Manitoba’s Photovoice for Community Development Guide
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Photovoice for Community Development

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) provides leadership and resources to support the development of vibrant rural and northern communities. It has researched and piloted a variety of approaches to encourage communities to become engaged in actively planning and determining their own development. Photovoice is one of these approaches that has proven to be a powerful method for community members to identify community strengths, issues and opportunities. Using pictures, and involving a wide range of community members, Photovoice is a tool that any community can easily use to encourage community discussion and planning towards a more vibrant future. This guide provides resources and step-by-step instructions to conduct a Photovoice project.

1.2 What is Photovoice?

Photovoice is a method that organizations and communities can use to identify and discuss issues that lead to taking action. Here’s how the process works:

- People are given cameras and asked to take photographs to illustrate a certain theme or community issue.
- Participants are asked to provide their thoughts about the photographs they take as they relate to the theme.
- The photographs and stories are collected, organized and presented to an audience as a catalyst to encourage discussion and change.

My Coffee Group

We discuss anything and everything – from the state of the weather to the state of world affairs. Gossip is the only topic not allowed. When someone wants to gossip, someone else will say “what is the other side of the story”.

Bruce MacDonald
Photovoice gives voice to photos to help communities and organizations see, talk about common issues and find ways to take action on the issues.

Photovoice has been successfully used as a research method for data collection and a tool for community capacity building. For example:

- A rural women’s group in Northern Ireland used Photovoice to address community relations.
- The Rural Development Institute of Brandon University used this method to engage and study rural and northern youth in Leaf Rapids and Souris.
- Grade 6 students, and the Retired Teachers Association in Virden, participated in a Photovoice project and presented their stories to the local chamber and town council. This resulted in actions that have, and will continue, to bring improvement to the community.

As William Albert Allard, renowned photographer for National Geographic said, “Words and pictures can work together to communicate more powerfully than either alone.”

Photovoice is a relatively new tool that takes into consideration that we are living in a visual world where change is often motivated by what we see, not just by what we hear and what we think.

Often, we don’t see the world in the same way. What one person sees or notices is different from the next. Photovoice allows people to share their visual images on a particular topic (Ex: downtown revitalization) and the group discussion around the visual images helps the community to determine a course of action (Ex: a picture of a graffiti-laden wall that is shared with other members of the community may encourage the community to repaint and beautify the area.) When people identify similar images as being important to them, this confirms that the issue is valued by many members of the community. That makes it more likely that a positive action will be taken about the issue.

Photovoice allows people to define for themselves, and others, what is worth remembering and what needs to be changed. It also enables people to record and reflect on their community’s strengths and problems and promotes dialogue through discussion and display of the photographs and stories. It uses resident expertise to mobilize for change.

Photovoice was first developed in the early 1990s by Dr. Caroline Wang, a professor and researcher with the University of Michigan, School of Public Health. The process is now used around the world. The international, non-profit organization — Photovoice — gives voice to the disadvantaged of the world through the Photovoice process. Visit this website for more information [www.photovoice.org](http://www.photovoice.org).
1.3 Photovoice as a Tool for Community Development

Community development is all about building relationships in the community, sharing values and creating a vision between individuals and organizations. Photovoice is a method of doing all of these things through sharing pictures, stories and conversation.

Photovoice can serve as a catalyst to help build the relationships and share the values needed for a community to band together to take action on any particular issue. It can also help the community:

- assess the current situation
- identify shared goals
- create a shared vision

Photovoice can be used as an evaluation process as it can help assess how a community situation has improved, what has changed or what is being done well. Photovoice is a way to engage and involve all sectors of the community, including those who traditionally have not been involved in community planning. (Ex: youth, the disadvantaged).

Photographs are used to tell stories and draw attention to things that are important. It captures a community at a certain time and place and can be a way to create visual artifacts of the community. The following picture is an example of a young person who told a story about what was is important to her.

