affected you? It affects me by going to my friends' house and see their parents drinking or doing marijuana and that's how I got affected by watching them. Sometimes they drink and get into fights.

It takes the whole community to raise a child

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it? I think that they should get help because they don't know what they're doing to their body and to themselves. They don't realize how much fun they could have without doing drugs or getting drunk. All they care about is getting high or getting drunk. Sometimes I think our family loves the liquor, drugs or gambling more than their kids and it hurts the kids. They just don't realize how much they hurt their family and friends, especially the parents. It's hard for the parents to watch their child come home drunk. They didn't raise their children to party or anything like that. There are enough young teenagers and adults in this community to help the people who are addicted to other addictions. Just like they say, "IT TAKES A WHOLE COMMUNITY TO RAISE A CHILD." Well this means, "IT TAKES A WHOLE COMMUNITY TO HELP THE OTHERS WHO NEED YOUR HELP." I have this friend that drinks, gets high, like almost everyday. One day I said this to her,

“Why do you always drink and get high? Don’t you think you have already caused enough problems in your life? This is always hurting your parents, especially your mom?” She never said a word, I guess I was right what I said. She sometimes drinks and gets high, not like before. Before she was worse but now she’s slowed down. So what I’m saying is, If you need help, you should go for it!!

It affected me because my mom drank when she had me

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? I think that people should stop drinking or smoking and chewing snuff. That affects us and we should put a stop to drinking or smoking in our community. Most of all we should ask our parents to stay home and be with us, not with the drugs and alcohol. If they do not listen to us we can tell them to say goodbye to us because we are not going to take this anymore. It affected my family, like if my mom is drinking I always run to my auntie’s and leave my mom to cool down. What can we do about it? We can go on a family vacation somewhere special like Florida. Describe how it affected you. It affected me because my mom had me when she was still drinking.

When I was born, my parents stopped

I feel sorry for the kids whose parents drink every day. We can try to stop our family from drinking. My parents used to drink before I was born. When I was born, my parents stopped drinking because when they drank, they used to beat up my sister which they didn’t like doing. My dad hasn’t drank for 11

years and I am proud of him. I think when my family drinks, I feel sorry for them. Sometimes I used to cry because they used to fight.

They waste a lot of money

Last year my parents used to drink a lot and they used to waste a lot of money. This year they don’t drink very much but only on holidays and Fridays. I just wish they won’t drink anymore cause they waste a lot of money. I don’t like it because they don’t buy us clothes or groceries. I just don’t like it. Even my brothers and sister don’t like that. Yesterday my sister told my parents not to drink and they said, “O.K.” The End.

Ruin your life

I would like to tell you a story about a friend of mine. She is 14 years old. Sometimes she smokes and drinks. She came to Rae to visit me but I was in Yellowknife at the time. She looked for me in Rae and when she saw my friends, she asked them if I was in town. My friends told her that I was in Yellowknife. My friends asked the others if she can hang around with them. They said yes so she ran to them. Around 7:00 they went to one of my friend’s houses to warm up. It was an open house. They had three bottles of Smirnoff. They drank two bottles and they were blasted. A couple of boys were at the door. One of the girls went to open the door to ask them what they wanted. They said they wanted to see my friend’s brother but he wasn’t home. Then they asked if they could warm up inside because it was freezing cold. My friend asked the others if the boys could warm up inside for awhile. The girl said yes but just for ten minutes and the boys agreed. The girls put on tape and cranked up the music. The boys wanted to sit on the sofa, but the girls said no

and they carried on dancing, laughing and drinking. Later the boys came in with their shoes and sat on the couch. The girls didn't know that the boys came in and sat on the sofas. When one of the girls turned around she screamed and started to laugh because she got embarrassed and scared. They yelled at the boys because they didn't want them in the house, but they just left them sitting on the couch. My friend from Yellowknife was flirting around with one of the boys. She passed out on the bed. The boy that she was flirting around with raped her. When she got up she had no clothes on. She slept for five hours. She got dressed and looked for the girls in the house. She saw the girls passed out on the sofa, bed and floor. She ran home at five minutes to twelve. When she got to her aunt's house she ran up to her cousin's room and changed her shirt and shorts. She went to sleep after using the bathroom. The next morning she went to her aunt's room to check if her aunt came home but she wasn't in bed. Her aunt's bed hadn't been slept in. She went downstairs to check if her aunt was there but she wasn't downstairs either. My friend smelled whisky. She didn't know where the smell was coming from. She sniffed her clothes and it smelled like whisky. She took a half-an-hour shower. She didn't feel good because she drank way too much the night before and she was very upset that she was raped. Raped by someone she trusted and considered a friend.

Your life will be ruined

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it? In our community people like to drink every weekend. Some people think it's fun but it's not fun when they get

gang raped. You won't know what happened. Why do people like to drink? Why can't they just stop drinking alcohol. There is no fun. Never say fun for you'll see fun in heaven. Drinking is the problem. If you drink everyday, you'll be a school drop-out. Your life will be ruined. You have parents to take care of you, especially your sisters and brothers and you'll always worry your parents. Never talk back to your parents or anything like that. Always stay sober. Whenever they offer you drugs or alcohol just say no.

I hate it when people drink

There are some things that I don't like in Rae-Edzo. They are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and the gambling. I want to talk to you about our problem in our community because everyday this problem gets worse. If you don't know what the problem is than you should keep on reading. The problem is alcohol; on weekends, this is a real problem because no one needs to or has to go to work and everyone has something to do, even the adults. On weekends, adults like to go over to people's houses and drink with them, you know like whiskey and stuff like that, even though they have kids at home, they still go out and drink until 5:00 a.m. or even later. If anyone is around a drunk person, then they don't feel comfortable around them, because they're scared. I hate it when people drink. I remember one time at a dance my older cousin, who was drinking and his brother went there, to the dance, and my older cousin was sitting in the middle. I was on the left side and my other cousin was on the right side, then a song went on and my older cousin told me and my cousin to dance, we both said no. He put his arm around both of us and just like that he banged our heads together really hard. We both got mad at him. Oh yeah, he

was drinking. After a little while, I asked my cousin for money and he gave me ten dollars except he punched me really hard on the shoulder. So I told him to get lost and he did. I felt so much better when he left.

Alcohol makes your brain confused

I think that alcohol makes your brain confused.

I think drinking and driving can kill people

I think drinking and driving can kill people. I hate alcohol because I never tried it before and I will never drink alcohol. I don't want to gamble, because I might waste my money and I don't want to waste it.

I like my mom when she's not drinking

A long time ago my mom always used to drink, but now she doesn't drink. My brother, sisters, my mom and I moved to a new house. I like my mom when she's not drinking. She buys anything I want. I have everything I want. My mom always cleans up and sometimes I help her clean up the house. My brother, sisters and I have our own bedrooms with lots of stuff in the bedrooms. When she used to drink, a lot of people use to party at my house. Some people started fighting and swearing. She didn't use to clean up and take good care of us. When my grandma caught my mom drinking, my grandma was disappointed then. When my mom was sober she thought about it, felt pretty bad then, that's how she start drinking again. The end.

What can we do about it?

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it?

1. Have AA meetings in cultural centre every Wednesday, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., to get all the problems out.
2. Some students don't know what to do on the weekend, sometimes they hang around at night looking for something to do, because parents are out to the bingo.
3. Parents don't want to spend time with their kids at home. All they could think of is money.
4. What about our education, these days education is very important, help us and support us.

Tell your family that you love them deeply

There are many factors that contribute to the even further division of its citizens. Alcohol and drugs are probably the leading factors that cause problems but there are more factors like a feeling of uselessness and isolation that arises from Wha Ti. People who are out of work have nothing to do but smoke up or do whatever they are doing. Whenever they do smoke up, they think too much. They get paranoid and delusional. Thinking about problems that haven't even begun. What makes people do drugs like alcohol and marijuana? I don't know. Maybe they want to fill a hollow gap or block out something or just do something other than walking around. The lack of events and recreation are on some people's minds. They can't accept the fact that there are so little things to do in Wha Ti. They do what they can to get a little satisfaction. A little feeling of high that comes

from mischief and an adrenaline rush that comes from the thought of getting caught. As it progresses, they finally learn they can get the same feeling from dope and booze. As they get stoned or drunk, they get more mischievous. A higher level of mischief to produce that same high but it's not working. They need to feel powerful and before you realize it, that person is pounding on someone who is probably weaker. Too scared to fight with somebody who might kick the crap out of them. All I am saying is that some people might need help and others need to belong in the jail. They have liked this life, I am writing about their lives and there ain't no way in hell that they are going to change. Others are okay. They are learning how to live or cope with problems. They are young and stupid and they will make mistakes. The older ones, who causes the same problems every Friday, they voluntarily teach these kids that smoking or drinking is a way of life too!! I have no idea what to write because this issue is a controversial topic. No one wants to get to the roots of the problem. We all want to live in our happy existence and ignore the cries of those who need our help. But that's not the way it works. Tell your family members that you deeply love them and care for them. They might say the same thing and before you know it, you have this feeling of being loved. You get addicted to this feeling. The problems that arise from alcohol are co-dependent. These are bridges that cross the gap from loneliness to an illusionary happiness. I mean if alcohol was a high tower, to get to the base, you need to find out what the foundation is made from. To find the foundation, you have to ask what the person is worried about and all his other problems. This is all I would like to write about. Sorry about the poor grammar in some places but this is something I don't like to talk about. I do not do drugs but I

do have problems like everyone else, I talk about my problems with my family. They do understand because they went though the same thing.

Kids under age could not buy booze or drugs

Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addiction are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it? I think the problem in the community is the alcohol and the drugs. Kids under 16 years of age could buy booze from people who do not care about what happens to the kids, same thing with the drugs. It makes that person, who does use this stuff, waste their time and their lives, when they could have gone to university or college to be educated. That is all I have to say.

