
 Director	 Municipal Manager/Deputy Municipal Manager
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<i>COUNCIL AGENDA</i>	
Date: <u>May 11, 2026</u>	Item: <u>7.</u>



DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
750 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER BC V7V 3T3

COUNCIL REPORT

Date:	April 23, 2026
From:	Lenna Nakamura, Aquatics and Youth Services Manager
Subject:	Proposed Youth Policy

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

1. proposed “Youth Policy 0282” be approved;
2. staff update the Youth Civic Strategy to align with the proposed “Youth Policy 0282” and current youth services best practices; and
3. staff return to Council by spring 2027 with the updated Youth Civic Strategy and implementation plan for consideration.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to request Council approval of the proposed Youth Policy 0282 (Policy) and that Council direct staff to update the Civic Youth Strategy (2006). This new Policy will support the work of Youth Services by focusing on the importance of positive youth development and youth engagement in the community.

2.0 Legislation/Bylaw/Policy

It would work in conjunction with District of West Vancouver’s (District) Youth Civic Strategy that was developed in 2002 and updated in 2006.

The District’s Blueprint for Social Responsibility and Change (2017) supports the development of a youth policy through Strategy 1: apply a ‘social’ lens to development and policy planning to ensure that the social priorities of the community are considered in municipal planning and processes.

3.0 Council Strategic Objective(s)/Official Community Plan

Council Strategic Plan

Council’s Strategic Plan supports youth as set out under Strategic Goal 6: enhance the social well-being of our community; and Objective 6.7: Select a permanent home for the Youth Hub. In addition, Council’s Strategic Plan supports policy creation as set out under Strategic Objective 5.5: create and/or update policies and bylaws to preserve community livability.

Official Community Plan

The District's Official Community Plan recognizes supporting youth through policies 2.8.1, 2.8.2, 2.8.16, 2.9.11, and notably the following:

- 2.8.3 Improve access to services and resources for youth, seniors and persons with disabilities, including considerations for improved walking, cycling and transit connections and shuttle services.
- 2.8.5 Provide services, programs and facilities to support children, youth and families in meeting their diverse needs and foster their sense of belonging.
- 2.8.7 Support the delivery of programs, services, events and activities that celebrate the full spectrum of cultural and ethnic diversity of the District and promote intercultural and intergenerational connections.
- 2.8.11 Support the continual provision of community hubs (e.g., Child and Family Hub and Youth Services Hub) and explore the potential for neighbourhood hubs based on community partnerships.
- 2.9.5 Provide accessible recreational programs and services to encourage physical and mental wellness for all ages, abilities and income.

4.0 Financial Implications

No additional financial resources are required at this time.

5.0 Background

The District has provided consistent support for youth in the community since the development of Youth Services in 1986. The Youth Services team has provided dedicated safe spaces for youth in grades 6 – 12 and offered a variety of programs and services designed to support their social, emotional, and physical well-being with an emphasis on growing their connection to the community.

Programs and services offered by the Youth Services team have included:

- free drop-in centre hours in four different spaces in West Vancouver (Youth Hub at Park Royal South, Youth Lounge at West Vancouver Community Centre, the Bay Scene at Gleneagles Community Centre, and Room 14 at West Vancouver Memorial Library)
- youth leadership opportunities through joining one of the youth committees, registering in a West Vancouver program, or volunteering with Youth Services
- one-to-one support provided to vulnerable youth and their families by Youth Outreach Workers
- employment training provided through volunteering and offering the Pre-Employment Program and the Summer Work Experience and Adventure Program

- programs developed based on youth-identified needs to improve access and knowledge to areas such as health and wellness, cultural connection, life skills, food and nutrition, social connectedness, and community engagement
- opportunities to participate in additional programs, services, and events offered in West Vancouver spaces by community partners

5.1 Previous Decisions

Council, at its October 15, 2002 regular meeting, passed the following resolution:

THAT

1. *the report from the Social Services Manager dated September 27, 2002 regarding the Civic Youth Strategy be received;*
2. *the Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver be endorsed in principle;*
3. *the financial implications of the Strategy be referred to budget deliberations;*
4. *the Strategy be referred to the Community Services Advisory Committee, the Parks and Environment Advisory Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee, the West Vancouver School Board, the West Vancouver Police Board, and the West Vancouver Memorial Library Board for review and comment.*

Council, at its June 2, 2003 regular meeting, passed the following resolution:

THAT

1. *the report from the Social Services Manager dated May 01, 2003 regarding the Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver be received;*
2. *the Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver be given final endorsement;*
3. *the policy statement contained in the Civic Youth Strategy report be adopted*
4. *the comments from H. Davies, Chair, West Vancouver Memorial Library Board be received with thanks.*

Council, at its February 12, 2007 regular meeting, passed the following resolution:

THAT the renewed Civic Youth Strategy 2006 – 2010 and its youth icon be received and endorsed.

Council, at its January 12, 2026 regular meeting, announced the approval of the development of a permanent Youth Hub on the former Ambleside Youth Centre site.

5.2 History

Civic Youth Strategy

In 2002, the Civic Youth Strategy (**Appendix A**) was endorsed by Council and was created to give youth the opportunity to directly affect the decisions that matter to them the most and to give them a voice within the community and civic government. The Civic Youth Strategy was not a project but an ongoing process and guideline for youth, staff, Council, and community partners. It was about changing the culture of municipal government, bringing about awareness of the positive contributions youth can make to their community, bringing a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning, and making municipal resources available to all youth.

In 2005, the Civic Youth Strategy won an award for Excellence for Innovation from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association.

In 2006, a review of the implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy was completed and an updated Civic Youth Strategy (Strategy) (**Appendix B**) was developed and endorsed by Council.

The main goals of the Strategy are to:

- Create a broader vision for youth recreation
- Give youth a stronger voice in local government
- Improve the image of youth in the community
- Use civic resources for youth development
- Bring a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning

The Strategy provided a framework that ensures the continued engagement of youth with District programs, services, projects, and initiatives. The Youth Services team continues to implement the Strategy through:

- annual updates to Council about Youth-Driven Committees
- annual Youth Appreciation Awards
- the Youth Advisory Committee to plan and present the annual Youth Council event
- Council representation at Youth Advisory Committee meetings
- the District's youth committees which include the Intergenerational Youth Committee and the Whatever Youth Committee for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to be able to effectively engage different demographics of youth
- youth engagement on various community planning initiatives
- programs and services that are responsive to youth-identified needs
- dedicated youth drop-ins in three locations across the District

- coordinated service delivery for youth in collaboration with community partners
- a robust youth volunteer program, leadership training, and employment programs

Future of Youth Services

In 2010, a review of Youth Services was conducted that included input from youth, families, and community service providers. The review confirmed that the delivery of Youth Services should continue to be provided through the District.

In 2016, youth, families, and community service providers were consulted further to understand space and resource needs for the future of Youth Services. The Youth Services Review Implementation Group was created and focused on five key themes: youth spaces; meaningful engagement; recreation and culture; access; programs and services; and next steps. The Visioning Youth Resources and Space Needs Final Report was presented to Council and confirmed that a dedicated youth space was important. The declining condition of the Ambleside Youth Centre was highlighted by Council and staff were asked to develop a continuity of services plan to address the rapidly declining condition of the Ambleside Youth Centre facility.

In 2019, the Ambleside Youth Centre permanently closed due to the condition of the building, and then a subsequent fire. Youth, families, and community partners were then engaged in a community survey which confirmed the importance of having a dedicated youth space in the community and the value of the Youth Services team in supporting youth.

In 2020, a temporary Youth Hub was established at Park Royal South. Youth were involved in providing input on the programs and services for the space, as well as completing different place-making projects to make the space feel more youth-friendly and inclusive. Community partners were invited to use the space when District programs were not running, as well as new partnership programs were developed to support emerging needs identified by youth.

In 2021, the Youth Services team, in collaboration with West Vancouver Schools, hosted two facilitated workshops: one with community service providers who offer services to youth across the North Shore and one with youth to develop a vision for a permanent Youth Hub in West Vancouver. This work was summarized in the West Vancouver Youth Hub Visioning Report (**Appendix C**) and was presented to Council. Council directed staff to report back with detailed business plans including proposed capital, maintenance, and operating costs for the establishment of a new permanent Youth Hub facility in a central location in West Vancouver and for a Youth Hub in an existing space through a long-term lease agreement.

Between 2021 and 2025, staff continued to explore options for a Youth Hub.

In 2022, Council announced the extension of the lease for the Youth Hub at Park Royal for an additional five-year period until June 30, 2027.

At the January 12, 2026 regular meeting, Council announced the approval of the development of a permanent Youth Hub on Pound Road in Ambleside Park, on the former Ambleside Youth Centre site.

6.0 Analysis

6.1 Discussion

Youth-Friendly North Shore

The Youth Services team was recently involved in the Youth-Friendly North Shore (YFNS) initiative which was led by the District of North Vancouver (DNV) in collaboration with the City of North Vancouver (CNV), the District, Squamish Nation, and Tsleil-Waututh Nation. The initiative was funded by Public Safety Canada through the Building Safer Communities Fund and supported by the North Vancouver RCMP.

YFNS was a three-year initiative to help build healthy communities where youth aged 12-18 years thrive, reducing the risk of involvement in gang or organized criminal activities. Building on the existing strengths in the community, the YFNS initiative focused on creating a youth-friendly North Shore by engaging youth, creating more welcoming spaces, and improving the system of care for North Shore youth.

Over three years, YFNS was able to complete a variety of different initiatives, notably the following:

- WelcoME Youth Action Teams conducted 'welcome' audits of public and agency spaces that cater to youth, and developed recommendations about how these spaces can be more welcoming for all youth
- One-time Youth Action Grants were offered to give youth opportunities to work with a responsible adult in their life or with a community organization to advance youth wellbeing on a project of their choice
- A Community of Practice for professionals who support youth aged 12 to 18 years, offered practical resources and evidence-based guidance on a variety of current topics to improve the delivery of community-based programs and services that promote positive youth development on the North Shore

The initiative and its recommendations are summarized in the YFNS Final Report (**Appendix D**).

As part of improving the system of care, a comprehensive review of Youth Services at the District was conducted and found the District has continued to prioritize youth outreach and low-barrier pathways to connection and support, including for youth who may be less likely to

access traditional programs (**Appendix E**). The YFNS review also included many recommendations for the District to enhance program and service delivery, notably the following:

1. Create overarching guiding principles and values for work with youth across the organization, not just within programs offered to youth. Explore developing a Youth Policy.
2. Participate in the soon-to-be-established North Shore Youth Situation Tables.
3. Keep youth engaged throughout the decision-making process.

The Policy is one of the first steps the District is taking to address the recommendations from the review.

Youth Policy

The proposed Policy (**Appendix F**) aims to support the continuance of preventative youth services and positive youth development through active youth participation, engagement, and support in municipal youth services and applies to all District programs, services, projects, and initiatives related to youth.

The proposed Policy will ensure that the current program delivery has long-term continuity and is aligned with the standards in adjacent municipalities, as both CNV and DNV have policies in place since 2002. This is important as youth move across the North Shore and may be accessing services interchangeably between any of the three municipalities.

The District's Youth Services team already provides strong, effective services to the community. A policy would anchor and sustain the progress achieved to date by formalizing Council's long-term commitment to Youth Services, outreach, and meaningful youth participation. Therefore, ensuring the District's approach remains consistent over time and through organizational change.

The Policy is supported by the Strategy, which establishes the overarching direction for youth engagement and inclusion across the District. The Strategy provides the framework, implementation outline, and prioritized actions; the Policy translates that direction into a Council-approved corporate standard to guide consistent decision-making, service planning, and accountability.

The Strategy

The District's existing Strategy ensured that youth voices were involved in the engagement process when staff were planning for the future of Youth Services, which ultimately led to the approval of a permanent Youth Hub on Pound Round in Ambleside Park. However, as the Strategy was endorsed approximately two decades ago and was developed in a different service and community context, an update to the Strategy is

recommended. Youth experiences and needs have shifted significantly over that period, including:

- the need for more inclusive civic engagement methods
- increased understanding and attention to equity, belonging, and barriers to access and the greater understanding of the complexities of these intersectional realities (mental health, social isolation, physical wellness, financial, cultural, ability-related, gender identity/sexual orientation, and transportation/time)
- the growing importance of youth outreach and low-barrier supports, particularly for youth who are not well-served by traditional program models
- a greater emphasis on the importance of collaboration with schools, health, community organizations, and Indigenous partners

Next Steps

If directed, staff will begin the work to update the Strategy to reflect current community context, best practices in youth engagement, and positive youth development, and will return to Council with an updated Civic Youth Strategy for consideration in spring 2027.

The other recommendations from the YFNS will be considered and implemented where possible and will be included in the updated Strategy.

6.2 Public Engagement and Outreach

Youth, community partners, and staff will be involved in the process of updating the Strategy.

6.3 Other Communication, Consultation, and Research

Bunyaad Public Affairs were the consultants selected to develop and deliver the work of YFNS, and were supported by McCreary Centre Society for the different youth engagement initiatives.

7.0 Options

7.1 Recommended Option

THAT

1. proposed “Youth Policy 0282” be approved;
2. staff update the Youth Civic Strategy to align with the proposed “Youth Policy 0282” and current youth services best practices; and
3. staff return to Council by spring 2027 with the updated Youth Civic Strategy and implementation plan for consideration.

7.2 Considered Options

THAT the proposed recommendations described in the April 23, 2026 report titled Proposed Youth Policy from the Aquatics and Youth Services Manager not be approved.

OR

THAT staff provide further information on the proposed youth policy as directed by Council.

8.0 Conclusion

Staff have successfully provided services to youth for 40 years. A Youth Policy and a subsequent update to the Civic Youth Strategy will demonstrate the commitment that Council and the District of West Vancouver have to developing youth to become strong, active, and engaged members of the community.

Author:



Lenna Nakamura, Aquatics and Youth Services Manager

Concurrence:



Alison Gelz, Senior Manager, Community Services

Appendices

Appendix A: Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver (2002)

Appendix B: Civic Youth Strategy (2006)

Appendix C: West Vancouver Youth Hub Visioning Report

Appendix D: Youth-Friendly North Shore Final Report

Appendix E: Youth-Friendly North Shore – Evaluation of Youth Services

Appendix F: Proposed Youth Policy

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Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver



west vancouver

THE WATERFRONT COMMUNITY

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

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Prepared by

Yates, Thorn and Associates, and District of West Vancouver Staff; Richard Wagner & Josie Chuback

Civic Youth Strategy (doc #112835)

September 27, 2002

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Policy Statement

Council will work towards developing a community where:

- The views of youth and their contributions to the community are valued and taken into account in the development of the Council's policies and activities.
- Youth are cherished and their diversity is recognized, acknowledged and celebrated.
- Young people have access to the information and resources required to meet their needs in the areas of:
 - . Health, safety and well being
 - . Physical environment and design
 - . Entertainment and recreation
 - . Education and training
 - . Employment
 - . Family

Council is committed to developing, supporting and promoting initiatives that positively contribute to the lives of West Vancouver youth

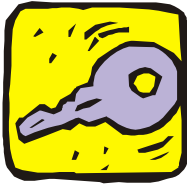


Council will develop five strategic approaches to the implementation of this policy statement, as laid out in this Civic Youth Strategy

- Create a broader vision for youth recreation.
- Give youth a stronger voice in local government.
- Improve the image of youth in the community.
- Use civic resources for youth development.
- Bring a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Introduction



In building our communities towards tomorrow, children and young people hold the key to a different set of attitudes towards crime, drugs, racial intolerance, safety and many other challenging issues.

They are tomorrow's community: Ensuring that our young people grow up feeling comfortable in and positive about the communities in which they live is a key to intergenerational progress. They are a source of learning for all of us in their freshness towards creativity, innovation, playfulness, trust and open expression of emotions.



When a city focuses strategically and proactively on the well being of its young people, positive changes will impact upon the lives of all citizens.

If a city ensures that its policies, planning and programs are examined in the light of 'how will this affect young people?' there is potential to enhance the city for all.

- Mayor and Council are in a unique position to provide leadership in this area.
- The Municipality is in a powerful position to promote long-term strategic development.
- Council's knowledge of local needs enables it to ensure provision of the best possible services and the best environment for youth.

Within our tripartite governmental system, the municipality is strategically placed to involve young people in planning and ensuring that their views are heard and acted upon.



The District of West Vancouver is recognized around the world as one of the finest residential environments. But over the years, concerns have been expressed, in various ways, by youth and adults, elected and non-elected, about whether the District's youth were full beneficiaries of its many attributes.

Did they feel full partners in the community? Did West Vancouver work for them?

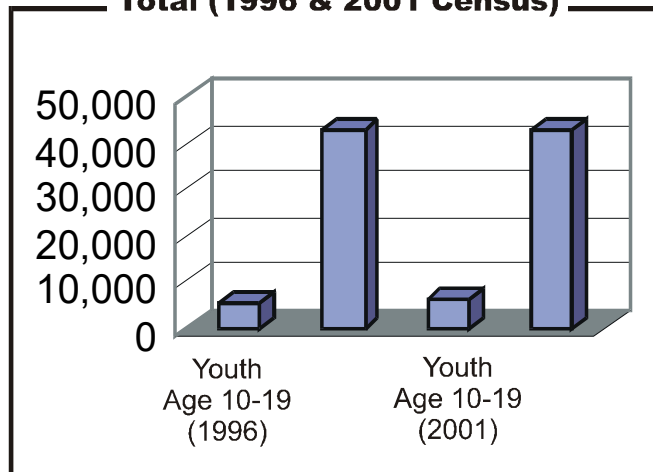
It was decided that these issues should be investigated, and a set of policies and actions put in place.

This set of policies and actions are the Civic Youth Strategy and are outlined in this report.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Demographics

**West Vancouver Youth Population
Compared to
Total (1996 & 2001 Census)**

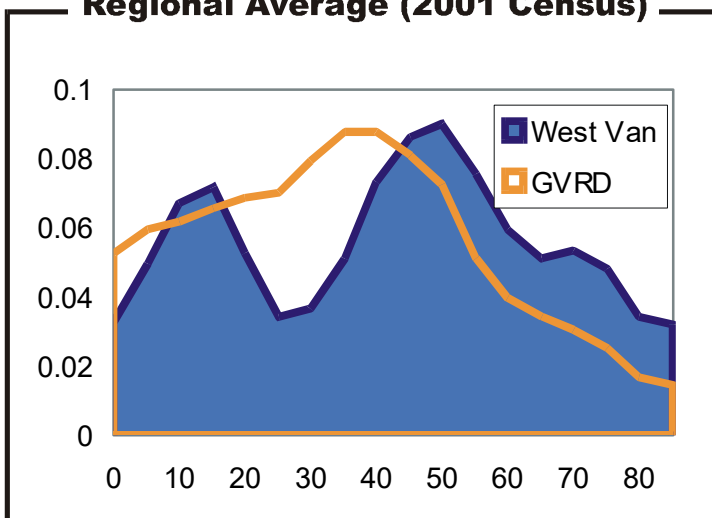


- According to the 2001 Census, there were 43,300 people living in West Vancouver.

- Of these, 6,000 or 14% were youth age 10-19.

- Between 1996 and 2001, West Vancouver's youth population age 10-19 increased in total numbers (by 600 youth) and as a percentage of total population (from 13% to 14%).

**West Vancouver Age Distribution
Compared to the
Regional Average (2001 Census)**



- Compared to the regional average (GVRD), West Vancouver has a slightly higher proportion of youth (14% in West Vancouver compared to the regional average of 13%).
- West Vancouver has fewer young children and young adults, and significantly more older adults over age 45 compared to the regional average.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Current Youth Service Providers

Services for youth are provided by a range of organizations in West Vancouver:

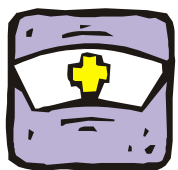
Municipal Departments

- Recreation is a municipal service and West Vancouver provides a range of youth recreation services through its Community Services Department. These include a stand-alone youth centre as well as facilities for youth in the community centres. Youth programs are delivered through these centres as well as in an outreach mode.
- Other civic departments focus on youth within their overall programming: the West Vancouver Memorial Library serves many youth functions, while the Parks Department provides a variety of park amenities where youth are the prime client group, as well as providing playfields and other green areas which are used by all groups including youth.
- Other departments have involvement with youth on an 'as needed' basis: for instance, the West Vancouver Police Department provide a range of services to young people ranging from prevention (DARE) to mandated services. The Fire Department also provides work experience to young people from selected high schools.



School District

- In addition to providing education services for young people, the school system provides extensive services for youth, from counselling to the facilitation of work experience.
- In addition, the schools, through their extra-curricular programs, provide enrichment experiences in sport, art and cultural activities.
- The schools provide space for many of the sport and art activities that are delivered through not-for-profit groups.



Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (previously the North Shore Health Region) provides a range of services such as the Teen Health Clinic operating at Ambleside Youth Centre one afternoon per week, Youth Mental Health services, and the educational and prevention duties of public health nurses.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Current Youth Service Providers

Not for Profit Organizations

- There is a wide range of not-for-profit groups that provide sport, art, cultural, educational and experiential activities for youth.

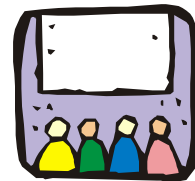


Private Sector and Commercial Operators

- Youth are major spenders in the community, and the private sector provides for these needs when economically able to do so. Chains such as 7-11, fast food outlets, and coffee shops provide popular consumer services to youth. However, the opportunity to hang out and meet their friends is limited. Movie theatres cater to the youth market, as do video stores.



- However, when the economics of the marketplace change, private operators move elsewhere. Recent closures of the Park Royal movie theatre and bowling lanes have reduced the entertainment options for youth in West Vancouver, forcing them to find other means to entertain themselves or to travel outside the municipality for these services.



How was the Civic Youth Strategy Developed?

Process

A three-phase process was used:

1. A youth survey was undertaken in West Vancouver High Schools.
2. Youth participated in a survey of all municipal departments and community facilities.
3. Thirdly, ideas were brought together at a Youth Symposium, organized with the School Board, and held in conjunction with Youth Week 2002.

Throughout this process, youth were involved:

- in designing the youth survey questions.
- in considering the meaning of its results.
- in presenting them to Mayor and Council for information.
- in conducting the Departmental Survey, and reporting back on their findings.
- in coming together to develop strategies at the Youth Symposium.
- in presenting the finalized Civic Youth Strategy to Mayor and Council.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Survey

As the first stage in the preparation of the Civic Youth Strategy, a youth survey was undertaken focused on youth aged 13 to 18 years (grades 8/12).

Assistance was provided by youth involved with the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) and the Library's Youth Advisory Group.

The survey was delivered through the schools, including Mulgrave School.



The survey was delivered in the last week of November, 2001. All secondary schools participated in the survey with the exception of Collingwood School.

The total grades 8 to 12 population in these school is 3,198 students.

In total, 719 completed survey forms (22% sample) were returned for analysis.

The survey can be considered accurate to within +/- 3%, 19 times out of 20.

It is, therefore, a very reliable indicator of youth views. It provides both a clear statistical picture and, since it also provided opportunities through open-ended questions for youth to express their views, it offers qualitative data in the form of extensive comments.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Survey

Some of the principal findings of the survey are as follows:



- The picture that it paints of youth is very positive - they lead a balanced life that includes school, homework, TV/videos and computers, some paid work, and a variety of other leisure activities. Yet none are done to excess. Youth are active in the community; almost one third are volunteers, in a very broad range of activities.
- They feel safe in West Vancouver, both in school and in the community. They appreciate the community; they recognize that it is a great place to live.
- But the community has its downsides for a young person. One person's 'safety' is another person's 'boredom'. The point was made repeatedly that there is little entertainment for a young person in West Vancouver. Comments regarding use of recreation facilities and the library made it clear that recreation was good - but it was 'entertainment' that youth were also looking for - just places where they can hang out, make some noise, and be themselves.
- When asked whether adults viewed youth positively or negatively, 70% indicated that adults were generally positive toward them. But certain groups of adults, especially those in positions of authority, were felt to be more negative toward youth.
- Less than 50% of youth indicated that youth are 'valued' by the West Vancouver community; and only 30% felt that youth were 'respected' in the community.
- Youth consider themselves excluded from the processes of local government. There was broad agreement that there were no ways to make their views heard, and even if they did get heard, no action occurred as a result. But over 60% indicated that youth wanted to be more involved in civic government, and over 70% indicated that youth would volunteer more if there were more opportunities.
- The issues of skateboarding and roller blading are issues about youth culture. But only 30% of youth see themselves as 'boarders', while roller blading is an activity practiced by over 50% of youth. The fact that neither is allowed on the Seawall, or on the streets for transportation are concerns for between 50% and 70% of youth. Youth clearly view these issues in a different light to those who set these rules in the first place.

Throughout the survey youth were saying 'we see things differently from adults - and we want to be heard'.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Survey

Pertinent Statistics from the Youth Survey:



- West Vancouver's youth work a limited number of paid hours - over 80% of all respondents worked less than 7 hours per week. Only 6.8% of students worked over 15 hours per week, and 60% of these students were in grade 12.
- Homework absorbs a good part of after school time for many youth - two out of three students do over 7 hours per week, and one in five does over 15 hours per week (two hours per night and five over the weekend).
- Less than 25% of youth were regular users of the District's recreation facilities, including community centres.
- Over 90% of youth indicated that they feel safe in West Vancouver in general and at school in particular.
- Traditional community based organizations are also venues for youth involvement; community sports teams (42.1%), churches (19.1%), youth organizations such as scouts and guides (7.0%), and arts and culture groups such as dance and theatre (25.3%), are all venues where youth are involved.
- Schools are a major venue for community involvement, whether in school-based activities such as peer counselling and Student Council, or in extra-curricular clubs; at least one in three students (35.9%) is involved in this way at their schools.
- Almost one in two of all youth thought the police generally have a negative attitude toward them.

The skateboard park had as many regular visitors as the arena - about 10% of youth.

38.5% of youth were regular users of the Memorial Library, visiting it at least once per month.