![Tanya age 14](image)

Here is the story that went with the picture: “Everyone goes and talks to God. People who are into drugs or something could pray to God to get them off drugs.” We can make many assumptions when we see a picture of a church, but this picture and the story together present a more powerful message from the point of view of this young person, and perhaps a different message than what we were anticipating.

The key, though to any community development or Photovoice process is in the sharing. By sharing our pictures and stories, we build relationships and community. In community development, the process is as important as the outcome. In fact, the process is an outcome.
1.4 The Sponsoring Organization

The sponsoring organization is the group that initiates and manages the project. This organization is responsible for all elements including:

- fundraising
- ethical practices
- record keeping
- co-ordinating discussions about the photos and stories
- co-ordinating action-planning events as a follow up to the project

The sponsoring organization can be a service organization, arts council, school, community development organization or municipal council.

1.5 Role of the Co-ordinator/Manager

Before undertaking a Photovoice project, the sponsoring organization will need to identify a co-ordinator who will be responsible for managing all aspects of the project.

The co-ordinator’s duties include:

- planning community meetings
- finding project partners
- accessing the needed resources
- developing a plan with the partners to implement the project
- meeting with project participants and informing them about the Photovoice project
- developing marketing and communication plans
- determining ways to share the results of the project such as through a public exhibit
They will be the main person to communicate with the community at large about the Photovoice project and its goals.

Co-ordinators will also need to develop a filing and cataloguing system to manage the pictures. They will take part in making decisions about the choice of photos and stories to include in exhibits, presentations and action-planning meetings.

The co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that meetings proceed effectively, in a structured way, to ensure the best results. MAFRI staff is available to help with organizational meetings, presentation meetings and follow up action-planning meetings.

### 1.6 Facilitators and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Support

Photovoice projects deal with pictures and stories that are personal to the people involved in the project and which may open discussions on sensitive community issues. It is very important that skilled facilitators be in place. MAFRI staff can help play this role or help identify other potential facilitators. It is important to have a skilled facilitator in place so that meetings are structured effectively and pictures and opinions are treated with respect.

A facilitator is many things including an:

- educator
- motivator
- negotiator
- guide
- artist
- role model
- mentor

They are often the key success factor of a project, acting as the interface between the project management and the participants.

Some of the skills that will be required of a facilitator for a Photovoice project include:

- A facilitator is skilled in the methods of participatory photography, even though they may have limited knowledge of the issues that affect the participants. A good facilitator will be open, flexible and supportive towards participants and will always maintain clear, professional boundaries. A facilitator should be aware of their professional limits and not adopt the role of a therapist or social worker to participants.

- The participatory process requires constant nurturing and support from facilitators. It is recommended that there are two facilitators per workshop in a Photovoice project. One may be from the partner organization so that they can provide support to each other and to the group. The lead facilitator should have proven experience using participatory photography techniques with vulnerable groups.

- A professional facilitator will be unbiased in their relationships with the group, sensitive to group dynamics and aware of his/her own feelings towards the group.
Facilitators are also responsible for:

- initiating discussions about the participants’ responsibilities to respect the rights and privacy of others when they carry a camera
- providing suggestions on how to respect others’ privacy and rights
- emphasizing that pictures should not be taken if they will cause the photographer harm or ill will

MAFRI is committed to supporting facilitators throughout the project by providing pre-project training, which includes techniques for responsible, self-aware practice.
2.0 Steps in Planning a Photovoice Project

2.1 Determine the Purpose of the Project

The co-ordinator and sponsoring organization first need to determine the purpose, focus or issue that is to be addressed in a Photovoice project. While it is great to take pictures and share stories, a Photovoice project should have a focus that will ultimately lead to a positive change in the community. The purpose may be to build relationships between groups, for example, youth and seniors, or to reflect the impressions of one specific interest, like the women in Northern Ireland. Photovoice can also serve as the starting point for a community development process.