The easier it looks, the harder it gets

Alcohol, which most people drink on special occasions or to party. That's what people would drink since they don't know what to do or just to have fun... Almost all people drink alcohol now. Their lives have been ruined and give it a bad name for themselves. They lose their friends, families and job. Alcohol was first brought to North America by Europeans a long time ago. It was discovered in the 16th century. Native people had been drinking and hurting or killing people. It is the biggest influence on people. The more the population grows, the more we become craving for alcohol. The easier it looks, the harder it gets.

Why do people drink? In current society today, many people drink and they had been losing their friends, family and jobs. That includes getting into fights and a whole lot

of things. Now, people drink because they are extremely addicted and that's what people call them "Alcoholics". They drink because of special occasions and they just drink because, they think it is just cool and it makes you look great. Not a great way to express yourself when you start drink. They maybe drink because, the liquor tastes good or they even drink because they like the feeling of drunkenness. Or they might have been drinking since they were very young and become addicted. This is the reason why people drink.

What influences people to drink? Many people are currently now influenced by alcohol in lots of ways. They are influenced by TV commercials, movies, families, magazines, people who are drinking and a lot of stuff that they are influenced by. Even young people are influenced and been drinking a lot of times. They all be sneaking drinks and drink behind people's back. They are even addicted. They have been drinking since they were very young. That is all that influences as to why people are drinking.

What kinds of lifestyles do alcoholics have? There are now lots of people who drink that are living on welfare and drink a lot of booze. They even have jobs which is a low paying rate. They even make money by selling their own stuff. Sometime they would even steal and sell things to buy alcohol. Their lifestyles are bad and getting worse. They even lose their family members, lose their friends and job or they would even quit things such as school. They are mostly poor and still living with their families and dropping out of school. They drink on weekends and partying so hard and drink daily. They don't even have lots of things. They have done lots of horrible things in their lives and can't even forget about it. Sometimes, they would do something really

stupid such as kill a person accidentally or rape someone. There are lots of stupid things they can do. That is all

Hating drugs, alcohol and cigarettes

Smoking: is not good for anyone because it could cause cancer and harm your baby. It could kill you. I would like a stop to drugs and alcohol in my community.

Drugs: With drugs you just get high and after that, you get burnt out and the feeling of burnt out is not good cause you get tired, lazy and grumpy.

Alcohol: With alcohol you get just staggering and get crazy like you don't know what you are doing and you can get in a fight and you won't even know it until the next day.

Gambling and drugs

Gambling and drugs make me want to go away from all the gambling and drugs. If you drink you will lose your money and you will get mad to the players and you will get beaten up and you will forget all the fighting in the morning, you will feel all the pain of your body.

Addiction could damage us

If you smoke up or drink a lot, you could kill yourself or you could kill somebody else. When you use these things you could lose a lot of friends or lose your families. Then later down the road you might end up becoming a bum or you could live on the streets.

Alcohol that causes destruction of my people

My essay, it been a long time that I heard of alcohol. Alcohol is the way of life, well is it? I know for a fact that I know that many of my people may drink, but who will stop them? No one has the guts to stop them or help them with any problems they have. So I'm writing this essay for you and me. How did the alcohol come here by traders that want our furs and given us alcohol. Who are the fools? We are of course, because we let them get away with things like that. They get the furs and money and we get the alcohol. So it was many years that the Dogrib became more liking to the alcohol. So generation to generation we Dogrib had the worse of it, we drink, had our fun but we must stop or this will lead us to our death in life as we know it. For a long time I for one, thought alcohol was the best way to help me with my problems, but it is not. I have so much family that care for me and they do not care about who I am, they just want me as myself. So I'm asking you what is important, alcohol or family? Is it really good to drink, sure it's fun. But is it really all that, you never know what you might do. You just might hit anyone like your family and friends or worse, someone whom you care very much about. I know alcohol is an addiction and is causing problems. You drink as parents, guess who will follow in your footsteps? Maybe your son, daughter or your youngest one. I have so many friends but most of them drink. I, for one, am one of them. Who would win, alcohol or me? I try to fight it but alcohol always wins. But in my life that will never happen, like hitting anyone that is my family or someone I care about. My life still has its problems, but I get over it. So many problems in the world, but it still good to live in a place where many people care for

you. So I hope I got through your head and helped you. All I ask is that you THINK while you take the shot, when you drink. Is it the way for your life or the death of you?

Gambling every pay day

Bingo night, it was on Friday, my God! Auntie got paid. I phoned her at her house and I ask her if I could come with her to YK. She said, if you babysit today then you can go with me tomorrow, so I babysat until 11:30. She came back, and she told me to phone my mom to ask her if I could sleep at her house because it is too late to go home, so I did. At 12:00 a.m. she asked if I could stay with her two girls, she said she was going to a friend's to pick-up something and I knew she asked me sleep over just because she wanted to go out to play cards at her friends, anyway she left. She was gone all night. She came back and I asked her, were you playing cards all night? She said yes. Next morning she said, we are going to Yellowknife, so I asked my mom if I can go and asked her for money so she gave me \$50.00. At 6:30 p.m. she went to bingo again and we were at the arcade. At 9:00 p.m. we went to bingo and then we came back, I slept at her house again, then she went out to card game again. The next day I told her, "You gamble too much. On Friday night you played bingo, then you went out to card game. Then on Saturday you played bingo," and I said, "You should buy clothes for your kids and buy some stuff for your house or something. Stop gambling for one month."

We want the liquor store closed

We can do something about it. It's easy because we will have a lot of money to shut down the liquor store. When the Land Claim is settled. The Government wants the liquor store to be open but we want it closed because they are killing many Dogrib in our community and it's the same with the drugs. Drugs is not bad because it's the best thing that happened to us, but it's still killing us too! So don't use drugs and alcohol to kill yourself. Just be yourself and be free from it.

Addiction

I live in Rae Lakes. I've seen people here that get drunk, do drug and all the other things. Even some kids here do drugs and alcohol. I don't know their names but I see them do it. Kids from my age to 20 (I think). My dad used to be a drinker but he quit a very long time ago. I don't know when but I think when my sister was born. There is a pool hall here. It opens Wednesday to Sundays 8:00 p.m. to midnight and I see kids there smoke. I went there a few times and saw a few kids smoking. I couldn't see who it was because it was too dark. Now I don't go there anymore, just once every two weeks so I don't get involved in smoking too. To have fun, I go to the playground or walk around town.

Addictions hurts us

Sexual Abuse: Some people do stupid things like sexual abuse to their girlfriends or daughters because they don't have any friends so they do those things.

Marijuana: I think some people do marijuana because they want to be cool but they don't know what they are doing to themselves.

Drinking and Driving: In Yellowknife people drink and drive, that person who is drinking and driving will get caught and go to jail and is not using a seat belt.

Rape: When people have parties, when they drink too much, even a girl drinks too much and two men want to walk her home but half way she well get raped.

AIDS and STDS: When people have sex and don't use condoms, that person will get AIDS or STDs. (USE CONDOMS)

Drugs: People bug you to buy drugs when you don't want to. Even a pregnant woman doing drugs or smoking weed she doesn't know what she is doing to the baby. (SAY NO)

What mother eats and drinks, baby eats and drinks too!

If you have a girlfriend and she wants to get pregnant, if when she is pregnant and she uses drugs and drinks a lot the baby could get stoned or get drunk. Maybe when the baby is born and the baby could be an alcoholic or a drug adict.

Addiction damages

How it affects me or my people like when my people go out for the weekend just to get drunk, when they leave their children at home with strangers. Now and then, it affects the children of the parents. It is a disease, you carry it along with you wherever you go. Even the addictions we have are even worse when we, or no one, can stop it. It's us that have to do it for ourselves. Drinking and the addictions can cause so many problems to you, us, family, friends and most of all your loved ones who care the most. Using alcohol or drugs can hurt you in a way that you've never noticed, when you can be abandoned,

put away or even worse, killed by it. Most of the time, it is hard to stop because they encourage you to drink. It is like the bottle is calling your name. Many people have the same problems with alcohol and drugs, when they don't wanna die and do something crazy. It sure is a serious problem in some communities with alcohol and drugs. It affects their daily lives for people that use drugs. So it is hard in this world, for nobody's perfect in this world. Well, we can do something about it. We can set up a group like AA or even talk to a religious person that has had the experience. Even though you're not in touch with God, he is with you all the way.

Drugs and alcohol

I don't like it when my parents drink because they like to fight and argue a lot. If they are drunk, they can do crazy stuff and break things around the house. If you smoke marijuana and drink, you will get very drunk. I don't like it when people drink because they might commit suicide. I don't like it when my friends drink because they might get into a fight and end up in the hospital.

Who is taking care of your family, kids and your home?

I think alcohol, drugs and gambling are making problems. You might lose your family, kids, mom and dad because of alcohol, drugs and gambling. When someone is drinking and driving, they might kill someone or kill or hurt themselves. When you do alcohol or drugs, you might get killed from it. You will see if you do alcohol and you'll lose your kids, or your family because you are drinking and you are not taking good care of your kids. Your kids might do the same thing as you are doing. You might kill someone when you are

doing drugs and alcohol. I hate alcohol, drugs and gambling. I think alcohol, drugs and gambling are very bad for you because there are better things to do than drugs, drinking and gambling. Gambling is a problem because you end up losing all your money and there will be no more money for the food and the kids. Who is taking care of your family and your home? Maybe your kids are being hurt while you are out playing cards. Also when you gambling, you could get sick because you are not taking good care of yourselves, you are not getting enough sleep and you are not eating well, this is not good for your body.

Drinking on my birthday

My mom and dad don't drink all the time but sometimes they drink at my house and sometimes they stay there until the next morning to get sober. My mom and dad they always drink until two or three days and they come back in the morning. We told you guys where we went. They said we went at my friend's house. It was December. They were drinking on my birthday. They bought me shoes, two litres of pop and it was fun at my birthday.