One in three (31.8%) youth indicated that they volunteer somewhere in their community.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Survey

Pertinent Statistics from the Youth Survey (cont'd):



- Almost 90% of youth agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that they live in one of the top residential communities in the world. However almost identical percentages of youth agreed that 'there is not enough to do in West Vancouver'.
- Slightly over 50% of youth felt that 'youth are valued by the West Vancouver community', but one in three, or 278 out of 719, felt that youth were not valued by the community.
- Three out of four youth feel they are unable to express their views in ways that make adults such as the Mayor and Council listen to them.
- 'West Vancouver needs a new movie theatre' was the one question in the whole survey that brought the strongest support, with 95% responding, and 95% of them indicating agreement, mostly strong agreement.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Departmental Survey

It was considered important for youth to find out what municipal departments and facilities do and how this affects youth. This was accomplished by having teams of two youth tour each department, ask questions, and report back to a workshop.

Teams were established of two youth, who were put in touch with a departmental representative.

- A time for the visit was agreed, with 2 to 3 hours being suggested for the larger departments.
- Youth were encouraged to create a dialogue with the people they met.
- During the tour, youth used a workbook to take notes of discussions.
- After the visit, youth were asked to prepare their notes into a word processing document or PowerPoint presentation.
- Two workshops were held to gather the information and learning of the youth teams and the departmental representatives. They were held in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Hall. Teams gave a 5 to 10 minute presentation of what they had learned. One group gave a PowerPoint presentation.

The Key Questions Youth Were Investigating

How do Municipal Departments' and Facilities' functions impact youth?

What changes can be made to make West Vancouver more youth friendly?

The results of this part of the investigation identified a number of opportunities:

- for greater involvement of youth in the work of departments and facilities.
- for departments and staff to support other aspects of the Civic Youth Engagement process.
- to change the way departments and facilities operate to make them more 'youth friendly'.
- to link with the schools and the educational process.
- to connect with certain departments where youth noted interactions and attitudes were sometimes cause for concern; the West Vancouver Police Department was noted as one such department where added liaison would build stronger relationships.
- to bring a youth perspective on civic issues and policies.
- to expand/rethink youth involvement such as through YAC and other advisory committees.
- to celebrate for and with youth.
- to expand programs for youth.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Symposium

The symposium was held during school time on the Wednesday of Youth Week.

- Students from West Vancouver Secondary School and Sentinel came to Rockridge to share their ideas.
- After a brief presentation, youth were divided into table groups, with a grade 11/12 student acting as a facilitator at each table.
- They were asked to comment on five broad questions, with the final 45 minutes being allocated to feedback from the participants.
- Worksheets were filled in at each table, and all completed worksheets were analyzed.



The results of the sessions are summarized as follows:

Creating a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation

Tell us what “Creating a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation” means to you?

- More places to meet other youth
- More businesses open later
- Change youth centre
- Programs aimed at different ages of youth
- Better transportation
- Ways to link better with groups who have difficulty with youth, i.e., seniors
- A close look at affordability of recreation services
- If Council are serious, their spending priorities must change
- Youth focused community events
- Youth Advisory Committee needs to be more inviting
- More communication between police and youth
- Better promotion of those programs which are put on for youth
- More dances
- Spread out youth recreation programs and opportunities throughout the community
- More support for youth programs such as Scouts and Guides
- Youth produced TV station

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Youth Symposium

Creating a Stronger Voice in Local Government

How can YAC be revamped?

- More power, influence and respect
- Televised Youth Advisory Committee meetings
- More advertising and promotion
- Closer links with schools
- YAC sponsored events
- Broader cross section of youth on YAC
- YAC involved in more aspects of the community

Improving the Image of Youth in the Community

How can we change this negative stereotype?

- Stronger, more active youth councils and YAC
- Provide more opportunities to talk and work with more groups
- Youth produced TV station
- Youth shows on local TV and radio stations
- Write, create and report on the good news stories
- Youth Awards
- Police/youth liaison
- 'Smile & Be Polite' Campaign

Using Local Resources for Youth

How can West Vancouver staff support and work together with you?

- More work experience opportunities
- Youth forums on Youth Issues
- Turn Career and Planning Program into an opportunity to do things, not just talk about 'goals'
- Staff from West Vancouver District coming to schools to talk about their jobs

Bringing a Youth Perspective to Civic Policy and Planning

What are some of the key things you'd like to work on?

- Involve youth
- Create places to just hang out and make some noise
- Talk about by-laws
- Youth transportation
- Designate pathways where skating and roller blading is OK
- Designate a beach for gatherings

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Give Youth A Stronger Voice in Local Government



YAC is the main vehicle for ensuring a youth voice in West Vancouver. It was established by Mayor and Council in 1987. It has promoted other activities designed to give youth both a say in local government, and an opportunity to learn about how municipal decision-making works: annual youth council, support for Youth Week are examples.

YAC has some difficulties from a youth perspective:

- It is an adult model, and is not well suited to the pace of life, thinking, or existence of most youth. It assumes a longer attention span than most youth have.
- It is not seen by most youth as doing very much, or making things happen.
- It is too broad in its scope, allowing it to be marginalized on most issues.
- It isn't perceived by some youth as being cool.
- Many of the youth involved in the Civic Youth Strategy discussions were critical of the YAC, yet they had respect for those of their peers who were working hard to make it succeed. They expressed a keenness to be involved 'if it would really change things'.
- The perception of youth is that the YAC needs to be changed to give it a higher profile, and more influence with Mayor and Council. It also has to become a more fluid and flexible mechanism, more in tune with the way youth do business, less marching to an adult drummer.

Directions



- Revamp the YAC to ensure that it has the kinds of processes and resources that make it a force for change within the civic system.
- Develop a system that allows youth to initiate task forces to investigate specific issues.
- Ensure that these task forces and the related process has the support of the School District, and can use school facilities and time to consult with youth.
- Ensure that YAC has a regular opportunity to report back to Mayor and Council, with particular emphasis on the results from these task forces being discussed with Council.
- Create a youth website to disseminate and gather youth views on issues.
- Strengthen staff support for this revamped YAC process.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Create a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation



- Being a young person between the ages of 12 and 20 is about the transition from a world where, for most children, their parents were the primary determiners of their recreation pursuits, to a world where they have the knowledge, skills, money, and authority to make their own decisions. During that transition, life can be frustrating, and rejection of previously embraced activities is to be expected.
- Low percentages of youth saying that they use the arena may mean that youth have moved on from these more organized activities. In part they have moved on to more individual activities (e.g. mountain biking with their friends), and in part they are looking for more informal places to 'hang out'.
- One of the clear messages that youth have given to the municipality throughout the development of this Civic Youth Strategy has been that they want to be able to access a wider range of youth recreation services and facilities than currently exists.
- Some of these activities are primarily not municipal functions, such as a movie theatre or late night coffee house. But youth would like the municipality to work with them to think more creatively about the youth programming that it provides, and how it sets up and programs its facilities.
- This broader vision must be youth-led if it is to be successful, with the role of municipal staff being to facilitate and to assist youth to implement some of the innovative ideas that they come up with. The recreation programs will be both more exciting for youth, and will bring higher participation levels.

Directions



- Work with youth to identify ways in which existing community facilities can better serve youth needs.
- Review and adjust the role and programming of the Ambleside Youth Centre.
- Review the provision of youth spaces in community centres.
- Identify other ways in which space for youth can be created within existing facilities.

Strategies

Directions (cont'd)



- Work with youth to find ways to meet outdoor recreation needs.
- Develop additional youth amenities in parks.
- Develop additional opportunities outside district parks for activities such as mountain biking.
- Work with youth to develop a skateboarding strategy.
- Upgrade the current skate park; build new skate parks.
- Address issues of skateboarding on the street.
- Review the by-law that requires businesses to close in the evenings.
- Review the noise by-law to identify opportunities for youth activities.
- Identify options that would create a youth coffee house in a commercial/retail area easily accessible to young people.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Improve the Image of Youth in the Community



- While the research for the Civic Youth Strategy did not establish that adults in West Vancouver do not have a positive image of youth, that was certainly the impression of youth, as recorded in the youth survey. In particular, youth felt that certain groups, such as seniors and the local police do not have a positive image of them.
- This would be consistent with research from other communities that indicates that youth are not viewed positively by adults.
- While some of this perception is created by the national media, actions locally, especially if well promoted, can counter these images. It is important that youth lead the way in this regard, and the municipality provides support wherever possible.

Directions



- Establish a volunteer registry and encourage youth to sign on.
- Using civic connections where necessary and encourage youth groups to find opportunities to work positively with other groups such as seniors and families with young children.
- As part of Youth Week, or at some other appropriate time of the year, develop a 'Give Back To The Community Day'.
- Maintain, enlarge and promote the Youth Awards program.
- Establish a regular liaison between youth and the local North Shore/West Vancouver media.
- Develop a youth liaison group to work directly with the West Vancouver Police Department.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Use Civic Resources to Support the Civic Youth Strategy



- The District has considerable resources, both human and financial, which it can bring to the implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy.
- It should be made clear to all staff and departments, by the Municipal Manager, that supporting the Civic Youth Strategy is not the job of one department, or one staff person, but of all staff and all departments.
- Training for youth involved in these new Civic Youth Strategy initiatives will be essential to develop the necessary skills.

Directions



- Develop a youth-for-youth website. Models would be the North Vancouver youth web site and that of the Abbotsford Youth Commission.
- Expand or create a work experience program within District departments (and other civic partners) to provide the required hours of work experience (Career and Personal Planning Program) for high school students.
- Establish a program that would provide District staff as resource people for specific curriculum modules and promote it to the high schools.
- Establish a Civic Youth Strategy Staff Team, made up of one representative of each department, to work with YAC and to assist with other Civic Youth Strategy projects as required.
- In conjunction with the School District, examine youth leadership training programs with a view to delivering one or more in West Vancouver.
- The programs should be adapted if possible so that they are also suitable for civic staff and other adults to take to discuss issues around giving more 'power' to youth.
- Consider establishing a Youth Foundation that would fund specific youth projects that were outside the District's mandate or jurisdiction.
- Identify the budget resources required to implement the Civic Youth Strategy.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Bring a Youth Perspective Into Civic Policy Development & Planning



- Youth have views on community issues and should be encouraged, through the Civic Youth Strategy, to present these views to the appropriate body. This is not to give youth, or expect from youth, any greater input than any other group. But, just as we adapt processes for people with disabilities, so too should processes be adapted to meet the specific needs of youth.
- In general, relevant policy papers and recommendations that come before Mayor and Council should address the issue of possible impacts on youth.
- Youth should also be encouraged to provide input to key planning processes such as the Official Community Plan Review. This input might be in the same way as other public input is gathered. It might use some of the specific resources noted above, such as the development of curriculum learning materials, or the use of the youth-for-youth website.
- These mechanisms could also be used to assist youth task force reviews of specific by-laws such as the shop closure by-law.

Directions



- Ensure that relevant policy papers and recommendations that come before Mayor and Council ask the question 'what impact on youth?' and provide a positive answer.
- Ensure that youth input into key planning processes such as the Official Community Plan and recreation master planning is always included.
- Conduct a by-law review jointly with a youth task force to examine how youth are impacted by specific by-laws.
- Review specific bylaws which are being drafted to examine the impact on youth.

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Strategies

Monitoring and Evaluating the Civic Youth Strategy

It is proposed that the strategy will be monitored and its outcomes evaluated.

A committee will be formed with representatives of youth, civic departments, and other community members. This committee will meet regularly and prepare an annual report that will be forwarded to Mayor and Council for consideration and action.



Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Implementation Strategy

Note:

It is imperative that the implementation of this strategy, and the individual projects that are proposed to implement it, be youth-led. The revamping of the Youth Advisory Committee should be the first priority, with all other projects contingent on its support and initiative.



Give Youth a Stronger Voice in Local Government

Strategic Direction	Implementation
Revamp the YAC.	<p>First Steps: Convene a youth meeting in early October to develop different structure and options. Consult with School District.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002</p>
Regular YAC reporting back to Mayor and Council.	<p>First Steps: Establish quarterly reporting procedures.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002</p>
Orientation training and leadership skill development for YAC.	<p>First Steps: Develop the training program.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002 and 2003</p>
Strengthen staff support for a revised YAC structure.	<p>First Steps: Identify staff roles and time commitment</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002 and 2003</p>
Develop a system that allows youth to initiate task forces to investigate specific issues.	<p>First Steps: Develop a pilot model</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Implementation Strategy



Create a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation

Strategic Direction	Implementation
Identify ways in which existing community facilities can better serve youth needs.	<p>First Steps: Establish a Youth Recreation Advisory Team for each recreation facility.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: Immediate</p>
Identify ways in which the outdoor recreation needs of youth can be met.	<p>First Steps: Establish a Youth Task Force to work with Parks and Outdoor Recreation staff to identify needs and develop an action plan.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, Parks Dept</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Develop a skateboarding strategy.	<p>First Steps: Establish a Youth Task Force to work with Parks and Recreation services staff to identify needs and develop an action plan.</p> <p>LeadDepts: Community Services, with Parks and Engineering</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Review shop closure by-law.	<p>First Steps: Work with YAC to establish a Youth Task Force that will consult with stakeholders.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, Planning and Permits</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Develop a strategy for a youth coffee house.	<p>First Steps: Work with YAC to establish a Youth Task Force to explore options.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2004</p>
Coordinate a PR/Marketing Strategy to inform youth of all municipal, volunteer, recreation and employment opportunities.	<p>First Steps: Gather information.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, Communications</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Implementation Strategy



Improve the Image of Youth in the Community

Strategic Direction	Implementation
Establish and promote volunteering programs.	<p>First Steps: Research and develop appropriate youth volunteer opportunities.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Develop a 'Give Back to the Community' program.	<p>First Steps: Propose idea to Youth Week Committee for 2003.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Enhance and promote the Youth Awards program.	<p>First Steps: Review the program and identify opportunities.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Communications, Community Services</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: for 2003 program</p>
Establish a regular liaison between youth and the local media.	<p>First Steps: Initiate quarterly meetings between YAC and local media.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Communications, Community Services</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003</p>
Develop a youth liaison group to work directly with the WVPD.	<p>First Steps: Develop terms of reference for liaison group, as part of the revamping of the YAC structure.</p> <p>Lead Dept: WVPD</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002/03</p>

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Implementation Strategy



Use Civic Resources to Support the Civic Youth Strategy

Strategic Direction	Implementation
Develop a youth-for-youth website.	<p>First Steps: Liaise with the schools to determine a group of youth who would be interested in taking on this project.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Communications, Information Technology</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002/03 School Year</p>
Expand or create a career development and work experience program in secondary schools.	<p>First Steps: Schedule discussions with School District</p> <p>Lead Dept: Human Resources</p> <p>Priority: Medium</p> <p>Timeline: 2003/04</p>
Develop a 'civic government' school curriculum module.	<p>First Steps: Contact the City of Vancouver to discuss the problems and progress that they have made. Also discuss with Supt of Schools.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, School District</p> <p>Priority: Low</p> <p>Timeline: 2003/04</p>
Establish a civic youth strategy staff team.	<p>First Steps: Discuss at Executive Team Meeting.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Municipal Manager, Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: October 2002</p>
Establish a budget to support the strategy.	<p>First Steps: Identify the necessary resources and include in 2003.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Municipal Manager, Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: Immediate for 2003 budget year</p>
Develop youth leadership training programs.	<p>First Steps: Review training programs of other municipalities.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services</p> <p>Priority: High</p> <p>Timeline: 2002, for implementation in 2003</p>
Consider establishing a Youth Foundation.	<p>First Steps: Review the concept with potential funders.</p> <p>Lead Dept: Community Services, Finance, West Vancouver Foundation</p> <p>Priority: Low</p> <p>Timeline: 2003 or 2004</p>

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

Implementation Strategy



Bring a Youth Perspective to Civic Policy Development and Planning

Strategic Direction	Implementation
Youth Impact Assessment in all appropriate policy papers and recommendations.	First Steps: Determine format and procedural changes. Lead Dept: Clerk's Department Priority: Medium Timeline: 2003
Ensure youth input into key planning processes.	First Steps: Discuss process with YAC Lead Dept: Community Services, Planning, Parks Priority: Medium Timeline: Immediate for Official Community Plan and ongoing.

Note of Special Thanks

While this Civic Youth Strategy was in its preparation stage, the Society for Children and Youth of BC held an international conference on Child and Youth Friendly Communities in Vancouver. Two of the international participants, Lyn Campbell, Children's Advocate for the City of Christchurch, New Zealand, and Marco Corsi, Research Associate with UNICEF's Innocenti Centre for Child Friendly Cities, took the time to meet with Council, with staff, and with the project consultant. We would like to express our gratitude to them for inspiring us, and reassuring us that we were on the right road.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the West Vancouver School Administration and school staff for their cooperation and assistance in providing their time and resources to support the Youth Survey and Youth Symposium, both of which occurred during school hours.

Finally, we thank the more than 900 youth who gave their time and advice in the development of this strategy.



Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

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Various books by Roger Hart

- 1992 - Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship - published by the UNICEF International Child Development Centre, Florence, Italy
- 1997 - Children's Participation: The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care - published for UNICEF, by Earthscan Publications, London
- 1999 - Cities for Children: Children's Rights, Poverty and Urban Management - written with Bartlett, Satterthwaite, de la Barra, and Missair - published for UNICEF, by Earthscan Publications, London. Chapters 13 and 14 are of particular relevance to this study: The Context of Local Government and The Practical Implications for Local Government.

National League of Cities Reports

- 1996 - Connecting Citizens and Their Government: Civility, Responsibility and Local Democracy. One section of this report focused on 'Youth Involvement: "Our Future and Our Only Hope"'.
- 1999 - Youth participation and Community Building.

Health Canada Projects

- Hearing The Voices of Youth: Youth Participation in Selected Canadian Municipalities
Prepared by: Dr. Tullio Caputo
The full report is available for downloading at the Health Canada website:
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth>
- Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement
As part of the research component of the Federal Children's Agenda, five Centres of Excellence were established. One focused on Youth Engagement. It has established a website at:
http://www.tgmag.ca/centres/index_e.html

Other International Projects

- Young people's politics: Political interest and engagement amongst 14- to 24 year-olds- published for the Rowntree Foundation by YPS (price £13.95, ISBN 1 902633 64 4).
A summary of this research is provided on the Rowntree Foundation website at: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/520.asp>
- Cities of Tomorrow - International Network for Better Local Government
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/CitiesOftomorrow/>

Civic Youth Strategy for West Vancouver

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BC Initiatives

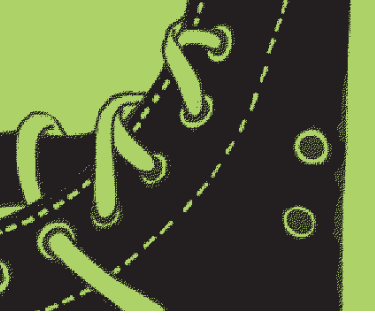
- BC Government's Voice for Youth Initiative
According to the BC Government
"B.C.'s youth deserve to have a real voice that's heard by government."
<http://www.youth.gov.bc.ca/voice/>
it would seem that this website may no longer be working.
- Child and Youth Friendly Communities Initiative
Based in BC, this Initiative of the Society for Children and Youth of BC also addresses many of the fundamental elements of youth engagement.
Their URL is: <http://www.scyofbc.org/cyfc/toc.html>

City's with strong youth engagement strategies and websites with data for downloading

- Auckland, NZ
http://www.akcity.govt.nz/council/governing_your_city/representatives_and_meetings/agendas_and_minutes/committees/auckland_city_youth_council/a20010629.asp
The Youth Council has also prepared a Youth Plan entitled Youth Action: Youth Action is a plan to make Auckland a cooler place for you to be. It's been designed by young people for young people, and it builds meaning between the Council and the youth of Auckland.
Further information and the full plan in pdf format can be found at:
http://www.akcity.govt.nz/council/strategies_policies_plans/guiding_communities/youth_action/index.asp
- Christchurch, NZ
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Publications/Youthstrategy/>
Christchurch is also the lead city for the Cities of Tomorrow project noted previously.

BC Cities with good youth-for-youth websites

- North Vancouver
<http://www.dnv.org/youthnet/>
- Abbotsford
<http://www.abbyyouth.com/>



westvancouver
THE WATERFRONT COMMUNITY

Civic Youth Strategy
West Vancouver
2006

Review Civic Youth Strategy: 2003 to 2005
Renew Civic Youth Strategy: 2006 to 2010



West Vancouver Youth
Take a walk in our shoes

This report was compiled by:
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West Vancouver Youth

Take a walk in our shoes

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Acknowledgements of Contributors

Introduction

Take a Walk in Our Shoes – The “Sole” of the Icon Development

The Vision:

The purpose of the Civic Youth Strategy is to encourage youth to be involved and build a community that they believe brings a sense of belonging, well-being and recognizes young people as valuable contributors. As a result of the review of the Strategy (2002-2005), youth recommended that a youth friendly image be used to communicate ongoing community projects and events. In response to their recommendation an Icon was created that will be easily recognized by all members of the community.

The Process:

The creation of the Icon involved youth through a call for submissions within the schools and community during the months of September and October 2006. Over 100 submissions were received and from the collected artwork, the idea of using shoes as an icon was created. The original concept was created by Angela Walsh and additional shoes were created by the Advanced Placement Art Class at Sentinel Secondary.

Each shoe, in its design detail, reflects the diversity of youth interest and their individual interpretation of West Vancouver. Displayed together, the shoes bring elements of the unique characteristics and spirit of community that they value as a whole.

The Youth artwork was compiled by Atessa Marashi, a local young artist, to produce the overall icon, banner and design of this report.

The Benefits:

- 1) To bring an awareness of community leadership and engagement for young people.
- 2) To give an identity to the next phase of the Civic Youth Strategy (2006-2010) that youth and the whole community can connect with as we move through the implementation process.
- 3) To assist with communicating the significant contributions young people make to the community at large.

Special Thanks:

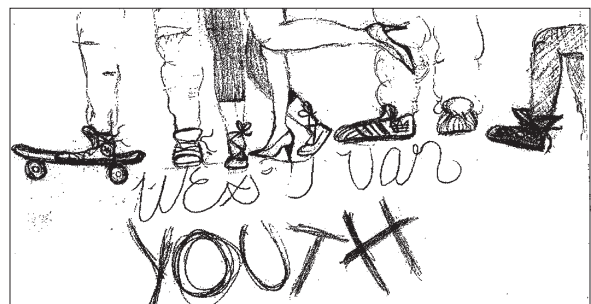
Ms. Carrie Berg, Rockridge Secondary

Ms. Barb Sunday, Sentinel Secondary

Icon:



Preliminary Sketch by Angela Walsh:



Banner:



WEST VANCOUVER YOUTH



TAKE A WALK IN OUR SHOES



Thank you to all the students from Sentinel Secondary who contributed:



Jason Lee



Cindy Choi



Sarah McLaughlin



Jihany Hassun



Joanne Oh



Molly Smith



Vanilla Sun



Hailey Kim



Rebecca Mataluk



Ashley Yoon



Anna Findlay



Hilary Park



Ali Koby



Melissa Mann



Mallory



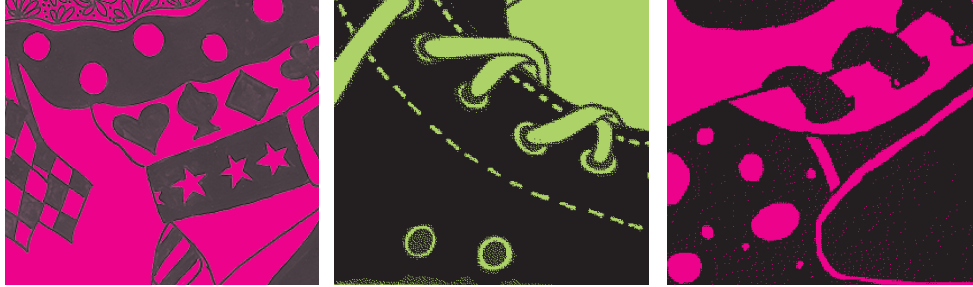
Atessa Marashi



Soo Hyun Ryu



Ji Sun Kim



Policy Statement

Council is committed to developing, supporting and promoting initiatives that positively contribute to the lives of West Vancouver youth.

Council will work towards developing a community where:

- The views of youth and their contributions to the community are valued and taken into account in the development of the Council's policies and activities.
- Youth are cherished and their diversity is recognized, acknowledged and celebrated.
- Young people have access to the information and resources required to meet their needs in the areas of:
 - o Health, safety and well being
 - o Physical environment and design
 - o Entertainment and recreation
 - o Education and training
 - o Employment
 - o Family

Council will develop five strategic approaches to the implementation of this policy statement, as laid out in this Civic Youth Strategy.

- Create a broader vision for youth recreation
- Give youth a stronger voice in local government
- Improve the image of youth in the community.
- Use civic resources for youth development
- Bring a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning

The District of West Vancouver defines youth by ages 13 to 18.



Civic Youth Strategy Review and Renew

Youth are vibrant and intelligent and they are making changes in our community. They are a source of learning for all of us with their fresh and creative approach to innovation with their playfulness, trust and open expression of emotions. Over the past three years West Vancouver's Civic Youth Strategy has given the key to young people to begin to open doors and share their attitudes towards building a healthy inclusive community. West Vancouver youth are stepping up as active contributors in developing a place where they feel connected and valued. They are leading the way through social responsibility and are engaging with all members of their community to improve the image of youth.

The Civic Youth Strategy was created in 2002 with the support of Council, community partners and dedicated young people/citizens, and adopted by Council on May 14th, 2003. The purpose of the Strategy is four-fold;

- to give youth a greater say in how West Vancouver is governed;
- to involve more youth in the community and in civic government;
- to develop strategies and actions that meet social, recreational, educational and cultural needs of youth;
- to help make West Vancouver more 'youth friendly'.

There are 25 separate strategies, including the establishment of several committees, that comprise the overall strategy. The strategy has prompted several changes in West Vancouver and has added new services and ideas that have been of benefit to it's

youth in the community and contributed to building a better community.

Many of the strategies have been implemented as outlined in the 2003 - 2005 Civic Youth Strategy. During the implementation phase of the Civic Youth Strategy, many new initiatives were identified as well as some of the strategies that were no longer applicable or deemed relevant with the current changes or trends.

The program's success has been due to both a commitment by Council and the willingness of local youth to get involved and make a difference in their community. Together they have focused strategically and proactively on the well being of youth needs and concerns. Council has led the community by adopting a policy and ensuring that all levels of Municipal Government are committed to developing, supporting and promoting initiatives that positively contribute to the lives of young people in building community in West Vancouver.