The topic, or question, used to focus a Photovoice project depends on the issues and interests of the organizers of the project and the voices they want to hear from. For example, in both the Virden and the Leaf Rapids Photovoice projects, the voices were the youth of the community who were asked to take pictures of:

- What is important to you in your community?
- What are you proud of in your community?
- What would you like to see changed in your community?
2.2 Identify Resources and Potential Project Partners

The sponsoring organization and co-ordinator may find that there are others in the community that can help implement a successful Photovoice project. For example, there may be other people, or groups, that have expertise in creating presentations, framing pictures or providing hints on photography.

There may also be groups or organizations that may want to collaborate on the project by supplying materials such as digital cameras or display stands. There may be people in the community who can develop a website to share the Photovoice project, are skilled at PowerPoint presentations or can build exhibits.

Each project will have its own unique needs. The co-ordinator, and members of the sponsoring organization, will need to be creative in identifying people and organizations that may help.

2.3 Identify the Photographers (Storytellers)

Photovoice projects can have one, or more than one, voice or point of view that will be the focus of the project and will help identify potential photographers (or storytellers). For example, the project may target the point of view of youth, seniors, service organizations or public officials. If the project targets the point of view of youth, the sponsoring organization needs to determine the age range, which school(s) or organizations the youth will belong to, and how they will be invited to participate in the project. If the focus is on seniors, the issue being addressed may help identify which group of seniors will be invited to participate. There may be a service club or community organization that is the target voice.

Projects that are more inclusive, that is, they include more points of view, will result in greater discussion and more consensus on what could be done next. The more points of view that a project includes increase the chances that someone will take the ownership to move the proposed actions forward.
2.4 Identify the Audience

Photovoice projects must have someone to look at, listen to — and hopefully become inspired by — the voices, photos and points of view that will be shared. This audience can be community leaders, the general public or a specific organization or group of people.

Project organizers identify the audience and invite them to a planning session where pictures and stories are shared to stimulate discussion about the theme. The pictures and stories can be the stimulus needed to bring two or more groups together on a particular topic. It is important to remember that whoever the audience is, they should be willing to listen and take action.

2.5 Identify the Ethics Involved

In a Photovoice project, the participants are essentially both documentary photographers and community developers. Each of these roles has ethical standards that need to be followed to create a feeling of trust and prevent misunderstandings. These are two key components when building relationships for community development. See Appendix 5.1, page 23 for a complete list of ethical considerations.
2.6 Develop Project Timeline

People are always busy, so setting timelines for the project is important. It gives the participants a sense of what is expected from them and when. It allows people to plan ahead and keeps the project focused.

When developing the timeline for the project, consider other events that are happening in the community and the season or time of year that may appeal to the participants involved. A timeline should include the best time to host an exhibit in your community.

Before setting the timelines, be sure the participants are given plenty of time to review and analyze the photographs and prepare for the exhibit. It takes more time than you may think.
2.7 Develop a Budget

Expenses:
- cameras
- printing and enlargements
- photocopying
- matting and display boards
- equipment rental (projector)
- meeting expenses
- food and refreshments
- advertising and promotion

Revenue:
- cash donations
- in-kind donations (digital cameras, use of computers, photocopiers)
- potential sale of pictures

If resources are limited, consider ways that project costs can be reduced, such as:
- Rent or borrow digital cameras instead of buying disposable cameras.
- Explore and choose the most affordable option for printing and enlarging photographs.
- Use electronic copies of the photographs may allow you to be more creative in the way that photographs are displayed.

As well as making a budget, the co-ordinator is responsible for purchasing supplies and services and keeping track of income and expenses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Costs/ Proposed Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cameras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 cameras @ $10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photo development – 20 @ 20 = 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two sets of prints and CD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 cameras @ $20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enlargements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matting and display boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meeting expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hall rental – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refreshments – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.8 Develop a Communications Plan

To engage the community in discussions about the issues and ideas identified in the Photovoice project, it is important the community knows about the project, how they can become involved and the main purpose or focus of the project.