Ongoing addiction and abuse

I know there are alcohol problems in Snare Lakes. People go to Yellowknife but they stay too long. They stay to drink. They stay for weeks when they should be back in two days. Then they phone for more money to buy more alcohol in Yellowknife. Kids here say they don't want to go to high school in Rae-Edzo because there's too much alcohol and drug abuse there. I don't know if it's true or not. Unfortunately we have had teenagers arrested for sexual abuse. They abused little kids and the little kids are very

upset. Sometimes people have no money for food, lights or gas but they buy alcohol. I know the senior class students were asking little kids to sniff gas for fun. I know that sometimes students act angry or crazy. Kids suffer from the abuse of addictions. Well I'm going to write about my parents. When my parents drink they always make me babysit my brother and my sister. I hate it when they drink because they sometimes fight and never come home for the whole weekend. Why do people drink? People drink just to make their problems go away but it doesn't go away, it just makes it worse. They just drink to have fun and to look like they are all that. There is a lot of drinking around the communities. When their children see what their parents are doing, they don't like it and they just cry and some hate their parents for it.

A true story

This happened to my real parents. Long ago, in 1989, when I was one year old, my dad got drunk. He crashed beside our old house with a skidoo. And my mom got drunk and passed out. But my mom still drinks. When it was my birthday, I was adopted from my parents because of their drinking. My oldest sister and me had to let our parents sleep on the bed because if they got drunk we felt sad. Right now I feel sad because my parents still drink. Right now they are still drinking and they got divorced. They got into a fight and my mom moved to Yellowknife and my sister was born. Now my mom is going out with somebody and dad is going out with somebody too. When I grow up I won't drink.

Addiction problems

Yes, it's a damn big serious problem in our community. Like bootleggers and the drug dealers in our community of Rae-Edzo. I don't know what we can do about the problems in our community because I don't run the Rae Hamlet office. What can you do about it and how much do you care about your community and the little children?

Problems, problems, problems

There are some things I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. They are addictions such as alcohol, drugs, gambling and bingo. These are problems because my mom hardly spends her free time with me anymore and spends all her money on bingo and gambling. Once when I was little, my dad slapped and kicked me just because I didn't play outside with one of my friends. When I used to live out of Rae-Edzo my mom always used to kick my brother and I out of the house at night until she sobered up but I'm glad now because my mom quit drinking. But my dad and sister drink only once in a while, but not enough to get drunk.

Drugs damages

Marijuana is growing in towns and cities. People who smoke stuff like this are going on the streets and in corners. We can't do anything about it but to say no and walk away like a man and stay in school. When I fly in to Rae, the kids I know smoke and drink alcohol and that's what they call fun. All that does to you is make you do crazy stuff.

Problems in our communities

There are some things that I don't like in our communities. They are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and the gambling. These are a major problem because they are hurting other people. Like one of my friends have a big family but they all live in different places and their family broke apart because of alcohol. My friend stays with foster parents and she tells me how she feels with her foster parents and how she feels about her family. I always ask her how she's doing and she says okay but sometime she says she's doing bad and I say to her just worry about yourself and then she starts to worry about herself.

Alcohol problems

Many people think that alcohol is cool to drink, but is not. Many people have been injured because of alcohol. Some of them are dead or some are in the jail. Their kids are worried about following their parent's footsteps. Many people just don't realize that alcohol is a drug. It is the most abused drug in Canada. Alcohol can be harmful to little children but it is enjoyable. A person may think that alcohol can solve all your troubles but drinking never solved anything, it often makes it worse. There are many things that we do to help our community, such as talk to them about alcohol, what it can do to them, teach the facts about alcohol. You can be fair to yourself. Do not be afraid to give up alcohol. What I think about alcohol is that there are many drinkers in town, acting crazy, beating up their wives and kids, breaking their houses apart. The worst thing about drinking alcohol is that you are not only hurting yourself, you are also hurting your family. Even teenagers are going to jail because of a drinking problem.

Alcohol and drugs

Sometimes people tease other people just because they are ugly or fat, it does not matter what they look like, they are still the same as other people. People tease others because maybe because they dress funny or maybe they live in an ugly house. Marijuana is not a thing for a kid or an adult. It can get people or kids in trouble. Marijuana can make you crazy, you don't have to copy your friends or your best friends. Marijuana gets you in a fight or maybe raped. If a woman is pregnant and when she drinks she is giving the baby a bad thing to drink. If you drink and drive you might not even know where you are going, you might crash into someone. So think, don't drink and drive.

Addiction strategy

I don't like people drinking in the community. We go to the Sportsplex in the community and at 8:00, we go to pool hall and we play pool until 10:00. Then we go outside and at 11:00, I go home and I watch TV and fall asleep. We need a treatment centre. Masi cho.

Abusing and teasing

There's one boy in Snare Lake who always is teased at school for everyday they tease him. Sometimes he doesn't go back to school because they tease him. One boy is in jail because he sexually abused a young girl. My teacher said that some people go to the airport just to smoke up. People like to gamble at someone's house and people use illegal drugs.

Addiction strategy

Last year during Christmas, my grandma was drinking, so my mom called the police but they were asking too much questions. So my mom told them it is all right and to just forget about it. My grandma had a fight with the people that were in my house. She was mad because they wouldn't let her in. That day my grandma's friend called and said she was coming, so she came and my grandma was feeling a little better. So we opened the door and let her come in. Then we made turkey and I made juice, after that the turkey was done. The next day, we ate it and then we opened our presents. Three days later everything was back to normal, so we need a treatment centre to help our people with their problems.

Addiction

In Snare Lake there is a lot of teasing and some kids like to tease the teachers. One boy in Snare Lake gets teased a lot of the time. There are lots of things in Snare Lake but not alcohol. Some people do that in Yellowknife. Some people fight when they drink and it is no good when they drink. When they drink a lot and if they drive and drink they can get into a crash. Sometimes when they drink they can rape kids or women. They can get pregnant and if someone is lonely they can drink and they can touch their daughter and then can get hurt. If a girl went to a party and she drinks a lot of beer she can get raped by a guy. If he did not use a condom the girl can get AIDS or an STD. Some people end up in jail and some people can stay in jail for long.

Drugs and alcohol

Drugs are not good for your body because it can make you sick of it and it might get you into trouble while you are doing it. And sometimes you will not know what you are doing you might rape someone. You might go to jail for that kind of thing, so don't do drugs. You lose brain cells just from doing drugs. I don't want you to do drugs because I care for you. If you do drink alcohol, if a girl is drinking beer you might black out and you don't know what is going to happen. If you do not want to drink, if some one is forcing you, just go to the counter and just remember to keep a pop and look for an empty bottle. And wash it good and spill the pop in the bottle. That is my idea. If someone is drinking alcohol, if you are alone with a girl you don't know what might happen to you, they might rape you so get out when you can.

Addiction strategy

Hi. I am 14 years old. I'll be in grade ten soon and am in the school of JWGS. I think there is an alcohol problem here in the community, because a lot of people go to Yellowknife when the winter road is open to beer at the liquor store and they bring it back to sell them for over 40 dollars. Last year there were a lot of grown-ups drinking but this year it was just a few drinking. I hope someone does something to stop the liquor store from selling booze and other stuff. In the winter and half of the spring, there are people drinking but sometimes and not all the time. In the summer, people make their own alcohol or drink hairspray. A lot of people get into fights, even when they don't know what they're doing. We want a treatment centre and recreation centre. I guess that's all I have to say, bye.

Alcohol

In the community of Wha Ti, there is a serious problem about addictions like alcohol. This alcohol they are drinking is really bad. It may not look harmful but it is. These addictions are giving our town a bad name for our people. Also, this is so unlike us. We are Dogrib and alcohol wasn't for us. Once we were very powerful and now look at us. We are fading like the candle is fading. What are we doing to ourselves? In addition, we should learn how to help, share and care for one another rather than be greedy. Greed has come in the way and affected our community as well. In conclusion, there are a lot of addictions, for example alcohol, drugs and greed. This is causing the community to fall apart. How could we stay alive? How could we keep our generation growing? We should all get together and talk about these addictions and restart our communities.

Mom and dad drink, drink, drink

Once upon a time, I saw someone drinking in the community on the bridge on a Sunday night. We were at my house and were playing a game in my dad house. We were at my cousin's house and we saw a drunk man at my house. We thought he wasn't there. My mom and dad were at the bingo, if they win bingo we are going to Yellowknife for three years. We saw three more drunk men at my house and we were going to school. My friend was drunk again. We were going to my house and we are going to drink at my house. My mom and dad were drinking more and more and again all day. My mom and dad were drinking today again and all day and weekend. My grandfather was mad to see my mom and dad drunk. My mom and dad are not drinking anymore.

Addiction problems in our region

As a teenager, I believe that all of the Dogrib region is having way too much drinking problems. Seeing our leaders that drink is a very bad influence for all of us young people. People that drink may think that alcohol is solving their problems, but it's not. It is hurting them more and their families. To make our community look better, we can stop all the drinking by having AA meetings once every week. Talk to people who have serious drinking problems can help in a way. It may not do any good but we can help. The other thing is the gambling. There are way too much mothers in our community that gamble, they should stop because what if something happens to their children. They would start feeling sorry and start thinking why did they even play. We the teenagers need help, love and caring parents. If you heard that we do something bad and you don't like it, you'll get mad at us. But guess where we learned it from and from whom did we learn it? We all need to do something about this big problem before it's too late!!!

What parents were like

There are some things that I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. They are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. These are problems because I don't like people when they drink because they always fight and swear. When I was little, my parents used to drink. My house would be very messy and we would have no food in the refrigerator. My mom doesn't really play cards but one time when she played cards and she never came back until 8:00 in the morning.