The Civic Youth Strategy is not a project, it is an ongoing process. The Strategy is about changing the culture of municipal government, bringing about awareness of the positive contributions youth can make to their community, bringing a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning, and making municipal resources available to all youth. Achieving and maintaining these goals/vision requires a constant and persistent effort. In other words, it is not as if we will ever 'arrive' and say our job is done.

The environment is also constantly changing. There is regular turnover of municipal staff which necessitates ongoing dialogue, encouragement, relationship-building, and awareness-raising about youth issues and methods of youth engagement in civic government. Youth themselves move onto adulthood and new youth bring with them ever changing perspectives.

The demographics within our population are also changing. For example, the growing cultural diversity in our community brings with it new opportunities and challenges.

All of this underscores the need to provide resources on an ongoing basis in order to respond to the changing needs of youth and sustain our vision of a 'youth friendly community' in West Vancouver.

So far, the Civic Youth Strategy 2002 – 2005 work has been possible with the establishment of the Youth Advocate position. For the past three years, this position has been on a year to year contract basis. The Youth Advocate has also provided primary staff support to the Youth Advisory Committee, which has become, and hopefully will continue to be, a permanent fixture of our local government. Costs associated with various Strategy projects, as well as provision of the new Leadership Grants program, have also been made available on a year to year basis through expenditures of the Youth Activity Fund.

The District of West Vancouver has shown tremendous leadership in creating the Civic Youth Strategy. The West Vancouver 2002 – 2005 Civic Youth Strategy received an award for Excellence for Innovation from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association in November 2005. This award recognizes projects and initiatives across Canada that may be used as successful models for other communities to adopt as part of their services or facilities. We can be very proud of the accomplishments so far. In order to sustain this excellent work and move forward, a commitment from Council is required to provide staff and financial resources on a permanent basis.





Review of the Implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy

Over a 3 month period from April to November of 2005, 400 young people were consulted to review the progress of the Civic Youth Strategy. The youth municipal advisory committees and students from the three public high schools as well as Committees' of Council were also consulted during the review process.

A. Questions youth were raising:

- Are youth full beneficiaries of the communities many attributes?
- Do they feel like full partners in the community?
- Does West Vancouver "work" for them?

B. Youth spoke up and told us:

- Youth are positive
- West Vancouver is a safe and great place to live
- One person's safety is another person's 'boredom'
- Less than 50% of youth feel valued by the community as a whole
- Youth consider themselves excluded from the process of local government
- Skateboarding and BMX riding are issues about youth culture, that seem to be resented by the rest of the populace

C. Successes

The Civic Youth Strategy (02 - 05) originally outlined five strategic approaches. To support the strategy Council provided staff support and seed money for youth to take on youth driven leadership initiatives through the Youth Leadership Grants Program.

Strategic Approaches:

1. Give youth a stronger voice in local government:

Youth engagement in West Vancouver is listening to youth and advocating on their behalf to facilitate and implement youth driven programs, services and activities that are important to them. Examples of the advocacy function related to the coordination of the Civic Youth Strategy are as follows:

- Education: District level, presentations at provincial conferences and leadership development with youth
- Connecting with Municipal Departments:
 - o Parks and Community Services: Aquatic Centre, Seniors' Activity Centre, Ice Arena, Harmony Arts Festival, Gleneagles Community Centre, Parks Department
 - o Administrative Services: Legislative Services
 - o Administrative Services: Communications
 - o West Vancouver Police Department
 - o West Vancouver Memorial Library
 - o Engineering Department
 - o Planning Department
- Connecting with West Vancouver School District #45, Mulgrave Independent School and Collingwood Independent School
- Connecting with local businesses, non-profit and service agencies
- Connecting with Youth Committees

Youth Advisory Committee

The Youth Advisory Committee was included as an official committee of Council and a direct link to Mayor and Council for youth to communicate through. The Youth Advisory Committee reviews and makes recommendations regarding the allocation of funds for the Youth Leadership Grants and the Recognition and Competition Funding Programs. The Youth Advisory Committee also reports to the Board of School Trustees for School District #45 and is a direct link for students to voice ideas and concerns about their education.

Community Services Advisory Committee

As part of the Civic Youth Strategy the communities from 2002 to 2005. The Community Services Advisory Committee appointed one youth representative per year. This was the first advisory committee of council to host a youth representative.

Council Mentoring Program

'Take 5' is a five-step program for Councillors to mentor Youth Councillors over a 5-week period. The purpose of the program was to provide an opportunity for Council to inform youth or the roles and responsibilities of a civic leader.

Youth Council and Youth Trustee

Annual events that take place during Youth Week, that provide an opportunity for youth to model as Mayor and Council and the Board of School Trustees. Youth debate topics that are important to them, and by the end of the evening there is a motion for follow-up after the event.

Youth Awards

An annual event that takes place during youth week, where students that have provided outstanding leadership in the community are recognized for their contributions.

Recreation Advisory Team

This committee was created to guide the recreation planning and programming for youth in the Committee. The committee is commonly volunteering at many community services events as well as fundraising for youth that are in need.

Gleneagles Community Centre Advisory Committee

The newly formed Gleneagles Community Centre Committee has a youth representative from Rockridge Secondary and the Chair is a young adult that was a mentored over the past four years through the Recreation Advisory Team.





Strategic Approaches continued

2. Create a broader vision for youth recreation:

Youth like recreation. It improves their quality of life. We have worked hard to broaden the scope of services and events that are of interest to them. To ensure the success of the services, committees of youth developed their own programs and events. Activities included: arts and cultural events, such as several concerts and “Battles of the Bands”, fashion events, a poetry slam and late night social activities; sports events, such as Fear Factor, basketball tournaments between the police and fire department and skateboarding events; and Leadership Conferences and workshops and official council sponsored events.

As the new Aquatic Centre opened its doors in 2004, new youth programs and youth volunteer and work experience opportunities grew. This fabulous facility is an example of a welcoming youth friendly place where many young people come to meet with friends, workout or start their first job. The Aquatic Centre has dedicated youth nights to ensure that a youth culture can be nurtured and grow.

The Gleneagles Adventure Park is a “big and little people” playground with dirt jumps for Mountain and BMX bikes, a concrete skatepark, and social spaces to just hang out. This unique and innovative facility was initiated and developed with the input of local youth riders. Some who have now moved into their early twenties are staying close to their community because they have a place to call their own. This facility attracts youth from all across the District. The facility has local riders that groom and maintain the facility and a new youth club will be formed so that riders can take full ownership of their park.

The Police Carnival is an annual event that is hosted during Police Week. The West Vancouver Police Department brings Westcoast Amusement to Ambleside Park. This fabulous weekend event hosts rides, games and your favourite fair foods.

In West Vancouver, **National Youth Week** (May 1st to 7th) is celebrated with an abundance of youth driven activities such as:

- Artistic Events: Battle of the Bands and a Fashion Show
- Sports Activities: Fear Factor and Beat the Heat Basketball tournament with the police, fire department and community services.
- Civic Recognition: Youth Council and Youth Awards

The **Separate Page** at Memorial Library is a fantastic example of using a traditional building for innovative and creative youth friendly events. The library hosted 300 young people for a night of live indie music and dancing. For many of the youth that attended the event it was their first visit to their community library.

3. Use civic resources for youth development:

Once the community made a commitment to supporting youth, it was recognized that funding and youth friendly structures need to be accessible to help provide opportunities for our young leaders.

The **Youth Leadership Grants Program** is designed to support youth that demonstrate civic leadership, citizenship and community involvement; provide seed money for youth to carry out projects or initiatives of concern to youth; benefit youth who wish to build their capacity to influence issues of

concern locally, nationally or internationally; and include elements of community service and global citizenship.

The **Youth Leadership Conference** is a partnered event with West Vancouver School District #45, Mulgrave Independent School and Collingwood Independent School. The event was created by youth for youth, and has produced several outcomes in the past three years. These range from an increase in youth involvement in the community to specific events inspired and implemented by youth for seniors.

Civic Department support has been extensive and municipal staff have come on board in many ways ranging from hiring youth to donating staff time and resources to contribute to specific projects. Some examples of this are the Communications Department and Library, supporting the development of the Youth 2Youth Website with staff and software, the Engineering Department routinely printing promotional posters for upcoming events and activities; the Parks Department hiring youth to set-up for special events and the Police Department hosting special events and contributing funds to the development of the Gleneagles Adventure Park.

4. Bring a youth perspective to civic policy development and planning:

The Youth Advisory Committee is routinely consulted by all municipal departments as special planning projects and development projects are initiated. Recently, the Recreation Facility Planning committee have developed two community centres, sports fields, and an Aquatic Centre which young people were consulted and kept in the forefront of the planning by designers and committee members. Other examples of consultation with youth have been the inclusion of youth in planning committees for the Special Events Policy and the Ambleside Park Master Plan. Youth have been represented on District-wide Community Initiatives in a number of ways. Such as the Special Event Policy Task Force, the Transportation Task Force to review a new bus route, and the Gleneagles Community Centre Advisory Committee.

5. Improve the image of youth in the community:

Volunteerism has been one of the most popular forms of improving the image of youth in the community. To help youth get connected with local agencies and service providers, two volunteer fairs were held. This event resulted



in more youth involved in Community Service programs as well as local, national and global causes. Service agencies have the opportunity to talk to and learn about the interests and needs of young people.

Fundraisers and donation services are great avenues for youth to give back. Some of their achievements include raising \$1000 for the North Shore Safe House, \$6,000 for Breast Cancer Research, \$10,000 to reduce World Hunger and \$50,000 for Youth Against Landmines as well as preparing 20,000 meals annually for the Vancouver downtown eastside.

Improved relationship with the Police was a priority over the past few years and the police have hosted several events, volunteered for youth driven late night activities and donated funds for youth initiatives.

Recreation Advisory Team is a committee that hosts several fundraisers and special events for their peers each year. These funds are used to sponsor a child through SOS Children's Villages.

Arts and culture special events showcasing fashion, music, dance and artwork have been popular and effective events because they involved many youth performers which have inspired their peers

and have completely changed seniors and adults perceptions of youth with their talent and abilities.

Health and Wellness activities and awareness programs to help the young women in our community recognize how wonderful they truly are. These programs have come in the shape of fundraising for disordered eating and events that allowed young women to dabble in a variety of sports ranging from kick boxing to belly dancing.

Youth Park Stewardship Program at Hay Park is a partnership program between the Parks Department, West Vancouver Secondary and the Evergreen Foundation where by youth are taking care of the green spaces in their neighbourhood. The park is located adjacent to West Vancouver Secondary School and the youth network have hosted several invasive species removal days and educational sessions and have encouraged their peers to enjoy and take care of one of their favourite local hang-outs.

A **Skateboard Park Host Program** was created to monitor the newly built Gleneagles Adventure Park. Local riders are hired to work with youth in the parks and encourage helmet use.

Perceived long-term benefits of the implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy:

- Youth are involved at many levels of the local government decision-making process
- All residents benefit by gaining the unique perspective of youth on issues affecting their community
- More effective and efficient use of municipal resources
- The perceptions of youth as valuable contributors of the community are enhanced
- Negative perceptions of youth are decreased
- Improved social interaction between youth, adults, seniors and the general public
- Enhanced recreational, cultural, social, and educational opportunities for youth
- Community capacity is enhanced by involving youth in municipal and community affairs
- Partnerships are developed between youth, business, local government, social service agencies and other stakeholders
- The community is youth-friendly in all aspects ranging from the way in which development occurs, neighbourhoods are designed and decisions are made
- Youth have a sense of belonging and inclusion in the community

D. Challenges:

Youth were very positive about the progress that had been made in the last three years (2002–2005), but also noted areas where progress had been limited or more action was still needed.

There was an overall sense that youth wanted things to be ‘hipper’ and ‘cooler’ than they were. Youth are exposed daily to media images of a “cool” lifestyle, be it in advertising, Much Music, or wherever. Their expectations come from this world, and they aspire to see it replicated in their local environment:

Ambleside Youth Centre and Gleneagles Community Centre Youth Lounge:

- Ambleside Youth Centre requires facility upgrades to appeal to the broader youth population.
- Further awareness of the existence of the Gleneagles Community Centre Youth Lounge is required.

General community programming is still lacking:

- Activities and late night programs and “places” to go at night (entertainment versus recreation).
- Pre-teen programs.
- There are too few outings from the Ambleside Youth Centre.

The bus service does not meet the needs or expectations of youth:

- Limited bus service (specifically related to late night transportation).
- Cheaper bus fares are needed

Discrimination is still a major barrier for some youth and concern for all youth.

There is/are:

- Little acceptance of visible minorities and tolerance of youth of non-Western cultures.
- Friction between Caucasian and non-Caucasian youth

- Barriers between Seniors and Youth
- Little engaging of all youth from different communities.

Some major issues that really concern youth that were not addressed in the strategy:

- Youth are becoming more consumerist - buy more, consume more, waste more, exploit more.
- Further interest in environmental stewardship.
- Lack in the celebration of diversity.
- Mental illness depression and suicide and drug and alcohol misuse and abuse. (especially crystal meth)

Participants noted a number of process challenges:

- Getting the message of the Civic Youth Strategy out to more youth.
- Youth are a dynamic and changing population.
- Too many ideas, not enough follow up.
- YAC should routinely consult with their peers to identify what youth really want.
- Some processes are slow and youth are no longer youth when changes are finally implemented.

It is still a challenge to fully engage youth:

- Tends to always be the same youth who turn out to consultations, meetings, etc.
- Youth are unsure who to connect with in their community to get things done.
- More innovative methods are required to determine youth needs.
- Not enough advertising of events and communicating of planned recommendations to all youth.
- Informing of younger grades, specifically grades 7 to 10
- Not enough people are interested.
- People will sign up, but meeting times and locations need to be accessible
- Better connection and communication inside the schools

While it is getting better, the youth voice is perceived as not always listened to with the required respect:

- YAC needs to communicate to youth
- Youth feel their voice is still not always taken seriously
- Youth are still stereotyped especially by Seniors and parents of young families.

- Bylaws, especially the Noise Bylaw, are too restrictive.

Many of these ideas coalesce around the need for a different kind of youth facility with evening services:

- Nothing to do after 7.00pm but shop



Linkages and Partnerships

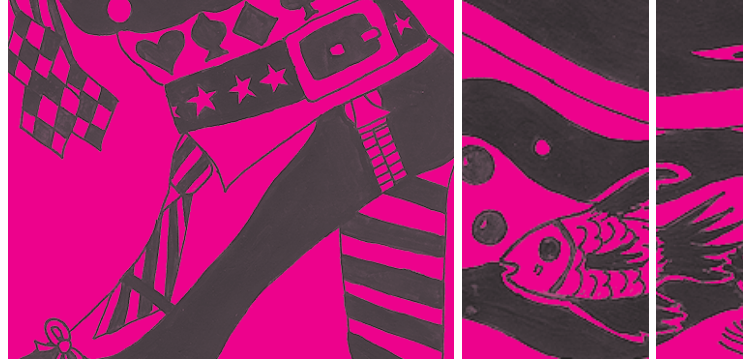
The Civic Youth Strategy is a community effort where community and partners work to build new and exciting opportunities for youth.

Community Services and West Vancouver School District #45 have built a team comprised of recreation staff and school representatives to work together to build leadership opportunities throughout the District. A youth committee have worked with staff to develop an annual Leadership Conference that includes participation of both public and independent schools.

Approximately 100 students annually gather for a full day of learning. The students gain skills in project planning through to public speaking and receive a community resource package to help them implement any project ideas they may have. Several youth leadership initiatives stemmed from the conference ranging from intergenerational events through to fundraisers for sports equipment for youth on the Vancouver Eastside.

Ambleside Youth Centre Work Experience Program

The West Vancouver Youth Outreach Summer Work Experience Program is a unique and very successful community supported opportunity for youth to gain confidence and skill in the work place. The program operates for six consecutive weeks each summer and provides initial work practicum for youth in West Vancouver. The West Vancouver Youth Outreach Work Experience Program is operated by the Ambleside Youth Centre, a District of West Vancouver Program, and funded privately which enables the program to be creatively tapered to address each individual's unique needs.



Vancouver Coastal Health and Community Services have implemented many exciting facilities and programs for youth.

The Hut

A youth health kiosk in Ambleside Park opened as a trial during the summer of 2004. This creative booth looked like a groovy surf shop and was filled with health professionals, recreation staff and loads of goodies ranging from sun screen, to condoms to water

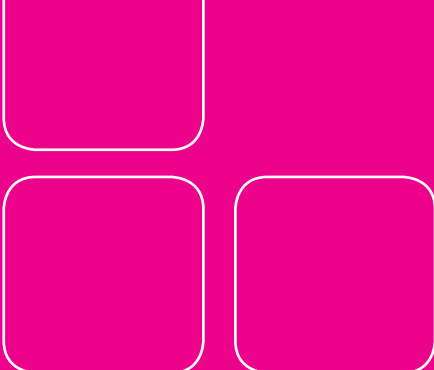
A Youth Health Clinic

In 2005, a youth health clinic was introduced at a facility just across the street from the community centre located in West Community Health building.

Health Professionals support youth recreation activities and events and are a familiar face amongst the young people in our community

The Civic Community Centre scheduled to open in 2007 will host a Youth Clinic that will provide seasonal flu shots and assessment, counselling and treatment/intervention/referral services and in concurrent disorders prevention will provide, assessment and therapy services for youth dealing with mental health issues combined with substance misuse. This inclusive clinic will also offer outreach services.

The Private Sector has funded and worked with youth at many special events ranging from fashion shows, health and wellness events, skateboard events, and Battles of the Bands. Our largest contributing partners are Park Royal Shopping Centre and local retail shops.



The Media has jumped on board by publishing positive stories of youth accomplishments, providing sponsorship for initiatives and events, and profiling events and their youth initiatives.

The West Vancouver Rotary Club and The Sunrise Rotary Club support youth by donating funds for youth services to host 7 events during National Youth Week, May 1st to 7th.

The West Vancouver Foundation – YAHU (Young Adults Helping U!) The Youth Philanthropy Council of the West Vancouver Community Foundation has been developed to support youth leadership initiatives.



Public Input

Public input into the process and their acceptance of the finished project:

A. The Starting Point of the Civic Youth Strategy:

In November of 2001, over 900 youth were involved in a three phase process which included a youth survey regarding the needs of youth. 719 youth responded to the survey. The survey included all municipal departments/facilities and a youth symposium that was organized with West Vancouver School District #45. Throughout the process youth were saying that 'they see things differently from adults – and we want our perspective to be heard'.

A Youth Symposium was held on May 8th, 2002 during youth week. This forum brought youth, Municipal staff, and School District staff together to prepare a Civic Youth Strategy. The Symposium provided an opportunity to present this in a draft form to a large number of youth and to get input before it goes to Council for approval.

In addition to working with hundreds of youth in the schools, several community consultation meetings were also held with neighbourhood focus groups and local agencies. The strategy was referred to Community Services Advisory Committee, the Parks and Environment Committee, the Youth Advisory Committee, the West Vancouver School Board, the West Vancouver Police Board, and the West Vancouver Memorial Library Board for review and comment.

B. The Journey:

Since May 8th, 2002, when the policy statement was adopted, until present many new programs, services and structures have been implemented. Several youth committees were formed to facilitate a new way of doing business. Some

committees met bi-weekly all year long, and some were task specific and were called upon as needed. As every new committee and task force was created, vital and important relationships were formed. The momentum began to build and the community strengthened. Several young people who may not have been connected within their community originally were meeting new friends and building new skills. Adults that had not yet had the opportunity to work with youth were exposed to a new energy and new perspective by looking through a youth lens. Our services began to be stepping-stones to producing young leaders that serve their community and enjoy being involved in community life. In 2002 the following committees were formed:

Committees:

- Transportation
- Youth 2 Youth Website
- Several Special Event committees (etc. Fashion, Battle of Bands, Gig Nights, Girl's Only Nights)
- Recreation Advisory Team
- Restructured Youth Advisory Committee
- Representatives on the Community Services Advisory Committee

C. Now:

Youth are coming to the Municipal Hall and municipal employees are asking for youth to participate in their work plans and planning initiatives. Partners are excited to return for annual events and programs or to meet to discuss new ideas and initiatives.



D. Consultation for the Review and Renew from April 2005 to December 2005:

Listed below are the processes, municipal departments and partners that guided the review and renew of the Civic Youth Strategy.

1. Workshop:

On April 23rd, 2005 in consultation with facilitator Bob Yates, a workshop was held with youth to review the progress of the Civic Youth Strategy. The purpose of the workshop was to begin the process. The workshop drew together about 25 youth, some of whom had been involved in the original development of the strategy, and about 10 municipal staff and volunteers.

2. Youth:

In General, throughout the months of October and November 2005, 300 youth ranging from Grade 8 to Grade 10, were consulted to review the current programs and opportunities and to provide new ideas for creating a youth-friendly West Vancouver.

3. Advisory Committees:

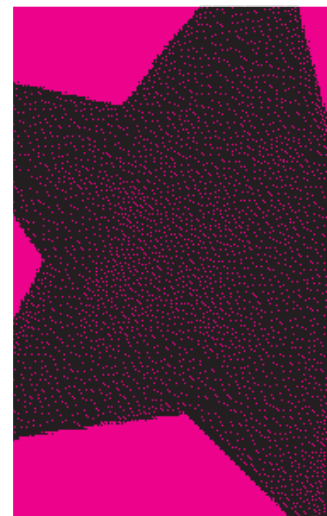
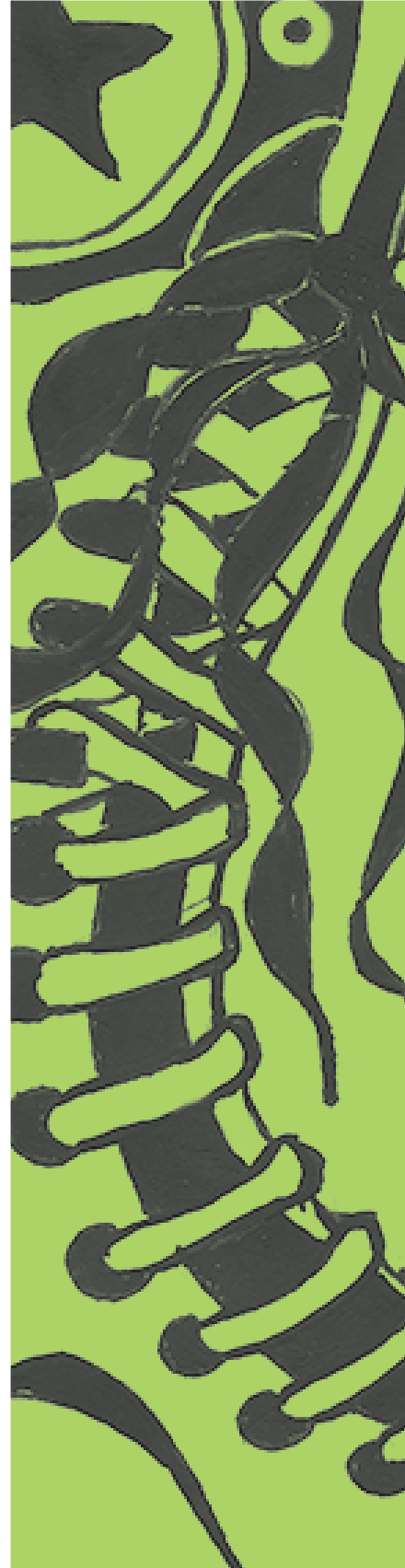
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Recreation Advisory Team
- Seniors' Advisory Committee
- Gleneagles Community Centre Advisory Committee
- The Board of School Trustees, School District #45

4. Municipal Departments

- Administrative Services: Communications
- Parks Department
- Engineering Department

5. Other Partners

- Vancouver Coastal Health and The Board of School Trustee, School District #45



Assessing the Strategic Directions at the Workshop on April 23, 2005

(Scaling of the charts. Each youth at the workshop was asked to rate each of the strategies in the original Civic Youth Strategy to indicate whether they thought that that particular strategy was 'still an issue in West Vancouver' or is 'no longer an issue in West Vancouver'. A five point scale was used, with 5 indicating that an issue was still important, and 1 indicating that the issue was no longer relevant. The maximum score that could be achieved was around 90, given that there were 18 youth who completed surveys. The minimum score would be 18.)

Of the five strategic objectives, the two which were felt to still be of greatest importance to youth in West Vancouver were: creating a broader vision for youth recreation; and putting a youth perspective on civic policy and planning.

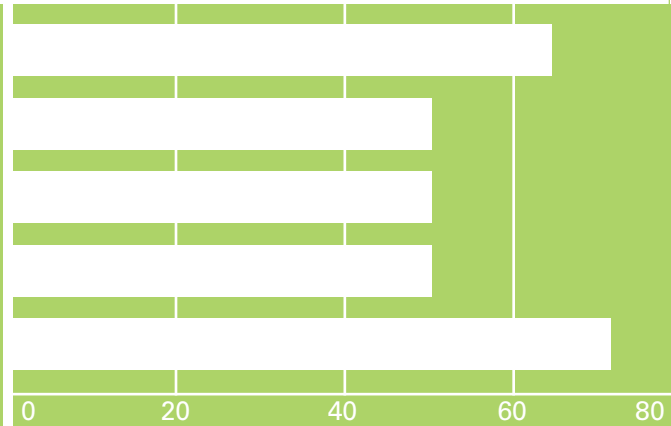
Putting a youth perspective on civic policy and planning

Using local resources for youth

Improving the image of youth in the community

Stronger youth voice in local government

Creating a broader vision for youth recreation



Within the overall issue of a broader vision for youth recreation, youth felt that they were included in program and activity planning. However, 'places for youth' still needed to be addressed: separate age and activity appropriate places for younger teens, places that attracted all youth, and places to 'hang-out' and relax later at night. Behind all these 'place' issues, was the issue of entertainment versus recreation.