Whether the intended audience is the community at large, a select group of decision-makers or a specific interest group, a good communication plan will solidify their support and could help them be more open to seeing and hearing the messages of the participants.
2.9 Are You Ready to Implement a Photovoice Project?

Once a sponsoring organization has decided to undertake a Photovoice project, have identified a co-ordinator and found the resources to implement the project, the organization should take a moment to reflect on the project. When all of the following statements can be completed, then you are likely ready to start implementing a Photovoice project:

- The purpose of our project is....
- We hope to accomplish...
- The voices of our project will be.... and there will be _____ participants
- The focus/topic or questions that we will pose to our photographers will be...
- The audience for our pictures and stories will be....
- We will encourage their participation by...
- The resources that we have available to us are ...
- The resources that we still need are...
- We can access those resources by ...
- A group or organization that might be interested in partnering with us is ...
- The person/people responsible for the co-ordination of the project are...
- Someone who could serve as a facilitator for our sessions is ...
- Someone skilled in photography who would also provide the participants with tips and techniques in photography is ...
- The ethical considerations for this project are...
- We will address them by...
- This project will be a success if...
- To make this project a success we need to ...

Wallace Water Project

The Wallace Water project is important to me because we used to haul water from the valley to our house but now we have a direct pipeline from Miniot. This good quality water has changed the way people live and care for their livestock.

I am proud of my Wallace councillor.

Sonya Laroque
3.0 Implementing the Photovoice Project

3.1 Prepare Documents

Before a Photovoice project can begin, the co-ordinator will need to prepare several documents. These documents will be handed out to the participants at the first meeting (see: The First Meeting – Participants Discover Photovoice).

Sample documents have been included in the appendix. Remember, these are samples and can be edited or revised according to the needs of each project. The documents include:

- Consent form for parents to provide consent for participation by youth participants. See the appendix sample “Permission for Child to Participate” on page 25.
- Consent form for permission to have photograph taken. See the appendix “Sample Permission to Take and Use Photograph” on page 27.
- Photo log form to keep track of each picture a photographer takes. This should be provided with each camera. See the appendix “Sample Photo Log” on page 29.

The co-ordinator should also prepare a:

- summary of the project for promotional and fundraising purposes
- guideline of ethics and protocol to include in the photo logs. See the appendix on page 23.

3.2 The First Meeting – Participants Discover Photovoice

The first workshop/meeting is when the participants (the voices) are brought together for the first time. This begins with an introduction to the Photovoice concept and method and should include a group discussion about the:

- focus topic
- consent forms
- cameras
- power and ethics
- potential risks to participants and how to minimize these risks
- practice of giving photographs back to community members to express appreciation or respect

Cameras should not be distributed at this meeting. The photographer who volunteered to help the voices can provide instruction on taking quality pictures.
The goals for the first meeting are:

- introduce project
- provide a background on Photovoice
- introduce focus topic
- provide background on focus topic and perhaps include an activity that encourages discussion on the focus topic
- distribute consent forms if children are involved
- discuss ethics and safety
- provide instruction on taking photographs

Participants will likely leave the meeting dreaming of the photographs they are going to take. When they actually receive the cameras and log books at the next workshop, they will be eager to get started.

3.3 The Second Meeting - Distributing Cameras and Taking Pictures

At a second meeting with the voices, the cameras and log books will be distributed so that participants can start taking pictures. Some of the participants will have thought about the topic and will know exactly what they want to record and why. Others will wait and see what inspires them.

The goals for the second meeting are to:

- collect consent forms for youth participants
- restate ethics
- review the Permission to Photograph forms
- provide timeframes and instructions as to when picture taking is to be completed
- distribute cameras and photo logs (encourage people to write notes as they are taking the photographs)
- promote creative thinking

Before the participants leave, a discussion should be held to determine how many pictures and stories each participant would be responsible for. This is a critical question and there are a few ways that this can be approached:

- Determine ahead of time how many pictures and stories will be exhibited. Individual participants can then take many pictures and submit a selected number to the project.
- Participants can be limited to a few shots and the group as a whole will review all the pictures and stories and decide which best represent the focus.
- Participants can be limited to a few shots that are then shared with the group as a whole so that each person has a chance to show their picture and tell their story. The pictures for the final exhibit are then chosen by a small committee or group who then decide how they may fit into an exhibit.