Addiction makes you do dangerous stuff

I think that kids are getting lonesome because their parents go gambling or go out and drink! The store should stop selling cards and cigarettes. We can also have a drug and alcohol alarm, and when people come back from YK, we can check the bags and check who is bringing drugs and alcohol back to Wha Ti. When people drink, I feel bad because if they have kids, their kids would be worried. Is that person alright? It is also scary if you see a drunk person walking around because they might have a bad attitude and do something to you. If you don't know how heavy that person drinks, then stay away from that person. If you do drugs, your eyes get puffy and red and you can hardly see anything and you'll probably get into an accident. I want my friend to stop doing drugs because her eyes are always puffy and red. She's only 16 years old. She is not old enough to do drugs. She shouldn't even be doing drugs. If you drink you'll get crazy and maybe you'll even get in a fight or kill somebody. Please don't drink because you might get into accident. One guy was drinking and he never knew he had a knife in his hand. Guess what? He stabbed his wife four times. Don't let this happen to you. Don't drink or you're a crazy idiot. Thanks for your co-operation. By somebody that does not do drugs or alcohol.

Addiction strategy

Hi. I live in Rae Lakes and I'm in grade six. I've seen people do drugs and drink. Some other people sell beer, like some girls. They used to sell and some other kids do drugs here too. A guy was bugging our door, I don't remember when this was, but then my mom came

home drunk. Sometimes my sister drinks in Rae and fights but now she quit drinking. My mom, whenever she drinks, she always cries and then she gets knocked out for five hours. Sometimes I get scared so I go into my room and put the music kind of loud and then I fall asleep. There is a pool hall here and it opens on Wednesdays 8:00 p.m. until 12:00 p.m. Some kids sell cigarettes to other kids but I don't remember who they are but just some kids. We need a treatment centre. Please help.

Addiction strategy

Hi there, I live in Rae Lakes. I've seen a lot of people drink before and I don't like it, not one bit of it so I want to stop this now before it's too late!! I even heard in Rae-Edzo that people my age are drinking!! I wish everyone would stop drinking and realize what it does to you and your family. Alcohol can cause problems. I hope people know that drugs can do the same things like alcohol. All of these can affect your life and your education. So quit while you are still alive. Some people are still drinking from the time they were kids! But some day people will realize what it does to them. My mom quit and you can quit too. Pull yourself together. When I was young, a lot of people would go to my house and drink, then my auntie would chase them out. I hope for them and everyone. Please help us, we need treatment centre.

Drugs and alcohol

Drugs and alcohol are unhealthy. I wish someone didn't invent drugs and alcohol because lots of people wouldn't be able to do drugs and alcohol. I remember when some people came to Wha Ti from Rae and they were drinking. I went upstairs and looked out

the window and saw the police coming and he went to the wrong house. One year later, they found out that my dad was drinking. Now he's in jail for it.

Alcohol

Alcohol causes problems to a lot of families because it makes you do things that you don't usually do. Alcohol can make you do things. They need help. It's also the same thing as drugs, it can wash your brain away. We can stop this thing by talking about alcohol and drugs to the people, if one can hear the words spread around. Talk about alcohol and drugs. When I was young, a lot of people drank and now they are slowing down but now their kids are taking over, doing the same things as their parents when they were young. I can do the same thing but I choose not to. The problem is that there is too much partying going on and nobody is doing anything about it. Talk to your kids about the problems you had with alcohol when you were young. Why are they letting their kids walk around late at night? They should look for their kids around the whole town and bring them back and send them off to bed. Then you will know that your kids are safe.

Addiction strategy

Hi. I live in Rae Lakes. I think alcohol, drugs and gambling are creating problems. You might lose your family, kids, mom, and dad from using alcohol, drugs and gambling. When someone is drinking, it is bad for you and them. Please stop.

Let's all help to improve our community

Q: Many people in our community say that alcohol and other addictions are causing very serious problems. What do you think? What can we do about it?

A: I think they're right about it being a problem. What I think is how could we stop it from causing our community problems. They're spoiling it. I think what we can do is stop at every house and do a survey or to check if they sell some booze to people who want it and inform the RCMP to do a checkstop at junction road. I think that people should stop arguing and do what they say instead of complaining a lot at their sons and daughters. The way they yell or talk to them is making them think about drinking and smoking drugs. If this is a problem to them then they should do what they have to do instead of just saying it and not doing it. The people who sell it have always been getting chances to sell it a lot and that's because the people who talk a lot about it aren't doing it. They're just sitting in a chair thinking or talking about stopping it and that is a problem to discuss. Because they're saying it instead of doing it, the way they talk about it to students or people in town, that's not even helping. They should stop telling us how it affects our body or something like that and start doing what they say or think. What they should do is make people gather around and talk to them or make laws. They should just do whatever else is left to do than just talk about it. The way they complain, the more chances they're giving, the more they do it than talk about it, the less chances they have for selling it. That's the way I think they should have done it instead of just talking about it.

Don't Drink

Some days, in my life, I think I'm having the best days. But when I go to my friend's house, I see my friend's parents drinking. Sometimes his parents get into fights. This was long time ago. My uncle was drinking one morning and he went to a party. The next morning my uncle's wife picked up a rock and threw it into his front window. When my uncle got there, they got in a huge fight. I think the fight was because he went to the party. And of course they split up. So when I get married I will not fool around because I know what will happen. I had the experience. The same thing happened to my other uncle, the exact same. But if you are single and drinking, it's O.K. to fool around. But on the other hand you are going look funny and look like an idiot.

Scary stuff

There are some things that I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. There are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. There are problems because my parents used to drink a long time ago. I remember that my mom and my dad were drinking and went upstairs, then my dad tried to beat my mom up and someone called the police. The police came and took my dad into jail for about two or three days. It felt scary when they fought. Four years ago my cousin came into my house drunk and my parents were gone. My brother was watching us. I was upstairs in my room watching TV and I heard something downstairs, it sounded like breaking plates and cups. I went downstairs and I saw my cousin and my brother fighting. My grandma, uncle and aunt came to stop the fight and it wasn't good because my cousin was crying.

My dad's drinking problem

There are somethings I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. There are addictions such as alcohol/drugs and gambling. These are problems because people are unhappy, angry, swearing and fighting. When my mom, my dad and I go to Yellowknife and go back to Rae, my dad goes to the liquor store and buys beer. When we go back my dad goes out to see his friends to drink. When my dad comes home he comes back at one or two in the morning. When my dad gets back from his friend's house he just goes to sleep. Sometime some of his friends fight at night. When my dad's friends are fighting, I just stay in my room.

Addiction problems

I think when people drink they spend a lot of money on booze and gambling, they are not spending money on their kids. When people drink I think that the parents don't think about their kids or the family's money. Sometimes when I see people drinking I wonder if their kids are happy and safe with their grandparents. Sometimes I wonder why do people drink a lot and spend all their money for nothing and sometimes I see old people drinking five star or hard stuff or Budweiser.

Alcohol hurts the family

There are some things that I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. There are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. These are problems in our community because they are hurting people by fighting and blood on their clothes. Why do they get pay day??? Some people have unhappy homes and sometimes they get taken away. I hope they change so they can be happy with their kids.

I hate my alcoholic parents

There are some things that I don't like in our community of Rae-Edzo. There are addictions such as alcohol, drugs and gambling. These are problems because it hurts the community. If the parents drink, their kids might turn out the same way. When I was small, my parents use to drink. I told them to stop but they wouldn't listen, they would leave me alone. When my sister was born it got worse. They would fight over beer and they fight. I hated it. I sometimes wished I would live with my grandparents because they raised me until I was seven years old and then I moved away with my alcoholic mom. So I don't want alcohol, drugs, abuse and gambling. I been through all that and I wish it doesn't happen in our community.

Amazing what you learn from the drunks

Drinking alcohol makes you a different person. It makes you do things that you would not even think of doing. Do you ever stop to watch others that drink and stagger around town? I do and it makes me want to laugh but then imagine if it were you in that person's shoes. It won't be funny. You wanna know what is sad about these communities of ours? It's watching the elders drinking in front of us. They should be preaching us like all the elders do on TV. Kind of funny when you're learning things from television when you should be learning from the elders. It sounds like they should be doing it elsewhere, but that is not what I'm trying to say. They should be encouraging us not to drink, not just wander around and make us look bad. I'll give you an example. One time I walked into this restaurant. First thing I see is an elderly man sitting in a booth just about to pass out.

Everybody looking at him constantly, I sat right across from him and took a good look at him. Wanting to say things to him that would make him think but then I figured that he would be too drunk to remember. We, as teenagers, seek council from our elders. Why do they just laugh at us? Do we not matter? When I was a child, my dad threw big parties. My mom would take us upstairs and get into bed with us. But it would be too hard to ignore the noises those people made. Sometimes we would watch whenever my mom wasn't looking after us. Just to see what the excitement is all about. And now after all those years of partying in our home where we can see, it stopped now that we're grown-ups. Probably through that we wouldn't learn by it. No, I guess it doesn't work that way. Because we can make those sort of choices by ourselves. There are other addictions such as gambling, which doesn't tempt me as much as those other addictions do. I wonder what is exciting about losing money to a game of chance or if it is more important than your culture. Because there are times when a lot of people get together for meetings and traditional activities. What do they do? They go and get their cards out.

Let's change our future

There are these people I know they always drink and smoke. I don't like it, they don't listen to me and when it's the next day they don't know what happened. I don't know what the future will look like and I wish they never had started drinking in the first place and they waste their money, by buying beer and cigarettes. They can save a lot of money if they never buy beer and I want them to stop doing things like that. I don't know what my future looks like, so I want to try to stop all of this stuff and that is all.

Losing ourselves through alcohol

Since we first found out about alcohol, our people have gotten addicted to this madness, it seems like we're losing our tradition, our culture, our sense to maintain things all around us. I really don't mean to be rude but the non-natives brought alcohol into our world, made us look stupid and stole our land. We didn't speak or know much about speaking English. I guess there weren't many interpreters back then to know what we are left with now. We are left with just meetings, only with meetings we will resolve this whole situation, but is it? People out there PLEASE understand what alcohol can do to individuals and many others, it may be harmful and dangerous. Alcohol, I think is running our lives, to some people "a good time" is just plain drinking, there really isn't much fun to it. Look at our community especially on the weekends, see what goes on, it may be embarrassing or shameful for those who are making a fool out of themselves. They say you show your true feelings when you are drunk, you feel nothing, no shyness to get in the way, is it really? Do you show your true feelings?