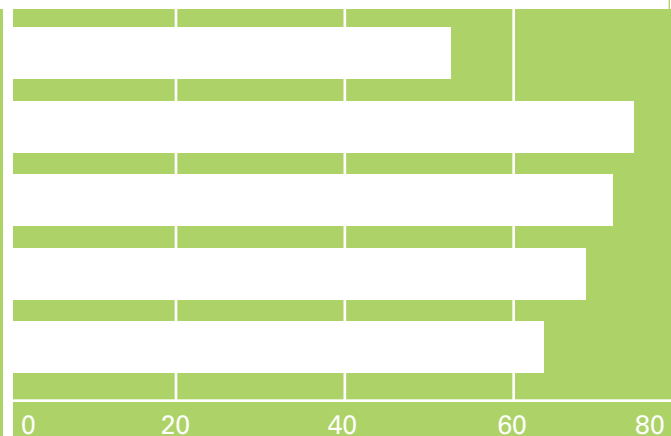
Be part of program planning

A place for younger teens and a place for older teens

A place for all youth to go to and not just a select group

More places to hang and relax later at night

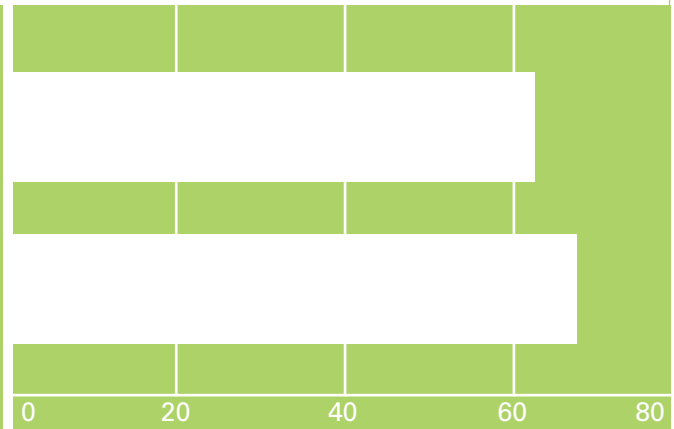
More recreation and entertainment



Under the objective of involving youth in civic policy and planning, there was a feeling that, while progress had been made, the youth voice was not getting through to all municipal departments and other public agencies. For example, issues remain regarding transit and youth transportation and relations with the Seniors. These are widely recognized as very difficult issues to find solutions to, especially solutions that are acceptable to youth.

Youth included in all planning processes (Community Centre planning, Official Community Plan)

Youth review of significant bylaws (curfew, shops closure, noise bylaws)



End of review, now it's time to "Take A Walk In Our Shoes" to the next steps of 2006 to 2010



West Vancouver Youth

Take a walk in our shoes

Take a walk in our shoes to the next steps 2006 to 2010

Multiculturalism and ethnic diversity – As a wider circle of youth have been included through the Civic Youth Strategy, a wider set of views about diversity have been added to the discussion. Many of West Vancouver's youth are from visible minorities, and specific objectives and actions have not been incorporated. As identified in the Arts and Culture Strategy, there is a District interest in bridging the gaps and learning from the various cultural communities.

Explore and address multicultural arts and cultural needs and opportunities.

As Identified in the Arts and Culture Strategy: Priority Strategies – Fundamentals of Action

Action: Establish specific initiatives that will engage diverse cultural communities to participate in community events, programs and organizations.

Substance abuse issues – Throughout the implementation of the 2002 – 2005 Civic Youth Strategy there was a greater openness in the dialogue between youth and adults that has enabled and empowered youth to be more honest and open about these issues. As the District develops a

process to undertake a Social Services Strategy, youth should be included at every point during the study.

Broadening the definition of youth - There was widely thought to be a lack of resources applied to services for both younger teens between the age of 11 and 13 as well as young people between the age of 19 and 22.

The environment – This is a passionate issue for youth.

As identified in the Report 2010 compiled by the West Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Committee:

Action:

- **Transportation:** Collaborate with Translink and other transportation providers to establish new, environmentally friendly modes of public transportation to, from and with in West Vancouver – eg. A ferry service, rail links to withsler shuttle services between villages.

- **Sustainability:** Build on our commitment to sustainability by identifying sustainable projects in West Vancouver and showcasing them to world.

Youth should be included in all municipal initiatives related to the 2010 Olympic Games.

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Create a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation (2006-2010)

Strategy	Outcome/Possibilities	Partners	Implementation
			Spring 2007 2006 to 2009 2006 (ongoing) 2006
Construct Phase III of the Gleneagles Adventure Park	Provide an all season park for skateboarders and BMX riders Broaden facility usage to include mountain climbing and opportunities for beginner riders	Outdoor Recreation Programmer Youth Community Engagement Coordinator Recreation Manager	Consultation and Design Spring 2006 Build 2007
Explore opportunities to incorporate bike trails, jumps and stunts in localized parks	Provide safe places for youth to ride that are close to home Develop education and community leadership tool for youth that have an interest in the environment and/or outdoor recreation	Parks Department	2006 to 2009
Include youth facilities and youth participation in the planning and development of Ambleside Park Ambleside Outdoor Performance Space	Ensure that the park supports positive spaces for young people to socialize and participate in organized and open park sport and arts and cultural activities	Parks Department Arts and Culture	2006
Develop a process and philosophy to continuously host live music events in a variety of municipal facilities and parks	Improve late night entertainment opportunities Introduce young people to a variety of municipal facilities and municipal staff Showcase many of the young artistic talents in the community	Youth Services Cultural Services	April 2006
Work in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health to promote active living	Assist with meeting the 2010 20% activity increase	Youth Services Team	2006 - 2010
Develop a year-round Youth Volunteer Program	Expanded volunteer opportunities for youth during the school year	Youth Services Community Agencies Local Business	2007

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Create a Broader Vision for Youth Recreation (2006-2010)

Strategy	Outcome	Partners	Implementation
Include youth in the implementation of the Arts and Culture Strategy	Ensure youth interests are included in the planning and development of arts and culture programs and facilities	Arts and Culture	ongoing
Provide recreation sport opportunities by: Partnering with SD45 to create recreational-level sport opportunities at the schools Creating recreation sport leagues and sport clubs within the community centres	Provide fitness and sport for all levels and abilities Encourage less active youth to participate	Youth Program Coordinator	October 2006
Work with schools to develop programs that will assist students in pursuing their dreams in sports, culture and the arts. (2010 initiative)	To broaden sport and cultural opportunities in the community	Youth Community Engagement Coordinator 2010 Community Committee	October 2006
Develop youth programs to meet Healthy Active Lifestyles goal of a 20% increase in activity by 2010	Active Communities Program	Health and Wellness Youth Program Coordinator	2006 - 2010
Build relationships with private businesses to host youth friendly environments for late night activities	Places for young people to "hang-out" during the evening	Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	ongoing
Explore options for a 'screening room'	Provide a space for youth to showcase their art as well as view big screen entertainment	Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	2007
Develop a community engagement program for international students in coordination with 2010 initiatives	To provide opportunities to new multicultural experiences	Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	2008

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Improve the Image of Youth in the Community (2006 – 2010)

Strategy	Outcome	Partners	Implementation
<p>Develop a Social Marketing Strategy</p> <p>Rename the Civic Youth Strategy that to something that is more appealing to youth</p>	Build communication between youth and the community and Municipality and youth	<p>Communications Department</p> <p>Youth Community Engagement Coordinator</p> <p>Youth Services Team</p>	June 2006
Develop a partnership with the local newspaper to create a youth column or page	Inform the larger public of youth initiatives	<p>Communications Department</p> <p>Youth Community Engagement Coordinator</p>	September 2006
Include a youth column in the Seniors Scene	Inform Seniors of youth initiatives to help break down barriers between youth and seniors	<p>Youth Community Engagement Coordinator</p> <p>Seniors' Centre</p>	ongoing
Develop a variety of multicultural events and programs to celebrate diversity in partnership with the Library and School District #45 and as part of the Arts and Culture Strategy.	Break down barriers between all the different cultures in the community	<p>Arts and Culture</p> <p>Youth Community Engagement Coordinator</p> <p>Library</p>	2007
<p>Use local transit to assist in marketing and communication</p> <p>Use Bus stops as community information hubs</p>	Many youth and seniors use the buses and it may be an effective tool to communicate	Engineering Department	October 2007
Develop an exchange program with other lower mainland youth to help break down stereotypes of West Vancouver youth	Break down barriers between different regions in the greater Vancouver area	<p>Youth Community Engagement Coordinator</p> <p>Library</p>	2007

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Use Civic Resources to Support Youth Development (2006 – 2010)

Strategy	Outcome	Partners	Implementation
Develop a youth community calendar	Assist with communication to the general youth population	Youth Services	March 2006
Develop a municipal youth website	Assist with communication to the general youth population	Communications	Ongoing
Employment Fair and Resource Centre working with the business associations	Allow young to work and stay in their community Youth Services	Chamber of Commerce	October/May
Continue to host an Annual Youth Leadership Conference with School District #45	Builds a stronger relationship between the School	Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	Fall
Make the Youth Community Engagement Coordinator position and the Civic Youth Strategy a core municipal function	The implementation of the Civic Youth Strategy 2006-2009	Mayor and Council	April 2006
Implement strategies as outlined in the Social Services Study to provide opportunities for young people.	Youth Leadership Development Volunteerism Better work with the Northshore as a whole and collaboration with other youth works across the region	Youth Services Team Social Services Manager	2006 to 2010
Continue working the West Vancouver Police and Ambleside Youth Centre to develop programs with the Squamish Nation	Build healthy relationships between young people, the police and aboriginal people in the community.	Ambleside Youth Centre Outreach Team West Vancouver Police	Ongoing
Continue to build and support groups at the Ambleside Youth Centre		Youth Services Outreach Team Vancouver Coastal Health	Ongoing
Host and develop unique programs and events at the Memorial Library	Encourage young people to visit and use their community library resources	Library Youth Services	Ongoing

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Give Youth a Stronger Voice in Local Government (2006-2010)

Strategy	Outcome	Partners	Implementation
Encourage Council to take a proactive approach in communicating and distributing information to youth about ongoing public process and Council decisions	Bi-Annual (May/October) Reports to Students Clerks	Communications	May 2006
Youth "Suggestion Box" for Council and the Board of Trustees" box in schools	Opportunity for young people to express their point of views in an accessible location	Legislative Services Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	April 2006
Making Government Appealing Program	To encourage young people to get involved with civic government	Legislative Services Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	January 2007
Invite youth to be a part of the committee of Council to guide the implementation of the Arts and Culture Strategy	To ensure that facilities and programs are designed to include young people	Council	
Invite youth to be officially represented on all Municipal Committees and working groups	Youth voice on committees that otherwise may not have interaction with young people	Council	May 2006
Host a youth voting campaign for the 2008 civic elections	Information process for young people to learn about local government	Legislative Services Youth Community Engagement Coordinator	September 2008

Civic Youth Strategy Renewal 2006 - 2010: Implementation Strategy

Bring a Youth Perspective to Civic Policy Development and Planning (2006-2010)

Strategy	Outcome	Partners	Implementation
Ensure youth are included in all aspects of the 2010 Olympics and Paralympic from development to implementation	Olympics bring many opportunities to communities and young people could learn valuable skill and make significant contributions to hosting the games in West Vancouver.	West Vancouver 2010 Community Committee Northshore Spirit Committee	2006 - 2010
Bi-Annual reports to the Executive Committee and Council regarding youth issues and initiatives	Inform management of youth initiatives and open doors for young people to work with all Municipal Departments	Council Legislative Services	2006 - ongoing

Acknowledgements of Contributors to Civic Youth Strategy (2003 - 2005)

Mayor and Council

Mayor – Ron Wood
Councillors – Pamela Goldsmith-Jones,
Bill Soprovich, Jean Ferguson, Rod Day,
Victor Durman and John Clark

Board of School Trustees

Chair – Jane Kellet
Trustees – Coral Winfield, David Stevenson,
Mary-Ann Booth, Cindy Dekker

Community Services Managers

Kevin Pike – Director of Parks and
Community Services
Josie Chuback – Deputy Director of
Community Services
Sue Kettler – Community Services
Manager

Youth Services Team

Christie O’Krainetz – Youth Community
Engagement Coordinator
Ira Applebaum – Ambleside Youth
Centre Supervisor
Peter Chisholm – Youth Outreach Worker
Jan Riddell – Youth Outreach Worker
Melanie Clark – Youth Program Coordinator
Richard Wagner – Social Services Manager
Jill Johnson – Youth Services Supervisor

Youth Advisory Committee

Kelsey Beninger, Collette Brown, Michael Calb,
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Civic Youth Strategy

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Civic Youth Strategy


West Vancouver Youth
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THE WATERFRONT COMMUNITY





WEST VANCOUVER YOUTH HUB VISIONING REPORT

A JOINT COLLABORATION WITH WEST VANCOUVER SCHOOLS | JANUARY 2021

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1.0 Introduction

Due to the extraordinary challenges that the District of West Vancouver (District) faced from the Covid-19 pandemic, work on this very important initiative was put on hold until December 2020.

The District, in collaboration with West Vancouver Schools, is uniquely positioned to lead a new vision for the design and delivery of youth services to meet the immediate and future needs of West Vancouver youth ages 13-18. West Vancouver has been home to four dedicated youth-serving spaces including:

- › **the Ambleside Youth Centre**
- › **the West Vancouver Community Centre Youth Lounge**
- › **Room 14 at the West Vancouver Memorial Library**
- › **the Bay Scene at Gleneagles Community Centre**



In March 2019, due to poor building condition, the District lost the Ambleside Youth Centre (AYC) as a community asset. The loss resulted in the relocation of youth programs and services to other community spaces. Immediately after, District staff conducted a review of current gaps and challenges to understand the impact of the loss of the AYC. This review process included a survey, targeting youth and families, and workshops, targeting youth and community partners, to gather input on the future of youth services.

The survey results emphasized the importance of the continued development of specific programs and services for youth ages 13-18 as a vital step in creating community safety, connection and providing youth a sense of belonging. As a result of the loss of the AYC, it has been identified that a dedicated, centrally located and transit-accessible Youth Hub is needed to meet the range of needs of West Vancouver youth. In December 2019, Mayor and Council of West Vancouver approved funding for the District to open an interim Youth Hub at Park Royal South. The space was ready to open in March 2020 but, due to Covid-19, the opening was delayed. The interim youth hub opened for youth in July 2020.



1.1 Objectives

The objective of this report is to illustrate and share the most recent comprehensive process undertaken by the District and youth-serving partners. This process has resulted in the development of a vision for youth services and space needs in a centrally located Youth Hub in the District for youth ages 13-18 in West Vancouver.

1.2 Engagement Process

The stakeholder engagement process included surveying youth in the community in November 2019 (**Appendix A**) and two separate workshops that took place in February 2020. One targeted youth ages 13-18 and the other targeted community service providers from across the North Shore that provide services to youth in West Vancouver. Workshop participants were recruited via the District and included:

Service Providers

- West Vancouver Police Department (WVPD)
- Child and Youth Mental Health, Ministry of Children & Family Development (MCFD)
- Canadian Mental Health Association - North and West Vancouver (CMHA)
- Foundry North Shore (FNS)
- West Vancouver Foundation (WVF)
- Vancouver Coastal Health (Public Health) (VCH(PH))
- North Shore Restorative Justice Society (NSRJS)
- West Vancouver Memorial Library (WVML)
- North Shore Multicultural Society (NSMS)
- Hollyburn Family Services (HFS)
- Family Services of the North Shore (FSNS)
- Work BC - YWCA (YWCA)

Community Members

- A member of the previous Youth Services Technical Review Committee

District of West Vancouver

- Director of Parks, Culture and Community Services (DPCCS)
- Senior Manager of Community Services (SMCS)
- Youth Services & Community Recreation Manager and Youth Outreach Workers (YS&CRM + YOW)

West Vancouver Schools

- Superintendent of West Vancouver Schools (WVS)
- District Principal, Student Support Services (WVS SSS)
- Director of Instruction (DI)

Regrets

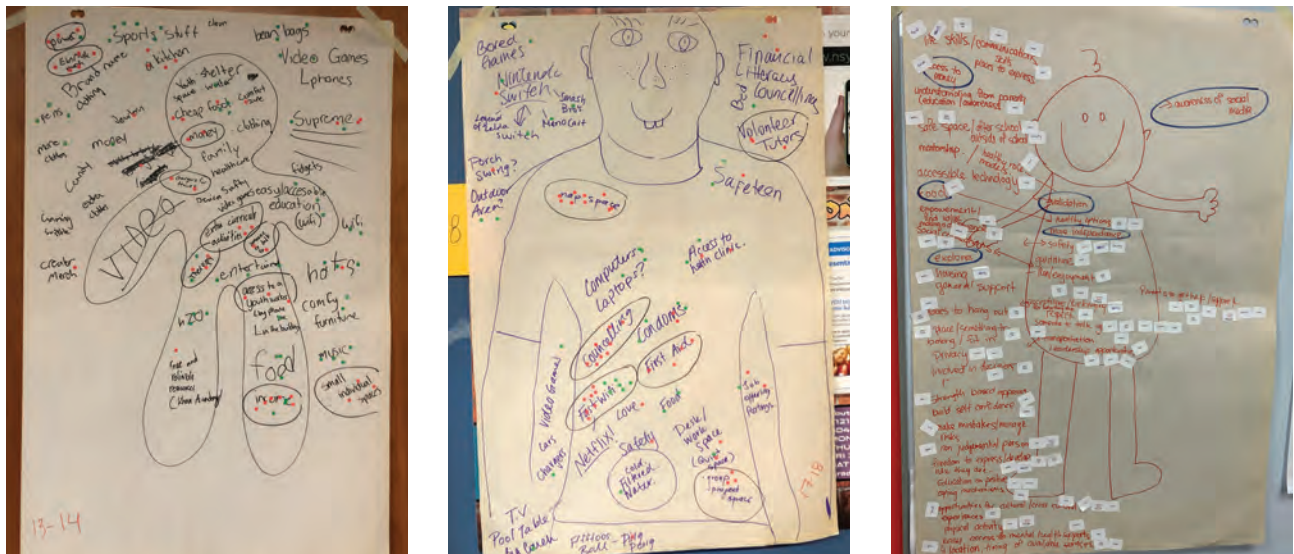
- Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society
- Squamish Nation

3.0 Identification of Youth Needs and Wants

Youth and community service providers were asked to identify the needs and wants for youth in West Vancouver.

3.1 Youth

Youth ages 13-18 identified their needs and wants and indicated which are easily and not easily met in West Vancouver. Participants were divided into three groups based on age (13-14, 15-16, and 17-18). The top 2-5 needs and wants are highlighted and ranked from highest to lowest below. For a complete list of needs and wants, see **Appendix B**.



3.1.1: Ages 13-14

Needs and wants ranked from highest to lowest:

	Easily Met	Not Easily Met
Needs	Healthy/affordable food	Accessing a youth worker; Counselling/someone to talk to
	Income	Healthy/affordable food
	Easy/accessible education (wifi)Entertainment	Extracurricular activities
Wants	Sports stuff including: equipment/space	Elon Musk merchandise
	Music	Kitchen
	Pens, bean bags and hats (clothing)	(Decision-making) power Small individual spaces

It should be noted that while half the group indicated that income and access to healthy and accessible food was easily met, half the group indicated that it was not easily met, demonstrating that some youth are having challenges accessing these specific needs. Overall, there is a strong food-related needs theme for youth ages 13-14.

3.1.2: Ages 15-16

Needs and wants ranked from highest to lowest:

	Easily Met	Not Easily Met
Needs	Counselling support	Feminine hygiene
Wants	Wifi	Birth control
	Netflix	Emergency contraceptive (Plan B)
	Books	Condoms
	Video games	Virtual reality

3.1.3: Ages 17-18

Needs and wants ranked from highest to lowest:

	Easily Met	Not Easily Met
Needs	Computers/laptops	Counselling
Wants	Condoms	Fast Wifi
	Safeteen program	First aid
	Nintendo/ games	Group project space
	Outdoor area	Volunteer tutors
		Financial literacy

It should be noted that the same group indicated fast wifi as being easily and not easily met, demonstrating that some youth are having challenges accessing fast wifi.

3.2 Community Service Providers

Community service providers identified the needs and wants of 13-18 year olds in the District including the needs and wants met by the programs and services they offer. For a complete list of needs and wants, and programs and services offered, please see **Appendix C**.



3.2.1: Ages 13-15

Community service providers indicated that they are meeting a wide range of needs and wants for youth ages 13-15.

With regards to **needs**, at least four or more community service providers offer programs and services related to:

- helping youth get support from parents
- offering someone to speak with
- supporting youth to feel safe

With respect to **wants**, at least three or more community service providers offer programs and services that include:

- life and communication skills in general
- cross-cultural experiences
- access to mental health supports
- access to safe spaces

3.2.2: Ages 16-18

Community service providers identified that they are meeting a range of **needs** and wants for youth ages 16-18.

With regards to needs, at least four community service providers are supporting youth to:

- be heard
- feel connected
- feel supported and safe
- be physically active
- be guided
- be empathetic towards other youth needs
- focus on sleep

With regards to **wants**, at least three community service providers are supporting youth to:

- feel validated
- build job prospects
- connect with others
- access transportation

3.2.3. Gaps in Identification of Needs and Wants

The identification of youth needs and wants are not exhaustive. The list below indicates some of

the gaps between the needs and wants identified by youth themselves:

- **Food Access:** Access to food and, in particular, access to cheap or lower cost food and space to prepare food.
- **Sexual health resources:** Access to sexual health resources including: birth control, condoms, and emergency contraceptive (Plan B) for ages 15-16 and to a lesser extent for ages 17-18.
- **Income:** Access to income for youth aged 13-14 is challenging.

Nap space: Access to a nap space for youth aged 17-18 was the highest-ranked need.

3.2.4 Gaps in Community Service Providers Service Delivery

Community service providers identified specific **gaps in youth service delivery** that are generalized below:

- Services are not delivered where youth are
- Services are insufficient to meet the needs of youth
- Leadership opportunities are not provided to youth of all ages
- Providing services outside of typical work hours is a challenge
- Lack of space to deliver drop-in programs or service in West Vancouver
- Restricted eligibility of certain programs (eg. age, status in Canada)
- Lack of partnerships to provide better services
- Limited capacity to provide all services
- Accessibility issues: transportation and food security

Visioning Services in the Youth Services Hub
This section helps to shape the vision of the future permanent Youth Hub based on the needs of youth ages 13-18. Based on youth feedback, the community service providers identified services that could be provided in the Youth Hub. Community service providers were also asked to indicate their interest in using the space.



4.0. Immediate Programs and Services in the Youth Hub

Community service providers were asked to consider their range of programs and services and further indicate which programs and services meet the specific needs of youth ages 13-18. The specifications for youth ages 13-18 were determined by research including the West Vancouver 2017-2018 Grade 7 MDI, 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey and the 2016 Council-Approved West Vancouver Visioning Youth Resources & Space Needs Report. For details on key considerations for West Vancouver youth ages 13-18, see **Appendix D**.

Below are the programs and services that could be provided *immediately and in the future* in a temporary and/or permanent space to meet the needs of youth ages 13-18. These programs and services could only be provided if an agreement between the various partners is reached.

The list below includes community service providers only and does not include services provided by the District. For a complete and up to date list of programs and services provided by the District, please visit: **westvancouver.ca/youth**.

Service or Program (specific to youth ages 13-18)	Service Provider
General	
Back to School Program	NSMS
Safety	Community
Transportation	Community
Youth out-reach ("Pizza with a cop")	WVPD
Health & Wellbeing	
Youth Clinic	VCH (PH)
Group Counselling (Mindshift, DBT)	MCFD
Co-curriculum (sports, clubs, arts)	WVS
Proud2Be Groups: parents, yourself, gender identity and sexual orientation, LGBTQIA2S+	FSNS
Employment & Housing	
Housing support	HFS
Work experience	WVS
Job sustainment support: keep the job, financial supports, counselling, encouragement, placement	YWCA
Counselling	
Career counselling	YWCA
Mental health counselling (12-24 yrs)	FNS
Substance use counselling (12-24 yrs)	FNS
Outreach counselling	MCFD
Individual counselling	MCFD
Referrals	
Strengthening community dispute referrals	NSRJS
Diversion from WVPD	NSRJS
Steps Youth Program specific to West Vancouver	CMHA
Criminal Investigations, extra-judicial resolution, consultation guidance	WVPD
Youth Led	
Room 14 - dedicated space for grades 8-12 with a free meeting room	WVML
Teen Advisory Group	WVML
West Vancouver youth peer support (drop in) and culturally specific peer support	CMHA
Youth Philanthropy Council - monthly meeting	WVF
100 Youth Who Care - quarterly meet up	WVF



4.1 Potential Programs and Services in the Youth Services Hub

In addition to what the District will offer in the Youth Services Hub, community service providers identified **aspirational programs and services** for youth ages 13-18:

- Using the space on daily, weekly or monthly basis
- Providing program or service information through brochures, pamphlets and posters
- Using the space as necessary or for one-time events

In general, the majority of service providers initially (pre Covid-19) indicated that they would be interested in providing services on a weekly or monthly basis. **Appendix F** includes the complete breakdown of programs and services that have been identified by the service providers and their estimated frequency.

Frequency	Program/Service	Service Provider
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mental health counselling ▪ clinical counselling ▪ one on one support 	FNS, NSMS, FSNS
Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ outreach/drop-in ▪ peer support ▪ counselling (career, substance-use, individual) ▪ health services ▪ LGBTQIA2S+ support 	CMHA, FNS, YWCA, WVPD, MCFD, FSNS
Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ leadership training ▪ funding opportunities ▪ life skills ▪ employment ▪ technology 	CMHA, WVF, YWCA, WVPD, FSNS, NSMS, NSRJS, WVPL, WVF, WVSD
One-Time Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ youth forums ▪ leadership opportunities ▪ workshops (research, housing, mental health) 	WVPD, NSRJS, NSMS, WVPL, MCFD, HFS, WVS, WFV, YWCA, FSNS
Program and Service Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ other support services identified by community service providers included providing information about programs by providing brochures, pamphlets and posters 	HFS, WVF, WVS, MCFD

4.2 Delivery of Programs and Services

While not exhaustive, the following are specific areas that could be targeted by community service providers at the Youth Hub as they meet the needs identified by youth:

- **Access to counselling and/or someone to speak to (Youth Outreach Worker, other appropriate adult):** Counselling services should be targeted to meet specific the needs of youth ages 13-18.
- **Communication:** Youth prefer being contacted via social media and emails about programs and services.
- **Employment:** Jobs, income, and financial literacy are necessary and not easily accessed.
- **Food:** Youth require space to prepare/access meals in addition to providing food for youth who attend programs and services.
- **Sexual health services:** Services offered should have a particular lens to supporting sexual and reproductive health including provision of birth control, condoms and Emergency Contraceptive (Plan B).
- **Tutoring:** Provision of reliable and consistent tutors to provide youth with necessary support.



