

**The elements/dimensions of social exclusion/inclusion as applied to “squeegee” youth**

Whether we regard social inclusion as a process, an outcome or both, there are five dimensions of social inclusion or ‘spaces’ in which social inclusion and exclusion occur.

**“Squeegee” Street Youth**

**Economic.**

- Material deprivation; poverty/economic well being Homeless or “under-housed” (“apt size of bathtub”); need our “spare change” to survive
- Economic security/insecurity Barriers to welfare if under 18 (Bill 142) – forced out of school; no \$\$ for aspirations/dreams
- Economic distance/ proximity (inequality/equality) Can’t hold down a job when living on the street (clothes, hygiene)  
“if you can’t spare a quarter for human life, you’re in a different world than I’m in” (The Star)

**Spatial.**

- Public space Barriers to earning \$\$ in public places – legislation to outlaw squeegeeing
- Private space Little to no privacy on street – issue of exposure to violence
- Physical location Streets, rooftops, parks, bridges, exposed to weather, squatting, couch-surfing, no stable place
- Geographic proximity/distance Being “chased underground” into deviant subcultures (drugs, crime, prostitution)

**Relational.**

- Social proximity/distance Public fear of aggressive youth – leading to police harassment; “treated like shit – hurt”
- Emotional connectedness “Kicked out of house” – family abuse leads to streets
- Recognition No official identification (Raven – fear of identification); outlawing their means of survival
- Solidarity Street youth hang out together for protection and mutual support

**Functional**

- Capabilities Capable but little formal education, few job skills; resilient survivors – “above and beyond everything, they’re still *alive!*”
- Developmental capacities, assets and liabilities Intelligent and motivated, but not supported and even unfairly excluded from education - “special exception” for collection of welfare while in school needed; “You can’t be a squeegee kid and go to school.” – demonstrated by success of SWYM program
- Valued social role/status Criminalized for trying to earn money to survive; “should just get a job”
- Productive role “Inventive” action for earning money delegitimated

**Participation, empowerment (political)**

- Participation “Negotiate, don’t legislate”
- Agency/freedom Unrepresented before decision-makers
- Civic engagement Eric involved in advocating for saving SWYM program the next year
- Empowerment/power “They (the City Councillors) should work with us”

(Adapted from Laidlaw Foundation, Oct. 2001)