I'm worried and sad

I want my uncle to stop drinking and gambling because he might go to jail. I worry when my uncle goes to jail. It makes me sad when my uncle goes to jail. I remember that one uncle was drinking in Yellowknife and he got shot in the leg. Instead of drinking to want to go to Yellowknife. When my parent's are drinking I was sad. I don't like people drinking their parents are old. I wish people would not drink because the community will be happier. When people drink I feel very sad.

I don't like going to my grandmother and grandfather's house

When my mom was younger, her dad was an alcoholic. He used to say nasty things to his family. My grandmother can now say nasty things too. He started drinking when he was 16 or 17. Now he is 71. The way drinking has affected me is that sometimes I don't like going to my grandmother and grandfather's house. Also when I was six and seven, my mom started to get help. Sometimes when I needed help, she wasn't there for me. I had to go to my sister instead.

Addiction makes sad

I worry when my uncle drinks. Instead of drinking, I want you to live longer. When my parents drink, I don't like it. I don't like people drinking because it's a waste of money. I wish people would not drink because everybody will be happy without it. When people drink, I feel sad. How to stop people from drinking? Talk to them. I wish people would just stay happy. Some people that have a hard time drinking should go to a treatment centre.

Drinking problem

The thing that bothers me is people drinking and smoking up. Those people that do this, they are always staggering around, walking around and start screaming or yelling. What if they were a dad or a mom and they had kids? What would they do? The kids would be crying, starving or what if there was a fire and there was a baby in the crib and a four year old little baby and they couldn't get out? And there was nobody around, what would happen? I'm very scared of all those

drugs and drinking, because my own people would die and I don't want that. I'm scared because what if all the people died that do that all the time? It's so scary! Even though I'm embarrassed of my own people because of the drinking, gambling, people playing bingo and drugs. Even to bingo, gambling, drugs and alcohol they spend lots of money to that. They spend like millions of dollars or thousands of dollars too. I'm scared of those kids, what if they start doing those things like drugs because of the parents and the people around town. Even the kids under the age of ten are starting to smoke because I see it. There's this family that's always drinking or smoking up and those two kids are suffering because they got no food, no one there for them, no one to do thing like cleaning and all those things. What if they don't graduate or go to college? So please help this town for people to stop drinking or just shut down the liquor store in Yellowknife. Please clean this town too, it's too messy. It's too dirty around the town. PLEASE HELP THIS TOWN!!! HELP!!

Alcohol

Alcohol is bad for you. It could damage your brain or it could make you crazy. You might throw things and hit somebody. You could lose friends and it is bad for you.

It's my life

Party! Party! Party! That was what my life was all about. Canadian, Budweiser, Vodka, Five-star whiskey, marijuana and Du Maurier cigarettes were all the main essentials of my life, I had no desire to change to make my life better. As I was growing up I challenged many obstacles and one of them was addiction. I have witnessed alcohol at a very young age and thought then that I was never going

to drink but that didn't happen. Hitting the teenage years was a real turnaround for me. I started drinking and experimenting with drugs heavily. It was the life in the fast lane! Suddenly one day, my eyes opened to the beautiful life that I have missed and wasted through all those years. Looking at myself, I realized then I'm not young anymore and not getting any younger. As a mother with two young children, I had to start making changes in my life fast before it was too late. Alcohol and drugs took control of my life and it almost took me six feet under but I fought so hard to the end. Today I am still standing tall with my head up high with my guards up. I know it's hard to do but it is so important to stay away from alcohol and drugs. It can become so powerful that sometimes it is too late. I believe with all my heart that you can do it, I don't believe in the word "can't" or "never" because it is not true. As a recovering alcoholic and drug addict myself, I strongly encourage all young and old to please stay away and firmly say NO! It will benefit you on the long run. You can still have fun and enjoy yourself without it. Finish your school and be that somebody that we're all looking for! May the Lord bless you on your journey to righteousness, sobriety, love and truthfulness. Masi. Recovered mother.

Please learn to control your bad habits

When people drink, I lock the door, and ignore them and then they will go away. I worry about them because they will not know what they're doing and what if they hurt themselves? What will you think then? I would be so sad and lonely that somebody died. I think drinking is bad for you because it can control your mind like crazy. It can tell you to drink more and more and it can tell you

what to do. Smoking is the same thing, the only reason God made smoke is that he made it because it can get cuts away. So if you got a drinking problem? Please stop or go to the drugs problems place. If you got a drinking problem, you tell someone you know. If you can't stop, please think about your kids and try to have a good life. Gambling and playing bingo is the same thing because you will not have enough money to serve your kids. For me, I cannot sit down and rest. Something has to be done.

My story

Why people drink in this age when they have children to take care of? Teenagers like me, go out when their parents start drinking in their house and have a party too. This doesn't make sense to me. I think that when parents get paid and they start buying booze instead buying food for their family, that is sad for their family. When husbands start drinking but their wives aren't drinking, husbands start to get mad, scream or yell at their wife or beat up their wife for no reason. That is not nice, and that is a bad relationship for the couple. That's not a good or great relationship for the parents. Your son or daughter will be like you if you drink. Confused Youngster.

Alcohol damages more than anything

Everything that's going on in town. I think that everyone should stop drinking and stop doing drugs. Because girls who drink and pass out, a bunch of guys might rape that girl and that girl might get pregnant and might not know who the father is. Some families break-up because the parents always drink and social services take their children or maybe one of the children drinks and it affects the

family. In some families, the parents drink all the time and the oldest child has to take care of his/her brothers or sisters and has to drop out of school just to take care of them. Some families don't even have money to buy food because the parents or children always spend the money on drugs or alcohol. Some people just drink to get rid of their problems but it gets worse if you drink. Some people who really want to drink and have no money they drink hairspray, mouthwash, shampoo and dish soap.

Rules

Why don't people listen to the rules and to the elders of our community?

Why don't children listen at all? Why don't they learn from the past and change for the best? Why don't we think twice and admit we were wrong? Why don't we think of the future and be like our elders of the past? Why don't we all learn from what we did and change for a better chance? Why can't we?

Many people who drink, show violence

People all around the world show violence. They swear, fight, punch and push. Kids around my age like to swear for nothing. Instead of saying shut-up, they like to use the F-word, B-word or the A-word. They use those swear words because they heard it from their parents. They show violence because that's the only way they know. When they get mad, they like to show violence, even though it is in public place. Many people who drink and are drunk, don't know they are being abusive or violent. Many people, who don't drink show violence and abuse to those that they love.

Why do people drink alcohol?

(1.) Why? To not make them think of what they did wrong that's why sometimes they turn to alcohol.

(2.) Why? Because their friends or families drink alcohol.

(3) Why? Because tomorrow is Friday and people drink on Fridays. They drink on Fridays because it's the weekend and weekends means to some people that it's party time. That's why some people drink because they think it's fun to let a colourless flammable liquid that is the intoxicating agent in fermented and distilled liquor in your stomach.

Drinking alcohol

It makes me sick of seeing people drinking alcohol. People get sick when they drink and smoke and eat alcohol. So many people get sick and die because they drink and smoke. When they drink and smoke, they are not taking care of their body so they end up sick and die. Drunk people smell bad and talk funny.

My life experience story

There was a time in my life that I was drinking a lot. All my friends were doing the same because we liked meeting at 10:00 every evening. Then we would start partying, talking and dancing which was right on but we would also drink vodka, whiskey, tequila, beers and many shooters. The bars closed at 4:00 a.m. so we had time to drink a lot. Usually, around 3:00 everybody was already drunk, falling down, unable to talk, throwing up everywhere and saying silly things or things that hurt. Most of them were fighting. I was drunk too, having fun. The next day

was always a nightmare. I would feel very sick and I'd have a big headache, wouldn't be able to move my body and would eat a lot. I would be so sick that I couldn't even think of doing anything else but lying on my couch all day when I could have gone for a walk or visited my friends. After a few nights like this, I put on weight because the alcohol contains lots of calories (one glass of whiskey is like one full meal). But the worst thing was that I couldn't remember anything that happened the night before. My friends were often telling me the next day, "I saw you dancing on a car or flirting with that guy or falling down on the road." Maybe it was funny at the beginning but it soon started to make me feel really ashamed and I got a very bad reputation for being a "crazy alcoholic". I had to stop because I was feeling really down and depressed. It has not been easy because when your friends constantly offer you a drink it's not easy to say no. You think that you won't be able to enjoy yourself if you are not drunk but I did it. I did stop and now, when I am going out, I am able to have a few drinks without being drunk. I enjoy myself and the next day I awake fresh as a rose, remembering all the things that happened the night before and ready to start a healthy and active new day.

Being abused by a sitter

I grew up in an alcohol home. There was no one there for me, to help me with my homework. So I quit school when I was 17 years old. Now I'm 27 years old. I learned so many things were wrong in my life. Every weekend my mother is gone to Yellowknife to buy alcohol, that's all she thinks about. I was always home alone with my brother who abused me, but when my mom came around 12:00 a.m., she would be drunk and with no

food. When I got older, all I wanted to do was to finish school and move on with my own life. I want my children to grow up in a safe home.

Smoking and drinking sucks!

This is a true story about my house. Everyday my mom smokes cigarettes.

I hate that okay. My dad and mom and their friends drink. I hate that okay. The day before yesterday my mom was smoking with her friends and sometime my parents drink with their friends. That really hurt me so bad. I fell down and cried.

All about alcohol

Well! I'm going to write about my parents. When my parent's drink, they always make me babysit my brother and my sister. I hate it when they drink because they sometimes fight and never come home for the whole weekend. Why do people drink? People drink just to make their problems go away but it doesn't go away, it just makes it worse. They just drink to have fun and to look that they are all that. There is a lot of drinking around the community. When their children see what there parents are doing they don't like it and they just cry and some hate them. A loving and concerned student.