5.0 Ideal Youth Space

These are the key themes of an ideal Youth Hub:

Design: The Youth Hub should offer a variety of spaces of different size and purpose. It should include lots of places to sit and relax with friends on comfy furniture and be a welcoming and calm environment for all youth.

Computer Labs: Youth would like to have a space with computers, colour printers and device charging stations. These resources would assist with homework and learning and would be even more valuable for those youth who face challenges to accessing these resources.

Entertainment/Play Area: An entertainment/play area is necessary in the Youth Hub. The space should enable youth to participate in a number of activities including playing board games and video games, watching movies/T.V. (including a projector for group movie nights), a virtual reality area, musical instruments, and pool tables/foosball, etc.

Food: Youth want a space that includes a kitchen and eating area where they can prepare and eat food. Youth are also eager to have a space that would allow them to take cooking classes and take food safety courses to develop skills to work in the food service industry during summer break or after school.

Outdoor Features: In reference to mental health and well-being, youth would like the Youth Hub to include outdoor elements such as: garden, benches, flowerbeds, fish pond, basketball, badminton courts and adequate parking.

Quiet Spaces: Youth would like a dedicated quiet space that allows them to rest, take naps, have downtime and read books.

Services: The Youth Hub would be a place where they can access services when needed. Specifically, youth stated that the Youth Hub should allow them to seek guidance, and access tutoring that aligns with student schedules to help alleviate stress and anxiety. Further, the space should include counselling rooms and allow youth to get support with health or medical issues without being noticed. Youth also noted that they would like therapy animals to be brought to the Youth Hub to help with anxiety.

Study Rooms: Youth want study spaces in the Youth Hub. Study rooms should provide flexibility for individual and group work opportunities and be supplied with headphones and storage for laptops.

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The visioning process with West Vancouver youth and community service providers from across the North Shore has demonstrated the need for a permanent Youth Hub in West Vancouver. A Youth Hub is a unique opportunity to create a facility for youth to access a variety of services under one roof and will become a centre that will service youth in West Vancouver for decades.

6.1 Conclusions

General

1. Community service providers offer a wide range of services to youth and are committed to meeting the needs of youth across the North Shore with limited offerings in West Vancouver specifically.
2. Youth view this time of their life with optimism and recognize this as a time to learn and grow while having the ability to make mistakes and be supported by people that care.

Youth Needs and Wants

1. Youth needs and wants are complex and, while similarities are found across different age groups, there are distinct needs for each group.
2. Youth placed a particular emphasis on services they need in West Vancouver including counselling (someone to speak with), easier access to sexual health services, access to food, and employment support.
3. Space related needs include access to a safe, welcoming, and comfortable environment, free and fast wifi, and a variety of spaces of different size and purpose
4. Barriers for youth attending programs and services include access to transportation and food.

Community Service Provider Programs and Services

1. It is necessary to deliver programs and services where youth are located and in a central location that is transit-accessible.
2. Service providers identified the potential to expand some of their programs and services to meet the needs of more youth in West Vancouver.
3. Space to deliver drop-in programs and services that are inclusive of the diversity of youth is limited in West Vancouver.
4. There is a necessity and willingness amongst service providers to build partnerships to improve service delivery.
5. Some service providers have challenges with providing services outside of typical business hours (Monday - Friday 8:30am-4:30pm)

Youth Space

1. Youth would like a dynamic space that meets their various needs while providing an opportunity for accessing services, food, entertainment, technology, quiet space, and the outdoors.

6.2 Recommendations

The following are recommendations for the District's consideration in meeting the diverse needs of youth ages 13-18 at the Youth Hub.

Programs and Services

It is recommended that...

1. Programs and services target the following key areas identified by youth: counselling, sexual health services, income and job opportunities, tutoring, and access to food.
2. Consistently provide a broad spectrum of daily, weekly, monthly and one-time events to meet the needs of youth in a predictable manner.
3. Community service providers are supported to operate in the Youth Hub in the following ways:
 - Exploring and establishing potential partnerships
 - Ensuring timely, relevant and flexible delivery of programs and services that include: social media awareness, opportunities for exploration, validation of youth, and helping youth exercise independence;
 - Supporting the delivery of program and service information via social media, email and email list serves as identified by youth; and
 - Ensuring consistency, transportation, welcoming and inclusive programs, friendships, support of families, status/notoriety, and technology in supportive programming/services specifically for youth ages 16-18.

Further consideration must be given to the needs of youth belonging to underserved and marginalized communities.

Space

It is recommended that...

1. The Youth Hub continues to engage with youth to ensure that the space reflects the diverse needs of youth.
2. The space provides a range of activities and services that allow youth to access services depending on their particular needs.
3. The Youth Hub is a safe and welcoming environment where youth can access services, food, entertainment, technology, quiet space, and the outdoors.
4. The Youth Hub be designed to allow youth to discreetly access services without being noticed, including counselling rooms and support with health or medical issues.

Operational Needs

It is recommended that...

1. The Youth Hub includes staffing to assist and manage the use and booking of space, services, and programs.
2. The Youth Hub review and establish possible partnerships according to the needs and wants of youth ages 13-18 including new and unique partnerships to offer additional services such as pet therapy, food security, and outdoor environment and well-being opportunities.
3. The Youth Hub explores a youth advisory model with youth membership to lead the ongoing evaluation and identification of services, programs, and partners.

Appendices

Appendix A: Youth Survey Results, November 2019

Appendix B: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Appendix C: Community Service Providers: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Appendix D: West Vancouver Youth Services Hub Visioning Brief

Appendix E: Current and Potential Services

Appendix F: Service Delivery Frequency

Appendix A: Community Service Providers: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Ages 13-15:

Needs	Organization (#)
Parents to get help or support	WVS, DWV YOW, DWV PCCS, FNS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA, Community, FSNS (7)
Someone to speak with	WVS, DWV YOW, MCFD, VCH (PH), FSNS, NSRJS (6)
Safety	WVPD, VCH (PH), Community, HFS (4)
Leadership opportunities	WVS, NSMS, WVPL, WVF (4)
Healthy options	DWV YOW, VCH (PH) (2)
Fun/enjoyment	DWV CR, DWV CS (2)
Acceptance/Belonging	HFS (1)
Respect	NSMS (1)
Transportation	NSMS (1)
Guidance	WVS (1)
More independence	(0)
Validation	(0)

Wants	Organization
Life Skills/Communication Skills	YWCA, HFS, DWV CS, FSNS, WVS, WVF (6)
Opportunities for cross-cultural experiences	YWCA, DWV PCCS, WVS, WVPD, FSNS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (6)
Easy access to mental health supports including location and timing of available services	MCFD, VCH (PH), FNS, DWV YOW, FSNS (5)
Safe space outside of school	MCFD, DWV PCCS, WVPL (3)
Empowerment, find value, making a difference	WVS, DWV CR, NSRJS (3)
Strength based approach to build self confidence	FNS, WVF, NSRJS (3)
Space to hang out	WVPL, DWV PCCS, DWV YOW (3)
Education on positive coping mechanisms	WVS, VCH (PH), NSRJS (3)
Non-judgmental person	NSMS, FNS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (3)
Freedom to express/develop who they are	NSMS, HFS, DWV CR (3)
Space to belong/fit in	DWV PCCS, DWV CR (2)
Physical activity	WVS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (2)
Housing/housing support	MCFD, HFS (2)
Privacy	VCH (PH), WVPL (2)
Involved in decisions	WVF, DWV YOW (2)
Make mistakes/manage risks	WVPD (1)
Accessible technology	WVPL (1)
Mentorship/healthy role models	WVPD (1)
Understanding from parents	WVS (1)
Income	YWCA (1)
Food	WVPD (1)
Social connections	NSMS, DWV CS (1)
Explore	(0)
Awareness of social media	(0)

Appendix A: Community Service Providers: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Ages 16-18:

Needs	Organization (#)
Heard	VCH (PH), DWV CS, NSRJS, HFS, NSMS, FSNS, MCFD (7)
Connection	WVF, DWV CS, NSMS, FSNS, DWV CR (5)
Safety	HFS, WVPD, DWV YOW, DWV CR, DWV PCCS (5)
Physical activity	WVPD, DWV CR, FNS, WVS SSS (4)
Guidance	WVPD, WVS SSS, WVF, FSNS (4)
Empathy	MCFD, FSNS, NSRJS, DWV CS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (4)
Sleep	VCH (PH), DWV CS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA, Community (4)
Accepted	WVF, NSMS, HFS (3)
Shelter	MCFD, NSYSH, DWV PCCS (3)
Confidentiality	VCH (PH), WVPL, FNS (3)
Included	DWV YOW, DWV CS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (2)
Valued	HFS, NSRJS (2)
Empowered	DWV YOW, WVF (2)
Engaged	WVPD, DWV CR (2)
Technology	WVPL, WVS (2)
Access to health care (health)	VCH (PH), FNS (2)
Food	FNS, YWCA (2)
Attached	FSNS (1)
Agency	NSMS (1)
Competent	WVS SSS (1)
Money	WVF (1)
Education	YWCA (1)
Belonging	WVS SSS (1)
Validation	MCFD (1)
Consistency	(0)
Attention	(0)
Transportation	(0)
Loved unconditionally	(0)
Friends	(0)
Supportive family	(0)

Wants	Organization
Validation	C& YMH N&WV CMHA, NSRJS, MCFD, WVS SSS (4)
Job prospects	WVS SSS, YWCA, WVF (3)
Connection	NSRJS, YWCA, FNS (3)
Transportation	YWCA, DWV CR, Community (3)
Friends	WVS SSS, C& YMH N&WV CMHA (2)
Education	WVPL, WVS SSS (2)
Affordable housing	YWCA, Community (2)
Freedom to choose	VCH (PH) (1)
Consistency	WVS SSS (1)
Boundaries	WVPD (1)
Money	YWCA (1)
Supportive family	MCFD (1)
Status/Notoriety	(0)
Fashion	(0)
Technology	(0)

Appendix B: Youth: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth




Youth Identified Wants								
<i>*green indicates need is easily met, red indicates need is not easily met</i>								
13 - 14			15 - 16			17 - 18		
Item	Green	Red	Item	Green	Red	Item	Green	Red
Power	1	3	Wifi	7	2	Board Games	1	
Elon Musk merch		5	Phone	1		Nintendo Switch & various games	4	1
Brand name clothing			Video Games	3		Porch Swing		1
Pens	3		Vacation		2	Outdoor Area	2	
More clothes	1		Pets	1		Financial Literacy		2
Money	1		Entertainment	2		Bed	1	
Jewelry		1	Pool Tables	1	3	Volunteer Tutors		3
Candy			2 couches	1		Counselling		
Extra Clothes			Weight room/gym					
Gaming supplies			Netflix	4				
Creator merch		1	Music	1				
A kitchen		4	Laptop	2				
Sports stuff	6		Books	3				
Clean			Speakers	1				
Bean bags	3		Wii sports, X Box	1				
Video games	2		Just Dance		2			
Phones			VR	1	3			

Appendix B: Youth: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Supreme	2	3	Karaoke machine		
fidgets			Scooters	2	
wifi	2		Board games		1
hats	3	1	Disney +	1	1
Comfy furniture	2		Quiet Space		2
Music	4		Warm fluffly blankets		
Small individual spaces		3	Condoms		4
			Bean bags		
			Sleep room		1
			Plan B	2	6
			Jobs & Volunteer		1
			Charging stations	1	1
			Coffee shops	2	1
			Tutoring		1
			Event	1	
			Outdoor/indoor basketball court		
			Ping pong	1	
			Birth control	3	14

Youth Identified Needs

**green indicates need is easily met, red indicates need is not easily met*

13 - 14		15 - 16		17 - 18	
Items		Items		Items	

Appendix B: Youth: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Youth space			Food	1	Computers, Laptops	4	
Shelter			Water		Nap Space		9
Water	1		Shelter	3	TV		
Cheap food	3	3	Clothes	1	Pool Table		
Comfort zone		1	Love	1	Big Couch	1	
Money		2	Counselling support	3	Netflix		
Clothing			Community		Fast Wifi	6	7
Family			Education		Counselling		8
Healthcare			Physical Activity		Condoms	4	2
Chargers for devices		2	Comfortable washrooms		First Aid		4
devices			Safe environment		Food		2
Safety			Green environment	1	Love		1
Video games			Glasses		Desk/work space (quiet space)	1	2
Extracurricular activities		3	Parking space		Group project space		3
Someone to talk to		2	Heating/AC	1	Safeteen	2	1

Appendix B: Youth: Identified Needs and Wants for Youth

Easy/accessible education (wifi)	3		Feminine hygiene	2	
Therapy	2	3	Medical centre		
Entertainment	4				
H2O	3				
Access to a youth worker (by phone line, in the building)	1	3			
Food	3				
income	3	6			
True and reliable resources (Khan Academy)		1			

Appendix C: Community Service Providers: Current and Potential Services

Organization	Current Services that best meet the needs of youth ages 13-18	Other Services, <u>not</u> specific to the needs of youth ages 13-18	Potential Services to meet the needs of youth ages 13-18
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Ministry of Children and Family Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach counseling Individual counseling Group service (Mindshift, DBT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health assessment and treatment referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychiatry Quicker access to support Respite Languages Assessments
District of West Vancouver Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach Drop in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership and community engagement Community recreation programs SWEAP Youth committees Indigenous cultural connections partnership Miscellaneous partnerships (NSMS, MCFD, WVPD, Foundry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand health and wellness options (yoga, meditation, nutrition) Social enterprise (café) Grow mandate to meet needs Expand access to health care (medical clinic) Continuum of services under one roof Set best practices for (technology, leadership, supportive housing, health/nutrition)
West Vancouver School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work experience Co-curriculum (sports, clubs, arts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership opportunities for all ages Guidance and counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible options for 13-15 year olds More trades Online learning Options for 18+ education (adult ed) More opportunities to play sports activities
West Vancouver Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Philanthropy Council – monthly meeting 100 Youth Who Care – quarterly meet up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide grants to agencies that serve youth Neighbourhood small grants for youth (\$500) Vital signs research – consults and reports on youth Fund holder/agency scholarships for Grade 12 students (\$1-6K) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage more youth to apply for grants Encourage more young adult participation in 100 Youth Who Care More fundraising for youth programming/organizations

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YWCA – Work BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career counseling • Job sustainment support (keep the job, financial supports, counseling, encouragement, placement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life skills workshops • Financial supports to look for jobs • Counselling SOV youth at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From school to employment program (youth at risk) • Employment services at the library, West Vancouver Schools and outreach • Employment services in First language (out of centre) • Summer job fair (out of centre)
Foundry North Shore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health counselling (12-24 yrs) • Substance use counseling (12-24 yrs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary health • Social services • Peer support • Parent navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early psychosis intervention
Hollyburn Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition suite program (North Shore Youth Safe House – life skills) • Wired for success (internships) • Education navigator (back to school support) • LSP houses (older youth, working or in school, low rent) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Shore Youth Safe House 2.0 (longer term shelter) • Travelling nurses and counsellors • Roomcare program
West Vancouver Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room 14 – dedicated space for grades 8-12 with a free meeting room • Teen advisory group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech programming • Volunteering for 14-18 (book buddies, teen tech mentors, shelving) • Weekly Minecraft meet up for 13+ teens with autism • No fines on books in teen or kids section • Free books for teens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solaro – online study guides grade 8-12 • English language conversation circle grades 8-12 • More volunteer opportunities for ages 12-13 • Skill building with stories program for grade 8-12 students with special needs • Recording studio

Appendix C: Community Service Providers: Current and Potential Services

Organization	Current Services that best meet the needs of youth ages 13-18	Other Services, <u>not</u> specific to the needs of youth ages 13-18	Potential Services to meet the needs of youth ages 13-18
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North Shore Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proud 2BE Groups: (parents, yourself, gender identity and sexual orientation, LGBTQ2S+) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical counselling (2-24) • Individual, couple, family counselling (low/no cost) • Sexual abuse/assault counselling (2-18, no cost, no waitlist) • Volunteer opportunities • Eating disorders (prevention and awareness – workshops and week fair) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family counselling • LGBTQ2S+ volunteer outreach • Gender based violence trauma and abuse (youth prevention and intervention)
North Shore Multicultural Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back to School Program – (Follow-ups for West Vancouver youth to provide support for students who have attended programs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neonology program (youth diversity workshop Grade 6/7 + 10's in North and West Van schools) • Leadership (Neonology 1 week summer camp youth 13-18 to build more inclusive communities) • Summer camp Expression (1 week, 13-18, immigrant youth) • Back to school program for newcomer youth (orientation to Canadian school system) • Middle years program (K-7) – youth share settlement experience • SWIS workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth diversity program to work with schools to become more inclusive, provides volunteer opportunities for youth
Canadian Mental Health Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps Youth Program specific to West Vancouver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent navigation 	

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Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Vancouver youth peer support (drop in) and culturally specific peer support • Safety • Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of community services • Parental involvement • Support of schools • Provide activities for their children • Money for activities 	

Appendix D: Community Service Providers: Service Delivery Frequency

Organization	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	One-Time Events	Brochures, Pamphlets, Posters
West Vancouver Police Department			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> youth outreach, proactive interactions (pizza with a cop) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> having safe shared space away from HQ 	
Child and Youth Mental Health of North and West Vancouver					
Canadian Mental Health Association – North and West Vancouver		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> peer support, and Indigenous peer support, want to reach more off reserve students, want to offer nature based recreation for 2 groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parent navigation 		
Foundary North Shore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mental health counselling (age 12 to 24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> substance use counselling (age 12 to 24), primary care 			
West Vancouver Foundation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> youth philanthropy council and could host monthly meetings at Hub WVF - quarterly meetup “100 youth who care” up to age 29 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> share vital signs research, and speak directly with youth about research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to find funding, scholarships (grade 12 between \$100 and \$6000)
Vancouver Coastal Health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> youth clinic, immunization clinics 			
North Shore Restorative Justice Society			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening community dispute referrals, multicultural diverse access youth SEL leadership group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> youth speak outs 	
West Vancouver Public Library		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wants better connectivity on a weekly basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tech programming, intro to VR, music appreciation Garageband, includes age 12 to 14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> free books, downloadable books, e-audio, online magazines 	

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Ministry of Children and Family Development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outreach counselling in schools and in homes, individual counselling but their limitation is staffing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hosting the Mind Shift groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posters about mental health and treatment
Hollyburn Family Services				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking about youth safe house, connecting youth to mediation, connect to youth to MCFD, family mediation, Foundry, mental health, getting a home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wired for success, get youth a paid internship (15 to 30), 17 weeks long for youth with barriers to finding employment
Family Services of the North Shore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clinical counselling ages (2 to 24), sexual abuse/assault counselling (age 2 to 18), individual couple counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proud 2 be (4 parts) - be yourself drop in, parent support group, proud 2 be SOGI conference, LGBTQ2S+ counselling support one on one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having volunteer opportunities with youth leadership, advisory board, MH awareness, connection and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating disorders and doing preventative workshops and support, awareness week with events that are fun 	
Work BC – YWCA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to provide career counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life skills workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer employment services anywhere 	
District of West Vancouver		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outreach, drop in, leadership and community engagement 			
West Vancouver School District			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work experience, jobs, letting youth know they can go to the Hub for it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold student leadership at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tell people about education

Appendix E: Community Service Providers: Current and Potential Services

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 *west* vancouver

Youth-Friendly North Shore

Final Report

April
2026



The Youth-Friendly North Shore initiative is led by the District of North Vancouver in collaboration with the City of North Vancouver, District of West Vancouver, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation.

The initiative is funded by Public Safety Canada through the Building Safer Communities Fund and supported by the North Vancouver RCMP. Prepared by Bunyaad Public Affairs for the Youth-Friendly North Shore initiative.



Public Safety
Canada

Sécurité publique
Canada



Skwxwú7mesh
Úxwumixw
Squamish Nation



Tsleil-Waututh Nation
PEOPLE OF THE INLET



We respectfully acknowledge the original Peoples of the lands and waters that situate and surround us wherever we work. We honour the səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), on whose territories we work, play and live.

We extend our gratitude and raise up their ongoing relationship with land they have stewarded since time immemorial. As well, we recognize Métis Nation BC, Inuit and urban Indigenous Peoples who have deeply rooted relationships with the land we all call home.

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What was YFNS?

Youth-Friendly North Shore (YFNS) was a three-year initiative to help build healthy communities where youth aged 12 to 18 thrive, reducing the risk of involvement in gang or organized criminal activity. Through targeted prevention and intervention activities, YFNS aimed to reduce risk factors—such as negative influences, limited positive role models and a lack of community attachment—while enhancing protective factors, including a sense of belonging, social connections, hope for the future, and access to social, recreational and cultural services.



The initiative was led by the District of North Vancouver in collaboration with the City of North Vancouver, the District of West Vancouver, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation. It was funded by Public Safety Canada through the Building Safer Communities Fund and supported by the North Vancouver RCMP. Bunyaad Public Affairs was selected to develop and implement YFNS, with youth-facing program support provided by McCreary Centre Society.



All photographs in this report are original images captured during the Youth-Friendly North Shore initiative. They feature youth who are residents of the North Shore. Permission was received to use these photos.

Guiding Approach and Values

Guided by an asset-based community development approach focused on building youth resilience, Youth-Friendly North Shore leveraged a defined funding opportunity to create meaningful and lasting change for youth across the North Shore. The collective vision of the District of North Vancouver and the North Vancouver RCMP grounded this work in the guiding values of sustainability, equity, cultural appreciation, youth resilience and community connectedness.

Recognizing that youth are not a monolithic group and often live, study and play across municipal boundaries, collaboration with the City of North Vancouver, the District of West Vancouver, Squamish Nation and Tsleil-Waututh Nation enabled a coordinated approach to supporting youth well-being as communities moved forward from an unprecedented global pandemic.

Youth-Friendly North Shore Legacy

Activities and approaches that could be maintained beyond the funding period were intentionally prioritized, recognizing that new initiatives without a path for continuation may have limited impact.

This included strengthening relationships between organizations, developing resources for ongoing use, building community capacity, establishing a Situation Table, and supporting changes to municipal youth policy and funding processes.

A comprehensive needs assessment informed the development of activities addressing the most urgent gaps, with a focus on sustainability and enabling solutions to be maintained within the community.

Tools developed through this initiative remain publicly available to all youth-serving organizations. They include:

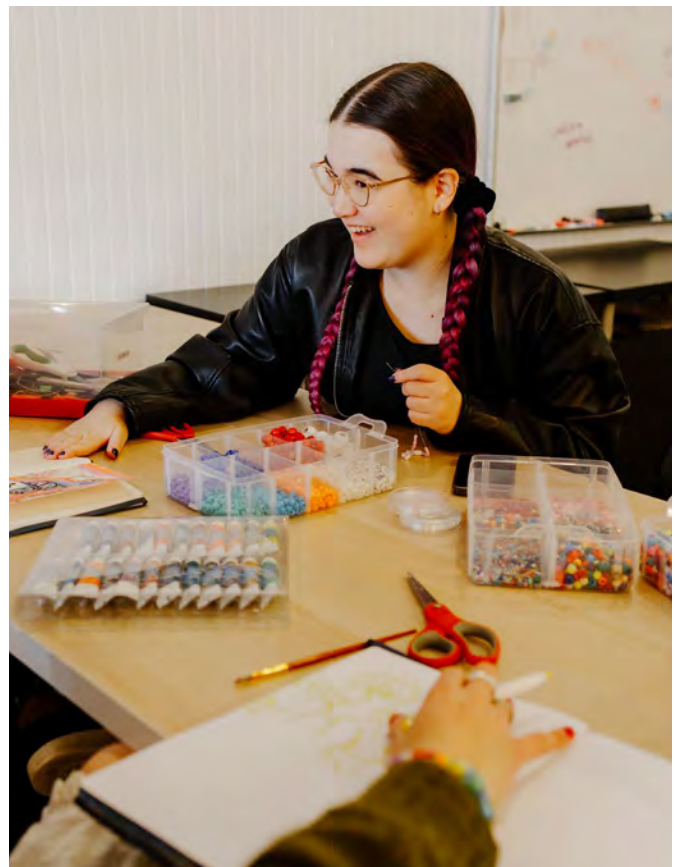
- Our Place—a placemaking tool adapted by youth to create youth-friendly spaces
- Self-evaluation tool for youth services
- Digital communications audit tool
- Youth stock photos for non-commercial use
- Human resources training videos for creating youth-friendly organizations

YFNS elevated the voices of youth and created opportunities for them to exercise their agency. The initiative provided valuable insights to local leaders through the lens of positive youth development and highlighted broader community risks that emerge when those needs go unmet.

The needs of some “at-risk” groups were identified but not addressed, as readiness for the required solutions was not yet in place.

“[VCH used to have] a youth coalition that would bring together community organizations similar to this... and then that sort of fell off. And so I do think that this has kind of started that again, and I do hope that we can continue to come together somehow to share with one another so that we can support the youth on the North Shore.”

Public Health Nurse



Community Engagement

A range of North Shore youth-serving organizations were invited in early 2023 to share their insights to inform the development of a three-year public safety and youth crime prevention plan. Stakeholders included representatives from K-12 education, sports and recreation, health and crisis support, policing and justice, and service agencies. The plan was developed by incorporating these local insights and reviewing relevant academic literature. During the implementation phase, partners and stakeholders continued to be engaged through an intergovernmental leadership table and semi-annual stakeholder gatherings.