While it will be tempting to encourage participants to take as many photographs as they please, limiting the number has advantages. It causes the photographers to think more about what they are going to shoot and why, reduces reproduction costs and makes analysis and review of the stories and the photographs much more manageable.
3.4 Taking Pictures

Photovoice offers the opportunity to learn more about taking photographs and using visual images to present ideas and messages. One of the key resources in any Photovoice project is an experienced photographer who is willing to share his/her expertise and stimulate creative thinking. The advice of this photographer will help increase the quality of pictures taken and provide participants with new ideas and ways to express and represent their thoughts and ideas. Learning about perspective, balance, contrast, composition, angles and how to attract the viewer’s attention will enhance their experience and result in more interesting, thought-provoking images.

Cali – Souris age 15

Brown Gold! Everything grows like mad if you use this form of Nature’s own!
Irma McDougall
3.5 **Cataloguing the Pictures and Stories**

Once the pictures have been taken and the participants have recorded their stories, the co-ordinator will use the filing and cataloguing system. The co-ordinator must now print, copy, sort and file all of the pictures that have been taken by the participants. Even if the photos are digital, participants still appreciate having printed copies of the pictures and photocopies of the log book where they recorded their notes. This will help the participants when they sit down to share their voices with their counterparts. The co-ordinator should also file an electronic copy of each photograph and a way to link that photograph with the name of the photographer and the story they recorded.

3.6 **Tips for Co-ordinators on Dealing with the Data**

Thinking ahead about how pictures and stories are going to be filed and catalogued will be one way to ensure that the pictures and stories are kept together. This is part of the challenge of Photovoice projects. Numbering the cameras and the pictures also helps.

A Photovoice project was conducted in Souris school and it was initially thought that only one grade would be involved. This meant that keeping track of the pictures and stories would not be a challenge. However, the teachers were so enthusiastic about the idea that the decision was made to include everyone from Grade 6 to Grade 11. When over 2,000 photographs and stories were collected, this created a logistical challenge.

When planning a Photovoice project consider the following:

- Where will the photographs and pictures be stored?
- How will they be organized and catalogued?
- How much will it cost to print or reproduce them?

3.7 **The Third Meeting - Sharing the Stories and Photographs**

There is when participants get together to share their pictures and stories. This typically is a facilitated process that includes small and large group discussion. It is also a chance to learn more about people’s stories. Sometimes in the discussion, more stories are revealed so it is a good idea to have someone taking notes during this process. Some groups even tape record the discussions and include them in their exhibits and presentations.

The process of sharing stories and photographs among the participants is an important component of a Photovoice project. It could include any or all of the following objectives:

- provide an opportunity for each participant to share their pictures and stories with their counterparts
- encourage further discussion on the topic and perhaps collect more stories
- have the group select the images and stories that they feel best portray the focus

If this third meeting is used solely as a sharing session, then a smaller group can be identified who will later select the material for the final exhibit. If this method is used, the smaller group may not choose to have a photograph and story in the final exhibit from every participant. This sharing session then, may be their only chance to be seen and heard so their stories need to be treated with respect. Others will need to be encouraged to do the same. A discussion guide will help draw out the stories and ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be heard.
3.8 Choosing the Pictures and Stories to Share

The sharing session is just the start of seeing the incredible power of photos and words together. Once the sharing session is complete, the co-ordinator (and any other people who have been identified for this part of the project) will review all the material, searching for common and uncommon threads and summarizing it into a display.