Alcohol

Hi. I would like to share my thoughts and feelings about the issue that most citizens of the community are concerned about, Alcohol. A portion of workers drink. When they get paid, they go to town to the bars and liquor store. They spend all their money on booze, instead of important things. For instance, if they have children, they should think of them. If they have bills and other important things,

they should think responsible before they drink. Most drinkers should know their limit. Some people get way out of control, when they get wired. This is a really bad view for youth of today's generation. They should take responsibility of whatever they do, good or bad. Some role model for youth should look into what they do. What they do, the young people do. Some people have wild parties. Some get out of control and violence breaks out when young people are around, they get involved. Some youths might get a hold of alcohol and get themselves in trouble. Some youth get too much alcohol in their system and end up in the hospital. Some people learn, some people don't. Alcohol also breaks up relationships and marriage. Some people lose their life, children and other belonging. Some people also wind up severely injured and killed by drunk drivers, so keep yourself away from the wheel. You are saving your life and others' lives as well. GET THE MESSAGE AND DON'T DRINK.

Problems with the family (alcoholism)

This story will start off from where my family started to drink hard liquor. Ever since I was a child, going to elementary school, my parents would drink, go out for weekends and get into fights. Nobody, but me would take care of my young brother and sister, and they were younger then me. Since there was no one to take care of my sister and brother, I was the one to be there for them, even though I needed the education. I kind of drop out of school when I was about eight years of age, cause I really wanted to be there just for my sister and brother. It was really difficult from what I went through those days, because I had to either stay home or go back to school. I love my sister and brother with all

my heart. I still take care of them when they need someone to talk to or when they have a problem. When three of us were young my parents always use to drink and they always wanted to go to YK and buy some more hard liquor. It was so disgraceful for my parents to drink in those days. Now days, we are in the nineties young teenagers from 15 to 16 and over start to drink alcohol, probably like their parents used to and they are following the wrong step. The teenagers are way too young to drink alcohol. I don't know how or when the people in our community of Rae-Edzo are ever going to stop drinking alcohol, but can they just put it through their mind and say to themselves, "Why am I drinking?" I just hope that the people of Rae-Edzo would put a stop to drinking, especially on weekends, not only Rae-Edzo, but also in the other Dogrib communities. I'm afraid the people seriously need some help into drinking problems. Maybe the people can spend a whole lot of time with their children when needed, even on weekends. With the alcohol going on in our communities we lost many dear friends and families. It bothers me when I see people drunk, especially the teenagers my age. Hope there will be a stop from the alcohol. But, who will put a stop to it? Who knows who will?
CJBS student

Broken homes

Drinking is not healthy and it can kill you. Drinking and driving do not mix. Some people get in big, big trouble when they drink. Some people that drink come to my house and ask for money for beer. Many people that drink come from broken homes. Drinking makes our community look bad and if you drink it makes YOU look bad. It sounds like it might be cool to drink but there are other ways to look cool such as dressing nicely and getting a good

education. Drinking makes you think dumb therefore you cannot think clearly. If you give a dog some beer, look at the way it acts. If that was a human being, it will look embarrassing. Is that how you want to look and act in front of others?

Community problems with sex and addiction

You know, people act as though nothing has happened over the weekend, the image they're making and putting on themselves. For example, a guy calls a girl that she's pretty and everything, then he has sex with her and never speaks to her again. After they had sex the guy says that he'll call but he doesn't call at all, and the girl realized that the guy would not call and that he used her. A month later the girl realized that she was pregnant and doesn't know what to do, have the baby or not. One day she went to find the guy she was with and told him that she is going to have a baby and she wants to know if he'll be part of the baby's life. But the guy told her he doesn't know her, then the girl said that yes you know. Why did you tell me that was I pretty and everything? And then you say that you don't know me, how could you do this to me, you are just like the rest of the guys. Then she left and decided to get an abortion, then she moved on with her life.

Unsolved gambling problem

There is a really big problem in our community of Rae-Edzo and it needs it be solved one way or another. But by the way things are going I don't think it will ever be solved. At one point our leaders tried to solve it but the community gamblers won't listen NO! NO! NO!! I think it only made things worse. Maybe that's why leaders and role

models got involved with the community gamblers group. Our community has this problem and no-one wants to try and solve it, maybe there are a few people out there that wanna say something about it, but they're scared and afraid and have no one to tell their problems to. I'm a grade 10 student at Chief Jimmy Bruneau Regional High School I walk to the bus every morning at around 8:00 a.m. As I walk towards the bus I pass this one house and what do I see? A house with bright lights on and two to seven vehicles outside, some days I'll see people leaving the place, some with happy smiles laughing away and some with frowns on their face wanna cry. As I approach the bus I look back one more time thinking, if I should just walk into the house and tell everyone how I feel about seeing them gambling all hours of the night. One thing that really hurts me the most is the gambler's children are home safe. I use to have this friend that always talked about her mother out gambling every night, she felt as if she was the mother to her siblings because she was stuck at home all the time. While her mother was out gambling trying to make money to pay the bills and put food on the table. Last but not least, what happened to all of our community leaders and role models. They're out gambling with the Rae-Edzo gambling group. Once in a blue moon I go out with a few buddies just to check out what kind of people gamble. And guess what we see. Our community leaders, teachers, counsellor, and a whole a lot of other role models and a lot of parents. For us to see this it hurts us a lot, our leaders and role models tell us to finish our grade 12 and for us to see this going on, they're sending us a message. Finish your grade 12 and become gamblers like us.

Drugs

Drugs are bad for you. Some bad kids buy drugs on the streets. Be free from drugs. Don't drink and drive. If you see alcohol in your house maybe it belongs to someone in your family. It could be dangerous and against the law for people to drink until they are 21 or older. It's hard to speak, walk and hard to think when you drink. If you're drinking you might have a car crash. Please be careful with alcohol. If your best friends tells you to drink, just say, "No thanks," if they say I'm going to beat you up if you don't drink or I'm not going to be your friend, just run or walk away. Or if your parents are having a fight because you dad is drunk, just call the RCMP. If you don't got any phone, just run there, or use your next door friend's phone. If you have a baby in your stomach, don't smoke or drink. Be smoke free and be drug free. You know that. Be safe.

Alcohol can make you do embarrassing things

My uncle was drunk and got in a fight. When he drinks, he bugs my grandma for money. Sometimes he drinks at his friend's house and his brother beats him up. Still, my uncle drinks. When he gets mad he is mouthy, but when he is sober, he is nice. At his mom's house he breaks the windows when he gets mad. When he's sober he is embarrassed for what he did. My mom gets mad at my grandma because she gives my uncle money. Then my grandma goes out and comes back after awhile. My uncle says he didn't know what he did. His brother tells him what he did and my uncle gets embarrassed again.

Abuse causes misery

One thing I hate about is our community is how alcohol abuse is affecting our people's lives. When people are drinking they don't know what they are doing, maybe they are abusing their kids, or teasing their family, friends and girl/boy friend. Young children are copying the elders, what they are doing, like doing drugs, drinking alcohol and abusing their girlfriend. That is not good so I want the drug and alcohol abuse to stop, to make it clean to the community.

What happens when people drink

Some people drink because they have problems all the time. They walk funny. They have brain damage. They forgot about everything. Alcoholic people are drunk and party all the time. Alcohol is dangerous and it's going to make you sick.

This is bullshit

Why do we children have to put up with this crap? Why should we have sleepless nights and why should the elders be abused or suffer? This is not right. It is not Dene.

I will never do that again

Once upon a time, there were these people who just loved to drink. They were addicted to it. They just couldn't stop. Once they were drunk, they would beat each other up. They would punch, hit, scratch and throw stuff around. It was really scary. When I was going around to visit them boys, I was really scared and really nervous. When I got there, I walked up to the doorstep and knocked on the door four times. Finally they answered the

door. When I walked in I could smell the stale beer. I told myself that I was so stupid and I should have phoned first. Well they pulled me in and told me to sit down just like anyone would do except for the pulling. We started a conversation for ten minutes but then it started to get scary. When I woke up, I found myself in the hospital feeling like I was stabbed 1,000 times and when I looked around, I just caught the nurse going out of the room. I asked her what had happened to me. She replied, "Well as far as I know you were beaten up by two people, who were really drunk. But don't worry. They were arrested today. You will need to get ready for your operation room in ten minutes." Ten minutes later I had to have my operation on my back. I was worried that I might die. Before I got in the operating room I quickly did the sign of the cross and prayed to God that I wouldn't die. Before I knew it, I was sleeping and they started fixing my back, which was broken. I was in a really deep sleep. I was in too deep of a sleep that suddenly there was the really bright light that shone and this person came out. It was God and he asked me if I wanted to see the good world or stay on earth? It was a hard decision. I wanted to see the good world and I also wanted to live on earth with my family. I decided to stay on earth because I didn't want to leave everyone in sorrow. That would be horrible so I didn't and as soon as I woke up, I remembered everything that had happened. It took me a year to get back to normal. Now I know better. This is a true story, it happened to my friend. Take my advice, DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!!!

Addictions causes dysfunction

When I walk the streets in my home town, I see people of all ages, races and their places in the community, abusing not only alcohol,

but many other addictive habits, ranging from drugs to gambling. It only brings them happiness when they get intoxicated, when they win at their favourite gambling and, when they get high on non-prescribed illegal drugs. But what will happen if they lose or wake with a hangover not knowing what they did the night before. That would really be stupid and regretful, because I've been there before and it really sucks. Because there are others who will be there to encourage others, including me. They bring all kinds of troubles to ruin your life for a moment, and that's where you got a chance to make your decisions to change to a normal life. But when you abuse alcohol and drugs, you can carry limited problems on your shoulders. What will happen if it builds up, you figure that out because it wouldn't be hard to imagine the consequences that are sure to throw your entire happiness that's within you. And I'll tell you this, every 1/100,000, if you drink, there will be a time where a split second can change your life forever. And that is where you can't do nothing but look back on your life and see what is wrong and what you can do about the situation. This all starts in the home and leads the kids to the streets if they're neglected to the point where they end up hanging on the streets too long and they'll start getting in trouble. So if you're planning to gamble, think of the kids you're putting on the stinking streets and what they can do to wreck their young precious future.