The background features a complex geometric pattern of thin red lines. These lines form a grid of rectangles and squares, with various shapes cut out or overlaid. Notable elements include a large semi-circle on the left side, a smaller semi-circle at the top right, and several triangles and trapezoids scattered throughout the layout. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

Initiative at a Glance

Building on the existing strengths in the plan focused on two key areas:

Stream 1

Creating a youth-friendly North Shore by engaging youth and creating more welcoming spaces for youth

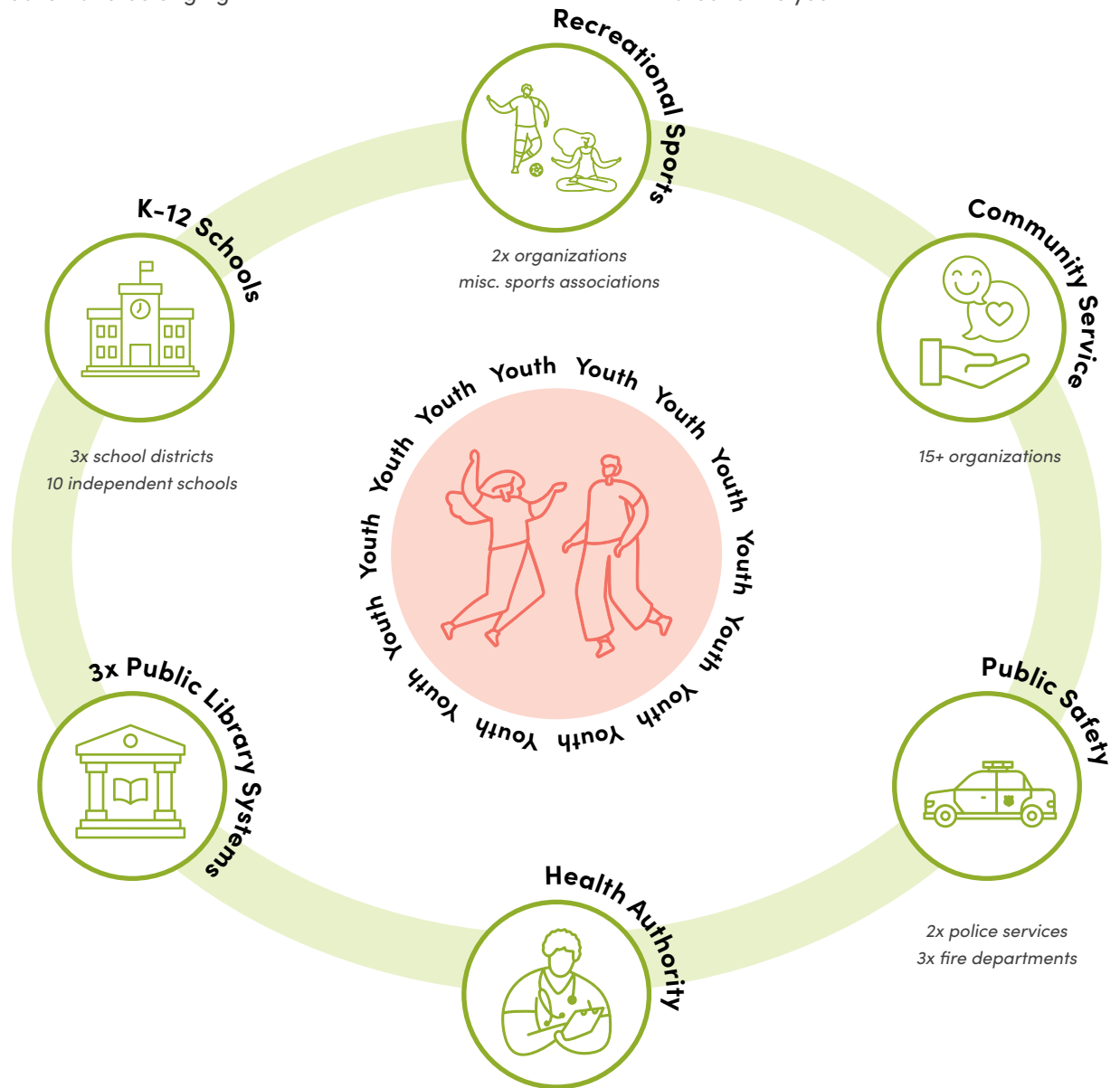
Stream 2

Improving the system of care for North Shore youth



Stream 1 focused on inner the circle – focus is on engaging youth and creating spaces for youth connection and belonging

Stream 2 focused on the outer circle – focus is on the adults running the services and systems around the youth



**Stream 1
Youth Friendly Spaces**

1. WelcoME - Youth Inclusion in Spaces
2. Youth Action Grants
3. Late night recreation pilot events
4. Exploratory activities:
 - a. Indigenous Youth Spaces
 - b. School spaces partnership
 - c. First Responders - Youth Recreation Activities League

**Stream 2
Improved System of Care**

1. Youth Services Community of Practice
2. North Shore Youth Situation Table
3. Evaluation of Municipally Funded Youth Services
4. Youth Online Use and Website Audits
5. HR training videos
6. Stock Photo Image Bank
7. Review of Municipal Youth Policies

Youth Context in BC, 2023

The BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) is a province-wide survey administered to youth in Grade 7 to 12 since 1992. The survey gives an evidence base of youth health trends, emerging issues, and risk and protective factors for healthy development. The data below is from this survey and provides context for this initiative.

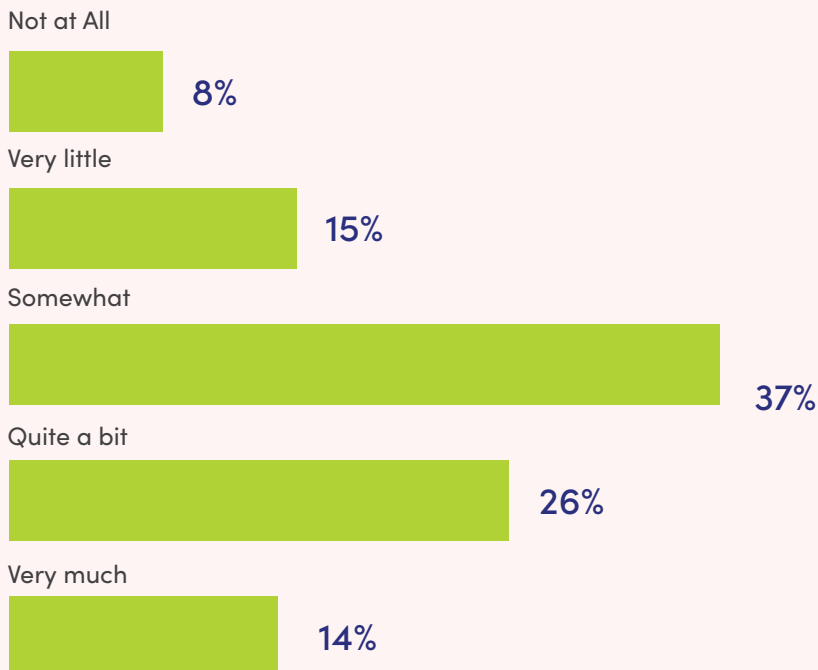
Community Connection Matters

While most youth (92%) felt at least a little connected to their community, survey data showed that their sense of connection decreased as they moved through adolescence. 54% of Grade 7s felt quite or very connected compared to 34% of Grade 12s.

Sense of Safety in Neighbourhood

Youth were more likely to often or always feel safe in their neighbourhood during the day (90%) than at night (65%). Among youth who used transit, 54% often or always felt safe doing so (with no grade differences), and around 1 in 6 (17%) rarely or never felt safe on transit.

How much students felt like a part of their community



Data source: 2023 Adolescent Health Survey

Stream 1

ACTIVITIES

Stream 1 focused on creating more youth-friendly spaces by directly engaging youth and creating opportunities for youth to shape places and activities they engage in the community.

WelcoME

The WelcoME Youth Action Teams were established between November and February each year to better understand youth needs and improve their sense of belonging and ownership of public spaces. In each round, we established one or more groups of youth to conduct a “welcome” audit of public and agency spaces that serve youth and to develop recommendations on how these spaces can be more welcoming for all youth. Youth aged 12 to 18 who live or study on the North Shore were recruited through a multi-agency effort and compensated for their participation.

- /// [Watch the Round 1 WelcoME Video](#)
- /// [Link to Reports: Round 1, Round 2, Round 3](#)
- /// [“Our Place” place-making tool](#)
- /// [Principles of Meaningful Youth Engagements](#)
- /// [Combined youth recommendations from all three rounds](#)



1. Dedicated Youth Spaces
2. Dedicated Youth Programs
3. Promote community connections
4. Ensure Inclusion & Accessibility
5. Create a safer physical space
6. Ensure clear navigation & wayfinding
7. Youth-friendly & WELCOMING adults
8. ADVERTISE Youth programs & spaces
9. Maintain community spaces
10. Encourage Youth Voice
11. Design youth friendly digital spaces

Youth Action Grants

These one-time grants offered youth opportunities to work with a responsible adult in their lives or with a community organization to advance youth well-being and build capacity through arts, culture, sports or recreation activities. Several youth-led projects were funded to connect youth with one another through activities that support their well-being and sense of belonging.

“The Youth Action Grant was instrumental in spurring our youth council to pursue this project. Thank you for all of the support and engagement from YFNS over the past few years. It has really meant a lot to have the advocacy on behalf of teens in our community!”

Partner Community Organization

MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOPS - OCT 2024

Youth wanted to improve access to mental health education and crisis response training to feel more confident in supporting their peers in distress. They requested funding to conduct two workshops in collaboration with Parkgate Community Services Society.

- **Crisis Centre “It’s Ok To Not Be Ok”** workshop on February 20th; 13 attendees
- **Children of the Street Safer Space** workshop on March 14th, 50 attendees



**OPEN MIC AND JAM NIGHT
- OCT 2024**

Youth reported feeling socially isolated and wanted to organize an open mic and jam night. This session was led by a youth band, North Shore Live, on Dec. 13, 2024, and was attended by 14 youth.

“I think this project improved community connectedness, belonging and wellness by getting some kids to come out and do this who usually don’t go out and socialize or express themselves creatively.”

Youth leader



**TRAVEL TO QUEER PROM
- JUN 2025**

Youth identified a fear of judgment on public transit as a barrier to attending the prom event and therefore requested funding to hire a private bus.

The grant supported transportation for 17 youth associated with Parkgate Community Services to attend the Lonsdale Queer Prom.



BRIGHT CHARGE SOLAR PANELS - DEC 2025

Youth were supported in installing solar-powered phone charging stations at the North Vancouver City Library, addressing a community need for reliable access to charging. Supported by Metro Vancouver's Youth4Action CHAMP program, the project promoted sustainable energy through educational posters and fostered a sense of safety and belonging by removing financial barriers and improving access to charging options. Youth leads managed funding, developed educational materials, and liaised with library staff to implement the project.

"We learned how there is truly no harm in just reaching out to different community spaces.... teaching us to be less scared and stressed about just trying.

We learned how supportive the community is of youth-led initiatives. Working with the library, we personally saw how different managers and employees were excited to help us, especially considering we were youth who wanted to create a change for our community."

Youth leader

INTERGENERATIONAL GAMING EVENT - DEC 2025

An intergenerational gaming event that paired youth and seniors for shared experiences was funded to foster mutual learning and community connection. The North Vancouver City Library's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) curated accessible games, including Braille Scrabble and large-print cards.

"I've learnt that I can always learn more from others while teaching them as well. With this new opportunity I've grown an understanding that everyone has new and unique knowledge they can share. We can teach about tech knowledge while they can teach us about life and its experiences."

Youth leader



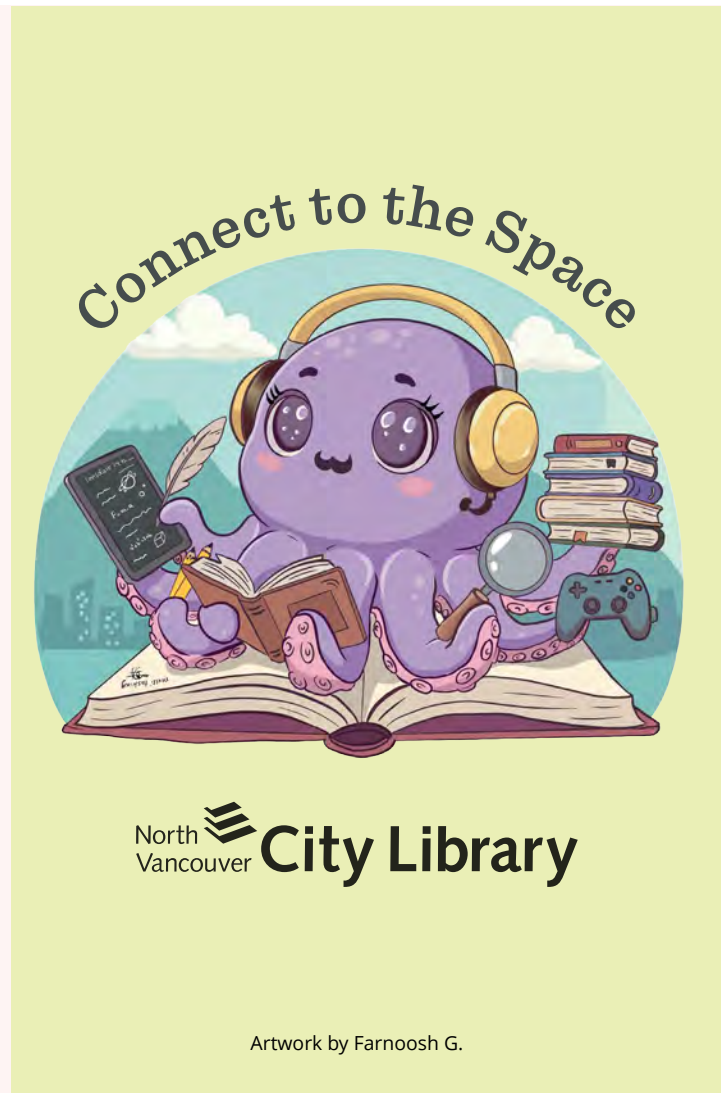
TEEN MASCOT DESIGN COMPETITION - DEC 2025

Grant funding enabled the North Vancouver City Library's Teen Advisory Council (TAC) to host a design contest (Dec. 2025 to Jan. 2026) to create visible, youth-friendly objects. The winning "Octopus" design, selected by 78 teens, was produced as plush mascots, banners and desktop flags to create a more welcoming, youth-friendly library space.

"My mascot design conveys youth friendliness by combining a cute, approachable octopus character with elements that reflect how teens actually learn and relax today. The octopus's soft shapes, big expressive eyes, and calm, welcoming posture make it feel friendly and non-intimidating, which helps the library feel like a comfortable and safe space for teens.

The eight arms represent curiosity and creativity, showing that the library supports many different interests at once, such as reading, technology, gaming, and creativity. By including modern and familiar objects, the mascot connects the library to teens' everyday lives, showing that the library is not just about books, but also a place to explore, discover, and express yourself."

Winner, Mascot Competition



"I think I learned a lot about myself through this project. I learned that I'm a little more reliable than I give myself credit for. I don't usually take on leadership roles, but trying it out, it felt fun. I also learned that a lot of teens in my community actually do engage with the voting."

Youth leader

YOUTH WELLNESS CONFERENCE - FEB 2026

We supported “Tools for Tomorrow,” a free, youth-led wellness conference organized by the District of West Vancouver’s Youth Advisory Committee in partnership with the Rotary Club of West Vancouver Sunrise. The event benefited approximately 50 youth by providing a supportive space to explore mental wellness, resilience and life transitions through peer-led workshops, interactive panels sharing lived experiences, and practical training on mindfulness and support strategies. It fostered a strong sense of belonging among diverse youth, including 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous and neurodiverse participants.

Activities included a facilitated panel of young adults sharing lived experiences and practical insights; small-group discussions that allowed youth to reflect and connect with peers; and a facilitator-led training session by the Crisis Centre titled “It’s OK to Not Be OK!”—among other learning opportunities. While the project achieved significant leadership growth for its youth planners, it also provided valuable resources to the broader youth community.



“[The workshop] was a great opportunity to understand how to care for myself.”

“I liked hearing others’ real experiences and also thinking about [mental health] stigma. Some people don’t even know they have it.”

“Vibes were truly immaculate!”

Attendees from Tools for Tomorrow,
Youth Wellness Conference

Exploratory Activities

A number of ideas to increase access to low-barrier recreation spaces for diverse youth populations were explored through this project. These included:

- **Exploring school spaces to support local access to low-barrier recreation.** While a space was identified, barriers related to staffing and funding made it difficult to pilot.
- **An Indigenous youth space to connect urban Indigenous youth with culture.** Discussions revealed that this work requires a dedicated space, rather than a multi-use space, as well as sustained funding.
- **A First Responders - Youth Recreation Activities League to build relationships between trusted adults and vulnerable youth in the community.** Discussions with other community organizations running similar programs identified the need for a community champion, sustained funding and dedicated space to establish such an initiative.

Late Night Recreation Pilot

Both youth and stakeholders identified a lack of low-barrier, after-hours activities. The evaluation of youth services showed that few public spaces are open late on weekends and that no youth services were offered on Sundays. Discussions with six key organizations resulted in a series of pilot activities held between Nov. 2025 and March 2026.

Marketed as “The Spot,” the pilot events offered different activities at varying times and locations. On average, each event was attended by 21 youth and cost \$1,250. A total of 247 youth attended, and feedback indicated that these events helped youth build confidence, character, competencies and a sense of connection and belonging.

For more details, refer to the [full report](#).



Stream 2

ACTIVITIES

Stream 2 focused on building capacity, strengthening relationships and improving service delivery by supporting the work of adult professionals in community organizations that serve youth across the North Shore.

Community of Practice

The YFNS Community of Practice (CoP) was a quarterly opportunity to address knowledge, capacity and relationship gaps identified during early engagement. Designed for professionals who support youth aged 12 to 18, the CoP offered practical resources and evidence-based guidance on a range of current topics to improve the delivery of community-based programs and services that promote positive youth development on the North Shore.

Nine sessions were held between 2023 and 2026. These were attended by 154 staff from more than 30 organizations. Many of these individuals attended multiple sessions. The CoP format enabled frontline staff to network across agencies, strengthening relationships and improving referrals among service organizations.

Resource materials from each session were compiled and can be accessed by clicking on the topics below:

- /// [Addressing Youth Substance Use](#)
- /// [Reducing Barriers to Access](#)
- /// [Approaches for Youth who may be Gang-Involved](#)
- /// [Culturally Inclusive Service Delivery](#)
- /// [Sexual Harassment and Gender-based Violence](#)
- /// [Online Exploitation and Safety](#)
- /// [Human Trafficking 101 Certification Training](#)

“Something that I learned here is that those really specific resources that I wish there were for my youth in really specific situations, do exist. Making these connections and being at these places teaches them to me so I can teach them to others.”

Youth Worker

“I get to leave today, sending off referrals, and I think that’s a really big part.”

Youth Worker



North Shore Youth Situation Table

Situation tables bring together frontline workers from health, social services, public safety and education to quickly identify and connect at-risk individuals with the support they need. The North Shore situation table for youth received startup funding from the Province of British Columbia [\[press release\]](#), and participants are currently receiving onboarding training. The establishment of a North Shore-wide youth situation table was a recommendation of the evidence review. Data from this table will help North Shore municipalities and service organizations better understand the evolving risk profile of youth in the community.

Evaluation of Youth Services

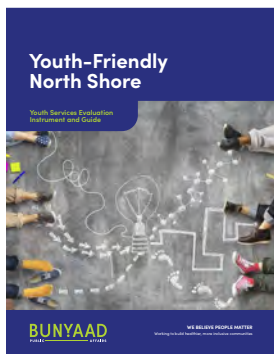
Rationale: Gaps were identified in service delivery and the continuum of care, as service providers struggle to engage particular groups of at-risk youth, and there was an overall absence of leadership and strategy for the care continuum. The evidence review shows that a continuum of care is critical to supporting at-risk youth.

In summer 2024, a new evaluation tool was developed and piloted to assess youth services offered across the North Shore. The tool is grounded in research-informed practice (e.g., the Positive Youth Development framework), and its strengths-based assessment scale allows organizations to identify how they can improve their practices in each area of their work. The evaluation tool is publicly available for use.

The tool was piloted with eight organizations that offer youth outreach, culture and recreation services in community settings. The evaluation provided customized reports to all participating organizations, as well as a cumulative report for municipal funders. Several recommendations from the cumulative evaluation report were implemented, and a summary report is available here.

“Making an online referral form rather than just a PDF. Makes it really simple for youth to refer themselves or parents for further use or counsellors to refer youth as well.”

Pilot community organization



/// [The evaluation tool](#) is publicly available.



/// Several recommendations in the cumulative evaluation report were implemented and a [summary report](#) is publicly available.

Municipal Youth Policy Update

The City and District of North Vancouver’s joint Municipal Youth Policy was last updated in November 2008. The current policy was reviewed after the completion of the youth services evaluation and discussions with the Intergovernmental Table. It was recommended that:

- Inclusion of the District of West Vancouver to create a tri-council municipal youth policy.
- Modernize language to align with evidence-based research (i.e., Positive Youth Development Framework)
- Maintain North Shore Youth Services Directory


The City and District of North Vancouver’s Outreach Youth Services – Core Funding Policy was also last updated in November 2008. It was strongly recommended that the municipalities engage their service delivery organizations to update the policy based on current day programming and needs, as identified through the youth services evaluation in Summer 2024.

Lastly, the District of West Vancouver does not have a council policy on youth services. It was recommended that they adopt a policy that reflects a Positive Youth Development Framework, similar to the CNV and DNV policy. This will ensure that the current program delivery has long-term continuity and is aligned with the standards in adjacent municipalities. This is important as youth move across the North Shore and may be accessing services in either of the three municipalities.

HR training videos

The evaluation of youth services recommended the need to establish a standard of practice for all municipally-funded services that support youth. A series of HR training videos were developed to support organizations to train their staff on how to engage with youth in the public spaces that they manage or deliver services in. This was rolled out with hybrid Train-the-Trainer sessions in January 2026.

The training package, including the videos and accompanying worksheets, recorded webinar, facilitation guide and supporting deck, and training certificate, are available on the DNV YFNS page.

 [Training package](#), including the videos and accompanying worksheets



Youth Online Use and Website Audits

Youth in multiple WelcoME rounds and the youth services evaluation identified the need to increase awareness of youth services and programs by enhancing the youth user experience on organizational websites. To support organizations in doing so, we compiled research on current trends in youth online use. This informed the development of an audit tool, which was used to review the websites of 21 municipally funded, youth-serving organizations.

- ✓ [The Youth Online Trends and Website Audit report](#)
- ✓ [Website Audit Tool](#)

Key findings from the audit were shared with organizations in a presentation in fall 2025, along with written reports outlining overall findings and site-specific results. In a follow-up survey completed three months later by 71 per cent of organizations, we found:

- 100 per cent of respondents confirmed they had received and read the general and site-specific website audit reports
- 100 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the report was informative
- 86 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the report was interesting
- 67 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the report was helpful
- 40 per cent of respondents had started implementing recommendations, while another 40 per cent were still considering options or intended to implement them (but had not yet started)
- 62 per cent of respondents faced barriers to implementing recommendations because staff time was allocated to other priorities, while 39 per cent indicated not having the budget to hire the external expertise required to make the recommended changes

“I’m really grateful for both the site specific audits that our library received... They are so specific and thorough... Having such specific feedback and so much care that went into those reports was really valuable for me.”

Teen librarian

“We got a full audit using research backed knowledge to change our website, and just make it more current, more up to date, and lower barrier.”

Youth Services Manager

Stock Photo Image Bank

Youth feedback and evaluation activities revealed a need to develop a library of authentic stock photos that reflect the diversity, spirit and lived experiences of North Shore youth. Youth models were recruited for photo shoots in locations across the North Shore. These images are available to North Shore organizations for **non-commercial** use until 2036.

- ✓ [Access the YFNS image bank](#)

Looking Ahead

Building on the successes of this initiative, continued collaboration among local governments, recreation providers, youth-serving organizations, school districts, healthy authority and other community partners will be important to advance youth well-being. The following suggested next steps are intended to support collective efforts to strengthen youth development across the North Shore.

POLICY

- Opportunities exist for municipal partners to modernize youth policies to better align with current standards for service delivery and the evolving needs of youth. Alignment across the North Shore, including consideration of a shared or complementary approach among the City and District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver, may help support continuity in program delivery and consistency in standards across municipalities. This is particularly important as youth move across the North Shore and access services in multiple jurisdictions.

PROGRAMS

- There is an opportunity for municipalities and service providers to continue collaborating on low-barrier, late-evening programming under a common youth-friendly brand.
- Enhancements to the North Shore Youth Services Directory could further strengthen program awareness and better meet the digital communication needs of youth.
- Ongoing coordination among municipalities and youth-serving organizations to ensure equitable geographic availability of programs and services as the population demographics change across the North Shore.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Ongoing collaboration among community partners could support quarterly Communities of Practice sessions, with future topics informed by emerging data from the youth situation table.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

- Continued support for youth-led initiatives through small, flexible funding opportunities would help sustain youth engagement. This may be advanced through existing community grant programs or by adapting current criteria to better enable youth participation and leadership.
- Strengthened collaboration between municipalities, youth-serving organizations and Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nation partners may help reduce barriers to access for Indigenous youth on the North Shore.

Acknowledgements

This work was funded by the Building Safer Communities Fund through Public Safety Canada. We are grateful for their generous support.

This community-wide initiative would not have been possible without the leadership of the Intergovernmental Table. We thank each of the members for their tireless efforts in supporting this work.

District of North Vancouver
City of North Vancouver
District of West Vancouver
Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Squamish Nation

This initiative was designed and implemented by Bunyaad Public Affairs.

We appreciate the insight and expertise of staff at all participating organizations and thank them for their ongoing work in supporting youth across our community.

