



**Acquired
Brain Injury
Network**

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Title:

Expressive Arts as a Social and Community Integration Tool for Adolescents with Acquired Brain Injuries

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Summary:

Purpose: A multiple case descriptive pilot study was conducted to evaluate the feasibility of an expressive arts theatre skills training to facilitate social and community integration for youth recovering from acquired brain injury (ABI).

Description: Participants took part in a camp experience, facilitated by theatre artists and occupational therapists, and engaged in various projects, such as mask work, drumming and story-telling. At the end of the program, participants delivered a public presentation which reflected the group's progress over the course of the program. Data collected reflected a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach. Qualitative data was obtained through focus groups that were conducted post-program with participants, caregivers and facilitators, as well as a Creative Tool Box created by the participant throughout the program. Quantitative measures included pre-post assessments designed to capture social and community integration for youth.

Observation: Initial analysis of the qualitative data reflects improved communication in the social and home setting for youth with ABI. Quantitative data revealed improvements in identification of facial expressions as well as improved performance and satisfaction with leisure activities as identified by the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM).

Conclusions: A combination of directed group activities and self-reflection within a creative learning context may improve social communication for youth with ABI. However, this study is a pilot project and further research needs to be conducted with a larger number of participants and appropriate control conditions.

Outcomes/Objectives:

The learning objectives of this pilot study were to evaluate the feasibility of:

1. An expressive arts theatre skills training program for youth with ABI including FASD.
2. A battery of quantitative measures evaluating pre-post change in social cognition, emotional functioning and community integration for youth with an ABI.