A long time ago

When my parents were in their 30s, they used to drink. Now when they drink, they don't get drunk. When I was nine years old, two of my brothers, sister and my mom and I moved to Fort Smith for two years. I thought we moved away from my dad because they had

an argument but we moved to have a better education. My mom used to drink in the house but she never got drunk. I remember only one time when my mom got drunk and she kicked my brother and I ran out of the house. We peeked through the window and saw her puking in the garbage and later she had a cloth on her head. So that's why I think she quit drinking. Drinking makes you sick.

Alcohol

Alcohol is poison.

Alcohol is disease.

Alcohol can kill.

Alcohol can hurt.

Alcohol can damage.

Alcohol loses language.

Alcohol loses culture.

Alcohol is not Dene.

The last time my dad drank

Last time my dad was drinking, he was going crazy and he was yelling at us. We ran out. My mom called the RCMP. Then my dad got mad and pulled out the phone line. The RCMP came to my house and my dad went outside to meet them. Then he started to fight one of the policemen. When my sister and I went inside the house my mom was crying. The next day my mom threw his clothes out. My dad stayed at my grandma's house. Sometimes we would visit him. My dad wanted to come home, but my mom said NO. A year later my mom said he could come home. That was the last time my dad drank. Now we are happy that my dad doesn't drink, and that we have a sober, happy home.

Gambling

Uncle, aunt, cousin, mother and father playing cards until the morning. The kids wake up. They see their parents, uncles, aunts, all of them tired from playing cards until past this waking hour. Smoke. "Mom, why are you so tired all day? Dad, why is mom not listening?" My family loves their pasttimes together, occasions to look forward to, money spent, won, lost, no food, no clothes. Kids starving and left alone again. Addiction. This is part of my life. I grew up with this. I had loving parents who loved to gamble their money. I had cousins who were better off than us. I grew up around family members playing cards sometimes until 3:00 a.m. I was a lucky one? In many houses they played cards until 6:00 a.m. The kids lost sleep. The kids always lose in the end. GAMBLING! Who really is the winner? NOBODY!

Love

Love is better than addiction.
Love is better than abusing.
Love is better than hurting.
Love is better than sadness.
Love is pure from the heart
Love is a pure Dene value
Love is always the best.

The innocent

Just last week this man across the street went crazy because he was drinking. When he drinks he fights the people that go by his house. He also smokes marijuana inside his warehouse. Last time I saw him he swore at two skinny kids that were walking by. My mom phoned the police so the police took the drunk man to jail. Innocent people, such as the two children in this story, are affected by people who drink.

Losing battle with drugs and alcohol

In our community many people are drinking and doing drugs. Back in the olden days, many people didn't know what the meaning of alcohol and drugs was. Right now on weekends, and sometimes on weekdays, people go to Yellowknife just to visit the bar and make a fast trip to the liquor store. Our community and the people are drinking and smoking a lot of drugs and don't realize they have a problem. It's not a good idea to drink or do drugs. One day in the future, people are going to think why did we ever do that, why? In the near future our people may be leaders for our community. That's why the white people want us to lose our community, land and the rights we have, to the addictions. So everyone out there please stop using alcohol and drugs for the children's and community's sake. Please!!!

What is love?

What is Love?
What is respect thy self?
What is self-love?
What is self-dignity.
What is pride?

Opening ourselves to love

Allowing ourselves to receive love is one of the greatest challenges we face in recovery. Many of us have blocked ourselves from receiving love. We may have lived with people who used to love to control us. They would be there for us, but at the high price of our freedom. Love was given, or withheld, to control us and have power over us. It was not safe for us to receive love from these people. We may have gotten accustomed to not receiving love, not

acknowledging our need for love, because we lived with people who had no real love to give. At some point in recovery, we acknowledge that we too want and need to be loved. We may feel awkward with this need. Where do we go with it? What do we do? Who can give us love? How can we determine who is safe and who isn't? How can we let others care for us without feeling trapped, abused, frightened, and unable to care for ourselves? We will learn. The starting point is to surrender to our desire to be loved, our need to be nurtured and loved. We will grow confident in our ability to take care of ourselves with people. We will feel safe enough to let people care for us, we will grow to trust our ability to choose people who are safe and who can give us love. We may need to get angry first, angry that our needs have not been met. Later, we can become grateful to those people who have shown us what we don't want, the ones who have assisted us in the process of believing we deserve love, and the ones who come into our life to love us. We are opening up like flowers. Sometimes it hurts as the petals push open. Be glad. Our heart is opening up to the love that is and will continue to be there for us. Surrender to the love that is there for us, to the love that people, the Universe, and the Higher Power send our way. Surrender to love, without allowing people to control us or keeping us from caring for ourselves. Start by surrendering to love for yourself.

God, today I will open myself to the love that is here for me. I will let myself receive love that is safe, knowing I can take care of myself with people. I will be grateful to all the people from my past who have assisted me in my process of opening up to love. I claim, accept, and am grateful for the love that is coming to me.

An alcohol story

When I was in grade two, I used to skip school because I had to babysit my sister. In the morning, my sister and I were looking out the window. We had no food to eat and my parents were arguing again but I don't know what they were arguing about. All of a sudden my stepfather grabbed my mom by the hair and threw her down the stairs and back up again. He hit her and I started to cry. My sister and I cried for my grandma. My mom told me to get someone and tell them to call the RCMP. My stepdad said, "NO." My sister and I cried. I wanted my grandma to come but I know she wouldn't because she lives at Bay Island and I live behind the Sportsplex. I used to go to Bay Island to see my grandma when my parents drank but now I don't because I have to watch my sister when my parents are drinking. Now I know my mom will always drink because of my stepdad. They always used to fight until social services took us away.

They love to drink more than they love me

When you were a child, did your mom and dad spend time with you? Did they feed you well, did they tell you tons of evening stories? Did they show you how to work, did they show you how to hunt, fish and cook? Did they take you out on the land, did they make you beaded clothes, did they protect you? Did they show you how much they care, did they show you respect and love? Well, I guess my parents don't do that anymore because they love to drink more than they love me.

Extreme problem unresolved

Drugs are one big problem around the NWT. People think it's popular but it's not. It is something that can cause mental problems such as madness, sickness, abuse, and many other things. Alcohol is a second major problem in the NWT. Alcohol is uncontrollable, when a person is drunk, it even causes injuries or death. That is why we've got to talk to our people.

Help

Alcoholics needs help

The spouses need help

Oldest child needs help

Middle child needs help

Youngest child needs help

Youth needs help

Elders need help

Leaders need help

Workers need help

Everyone involved needs help

Alcohol and it's effects

Sometimes my uncle drinks and I see him around Rae or Yellowknife. It makes me sad to see him drink. Sometimes he asks for money and we don't give money to drunk people because they might buy more beer. When he is not drinking, we give my uncle money. I often wonder how his kids feel when he drinks. I'm thankful that my parents don't drink and that I have a sober home.

It's too good to let go

Are you a victim of alcohol and drug abuse? If you are, don't panic, because do you know that I am too! There are millions of people like us who are in the same boat as we are right now. Do you believe you can get better?

Of course you can. We can do it together starting right now. First, admitting that you are an alcoholic and a drug addict is the most important step to sobriety and cleanliness. Be true and honest to yourself. Remember the truth shall set us free! Secondly, is looking at your life. I'm talking about way back as far as you can remember. Did you grow up around alcohol and drugs? And if you did, there is the key problem. Don't blame your family members for your faults, troubles and mistakes. You are the one who is doing it to yourself. Nobody forced the beer down your throat, this is all your doing. What you need to do is start forgiving yourself for all the things that you have done wrong in the past and turn your life to the care of God. It sounds funny and crazy at first, but it's not. It really does work, if you really mean it from your heart. Most of all you must stay away from slippery places as in bars, parties, etc... Slippery friends who like to drink, and slippery things that may remind you of drinking and drugging. It's going to be hard at first but it's worth it at the end. I am a recovering alcoholic and drug addict myself. The most intelligent choice I have ever made in my life was to let go of my old life. I am so thankful to be alive today. It's a beautiful life out there, don't let that go to alcohol and drugs. Just say No!!

Alcohol

There was no once upon a time in my days, because people my age or older than my age always drink on Friday night and Saturday night too. What a beautiful day to get drunk at home or somebody's house, I say to myself, why people get drunk on Friday and Saturday and I found the answer, they want to have a good time with their friends. So what! Want to have a good time: go on a skidoo ride with your friends, play games, play pool, sports,

go hunting and take a walk with your friends. Now that is a great time with your friends. When parents are drinking, it causes a bad relationship, because a husband will beat up his wife for no reason or get mad at her for no reason and their children watch the fight or hear the husband getting mad at his wife. And the children will cry because their mom is on the floor and the husband is kicking or punching her or the children will cover their ears because all the noise and the children don't want to hear it. I will not have that kind of relationship in my town. That is not our cultural way. Why do we have this stuff going on in our town. When small children don't like it!! When the parents starts to drink, I guess their children will start to drink and they will have the same relationship, just like yours. Do you know why I know this stuff? Because I have been there and did it. I want everybody to have a great relationship. I was walking around and I went to the complex to look around and I saw this big poster, it says, "IF YOU DRINK THEN DRIVE YOU ARE A BLOODY FOOL." That is so true.

