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This work was conducted on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwítlh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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1. Background

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) outlines the rights of children and youth to develop to their greatest potentials (Fig. 1).

This community-university partnership explores experiences of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and adjacent Inner City (DTES-IC) youth, parents, and community members with the UNCRC (Fig. 2).

2. Objectives

- 1) How much does the community know about the UNCRC?
- 2) How are those rights being honoured in the community?
- 3) How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted those rights?

3. Methods

A survey developed to facilitate UNCRC discussion was presented to community members iteratively on-line and on paper between September 2020 and July 2021 (Fig. 3).

Recruitment: convenience snowball sampling.

Analysis: descriptive statistics.

UBC REB Application Number: H20-00987

4. Results

13 youth, 16 caregivers, and 11 staff members participated.

1) How much does the community know about the UNCRC?

Before participating, 62% of youth and 56% of caregivers did not know the UNCRC existed (article 42) (Fig. 4).

92% of youth, 85% of caregivers, and 91% of staff stated they would like to know more about child and youth rights.

2) How are those rights being honoured in the community?

Overall, participants believed that most children and youth have their rights as outlined by the UNCRC in articles 12 (views), 23 (disability), 24 (health), 28 (education), and 31 (rest) honoured in their community (Fig. 5).

Participants reported that children and youth had paradoxically both the least and most access to rest, play, culture, and arts (article 31).

Participants also reported children and youth had the least access to respect for their views (article 12).

3) How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted those rights?

Participants thought the COVID19 pandemic increased children and youth's right to rest (article 31) but decrease other rights investigated (Figure 6).

5. Conclusion and Next Steps

Lack of knowledge of the UNCRC is prevalent on the DTES-IC.

The results of this study will inform DTES-IC community centre programming, and will enhance the capacity and empower communities experiencing vulnerabilities to participate in on-going health promotion research and human rights advocacy.

