CURRENT YOUTH IDENTIFIED NEEDS

A COMPILATION - SPRING 1996

NEEDS IDENTIFIED

1. A PLACE FOR YOUTH TO GO - I.E. A YOUTH CENTRE
2. A MEANS BY WHICH YOUTH HAVE A VOICE IN THE

COMMUNITY AND ARE INVOLVED IN DECISIONS

WHICH AFFECT THEM

1. A CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITIES NEGATIVE IMAGE OF YOUTH PROVE THAT YOUTH ARE CAPABLE 
2. APPROPRIATE ONGOING SUPPORT AND

COORDINATION OF YOUTH AND ADULTS IN MEETING THE ABOVE

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HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

# YOUTH VISIONING PROJECT  MAY 1993

* 12 different youth groups
* 200 youth
* established their top priorities as 1) Recreation/youth places to go

2) Economic issues: better malls & shopping, lower prices - more say in what is retailed

 3) Environment

* 1. Improving relations: race, peer pressure, age
	2. Substance use issues

COMMUNITY CARING FOR YOUTH

A VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGY

SURVEY AND COMMUNITY MEETING  SPRING 1995

THE COMMUNITY CARING FOR YOUTH SURVEY FOUND THAT YOUTH DISLIKE:

BOREDOM, LACK OF ENTERTAINMENT, DANGEROUS DRIVING, DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE, CLIQUES, RUMOURS, DISCRIMINATION, LOW TOLERANCE, CRIME, VANDALISM, BEING BEATEN UP.

AND THAT YOUTH WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THESE CHANGES:

AFFORDABLE ACTIVITIES, YOUTH CENTRE, REC.CENTRE, FUN CENTRE, SKATE PARK, CLIMBING WALLS, DANCE CLUBS, NIGHT CLUBS (ALCOHOL FREE), EVENTS AND ENTERTAINMENT, BETTER MALLS, ELIMINATING CLIQUES AND RACISM

IN THE COMMUNITY MEETING FOLLOWING THE SURVEY,

FACILITATOR PAULA TEMRICK PUT FORTH THE FOLLOWING

BELIEFS BY WHICH A COMMUNITY CAN BEGIN TO DEVELOP A VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGY, SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSING

YOUTH AND COMMUNITY:

* ALIENATION LEADS TO CRIME AND APATHY
* ABUSIVE AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR ARE A SIGN OF LOOKING FOR BELONGING
* COMMUNITY-BASED (VS. COURT-BASED) PROGRAMS ADDRESS YOUTH CRIME

AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY, THEREBY CREATING

POSITIVE CONNECTIONS AND BELONGING

## SUMMER 1995 YOUTH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SURVEY

SURVEYED 50 YOUTH FROM:

* YES. PROGRAM AT THE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

  RESIDENTIAL ATTENDANCE PROGRAM

* FUN CENTRE ARCADE

  STORES ON MAIN STREET

  FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS ON THE STREET

1 ) Do YOU FEEL YOU ARE RESPECTED AS YOUTH IN THE COMMUNITY?

24% RESPONDED YES

76% RESPONDED NO

1. Do YOU FEEL THE TOWN DOES ENOUGH TO SUPPORT YOUTH? KEEP THEM BUSY?

26% RESPONDED YES

74% RESPONDED NO

1. Do YOU FEEL INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITY?

24% RESPONDED YES

72% RESPONDED NO

4% RESPONDED SORT OF



1. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN TO MAKE SMITHERS A BETTER PLACE FOR YOUTH? ANY IDEAS ON THINGS TO DO

\*YOUTH CENTRE, THINGS FOR EVERY GROUP AND TYPE OF TEENAGER, STOREFRONT SCHOOL, RADIO STATION, WEEKEND OUTINGS (HIKES ETC), NIGHT

CLUB, SET UP A CLUB OF YOUTH TO ORGANIZE THINGS TO bo, DRIVE-IN MOVIE,

1. DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE A PLACE TO GO? (IF FUN CENTRE, DO YOU THINK IT IS AN ADEQUATE PLACE?) IF NOT, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FUN CENTRE?

26% RESPONDED YES, ADDING THAT THEY GO TO THE FUN CENTRE BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY PLACE TO GO.