The effects of alcohol

If people want to drink alcohol they have to be 21 years or older. When you are 21 you can decide if you want to drink alcohol or not. You must show ID proving you are over 21 to drink alcohol. If you drink you can't think right and you can't walk straight. If your friend is drinking and forces you to drink, he/she is not a good friend. If your friend forces you to do something you do not want to do, it is still peer pressure. Too much drinking alcohol can make you really sick. If you drink too much you might throw up. When someone is drinking he/she might try to hit you.

The best thing to do is to stay away from him/her. Some people drink because their friends do or because they don't think they are cool or because they think they can get away from problems, but it doesn't go away.

“For The Sake of Our Children”

The Dogrib Addictions Strategy – An Executive Summary

In August 1998, because of growing concerns about addictions in Dogrib communities, the Treaty 11 Chiefs asked the Dogrib Community Services Board to develop an addictions strategy. This strategy was to be presented to the Dogrib leaders and people at our General Assembly in Gamètì in August 1999. Our Steering Committee was appointed a few weeks later.

Over the next six months, we visited all the communities to consult with our people. We spent many hours in conversations, conducted healing workshops, carried out research and held numerous planning sessions. Finally, we summarized all the information we gathered in a report entitled, “For the Sake of Our Children”. This document is a draft summary of the final report.

Part One

Talking to Our People

Our People’s Vision

Our people see a better world ahead of us, a world where addictions do not rule their lives and trouble their communities.

They see families that are strong and healthy, where people respect and support one another. Elders are listened to, parents are aware of their responsibility to guide their children, and children listen to the counsel that is provided by their parents and elders.

Our people see a world in which the members of every Dogrib family have a deep-rooted sense of “belonging to the land”. This relationship is the source of their strength, It is what gives them an awareness of who they are and defines them as Dogrib. They spend time on the land, they continue to cultivate the traditional skills, they return to the land when they are distressed or troubled.

People have a special vision for youth, and the youth share this vision. They know that our youth are now caught between two worlds, having difficulty sorting out who they really are. As our people look to the future, they see young people who are “strong like two people”. They have learned the skills they will need to survive and flourish in the wider world. But they are Dogrib to their very core: they speak their language, they know their customs and traditions, they are proud of their culture and heritage, they are guided by their Dogrib beliefs and spirituality.

Our people see a future in which strong leaders play a dominant role. They are sober leaders – leaders who are role models. They are committed to education, able to move easily between the two worlds in which we exist, and committed to the development of our Dogrib culture. They are leaders who seek the counsel of our elders, and they will have a special commitment to training our youth – the leaders of the future.

Finally, the vision of our people is a realistic one. They know that addictions are like powerful viruses that invade the body, weaken our families and communities, and sap our strength as a people. These viruses will not simply go away. They will have to be struggled against and overcome. And so, each community will have trained people and support groups to help those suffering from addictions. They will organize education programs, provide family counselling, take people out on the land for healing programs, and be there to greet and work with everyone returning from treatment centres. As a people, we will have our own regional treatment

centres serving our own people in our own language.

It will not be easy for our people to make their vision a reality. But it is possible. For thousands of years we, as Dogrib people, have overcome problems and difficulties. This latest problem, the challenge of overcoming addictions in our families and communities, is our greatest challenge. But we will overcome them. We must overcome them – for the sake of our children.

Our Findings

Here is a summary of our findings.

1. Every individual and every family in every Dogrib community has been, and is affected, by addictions problems.
2. The major addictions problems are alcohol, drug abuse and gambling.
3. Addictions are caused by a number of factors. These include personal problems, family problems, community and societal problems.
4. The major and most serious effect of addictions is the breakdown in the family structure.
5. The major concern of most people is the impact that addictions are having on children and young people.
6. Though we are trying our best, we are not doing an adequate job dealing with addictions problems in our communities.
7. If we are to succeed as a people in overcoming our addiction problems, we must have leaders who are strong role models.
8. The key to a successful strategy is the involvement of people who have entered into healing and are willing to help others with their healing.

Part Two **The Dogrib Addictions Strategy**

Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the The Dogrib Addictions Strategy is to help individuals live healthy lifestyles in healthy families in healthy communities by preventing or overcoming addictions. It does this by mobilizing the resources of Dogrib communities to implement preventive measures, support those in the midst of their healing, and help them and their families make transitions to positive, healthy and addiction-free lifestyles.

The word “healthy” refers to the achievement of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. The primary way of achieving health is by maintaining and/or restoring primary relationships with the land and with one’s culture, with one’s own individual Spirit, with one’s family and community members and with the community’s organizations and institutions.

Guiding Principles

The strategy is guided by the following principles that have emerged out of our consultations.

- Individuals and families must assume responsibility for their own health, education and social wellbeing.
- The strategy must be family and community-based. It must help individuals, families and communities develop the capacity to address their own addiction problems in their own way.
- Community programs and forms of assistance must be supported by a regional support system.
- Programs and services must be culturally relevant and enhance the cultural and linguistic unity of Dogrib people.

- Programs and services must be comprehensive (prevention, treatment and after-care) and integrated. They must meet the needs of all people, remove barriers to access, eliminate duplication, foster coordination, fill in the gaps and be cost-effective.

Our Strategic Goals

The strategic goals are those areas where, over the next five years, we should devote most of our resources and energies. The responsibility for achieving these goals lies with various Dogrib groups – at both a regional and local level – and government departments, working together in partnerships.

Goal #1: To establish, in each community, a Community Healing and Support Program. This program would work to stop the deterioration of family life and provide the support needed to develop healthy families.

Goal #2: To develop a strategy and action plan to meet the needs of families with special needs children. This strategy would pay special attention to helping families with children suffering Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) or Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE).

Goal #3: To develop a youth addictions strategy in each community. The focus would be on preventing addictions, providing alternatives to addictions, and helping young people overcome their addictions problems.

Goal #4: To develop a youth treatment capacity in the Dogrib region on both a local and a regional level. The emphasis would be on the development of land-based treatment programs in a cultural context.

Goal #5: To develop a regional adult treatment capacity for Dogrib peoples. We need treatment in our own language that reflects our own culture.

Goal #6: To increase the number of trained addictions counsellors in both the communities and the region. The need is to train both professional Dogrib counsellors serving full-time and to train community people working as volunteers with AA groups, healing groups, providing peer counselling, etc.

Goal #7: To establish a policy framework that will demonstrate the commitment and support of the Dogrib leaders. (Initial policies would include: support for this addictions strategy; sobriety requirements for leaders; zero tolerance for bootleggers; sobriety requirements for all Dogrib employees; expectations of voluntary community service [as opposed to honoraria]; refusal of the Band to pay for addiction-related damages to public housing.)

The Next Step

Assuming that the Addictions Strategy is accepted at the Dogrib General Assembly in August, 1999 (perhaps with some modifications), the next step would be for Dogrib Community Services Board to take the lead role in coordinating the implementation of the strategy. It would work with local CSB authorities to develop an overall plan, identify and secure resources, hire staff and ensure the required training of board members, staff and volunteers.

Project Terms of Reference

*All Chiefs Meeting,
Cultural Centre, Rae-Edzo, NT
September 24-25, 1998*

Community Addictions Strategy

Resolution #98-05

Whereas, the sickness of alcohol abuse and other addictions touches everyone in our communities;

And whereas, alcohol abuse in mothers and fathers harms children in the womb and robs them of a productive future;

And whereas, alcohol abuse causes parents to neglect their children, families to break up, and children to be split from their parents;

And whereas, alcohol abuse causes people to leave school, quit their training and lose employment;

Therefore be it resolved that, the Dogrib Community Services Board begin a process of community consultation that involves elders, elected officials, professionals, families, and young people in the development of our comprehensive and integrated community addictions strategy for the wellness of our people and the future of our children and our communities; and to report annually to the Assembly on the work to date.

Moved by: Joseph Judas

Seconded by: Jackson Lafferty

**Motion carried this 25th day of
September, 1998**

Approved: Grand Chief Joe Rabesca
Chief Charlie J. Nitsiza
Chief Henry Gon
Chief Joseph Judas

Dogrib Addictions Strategy Steering Committee

Steering Committee

Nora Wedzin,
Social Worker, Health and Social Services

Christine Smith,
Mary Adele Bishop Health Centre

Mabel Husky,
School Community Counsellor, EMES

Cecilia Zoe-Martin,
Counsellor, CJBS

Jim Martin,
Executive Director, DCSB

Community Consultations

We would like to express our appreciation to **Joe Beaverho** and **Noel Bishop**, who kindly consented to serve as chairpersons for the community consultation meetings.

Mike Bell,
Inukshuk Management Consultants, Writer

Philip Rabesca,
Interpreting and Technical Assistance

David Gon,
Technical Assistance

Goal of the Twelve Steps

GOAL	PURPOSE	STEP
Peace with God	Step One is about recognizing our brokenness.	We admitted we were powerless over the effects of addiction – that our lives had become unmanageable.
	Step Two is about the birth of faith in us.	Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
	Step Three involves a decision to let God be in charge of our lives.	Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, <i>as we understood God</i> .
Peace with Ourselves	Step Four involves self-examination.	Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
	Step Five is the discipline of admitting our wrongs.	Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
	Step Six is the beginning of an inner transformation, sometimes called repentance.	Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
	Step Seven involves the transformation or purification of our character.	Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
Peace with Others	Step Eight involves examining our relationships and preparing ourselves to make amends.	Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
	Step Nine is the discipline of making amends.	Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
	Step Ten is about maintaining progress in recovery.	Continued to take personal inventory and, when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
Keeping the Peace	Step Eleven involves the spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation.	Sought, through prayer and meditation, to improve our conscious contact with God, <i>as we understood God</i> , praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.
	Step Twelve is about spreading the word.	Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Help Numbers

For more information on the Addictions Strategy, call or write:

Tłıchq Community Services Agency

Bag 5 , Behchokq X0E 0Y0

Phone: (867) 371-3700

For help or assistance with an addiction:

Speak to a school counsellor, a community health nurse, a community health representative, a social worker, the parish priest or an alcohol and drug counsellor in your community.

Or call: (867) 392-6931

NWT HELP LINE:

1-800-661-0844