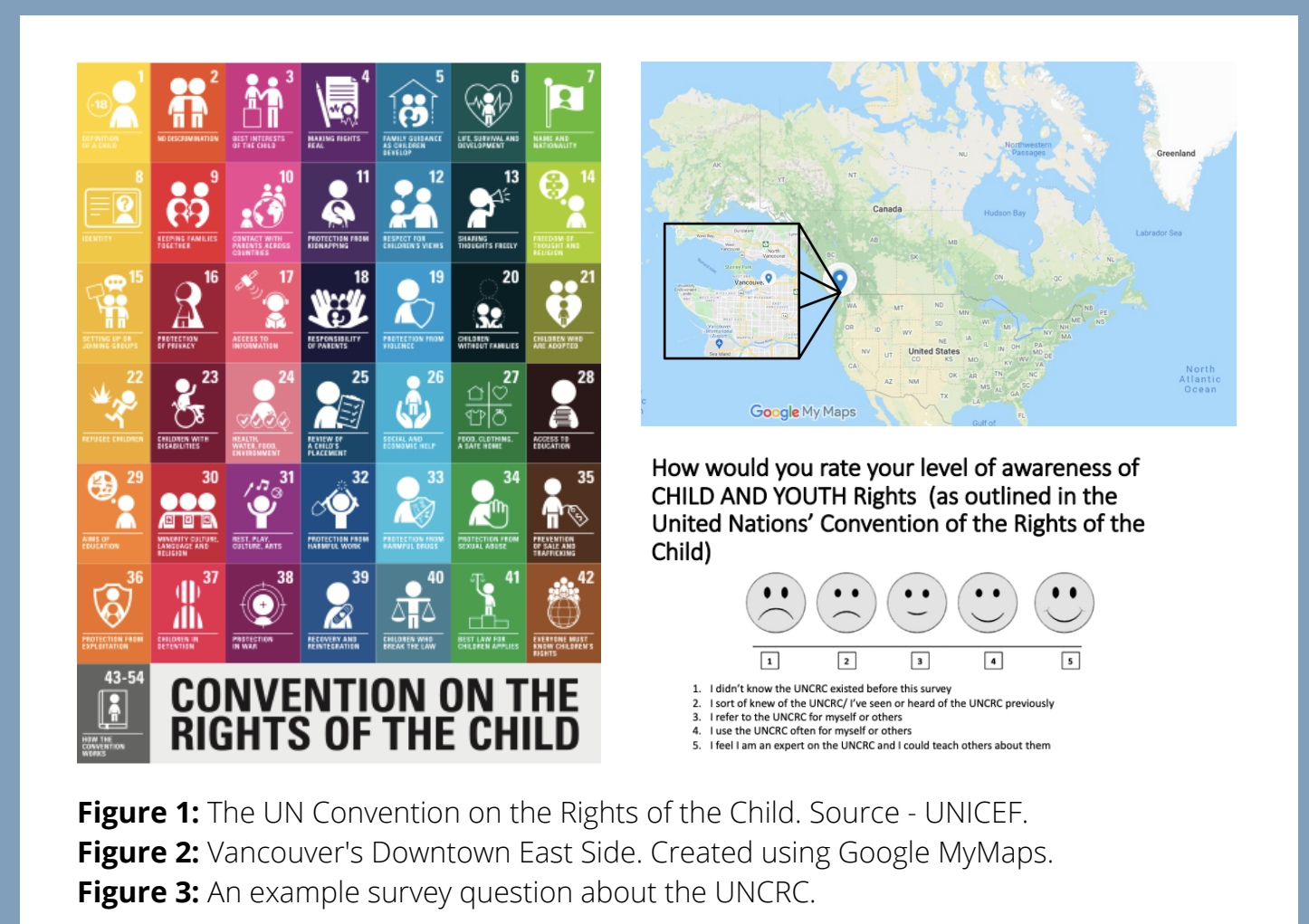


Figure 1: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Source - UNICEF.

Figure 2: Vancouver's Downtown East Side. Created using Google MyMaps.

Figure 3: An example survey question about the UNCRC.

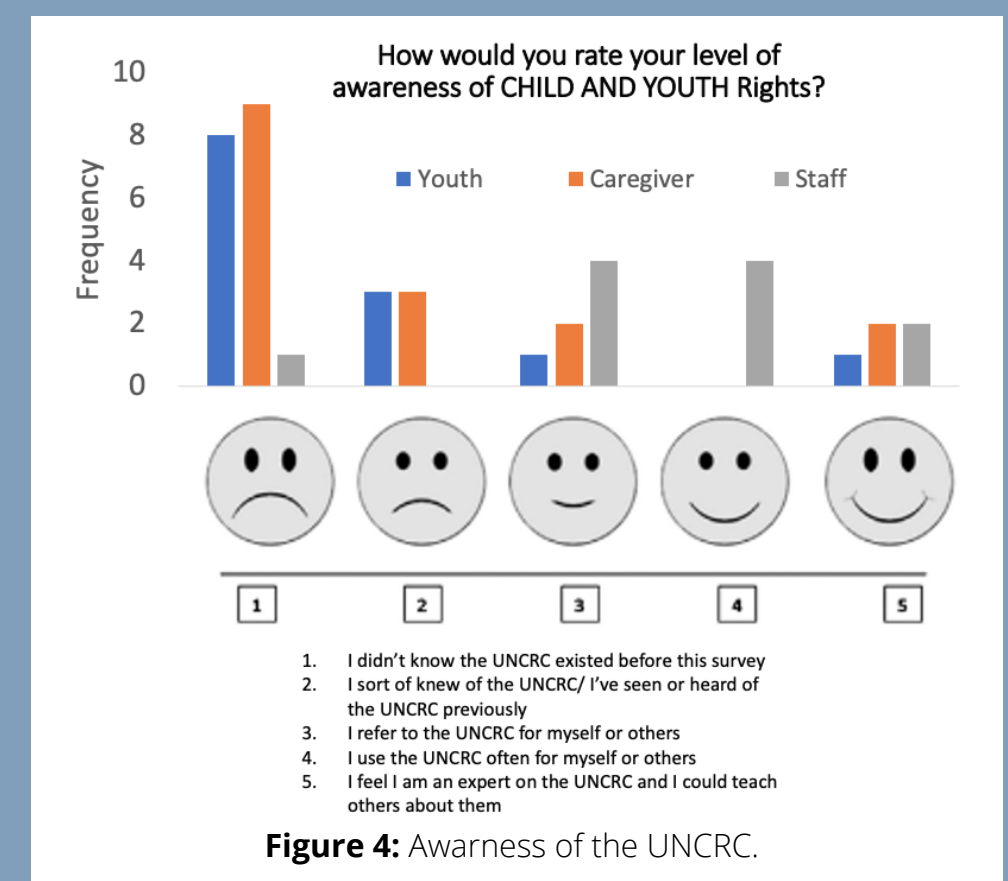


Figure 4: Awareness of the UNCRC.