740/0 RESPONDED NO

1. IF YOU HAD A YOUTH CENTRE WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO OFFER? 6A) WHAT WOULD BE YOUR CONCERNS?

6B)WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO HELP WORK ON IT?

 6) \*SAFE, CLEAN ATMOSPHERE! OPEN ALL HOURS, SPORTS CENTRE,

TUTORING CENTRE, LIFE SKILLS TEACHING, JOB SKILLS, DANCE AREA,

GAMES, WEIGHT ROOM, CAFETERIA, BASKETBALL COURTS, CLUBS

 THAT IT WOULD TURN INTO THE PRESENT FUN CENTRE, BECOME

DIRTY, CATER ONLY TO A LIMITED NUMBER OF YOUTH. ONE WAY TO

CONTROL DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOUR WOULD BE TO ISSUE

MEMBERSHIPS AND HAVE THE MEMBERSHIP REVOKED IF SOMEONE BREAKS THE RULES.

6B) 94% WOULD BE WILLING TO WORK ON A YOUTH CENTRE 6% WOULD NOT

1. WOULD YOU GO THERE?

100% WOULD GO TO A YOUTH CENTRE!

1995 Summer Youth Community Development Project Survey

COMMUNITY CARING FOR YOUTH SURVEY - SPRING 1995

(Polled: 280 youth, ages 12 - 24)

What students don't like about school:

* + Some teachers' attitudes and lack of respect.
	+ Favouritism.
	+ Put downs.
	+ Not being understood.
	+ Racism.
	+ Cliques.
	+ No school spirit. 

What changes would you like to see to make school more enjoyable? 

* + More caring teachers. 
	+ More awareness of youth in crisis.
	+ More respect between teachers and students
	+ More activities 
	+ More school spirit

 Fewer cliques

* + Daycare
	+ Cafeteria with nutritious food.
	+ Gym open at lunch time.
	+ More course options.  More peer support.

What examples of abusive behaviour have you seen in the school?

Verbal aggression, bullying, emotional abuse a lot of the time

(examples: fighting, name calling, pushing, threats, intimidation of younger students, racism.)

'Opening Eyes and Opening Doors '

### Report from the Smithers Youth Recreation Forum

Over 65 young people, aged 13 to 19, gathered at the Dze L Kant Friendship Centre in Smithers on Saturday January 27, 1996, to consider how recreation services for youth in communities the Bulldey Valley could be improved. The communities of Smithers, Gitanmaax, Giktsan, Moricetown, Houston, Kitsumkalum and Granisle were represented. The Forum was part of a larger process to develop resource materials to assist all recreation departments and commissions in small communities. It was funded by the Ministry of Housing, Recreation and Consumer Services, and the Minister, Sue Hammell, addressed the Forum during its lunch recess, and spent some time talking to groups of your people.

The morning session focused on four topics:  places for youth  activities for youth  transportation for vouth, and  representation for youth

In reporting the results of the Forum, the comments on places and activities have been combined - for the participants, what to do and where to do it were inseparable.

In order to stimulate discussion, two questions were asked: . what's OK Q

. what's not OK 9

The results were as follows:

Places and Activities What t s Right

The main ideas that came out were as follows:

Buildings for Youth - call them Youth

#### Centres

Young people need a place, a building, to call their own. Some of the elements and services which they wanted to see in the centre included:

* focus on drop in act-ivities - 'l a place to hang out without trouble"  possible in existing rec facilities, but a separate building would be preferable  extended opening hours, perhaps even 24 hours in some communities  some adult supervision  perhaps incorporating other ideas such as a coffeehouse with bands, etc, or a vouth health clinic providin2 walk in services such as STDs, birth control, HIV testing  a safe place to stav overnight occasionallv

Interior Aspects

Some of the ideas for what else should be included in the youth centre included:

* arcades and better games  pool table
* comfortable chairs and couches
* fitness room - weights and music
* more game nights - not sport oriented  somewhere heated and pleasant to be  stereo, TV, VCR

Building-based Services and Programs

Programs and services should include: aerobics coffee house cultural games  dances that end later drama club outside of school gym night youth conferences shelter for homeless teens overnight sleepovers, panies and get togethers  poetry night radio station in drop in centre tai chi video ni childcare for teen mothers  youth job training and job search help