André Piolat K-12 School
Bodwell School
Bowen Island RCMP Detachment
Boys and Girls Club of South Coast BC
Brockton School
Capilano Community Services Society
Capilano University
CMHA North and West Vancouver
Collingwood School
Cousteau School
DNV Fire and Rescue
Family Services of the North Shore
First Nations Health Authority
Foundry North Shore
Harvest Project
Hollyburn Community Services Society
Hollyburn Country Club
Hollyburn Family Services Society
Impact North Shore
Intellectual Disabilities Society (formerly North Shore ConneXions)
Kenneth Gordon Maplewood
Lions Gate Christian Academy

Lookout Housing and Health Society
Lynn Valley Services Society
Ministry of Child and Family Development
Mulgrave School
North Shore Basketball Academy
North Shore Community Resources
North Shore Community Services
North Shore Crisis Services Society
North Shore Disability Resource Centre
North Shore Girls Soccer Club
North Shore Minor Lacrosse
North Shore Neighbourhood House
North Shore Restorative Justice Society
North Shore Women's Centre
North Vancouver City Fire Department
North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce
North Vancouver City Library
North Vancouver District Public Library
North Vancouver Football Club
North Vancouver Minor Hockey Association
North Vancouver Recreation and Culture

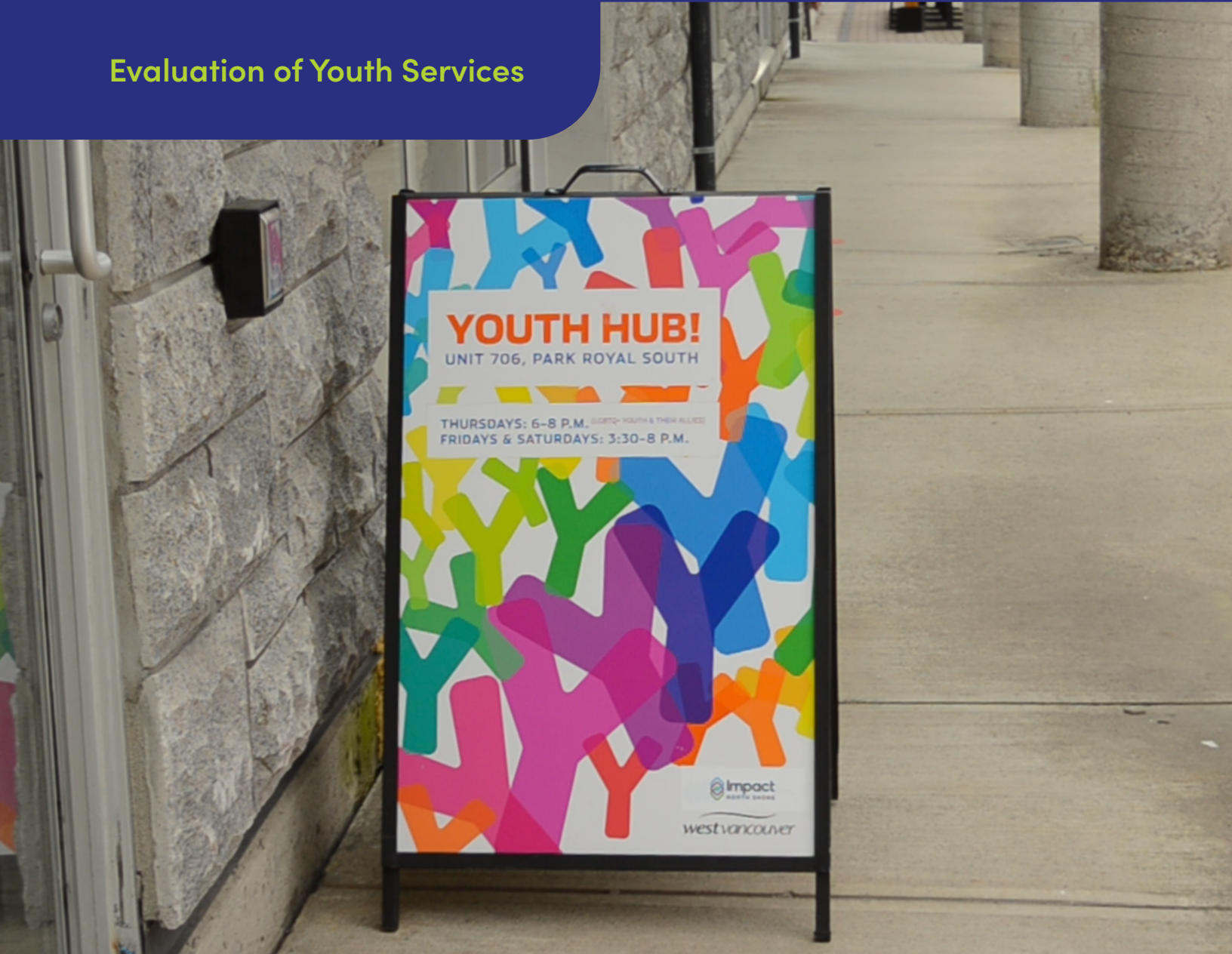
North Vancouver RCMP
North Vancouver School District
Norvan Boys and Girls Club
Parkgate Community Services Society
Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society
PLEA Community Services
Spectrum Skateboard Society
St Alcuin College
St John Ambulance Youth Brigade
St Thomas Aquinas
St. Alcuin College for the Liberal Arts
Vancouver Waldorf School
Vancouver Coastal Health
West Van Chamber of Commerce
West Vancouver Fire & Rescue
West Vancouver Memorial Library
West Vancouver Police
West Vancouver School District
YWCA (North Van)



HELLO@BUNYAAD.CA
BUNYAAD.CA

Youth-Friendly North Shore

Evaluation of Youth Services



September 2024

West Vancouver Youth Services
750 17th Street,
West Vancouver, BC

Dear Lenna and the West Vancouver team,

We want to sincerely thank you for your participation in this community-wide evaluation of youth support services on the North Shore. Your participation as a pilot site has helped us refine the evaluation instrument, which we hope will be of use to you and other organizations in the future self-improvement exercises. Additionally, hearing from the Youth Services team at the District of West Vancouver as one in a collective of organizations that support the North Shore has helped us to identify several areas for collective action to be supported in partnership with municipal funders.

The attached report is a summary of key findings specifically for your organization. We observed many strengths in the way your team supports youth, and commend you for your dedication and support for youth over the past decades. We have included some recommendations for your consideration in areas where things could be improved.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at yfns@bunyaad.ca should you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspects of this report.

Once again, we want to offer our deep appreciation and gratitude for the work your organization does in our community. We look forward to working with you to advance additional actions that collectively improve the quality of life for youth across the North Shore.

Warm Regards,

The Youth-Friendly North Shore Team
Bunyaad Public Affairs

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Introduction

Youth-Friendly North Shore (YFNS) is a three-year initiative to help build healthy communities where youth thrive, reducing the risk of involvement in gang or organized criminal activities. Building on the existing strengths in the community, YFNS focuses on (1) creating youth-friendly spaces by engaging youth and (2) improving the system of care for youth across the North Shore.

An evaluation of community-based services that support youth was undertaken in the Summer of 2024 to highlight strengths and areas for improvement to enhance the system of care for youth. An aggregate report with detailed methods, community-wide findings and community-wide recommendations has been provided to the project's Intergovernmental Leadership Table as well as all participating organizations. The evaluation instrument is publicly available on the YFNS webpage [here](#).

This site-specific report outlines the key findings from interviews and focus groups held with Youth Services staff at the District of West Vancouver in June 2024. The key findings from this evaluation are presented in multiple formats to ensure accessibility for readers.

The **Results at a Glance** section provides a snapshot of the assessed ranking for each domain. This format allows you to quickly assess areas of strengths, which appear in darker shades, as well as areas for improvement, which appear in lighter shades.

The subsequent sections provide a detailed explanation of our assessment in each domain within the four core components evaluated: **Organizational Setting, Program Characteristics, Implementation and Process Characteristics, and Participant Demographics**. While the emerging, developing and transforming statements for each domain are all included, the organization's ranking is reflected in the bold blue text. We discuss the ranking achieved by the organization and the factors that contributed to this outcome.

Lastly, acknowledging the constraints of resources and capacity, we offer a short list of practical **Recommendations** which would enable improvement across multiple domains.

Key Findings

Results at a Glance

Legend Not Aware 0 Emerging 1 Developing 2 Transforming 3 Not Applicable

Setting Characteristics	Program Characteristics	Implementation and Process Characteristics	Participant Demographics
Organization climate and culture	Youth-specific programming	Program oversight	Demographics of youth participants
Youth as a priority population	Evidence-based programming	Involve youth in decision-Making	Understanding of Youth Population
Physical Space - Youth Friendliness	Developmentally appropriate programs	Gather and incorporate feedback from Youth	Understanding of reach
Physical Space - Accessibility	Clarity of program goals and alignment	Resource allocation	Understanding of gaps in reach
Physical Space - Inclusion	Community engagement and sense of belonging	Staff Training	
Digital Space - Youth Friendliness	Promoting youth competencies among youth	Accessibility - Appropriateness	
Digital Space - Accessibility	Supporting confidence development	Accessibility - Acceptability	
Digital Space - Inclusion	Character development	Accessibility - Affordability	
Program awareness and visibility	Facilitating connection and relationship	Accessibility - Availability and accommodation	
Barriers to access our services	Creating caring youth	Accessibility - Approachability	
Wayfinding	Promoting contribution among youth	Outreach to overcome barriers to access	
Prevention efforts		Referrals and coordinated care	
Experiences of risk among youth		Youth retention in programs	

Organizational Setting

ORGANIZATION CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Emerging | Our organization has defined overall guiding values for working with youth.

Developing | Our guiding values for working with youth are known to all our staff and applied in their work.

Transforming | All staff actively embody the guiding values for working with youth, and this is part of their ongoing performance evaluation.

We consistently heard themes of youth empowerment guiding staff's work across all interviews. However, rather than being formalized as overarching guiding values for the District of West Vancouver (DWV), these efforts seemed to be integrated into programming through staff orientation and effort. We appreciate staff's efforts to align their practices with the requirements of the Child and Youth Care Association of British Columbia. More effort across the district for embodying guiding values for working with youth would help create a district wide culture that supports youth, advancing them to the next stage.

YOUTH AS A PRIORITY POPULATION

West Vancouver Youth Services is unique in this context as a municipal service, compared to other organizations. As we are not in the position to make a determination about youth as a priority population for the entire municipality, this criterion is not applicable.

PHYSICAL SPACE - YOUTH FRIENDLINESS

Emerging | Our staff recognize the importance of creating physical spaces that are youth-friendly.

Developing | Our staff aim to create inviting spaces that they think would be friendly for youth.

Transforming | Our staff actively engage youth clients to understand how spaces can be more youth-friendly and work with management to implement these changes. Our youth-specific spaces have some flexible elements; youth are encouraged to shape the space as they desire.

West Vancouver Youth Services scored a full seven out of seven on the observable youth-friendly characteristics on the checklist [refer to [Appendix A](#)]. We appreciate the DWV's efforts to include youth voices through four advisory committees and the staff's collaboration with management to implement changes to the friendliness of the physical space. We were particularly impressed by the mural created by youth upon entry into West Vancouver Community Center and the artwork that expressed youth voice and identities throughout the youth hubs, placing them in the transforming stage.

PHYSICAL SPACE - ACCESSIBILITY

Emerging | Our organization is aware that removing barriers for some youth makes spaces accessible for all.

Developing | We have started a process to meet the standards of universal design.

Transforming | Our program spaces follow universal design principles and are regularly maintained to support the diverse needs and abilities of our youth clients. All of our spaces meet universal design standards, and all future building projects and renovations are required to meet universal design standards.

We noted the West Vancouver Youth Service's efforts to actively begin meeting universal standard designs in all their spaces including gender neutral washrooms in youth spaces. Staff recognize accessibility barriers and understand that universal design principles make spaces accessible to all. We observed six of the seven accessibility criteria [refer to [Appendix A](#)] in their physical spaces. Only the display of information about available accessibility features and translation services was missing in our observations, which would have placed them at a transforming stage.

PHYSICAL SPACE - INCLUSION

Emerging | Our organization recognizes the importance of creating inclusive spaces for our participating youth.

Developing | We ensure that there are visible representations and resources that reflect the intersectional attributes of the youth we serve.

Transforming | Our staff reflect the intersectional attributes of the youth we serve. We review and adapt our work to reflect the evolving diversity of our young clients.

We observed all five inclusion criteria based on our observational checklist, including visible diversity identifiers, racial identifiers, and culturally inclusive materials [refer to [Appendix A](#)]. We recognize DWV's efforts to include visual representations of their clients' intersectional identities. For instance, staff mentioned that in response to youth identifying a lack of visual Indigenous representation in the community center, they created an opportunity for Indigenous youth to design an art piece for the entrance. Staff educate themselves about the diverse backgrounds of their youth clients and understand the importance of visible diversity representations for creating a welcoming environment. They encourage open communication for feedback on diversity identifiers and collaborate with management to address any concerns raised by their young clients. The staff recognize the limited cultural diversity within their team and its importance to engage youth from particular demographics. Addressing this would move them to the next stage.

DIGITAL SPACE - YOUTH FRIENDLINESS

Emerging | Our organization recognizes the importance of providing information for youth in online spaces (e.g. website, social media).

Developing | We create youth-friendly digital spaces with information on multiple platforms (e.g. text, audio, image, video). Our content is in plain language and is designed to engage youth.

Transforming | We conduct periodic communication audits to track youth interactions with our digital spaces and adapt our practices to improve youth engagement.

We observed seven out of twelve youth friendly characteristics based on the observational checklist [refer to [Appendix A](#)] on West Vancouver's website. Although the youth webpage is easy to read and has clear links to youth-related resources, improving digital navigation could improve youth engagement. Staff recognized the importance of creating youth-friendly

digital spaces, but acknowledged that the website is managed by the DWV's communications team. Youth services staff may wish to advocate for more plain language content that is more accessible for youth.

While the website is mobile-friendly, having an active social media presence would improve access for youth. We noted the West Vancouver youth specific Instagram account has not been updated since April. Addressing these would move them to the next stage.

DIGITAL SPACE - ACCESSIBILITY

Emerging | Our organization is aware of digital accessibility guidelines. Most people can use and understand our online spaces.

Developing | Our online spaces aim to meet digital accessibility guidelines and provide information on youth-specific programs and services.

Transforming | Our online spaces follow universal design principles. They are regularly updated to ensure compliance with digital accessibility guidelines and with features to support the diverse needs and abilities of our youth clients. Detailed information about our youth programs is easily discoverable in our online spaces.

We observed one visible accessibility criterion based on the observational checklist [refer to [Appendix A](#)]. While the website currently lacks accessibility adaptations or widgets for users to modify the webpage based on their abilities, staff are aware of these barriers and are committed to improvement. We appreciate their understanding and recognize that the website is managed by the district's communication team. We noted that the website's content doesn't provide accessibility information for West Vancouver Youth Spaces, placing them in the emerging stage.

DIGITAL SPACE - INCLUSION

Emerging | Our organization understands the need to create inclusive digital spaces and welcome diverse youth.

Developing | We create inclusive online spaces that represent diverse, intersectional attributes.

Transforming | Our digital spaces go beyond diverse, representative visual content. We use the principles of intercultural communication to guide the design of our online content. Our digital spaces allow visitors to select from multiple language options.

We observed one inclusion criterion on West Vancouver’s website based on the observational checklist [refer to [Appendix A](#)] and appreciate their efforts to provide translation services, although these are somewhat limited. The website clearly mentions programming information, but we did not have enough content to fully assess the use of inclusive language, so a few parameters were left out. While some pictures, activities, and resources on social media demonstrate diversity, they are not fully reflective of the community, indicating room for improvement. We recognize the efforts made so far and recognize the potential for further progress in promoting inclusivity, placing them in the emerging stage.

PROGRAM AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY

Emerging | We share information about our youth-related services on our communication channels, including our website and social media.

Developing | We enhance our communication using specific channels that are popular with our target youth population.

Transforming | We regularly engage with users of our communication channels to solicit feedback to inform our communication efforts to raise program awareness and visibility for our target population.

Staff acknowledged their lack of a consistent online presence. We recognize that their limited control over digital spaces places them in the emerging stage. Although staff understand the need for a more regular, youth-specific social media presence, they face constraints in resources and authority. To advance, we recommend focusing on organizational-level strategies to improve digital engagement and support staff in enhancing their online presence. We also noted staff efforts to improve outreach efforts in schools to improve program awareness.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

Emerging | We are aware that youth face barriers in accessing our organization.

Developing | We have taken steps to understand the barriers that youth in our community experience when accessing our organization.

Transforming | We are taking action and have committed resources to address the barriers that youth have identified about accessing our organization.

Staff recognized many barriers to youth accessing their services, primarily transportation and time constraints for those from distant areas. We appreciate the DWV's efforts to reduce these barriers, such as mandating youth workers to drive youth and allocating resources through a separate budget. These actions place them above the emerging stage indicating progress towards the developing stage. However, we did not hear any examples of formal steps taken to understand these barriers. While we appreciate the efforts and streamlined processes in place to overcome these barriers, most awareness appeared to be observational. Implementing formal steps and resources to understand access barriers could advance their status to the developing stage.

WAYFINDING

Not Aware | We believe youth can easily locate our organization, both physically and digitally.

Emerging | We know that some youth may struggle with navigating our physical and digital spaces.

Developing | We have clear signage in our physical spaces and a clear navigation menu on our website to enable youth to navigate our organization and get the resources.

Transforming | We routinely review our physical and digital spaces to identify navigation barriers for our youth clients. We revise signage and navigation menus to continually meet the needs of our clients.

Staff recognize the importance of providing clear signage and easy navigation in their physical and digital spaces. The signage in physical spaces, including the prominent board directing to the Youth Hub in Park Royal, is easy to navigate. Physical navigation was generally easy but digital navigation was challenging. It took many clicks to get to youth related content and the navigational pathway was not intuitive. Addressing digital navigation challenges can advance their status to the developing stage.

PREVENTION EFFORTS

Emerging | Our organization attempts to contribute to prevention efforts by providing youth community-based programs.

Developing | Our organization facilitates prevention efforts by offering support to youth who seek to strengthen or contribute to protective factors.

Transforming | Our youth programs actively contribute to prevention efforts in our community by promoting individual and community protective factors through our programming.

We ranked West Vancouver Youth Services' efforts to provide programming and individualized support that promote both individual and community protective factors at the transforming stage. Staff make concerted efforts to meet youth where they are at and bridge gaps in access for all youth. We heard numerous examples from staff of how these efforts promote positive influences like emotional self regulation, positive coping skills, peer connections, community belonging, future orientation, and goal setting in youth, placing them in the transforming stage. Staff's ability to purchase critical items for youth in crisis, transport youth in their personal vehicles and customize activities to youth needs set a high standard of service delivery.

EXPERIENCES OF RISK AMONG YOUTH

Emerging | All of our staff are aware that some youth may experience risks.

Developing | Some of our staff seek to understand the risks experienced by some youth in our community. They work to address these risks through our programs and services.

Transforming | We seek to understand the static and dynamic risks experienced by youth in our community. We make active, ongoing attempts to engage at-risk youth through our programs and support them to mitigate the impacts of these risks on their lives.

We were encouraged to hear examples from staff seeking to understand both the static and dynamic risks faced by youth in the community, placing West Vancouver Youth Services at the transforming stage. All staff are aware of different risk categories faced by youth and mentioned examples of risk factors such as isolation, financial barriers, substance use and youth displaying intolerant behaviors. Staff actively work to mitigate these risks through targeted group activities, dedicated financial support, assistance with paperwork, mental health support, and one-on-one services. Staff mentioned a strong emphasis on fostering future orientation and goal setting in their one-on-one services which helps mitigate the impacts of these risks for their young clients. Staff also mentioned maintaining a strong presence in the community and are often called by community members, such as libraries, to address any emerging risk factors or disrespectful behavior in youth. Staff mentioned having established referral mechanisms, especially with the Ministry of Child and Family Department where they support at-risk youth providing volunteer hours and helping them mitigate the impacts of these risks on their lives.

Program Characteristics

YOUTH-SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING

Emerging | Youth are part of our programs and services.

Developing | We offer youth-specific programs and services. We actively build and maintain positive interactions with our young participants and tailor our programs to the needs of these youth.

Transforming | We offer youth-specific programs that are tailored to the individualized needs of youth. We seek feedback from participant youth to improve our services.

We were encouraged to see that West Vancouver Youth Services offered person-centered programming based on the individualized needs of their participating youth. Staff provided examples of how they adjust programming based on informal feedback from youth and their families, as well as outreach efforts. We appreciate the team's commitment to improving youth-specific programming by establishing easy processes for youth workers to implement these changes with management, placing them in the transforming stage.

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

Emerging | Our youth programs would benefit from an update.

Developing | Our youth programs are periodically reviewed and updated to incorporate current best practices and research evidence.

Transforming | Our organization considers the lived experiences and social locations of our youth clients in addition to current best practice and research evidence. We have processes in place to periodically update our youth programs based on both the evidence and the needs and abilities of our youth.

We recognize West Vancouver Youth Services' efforts to periodically update their practices and incorporate research evidence. Staff mentioned offering evidence-based programming in partnership with other organizations. The thematic focus of this was grief support or anxiety management based on identified needs. The District of West Vancouver encourages staff to upskill by attending conferences and offers subsidies for continued learning. While staff understand the lived experiences and social locations of their youth clients, we did not hear any examples integrating this information with research evidence in planning services, placing them in the developing stage.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PROGRAMS

Emerging | We understand the importance of providing programs that are appropriate for youth at each stage of their development.

Developing | Our youth programs offer support for youth at each stage of adolescent development.

Transforming | Our youth programs account for each stage of adolescent development. We customize our programs based on the needs, abilities and preferences of our youth participants.

West Vancouver Youth services supports youth aged 11-18. We heard strong evidence indicating that West Vancouver Youth Services provides a continuum of care for different stages of adolescence, including separate spaces and individualized programs for various developmental groups. Staff provided examples of programming tailored to different developmental stages, and management demonstrated an understanding of the need to cater to these stages. This approach highlights their commitment to addressing the unique needs of each developmental stage during adolescence effectively, placing them in the transforming stage.

CLARITY OF PROGRAM GOALS AND ALIGNMENT

Emerging | Our youth programs have defined goals.

Developing | Staff are aware of the goals that guide our youth programs.

Transforming | Staff ensure program activities are aligned with the intended program goals.

Staff demonstrated clear understanding of program goals and demonstrated examples of how they align with their actions with the program goals. It was encouraging to hear that staff have the liberty to adapt program activities based on the needs of youth, but are intentional in doing so to ensure alignment with overarching program goals. These efforts place West Vancouver Youth Services in the transforming stage.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SENSE OF BELONGING

Emerging | Our youth programs and services aim to develop a sense of community among our participants.

Developing | Our youth programs actively offer opportunities for youth participants to engage in community activities and events.

Transforming | Our youth programs provide resources and support for youth to develop meaningful relationships within their community and outside with other participants by organizing activities that foster a sense of belonging and actively promoting participation.

We appreciate West Vancouver Youth Services' commitment to supporting youth by fostering meaningful relationships within their community and with other participants. This was most notable through their dedicated Intergenerational Youth Advisory Committee involved in planning community events. It was encouraging to see this domain reflected in the DWV's strategic planning. This focus appears to be embedded in their programming and exemplified by the staff's efforts, placing them in the transforming stage.

PROMOTING YOUTH COMPETENCIES AMONG YOUTH

Emerging | We are aware of the importance for youth to build competencies.

Developing | We try to promote competency building among youth by focusing on skill development in a few domains.

Transforming | We actively support competency building among youth by promoting skill development across several domains.

We heard several examples of competency building across various domains achieved through programming, one-on-one services and volunteering activities, including leadership skills, creativity, emotional management and goal setting. This focus is evident in the staff's behaviours, language and overall efforts to support youth where they are and foster their growth. West Vancouver Youth Services' commitment to actively developing these competencies in their young clients reflects an advanced approach to youth development and a dedication to building essential life skills. These efforts place them in the transforming stage.

SUPPORTING CONFIDENCE DEVELOPMENT

Emerging | We recognize the importance of instilling confidence in young people.

Developing | We ask youth about their strengths.

Transforming | We support confidence-building by taking a strengths-based approach to help youth embrace their self-worth and focus on building future orientation among youth.

Staff provided several examples of offering strengths-based individualized support to help youth embrace their self-worth, which is central to their programming and actions. We recognize the West Vancouver Youth Services' efforts to offer leadership opportunities, such as summer work experiences and youth-led committees, which build confidence and empower youth to voice their opinions. Staff focus on meeting youth where they are, fostering self-worth, and supporting them in developing a positive sense of self. This places them in the transforming stage.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Emerging | We recognize the need for young people to be held accountable for their actions.

Developing | Our programs try to foster a sense of responsibility and integrity among youth to support their development.

Transforming | Our programs include components that promote growth among youth, celebrate individual identities, and intentionally encourage youth to exercise their autonomy and agency.

We recognize West Vancouver Youth Services' efforts to foster responsibility and promote youth client's autonomy through programs such as employment readiness and youth-led committees. Their commitment to encouraging agency is evident in their practice of consulting youth about services. While they do have an advisory committee for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and allies, we did not hear examples of broader components that consistently celebrate individual identities across all programs. This places them near the transforming stage but with room for further improvement in this area.

FACILITATING CONNECTION AND RELATIONSHIP

Emerging | Our programs allow youth to build connections with other youth.

Developing | Our programs facilitate peer relationship building and staff try to develop positive relationships with youth.

Transforming | Our programs promote intentional relationships among youth with peers, positive and reciprocal relationships with staff, and connection to the community.

Facilitating peer connections and positive relationships with staff is central to West Vancouver Youth Services and is evident in the staff's actions. We appreciate the team's commitment to fostering intentional, positive youth-adults relationships and strengthening community ties through their youth-led Intergenerational Committee. This committee also plays a key role in planning events that nurture these connections. These positive influences serve as protective factors, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing the risk of youth engaging in gang or gun-related activities.

CREATING CARING YOUTH

Emerging | We understand the importance of developing respect, empathy, and sympathy within youth.

Developing | We talk to youth about respect, empathy and sympathy.

Transforming | We actively model and encourage values of sympathy, empathy and respect among youth and in their interactions through our services.

We were pleased to hear staff share examples of actively modeling and promoting values like sympathy, empathy, and respect to nurture caring youth. This commitment is evident in the respectful tone and language staff use. Recognizing the physiological changes adolescents experience, staff strive to be consistent, caring adults in their lives. Staff shared examples where they struggled as well as strategies they have used to explore different approaches to building empathy and respect. We appreciate their efforts in offering programming that helps youth effectively regulate their emotions, ultimately fostering a supportive environment and building lasting protective factors.

PROMOTING CONTRIBUTION AMONG YOUTH

Emerging | We encourage youth to find opportunities to become engaged in their community.

Developing | We make youth aware of the importance of civic engagement and provide youth with examples of how they become more involved in the community.