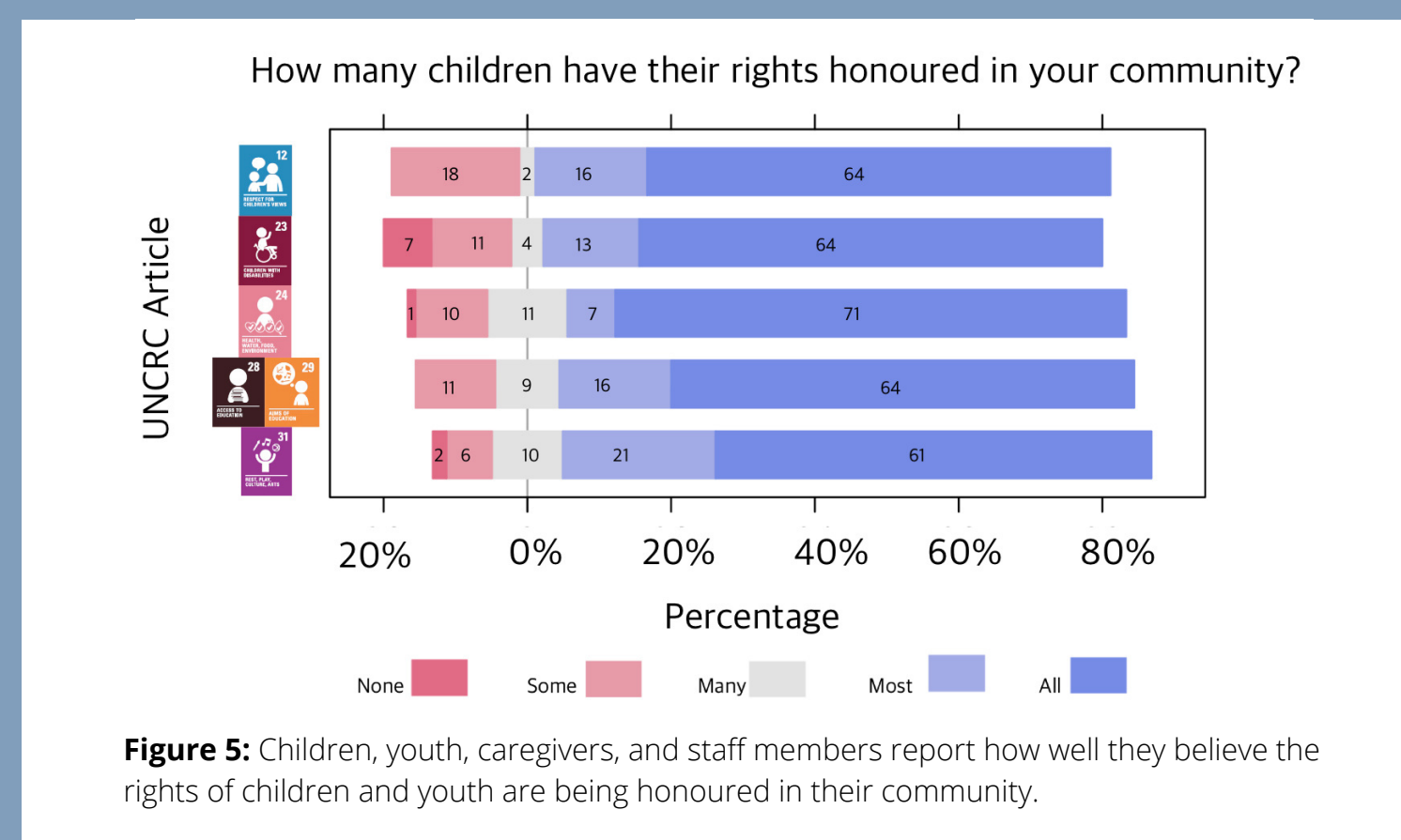


Figure 5: Children, youth, caregivers, and staff members report how well they believe the rights of children and youth are being honoured in their community.