Whether you decide to appoint a small group to undertake this or involve all the participants in a facilitated discussion, the process usually requires three steps:

- **Review:** Look at all the submitted pictures and stories. Some pictures may seem basic, or even out of focus, but the words may be truly inspirational. Look at the whole package — the words and the picture together.

- **Code:** Identify the issues, themes and theories. Is there a pattern? Do all the participants agree or are there some divergent opinions? Are they what you expected or did something new emerge?

- **Select:** Select the images and stories that most accurately reflect the topic. There may be many pictures of the same subject. For example, in the Souris project there were countless pictures of its swinging bridge. Select the picture that presents a new view, a different angle or an unexpected story.

“It is the longest suspension bridge in Canada and has survived for 101 years.”

Cameron Hicks

Now that the Photovoice pictures and stories have been selected, the creative process starts by putting the voices together to create a powerful message for the chosen audience.
3.9 Preparing the Exhibition

An exhibition is used in a Photovoice project as a way to bring photos and stories together, hopefully to encourage and inspire. Different Photovoice projects have approached this component in different ways. Some have staged very formal exhibits in art galleries. Some produced PowerPoint or Muvee presentations with accompanying music. There are so many ways to present pictures and stories that it can be overwhelming. This is where organizers need to review the purpose of the project and determine which form of exhibit will best suit the target audience.

The Grade 6 class in Virden made short videos with recordings of their own voices. Other methods that have been used include placing the pictures in a public space like a library or restaurant, or developing a presentation for a regular municipal council or chamber of commerce meeting. Below are some of the methods that have been used in Photovoice exhibits and presentations:

- **PowerPoint:** This computer program allows you to project images like a slide show. You can be creative in your presentation by changing background colours, adding animation, adjusting transitions from slide to slide and adding music or other form of audio.

- **Stand alone exhibit:** This could be set up as a display over a longer period of time or a one-time exhibit paired with an event or community meeting. This would likely involve enlarging and matting the photographs with captions.

- **Series of articles and pictures in a printed document:** You could compose a series of articles with pictures for your local newspaper. Alternatively, you could actually produce your own booklet with attached discussion guide.

- **Muvee or other media program:** There are many types of media programs that allow you to creatively put together pictures, words and music. Work with someone in your community with design skills and a computer program.

- **Music:** Words and pictures together are powerful but words, pictures and music are even more so. Music can set the mood and stir emotions. If a song with lyrics is chosen, make sure that the lyrics match the theme of the presentation and do not distract from the message. Instrumentals are usually a good choice. (Note: If using music, please purchase the music and give the musician and composer credit.)

As the exhibit is being planned, consider how discussions will be encouraged to address the issues that are raised within the exhibit and the topic focus. Some ways to gain feedback during the exhibit are to:

- Provide a comment book for participants to share their reactions.
- Develop a response survey.
- Organize a facilitated discussion.

Often, a Photovoice presentation can serve as the catalyst for a longer community planning or strategic planning process. Before the method is chosen to present the Photovoice project, consider the original purpose and the target audience. The type of presentation that is chosen needs to be suitable, and capture the attention of, the people the message is intended for. Most importantly, the presentation should move the audience to act on the message, so be sure the target audience includes people who make decisions about policy and have decision-making authority. A skilled facilitator can help with an effective community planning or consultation session.
3.10 The Exhibition — Sharing the Stories and Photographs

The format for the exhibition of the Photovoice stories and photographs can be public or private. It could use audio/visual means to display the photos and stories, or a more formal stand alone exhibit. Whichever means are used to display and share the Photovoice; it is important that the target audience is invited to the event well in advance and is aware of why they are being invited.

The point of the exhibit is to be a catalyst for community discussion. A skilled facilitator can help the co-ordinator and sponsoring organization prepare for questions and responses from the audience. Remember too that there can be more than one exhibit or presentation — in fact as many as time, energy and resources will allow.
4.0 After the Exhibit – Plans for Change

4.1 Communicating and Sharing Results

The communications plan should include a method to communicate and share the results of the Photovoice project with the entire community. Inviting local media to exhibits and presentations is one way to help share the Photovoice story and results. This sharing might also take the form of newsletters, brochures and/or submitted newspaper articles.