Transforming | We intentionally promote the importance of civic engagement among youth and facilitate opportunities for youth to be involved in our organization and the broader community.

We appreciate West Vancouver Youth Services' intentional efforts to provide civic engagement opportunities in their young clients, as evident in staff's examples and their facilitation of these opportunities. The DWV's dedicated volunteer department offers roles within the youth services team and the broader community including their summer job experience program. We were pleased to see their commitment to promoting youth engagement through initiatives planned by their youth-led committees. Staff mentioned collaborating with the restorative justice department to create community service opportunities that support youth in strengthening their connection to the community, placing them in the transforming stage.

Implementation and Process Characteristics

PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

Emerging | We recognize the need to include youth voices in program planning and delivery.

Developing | We include youth voices in service planning and delivery by interacting with youth to understand their experiences and needs and other monitoring mechanisms.

Transforming | We seek input from youth and youth workers to improve program delivery and measure program alignment with the needs of youth.

West Vancouver Youth Services shows a strong commitment to offering youth-led programming shaped by youth input. Staff shared examples of long-standing programs that continue to receive high participation rates, reflecting their effectiveness. It was encouraging to see that staff have the flexibility to adapt and plan activities to meet individual needs of youth, with strong support from the district. We were pleased to see programs regularly updated to reflect changing trends and needs, with active consultation from youth through youth-led committees, placing West Vancouver Youth Services in the transforming stage.

INVOLVE YOUTH IN DECISION-MAKING

Emerging | Program decisions are made with youth in mind.

Developing | Youth are valued and sometimes consulted as decision-makers in our organization.

Transforming | Youth are valued and consulted as decision-makers throughout the processes of creation, updates, or modification of programs.

West Vancouver Youth Services shared their efforts to involve youth in decision-making through their youth-led advisory committees and indirect feedback mechanisms. While youth don't directly develop the programming, their input is used to adapt services to meet their individual needs. We also heard examples of the team's growing efforts to consult with some youth clients through formal methods in the creation of some activities. However, we did not hear examples of youth being kept informed throughout the implementation process, placing them in the developing stage.

GATHER AND INCORPORATE FEEDBACK FROM YOUTH

Emerging | We occasionally gather anecdotal feedback from youth participants. However, we lack formal evaluation procedures for our youth programs.

Developing | We collect self-reported measures from youth to understand how our programs meet their needs. This input may not always be used to improve our programs.

Transforming | We have comprehensive evaluation processes that include both internal and external reviews, fidelity checks, and periodic self-reported measures from youth to continuously improve our youth programs and efficiently meet their needs.

We recognize West Vancouver Youth Services' efforts to gather and incorporate feedback from their youth participants. Most feedback mechanisms identified are informal and anecdotal, coming from youth and their families. Staff mentioned using some surveys and attendance records to influence programming. However, we did not hear any examples of formal long-term evaluation methods or the consistent collection of self-reported measures to better align youth programs with ever evolving needs of the participants. This places them at the emerging stage.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Emerging | We are aware of a few resource barriers that we face in our youth programs.

Developing | We face a few resource barriers but are actively working to eliminate these barriers.

Transforming | We face a few resource barriers, but streamlined processes are in place to reduce the resource barriers faced by youth programs.

Staff reported that time constraints as their biggest challenge, and they are actively working with management to hire new team members to address this issue. We also recognize that West Vancouver Youth Services has faced recent staff turnover and is rebuilding its capacity. It was encouraging to hear that staff feel supported by management and can easily access necessary resources to overcome challenges. Staff shared the unique challenge of supporting youth who attend West Vancouver schools but live in a separate municipality (Bowen Island).

Their efforts to address some of the challenges place them in the developing stage.

STAFF TRAINING

Emerging | Not all staff receive youth-specific training.

Developing | Our staff receive some youth-specific training (especially for youth programs).

Transforming | Our staff receive regular training and are encouraged to attend additional training as it pertains to their work and the changing needs of youth.

We were pleased to see that staff at West Vancouver Youth Services receive regular training relevant to their work. Staff feel supported and are encouraged to pursue additional training opportunities, including financial support for conferences and tuition credits for further education. During onboarding, managers and staff collaboratively set professional and personal goals, which are reviewed periodically, demonstrating a strong commitment to staff growth and development. Additionally, staff are connected to community resources such as clinical counselors, sexual health educators, and organizations to better address the changing needs of youth. For these reasons, we placed them at the transforming stage.

ACCESSIBILITY - APPROPRIATENESS

Emerging | We take a universal approach to serve all youth in our community.

We are aware that our services need to meet the needs of the youth we serve.

Developing | We seek to understand the needs of the youth we serve and adapt our approach to serve the youth in our community.

Transforming | We understand the community-wide needs of youth and recognize that these needs change over time, even within the same neighbourhood. We adapt our approach based on these needs and customize our programs to address these needs for the youth we serve.

We recognize staff's efforts to understand the needs of participating youth through indirect feedback and by adapting their approach to meet these individualized needs. However, we did not hear examples of formalized data collection across interviews to identify which youth subgroups may be missing from their services. While the recent turnover in

youth staff is acknowledged, staff are aware of some subgroups that are currently underrepresented. We commend the team's efforts to improve appropriateness by strengthening community connections and outreach, but we did not hear specific examples of efforts to adapt their approach for these subgroups. Considering these factors, we place them close to the developing stage.

ACCESSIBILITY - ACCEPTABILITY

Emerging | Our staff are aware that youth programs and services need to be socially and culturally accessible.

Developing | We create inclusive youth programs by establishing a respectful code of conduct, providing adaptations for participants, and offering translation or interpretation services for youth who need them.

Transforming | We customize our programs to meet the needs of diverse youth in our community, with regular staff training to ensure inclusivity in program design and implementation. We actively seek and incorporate participant feedback to enhance inclusion in our services.

We heard staff acknowledge that certain demographics are missing from their services and observed efforts to create socially and culturally inclusive youth programs by hiring representative staff. It was encouraging to see signage in different languages promoting a respectful code of conduct and fostering an inclusive environment. Not offering translation or interpretation services was the only limiting factor preventing us from ranking West Vancouver Youth Services at a developing stage.

ACCESSIBILITY - AFFORDABILITY

Emerging | We recognize direct and indirect costs as a barrier to access and offer low-cost programs for youth.

Developing | In addition to low-cost youth programs, we offer subsidies for youth for whom any cost may be a barrier. This information is posted in our physical and digital spaces.

Transforming | All programs and services are free for youth, OR We actively raise funds to offer subsidies for youth. Our staff actively engage youth at-risk to raise awareness of subsidies, and support youth to complete funding-related paperwork.

West Vancouver Youth Services offers mostly free and low-cost services. Staff provided various examples of providing financial support, such as waiving program fees and utilizing a dedicated crisis budget to help participating youth overcome financial barriers. Additionally, staff assist youth with funding-related paperwork. We were encouraged to see information on bursaries and financial support displayed in program spaces, and staff actively inform youth about these opportunities.

ACCESSIBILITY - AVAILABILITY AND ACCOMMODATION

Emerging | We recognize the importance of providing youth programs at times and locations that are convenient for youth and do so whenever possible.

Developing | Our youth programs are held at times and in locations that are conveniently accessible for youth (e.g., weeknights, weekends). We offer transportation and/or cover transportation costs when youth may need to travel to access our programs (e.g., field trips, camps).

Transforming | In addition to running youth programs at times and locations that are conveniently accessible for youth, we actively engage youth to ensure our services are accommodating the needs of diverse youth populations. Program staff work closely with management to ensure adequate resources can be allocated to accommodate these needs.

West Vancouver Youth Services' offers programs at times and locations convenient and accessible for youth. Youth staff are required to have a valid driving permit to help address transportation barriers and covering transportation costs for participants. Staff mentioned checking school calendars to avoid scheduling programs when youth are busy, ensuring

programs are held at optimal times. The youth hub's extended hours, staying open until 10pm on Fridays and Saturdays, also demonstrate their flexibility to meet youth needs. Staff also provided examples of collaborating with management to ensure adequate resources are allocated to accommodate these needs. However, we consistently heard about geographic barriers, particularly for youth living in distant geographical areas like Bowen Island

ACCESSIBILITY - APPROACHABILITY

Emerging | Information about our youth programs is available on invitations, posters and digital resources, including our website.

Developing | Information about our youth programs is available in multiple locations and our organization is aware of potential barriers for youth who try to access our program information.

Transforming | Our organization actively reaches out to our community to distribute program information. We offer information sessions and provide assistance (a contact to reach out to) to improve access to program information and reduce barriers faced by youth accessing our program information. We do not assume that all youth have mobile devices or reliable access to the internet from home.

Staff acknowledge the need to enhance approachability, particularly in digital spaces, though they recognize that this may not be entirely within their control. Staff also mentioned conducting school outreach to reduce potential barriers for youth seeking program information and to promote self-referrals. However, they were not fully aware of the specific barriers that might prevent some youth from accessing this information. We recognize that the team is still rebuilding resources and capacity post-COVID to improve community connections and outreach, and we appreciate their ongoing efforts toward reaching a developing stage.

OUTREACH TO OVERCOME BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Emerging | We recognize the need for outreach and promoting our services outside of the location.

Developing | We offer some outreach and advertise youth programs in nearby schools through posters, social media, and direct invitations.

Transforming | Our youth program staff actively promote our services by engaging with schools and families, and we have established referral mechanisms to offer integrated services.

We noted staff's efforts to conduct outreach and extend direct invitations in nearby schools and community spaces. Staff mentioned having established relationships with the school district, principals, counselors, and teachers, who frequently refer students, exemplifying their well-developed referral mechanisms for offering integrated services. Staff are aware of the reduced community connections post-COVID, and we acknowledge the district's growing efforts to hire new staff to enhance outreach and overcome barriers, moving them close to a transforming stage. Additionally, staff identified social media as a significant area for improvement in promoting youth programs.

REFERRALS AND COORDINATED CARE

Emerging | Our staff look up other community organizations when we are working with youth who need services beyond what our organization offers.

Developing | Our staff are somewhat familiar with other organizations in the community that offer services that we do not. They are able to make these referrals easily when the youth we serve need them.

Transforming | Our staff have positive relationships and/or collaborations with other community organizations who offer services we do not. Our programs offer a holistic model of care, and when referrals are made, staff are responsible for making sure that the youth client has a smooth handoff.

Staff shared examples of collaborations with other community organizations to ensure smooth transition for youth requiring services not offered by their team. They strive to facilitate seamless handoffs by driving youth to other service providers, staying for the first meeting, and offering tours of partnering organizations, especially when youth age out of services. Staff also mentioned receiving referrals from schools, counselors,

and parents. Additionally, they are proactively working to develop stronger relationships with organizations outside the region to better support youth. These efforts reflect their ongoing commitment to enhancing referral processes and support networks, exemplifying a transforming practice.

YOUTH RETENTION IN PROGRAMS

Emerging | Our programs cater to diverse needs and youth sometimes come back for other programs and services.

Developing | Youth are encouraged to come back to access other programs and services we offer as needed. We attempt to stay engaged with youth participants after they've completed a program.

Transforming | We seek to engage youth in a continued-care model of service delivery. We encourage youth to engage in multiple programs and services as they transition to adulthood. We make stringent efforts through our processes to keep youth engaged in programs and services that can benefit them.

Staff shared examples of attempts to maintain connections with participants after they complete a program, such as providing resources, assisting with applications, and facilitating introductions to other care providers. They work to ensure smooth handoffs, allowing youth to continue engaging even after direct services have ended. Youth who age out at 18 years are given a soft end date and resources to help them prepare for transitioning out of the programs, reflecting the staff's dedication to staying engaged and supporting youth as they move into adulthood. While these efforts highlight a commitment to a continued-care model, staff acknowledge that they often lose connection with youth after they age out of their services, placing them in the developing stage.

Participant Demographics

DEMOGRAPHICS OF YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Emerging | Our programs are open to all youth regardless of gender, race/ethnicity, ability, socioeconomic status, etc.

Developing | All youth are welcome in our programs. However, we are aware that the demographics of our program participants do not reflect our community's diversity.

Transforming | All youth are welcome in our programs. We know that the demographics of our program participants do not reflect our community's diversity. We actively seek to reach underrepresented groups to raise awareness and lower their barriers to access for diverse youth populations.

While all youth are welcome, staff are aware that the demographics of their participants does not fully reflect our community's diversity. Staff could recognize gaps both geographically and in terms of diversity, although most of the data is observational. We recognize West Vancouver Youth Service's efforts to build capacity and dedicate resources in this area. This includes building a diverse staff team and hiring a new staff member to improve engagement and outreach. We appreciate staff's efforts towards a transforming stage.

UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTH POPULATION

Emerging | We have only observational data about the backgrounds and social location of youth in our programs.

Developing | We collect self-reported data about the background and social location of most youth participants.

Transforming | We collect self-reported data about the background and social location of youth participants. We use these insights to tailor programs to meet youth needs.

Staff identified several observational methods of data collection, along with a few surveys and attendance records for certain programs. Staff also displayed understanding of the social backgrounds of the youth participating in their programs. We recognize their effort to offer programming based on direct feedback, interests, and needs of participants, showing an effort to understand the youth needs. However, these data collection methods are not integrated into implementation processes or reviews and are not repeated on an on-going basis with different cohorts of youth. This places them at the emerging stage in this domain.

UNDERSTANDING OF REACH

Emerging | Our organization is more focused on what services we offer rather than who is accessing these services.

Developing | Our organization makes an effort to understand the population of youth who access our services.

Transforming | Our organization understands the youth who access our services in the context of the broader community population. We tailor our awareness and outreach activities to reach underrepresented, vulnerable youth.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the youth accessing their services in the context of the broader community population. Staff mentioned a few formal efforts to understand their participating youth, such as attendance records and collecting data from referrals. We recognize the DWV's efforts in hiring more staff to improve outreach activities as a strategic priority and in building capacity towards raising awareness and reach among vulnerable youth, placing them in the developing stage. A continued effort towards reaching vulnerable, under-served youth would be a strong way forward. The youth team can also leverage its existing relationships with schools and community partners to support these efforts.

UNDERSTANDING OF GAPS IN REACH

Emerging | Our organization focuses more on supporting the youth who attend our programs rather than those that don't.

Developing | We have made some efforts to understand which youth we are not reaching through our outreach and data collection.

Transforming | We understand which youth we are not reaching through our outreach efforts and have processes and strategies in place to improve our reach and visibility to access hard-to-reach youth.

We heard staff at all levels acknowledge gaps in their reach within the broader community. We recognize West Vancouver Youth Services' commitment to improving outreach and build trust with youth, despite recent turnover post-COVID. However, no formal processes or strategies were identified to enhance their reach and visibility to hard-to-reach youth, placing them in the developing stage.

Recommendations

The recommendations below cut across several domains and are intended to support progression between stages (to emerging, emerging to developing, developing to transforming) in various areas. We strongly encourage you to consider prioritizing their implementation as best possible within your organization's resources and constraints. Each recommendation provides suggestions on how to bring these recommendations to life, along with which domains are addressed through implementing these recommendations.

Complimentary recommendations have been provided to municipalities in the aggregate report as they were observed to be areas of mutual challenge for all organizations across the North Shore, and require additional resources and/or collective action.

- 1. Create overarching guiding principles and values for work with youth across the organization, not just within programs offered to youth. Explore developing a Youth Policy.**

Bringing this recommendation to life: Share these guiding principles and values with all staff across the organization along with basic training on how to engage with adolescents. For more resources, refer to these Youth Engagement Tips for Professionals developed by Youth Gov. Periodic reviews of staff embodiment of these guiding principles and values are encouraged. Review the existing Youth Policy that CNV and DNV have at the Intergovernmental Table and explore the addition of a Youth Policy for DWV.

Domains addressed: organizational culture, youth as a priority, physical space - youth friendliness, barriers to access our services, staff training, accessibility - acceptability, youth retention in programs and services, program oversight, clarity of goals and alignment

- 2. Review [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#) and work towards compliance where possible within resource constraints. Additionally, ensure that website content includes key pieces of information about the organization and services.**

Bringing this recommendation to life: Ensure that website content is youth-friendly and easily navigable. The website should include offering clear, complete and accurate information about hours of operation, key contact information, associated social media accounts, accessible information for the Youth Hub Spaces and other youth-specific programs and services, upcoming events and ongoing activities, and any available financial assistance for those who may need it. Modify website content to reflect inclusivity through visual cues, activities and land acknowledgements, and note who is welcomed at the organization.

Domains addressed: digital spaces - accessibility, inclusion, youth-friendliness, program awareness and visibility, barriers to access our services, wayfinding, accessibility - appropriateness, acceptability, approachability, referrals and coordinated care

3. Participate in the soon-to-be-established North Shore Youth Situation Tables.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Participate in and attend situation tables to support coordinated case management for youth at risk in partnership with other municipal and community organizations.

Domains addressed: prevention efforts, experiences of risk among youth, outreach to overcome barriers, referrals and coordinated care, understanding of youth population, understanding of gaps in reach, program visibility and awareness

4. Create simple but formal mechanisms to get feedback from youth participating in programs and services.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Create resources that can be used repeatedly across services and programs. For instance, this survey can be set up in Google Forms or similar platforms and can be modified across programs. This should be given to youth at entry and completion of a program.

At entry:

- Event or service name:
- Date started:
- Why did you choose to participate in [name of event or service]?
- What do you hope to gain from participating in [name of event or service]?
- Is there anything that you feel we should know before you begin in [name of event or service]?

At completion:

- Event or service name:
- Date completed:
- What did you like about it?
- How could this have been better for you?
- How did this program help you achieve your hopes or goals?
- What else do you need that you have not been able to get at [org name]?

Domains addressed: program oversight, involving youth in decision-making, gather and incorporate feedback from youth, accessibility – appropriateness, accessibility – acceptability, accessibility – availability and accommodation, clarity of program goals and alignment, barriers to access our services

5. Create a youth volunteer team to handle social media.

Bringing this recommendation to life: The volunteer social media team can be provided with some overarching principles that must be followed in all of the organization's communication. The volunteer team could meet weekly to come up with the social media posts for the following week. Youth can be provided a certificate for their involvement in this initiative for future use by youth. For more information, talk to the teen engagement librarian at WV Memorial Library.

Domains addressed: prevention efforts, youth-specific programming, developmentally appropriate programming, community engagement and sense of belonging, promoting competencies among youth, character development, facilitating connection and relationship, creating caring youth, promoting contribution among youth, gather and incorporate youth feedback, accessibility - approachability, outreach to overcome barriers to access, youth retention in programs and services, resource allocation

6. Engage youth participants to create objects that can be easily placed in any space to signal youth-friendliness and inclusion.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Consult with youth at your organization on what they feel would signal youth-friendliness and inclusion, and have them create these objects where possible. Place these objects on a mobile cart that can be taken to any multi-purpose space where youth programming is being run.

Domains addressed: physical space - youth friendliness, physical space - inclusion, experiences of risk among youth, demographics of youth participants, accessibility - appropriateness, acceptability, community engagement and sense of belonging, promoting contribution among youth, facilitating connection and relationship, involve youth in decision-making

7. Formalize a process for the collection of self-report demographics to deepen understanding and awareness of demographics of youth participants.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Self-report demographics can be collected upon a youth's entry into an event, program, or service. These standard questions can be used to survey youth to collect demographic information to better understand youth participants accessing your services:

- How old are you?
- How do you describe your race?
- What is your gender identity?
- Have you participated in any services at [org name] before?

Domains addressed: demographics of youth participants, understanding of reach, understanding of gaps in reach, accessibility – acceptability

8. Build strategies for mitigating barriers for youth to access your services.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Consult with youth about the common barriers they experience accessing your program. Address the availability of programming during certain hours and days of the week to help address service delivery gaps for youth when needed most. Outreach efforts can be facilitated through the creation of resources about services, events, and programs to be given to local schools or other community partners to increase visibility and promote services within the broader community. This resource creation can be done alongside a team of youth volunteers.

Domains addressed: barriers to access our services, program awareness and visibility, accessibility – availability and accommodation, understanding of gaps in reach, promoting contribution among youth, community engagement and sense of belonging, involving youth in decision-making, resource allocation, acceptability

9. Develop a pathway for youth to move from client to volunteer.

Bringing this recommendation to life: Encourage youth who attend regular programs to take on some responsibility in planning and/or supporting the delivery of activities. For interested youth, support their added involvement by offering volunteer hours for this and/or creating a casual employment opportunity. This continuum offers collaborative skill building as well as opportunities for contribution and character development. Youth volunteers can assist in many different ways, such as creating and supporting new outreach opportunities, creating social media content, promoting planned community events, etc. Volunteer opportunities need not be limited to youth services – youth volunteer opportunities with senior or other program activities would build intergenerational relationships.

Domains addressed: promoting competencies among youth, character development, community engagement and sense of belonging, facilitating connection and relationship, creating caring youth, promoting contribution among youth, supporting confidence development, youth retention in programs and services, involve youth in decision making, resource allocation

10. Keep youth engaged throughout the decision-making process.

Bringing this recommendation to life: To continue with current efforts to gain feedback and involve youth in decision-making, youth should remain involved in providing feedback and voice through the implementation processes. Formalize a process for keeping youth engaged and informed throughout this process.

Domains addressed: program oversight, involving youth in decisionmaking, gather and incorporate feedback from youth, accessibility – appropriateness, acceptability, availability and accommodation, clarity of program goals and alignment, barriers to access our services, promoting competencies among youth

Appendix A - Observational Checklist

Criteria for Physical Spaces

YOUTH FRIENDLINESS	YES	NO
Do the program spaces have adequate and adjustable lighting?		
Do the program spaces generally feel warm and inviting? [paint, artwork, signage, other elements: _____]		
Are the furniture or accessories adjustable?		
Do the spaces show evidence of youth presence/youth voice? [photos, artwork, comments, etc.]		
Do the program spaces display information about activities and opportunities for youth?		
Do the program spaces show information about accessing bursaries or grant funding for youth?		
Does the space (including the furniture) appear to be well-maintained?		
ACCESSIBILITY	YES	NO
Are entrances and pathways clear of obstructions (door thresholds, furniture, etc.)?		
Is there clear, visible signage indicating the location of the program/service?		
Is the signage in any language other than English (incl. Braille)		
Is there signage about the space/rules of use for the space?		
Is there signage about available accessibility features (ex. translation/interpretation services?)		
Is there colour contrast between different elements of the space (walls, floors, counter/service desk, furniture)		
Are there service navigators present?		
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	YES	NO
Are there diversity identifiers like pride flags present?		
Are there any racial diversity identifiers present?		
Are there symbols in different languages apart from English?		
Are there culturally inclusive materials/resources?		
Are there resources demonstrating intersectionality?		

Criteria for Digital Spaces

YOUTH FRIENDLINESS - WEBSITE	YES	NO
Is the digital space interactive and engaging? (e.g. graphic, video and audio content)		
Is the website mobile-friendly?		
Is the youth-related information in plain language?		
Are the pages text-heavy?		
Does the navigation menu clearly indicate how to get to youth-related information (<2 clicks)? Is the website easy to navigate for young users of all skill levels?		
Is the youth service-related information well-organized? (e.g. navigating with features like drop-in or program schedules)		
Is the youth-related information current, and does it appear to be updated regularly?		
Is the youth-related information comprehensive and complete? [Where, When, What, How often]		
Does the webpage provide information about how to get to the physical space by public transit or other mechanisms? [more than a static street address]		
Does the organization use their media content to make youth programming more visible? [social media, newspaper articles, event photos, testimonials etc.]		
Is there a posting for youth-involvement opportunities? [volunteer, job postings]		
Are there mechanisms for users to provide feedback or report issues?		
Is there information available on available subsidies/bursaries/etc.-----N/A		
YOUTH FRIENDLINESS - SOCIAL MEDIA	YES	NO
Does the organization have an active presence on the following platforms?		
Facebook		
Instagram		
Discord		
Snapchat		
TikTok		
Other: _____		
Do they regularly post youth-appropriate content?		
Is there youth-programming-related information?		

Is the youth-related information current, and does it appear to be updated regularly?		
Does the social media content clearly link to the organization's website?		
ACCESSIBILITY	YES	NO
Is there an accessibility widget? [e.g. customizable text size, colour schemes, different contrast levels]?		
Are there materials available in Braille or other formats for visually impaired users?		
Does the webpage provide information and images about accessibility features of the physical spaces?		
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	YES	NO
Do images and visuals represent diverse groups (e.g. different races, ethnicities, genders, abilities)?		
Are there multiple language options available for users?		
Is the content culturally sensitive and relevant to diverse youth groups?		
Is the language used inclusive and respectful of all identities?		
Does the content demonstrate intersectionality?		



YFNS@BUNYAAD.CA

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Title: Youth
Division: Parks, Culture, and Community Services
Policy Number: 0232
File Number: 0282-20-0232

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To create relationships and opportunities that enable the development of youth to be healthy, engaged, and valued members of the community.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all District programs, services, projects, and initiatives related to youth.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. “**Council**” means the Council of The Corporation of the District of West Vancouver.
- 3.2. “**District**” means The Corporation of the District of West Vancouver.
- 3.3. “**Youth**” means persons in West Vancouver ages 10 to 18.


4. Policy Statement

- 4.1. The District endorses the concept of interagency coordination of programs and services for youth.
- 4.2. The District holds that youth should have the right to full and due consideration and that youth should be provided with opportunities to develop competencies, confidence, character, connection, sense of belonging, and contribution.
- 4.3. The District is committed to ensuring that the provision of programs and services meets the best interests of youth and promotes positive youth development.
- 4.4. The District will maintain a Youth Services Department within the Parks, Culture, and Community Services Division which has the mandate:
 - a) to develop and maintain a service that facilitates the provision of community-based youth programs and services focusing on youth engagement and positive development;
 - b) to encourage youth participation and advocacy, especially related to District projects and initiatives that relate to youth; and
 - c) to maintain a comprehensive directory of youth services.

5. Related Documents

- 5.1. Civic Youth Strategy; and
- 5.2. Blueprint for Social Responsibility and Change.

6. Approval

Approved by	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayor and Council
Approval date	Click here to enter a date.	
Council minutes Document ID (Council Policies only)		
Council report Document ID (Council Policies only)		
Signature		

7. Additional Information

Category	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative
Related procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Date of last review	2026	