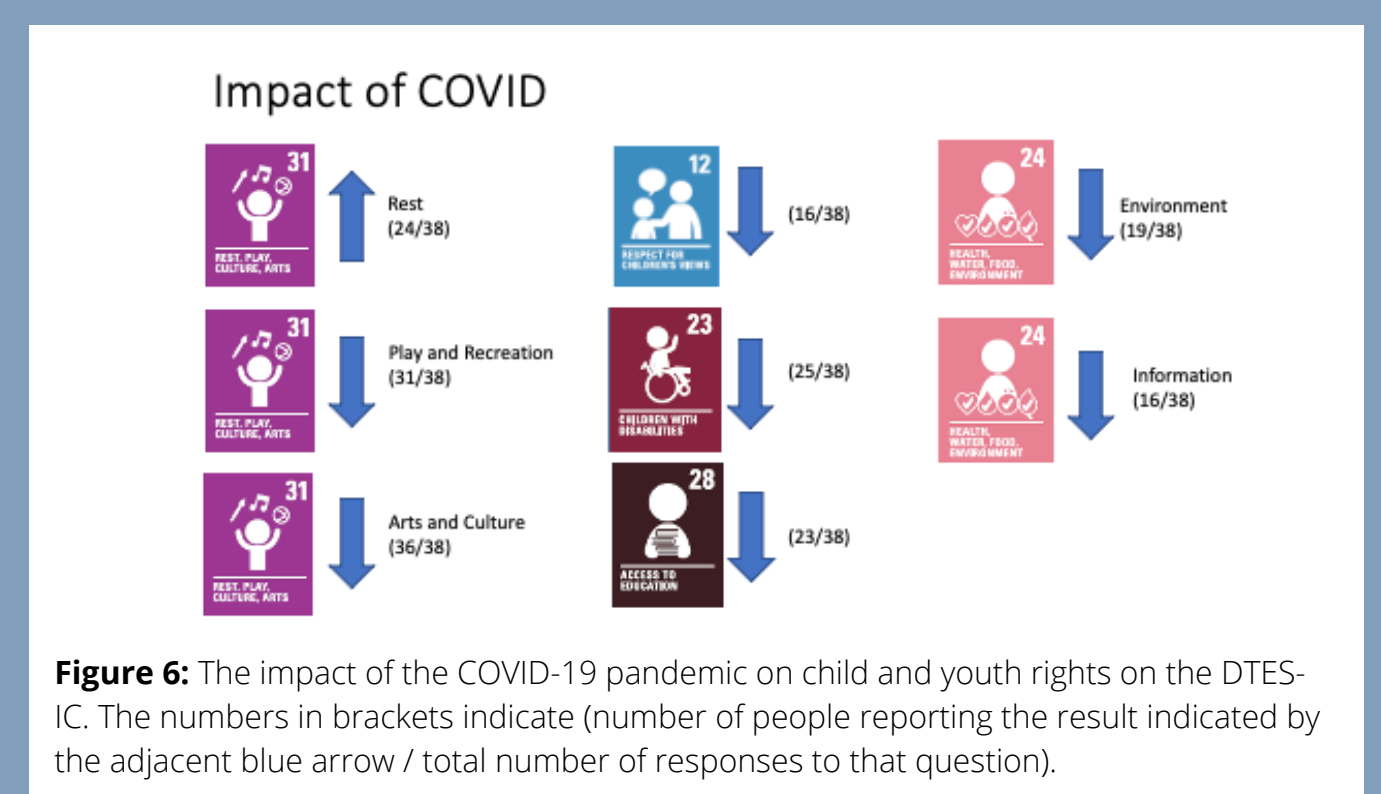


Figure 6: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child and youth rights on the DTES-IC. The numbers in brackets indicate (number of people reporting the result indicated by the adjacent blue arrow / total number of responses to that question).