4.2 Appreciation and Follow-up

Participants in the project will appreciate a note of thanks for their volunteer time in the project. The co-ordinator and sponsoring organization can determine how appreciation will be shown to the participants and the audience. This could take the form of individual thank you notes, a notice in the local paper or a combination of these.

4.3 Evaluation for Co-ordinator, Sponsoring Organization and Photovoice Participants

When all is said and done, did you achieve your purpose? Did you meet your goals? If you were to do it again, what would you have done differently? Contrary to what you may think, the time to plan an evaluation of a project is at the beginning of a project.

Could a Photovoice project change the world? Perhaps, but how would we know? Successful projects need goals and objectives that are measureable, achievable, reasonable and realistic. If you are receiving outside funding, you will likely need to include an evaluation of your project in your final report.

Look back at your responses to the first two statements in the section Are You Ready to Implement a Photovoice Project. These are your project purpose and objectives and they can be used to design your evaluation process.
Appendix 5.1 Ethical Considerations in Running a Photovoice project

As well as the following ethical consideration, Photovoice.org has posted their ethics of practice on their website. www.photovoice.org/html/whoarewe/pvethicalpractice.pdf

Participation of Young People

When people under the age of majority are involved, as either photographers or subjects, permission from parents or legal guardians needs to be secured. Samples of release forms are included in the appendix on page 25. It is easier to secure permission for participation from the parents or guardians before distributing the cameras.

Permission to be in a photograph should be secured at the same time as one is taking the photograph. These forms can be included in a package that accompanies each camera.

Taking Photographs

Before taking anyone’s picture, permission is required. A sample form is included in the appendix on page 27. People should be made aware that the photograph might be used in a public forum (an exhibit, website, newspaper). Photos cannot be shown without a subject’s release.

Part of a discussion with your group, prior to the distribution of cameras, should be about:

- Acceptable ways to approach someone to take his or her picture.
- Avoiding taking pictures of people without their knowledge.
- Avoiding taking pictures of people who do not want their picture taken.
- How to portray issues without photographing individuals.

Protecting privacy/public versus private spaces

Participants must take photos in public spaces (from which participants can photograph without trespassing) versus private property. They must be respectful of people’s privacy and consider what activities are appropriate to photograph.

Safety

Participants must be advised to shoot smart. Maintaining personal safety is the highest priority. No photo is worth personal danger. That means no close ups of charging bulls and no suspending themselves from tall buildings for a classic aerial shot.
**Exhibiting photographs**

The purpose of this project is to stimulate discussion without causing offense. It is important to keep this in mind when selecting photographs for public exhibition. Ensure that permission has been given by both the photographer and the subjects.

**Encouraging respectful dialogue**

Photovoice is all about giving voice and encouraging respect. The object is to promote dialogue, not controversy, by remembering that everyone has a point of view. The purpose of the exercise is to give voice to those views.
Appendix 5.2 Sample “Permission for Child to Participate”

Consent Form

Dear Parent / Guardian;

Our Grade 6 students have been invited to participate in a community development project using photography. Staff and students will be participating with________________________________________ (Partner)________________________________________ and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) to gain a greater insight into our community.

The goal of this project is to give youth in Grade 6, and some of our more experienced citizens, the opportunity to look at their community through the use of photography and share their ideas with each other and the community at large. Participants will be given disposable cameras, and over a one-week period will take pictures that illustrate what their community is to them. They will record the content and the significance of each picture in a photo log that will be provided to them.

Once pictures are developed, youth participants will discuss their pictures individually with an adult participant and vice versa. Participants will share their thoughts about the photographs they have taken and the photographs will encourage discussion about how they see their community and how they would like their community to be in the future.

Some photographs will be selected and displayed throughout the community. Some will be developed into a PowerPoint presentation to be made at an open community discussion on community development and possibly in other exhibits as opportunities arise.

If you give your consent, your child will be provided with a disposable camera and asked to take photographs of his or her choosing. Students will be working with fellow students in small groups (three or four) with each student taking approximately nine pictures. Participants will be given copies of the photographs they take.

Youth will also be asked to give their consent to participate. They will be considered to have consented if they receive a numbered camera, take the pictures and return the camera to the school.

The school, ___________________________________________ and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives or ________(any other project partners)__________, are not liable for any risks or injuries associated with participation in this project. Please contact:______________________________________________
We are excited about this project and look forward to working with the students. To provide consent, please fill out this form and return it to the classroom teacher who provided the form to you.

I give my consent for my child ___________________________ (name of youth), to Participate in the community Photovoice project.

Signature of parent/guardian ___________________________

Date: ___________________________

Print name of Parent: ___________________________

Signature of Witness: ___________________________

Date: ___________________________
6.1 Sample “Permission to Take and Use Photograph”

Community Photovoice
Permission To Use Photograph of You or Your Child

When taking pictures of people, it is important to have their permission. If this person is under the age of 18, then permission of their parent or guardian is required. Copies of this form should be included with the photo logs that are kept by each photographer so that permission can be sought at the time the photograph is taken. It is the role of the project co-ordinator to ensure that no photographs of people are used without appropriate and informed consent.

Components of a Permission Form

Description of Project
- its purpose
- who is involved

The Process
- individuals given cameras and asked to take pictures to illustrate what their community is to them

The Photographs
- the photographs may be used for: (list what is applicable to your specific project)
  - public display
  - development of promotional material
  - the development of presentations to identify community issues and inspire community action
  - no names will be attached to identify people in the photograph

Permission
We require your permission to use this photograph, if chosen by the photographer, which contains yourself and/or your child for the display. To provide consent, please fill out this form and return it to the photographer as soon as possible.
Contact for further information

For further information on this project, please contact:

I give my consent for a photograph containing myself and/or my child ________________
______________________________ (name of youth and/or yourself) to be displayed at a
public community presentation in ____________________________, a mounted display and any
subsequent opportunities that arise.

Print name of person photographed: ______________________________________

Date ______________________________________

Print name of person photographed: ______________________________________

Signature of parent/guardian ______________________________________

Date ______________________________________
6.2 Sample Photo Log

These are sheets that accompany each camera. Photographers record their thoughts at the same time they take the picture.

**Photo Logs**

__________________________ Community Photovoice Project

Camera # ____________________

**Names:**

__________________________ Youth _______ Adult _______

__________________________ Youth _______ Adult _______

__________________________ Youth _______ Adult _______

__________________________ Youth _______ Adult _______

__________________________ Youth _______ Adult _______
Picture #1  Photographer: 

☐ This picture is of something that makes me proud of my community.
☐ This picture is of a natural place in my community.
☐ This picture is of an activity in my community.
☐ This picture is of something that could be improved in my community.

(Note: these categories may change based on the specific purpose and objectives of your Photovoice project)

This picture is of _________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

This picture is important because _________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Picture #2  Photographer: 

☐ This picture is of something that makes me proud of my community.
☐ This picture is of a natural place in my community.
☐ This picture is of an activity in my community.
☐ This picture is of something that could be improved in my community.

This picture is of _________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

This picture is important because _________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
Check out the following resources to help you with ideas for your Photovoice project:

  - Photovoice youth camp
Photovoice Participating Growing Opportunities (GO) Team offices:

**Southwest**
204-851-2368

**South Parkland**
204-764-0150

**North Parkland**
204-648-4116

**Valleys North**
204-620-0656

**Pembina**
204-523-2194 or 204-523-5260

**Central Plains**
204-723-0072

**Red River**
204-823-0056

**Eastman**
204-268-6067

**South Interlake**
204-886-7454

**North Interlake**
204-641-1993

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