Other Activities and Programs

Not every youth activity should take place within the youth centre. Other activities and services could include:

junior firefighters  midsummer and mid winter festivals more communitv clubs sports programs including martial arts inter mural sports - need adult coordinator, sponsorship from merchants, leagues more participation in sports - no cut teams more road trips skate/sound off

• weekend outdoor activities - camping, hikin o biking, fishing co ed camps

#### Other Facilities

Other facilities should be available for youth recreation:

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bigger pools, and more court space and time  more space for little kids to 20 sledding outdoor arena pool in Hazelton  raqcquctball courts skateboard park skj hill rental housing for youth

Places and Activities - What's

Wrong

The main problems associated with recreation for youth included:

Inappropriate Youth Activities

Some young people's activities and behaviour are inappropriate, and give all young people a bad name which is unjustified. Some activities noted as inappropriate included:

* alcohol and drugs  bullying
* cliques - jocks, rednecks, skaters, etc  fights at dances
* violence and vandalism  wild parties  high teenage pregnancy rate

#### Discrimination

Adults are often unhelpful and discriminate against youth, both specifically and generally:

* stereotyping by adults based on nose rings, clothes, hair  discriminating against under 19s  police who discrirrünate  racism

Adult Oversupervision Youth wish to run their own activities, with only a small amount of adult supervision:

* adults putting on events without youth input  adults supervising all youth events

Cost of Recreation

The cost of recreation programs often makes them unaffordable and therefore inaccessible.  prices

Avoiding an Overemphasis on Sports While young people like sports, there is too much of it, and its too competitive. Comments included:  strong sport orientation to recreation programming

* too many sport oriented activities

Ideas for Action - Developing The

Resources For some of the discussion groups, 'activities for youth' meant how are we going to make better programs happen. Ideas included:  apply for grants  conduct surveys to find out the amount of interest - in schools and around town  develop a ftM1draising plan  involve all the community in partnerships  raising funds thro bake sales, donations, yard sales, auctions, raffles, cake walks, little fairs  request meeting with town council  use volunteers wherever possible  work with businesses to promote in return for funding  get discounts on advertizing

Representation for Youth

The main ideas that came out were as follows:

Barriers to Effective Representation Why don't young people get an effective voice regarding activities that concern them:

* adults don't respect us because thev think that we don't respect them
* mayor and council always busy schools play favourites when selecting youth for key roles - seldom elections
* suggestion boxes not responded to 

But youth also recognized that

* whining and threats don't work

Making it Happen

What has to be done to ensure that the voice of youth is heard.

young people must work on their own image

* act mature, serious, and responsible - need to dress appropriately if adults are to listen
* avoid cliques or political parties  develop good organizational skills
* select the right person - articulate, interested As one youth noted:

"the best way to get our message across is by doing it ourselves and showing ourselves as good community citizens" youth can take the first steps build better student government system in the schools establish clear youth objectives, with broad youth support for them develop ways of getting youth views to the communi ty  use the media and channel 10 - regular show, youth produced work for funding for youth newspaper gain respect by trying to solve our own problems - eg vandalism get more involved in the community -volunteering will breed respect  invite broad cross section of adults to forums judges, mayor and counsellors, RCMP more youth forums - to demonstrate that youth can handle responsibilities sponsor student conferences establish a youth  with elections, to inform youth what is happening and to gather their opinions elect youth to town council advocate for actions that the communitv can take

* city to fund job of youth advocate
* native youth rep on band council

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* more opportunities for vouth and adults in authority to dialogue  youth rep on town council  put youth in charge - youth will respect it more if they own it

#### 'Transportation for Youth

Recreation services are not useful if youth cannot get

to them. This was a problem for youth who lived in Smithers - and a greater problem for youth living in outlying villages. Creaüng better access is the issue that was addressed.

Barriers Faced by Youth

There are manv barriers to be overcome:  too cold to walk  too far to walk  don't like relying on parents  prices of taxis and buses  cost of drivers license  timing of buses  not enough carpooling  poor school bus service, but buses are there  van drivers need a class 4 license

Dangerous Practices

Lack of adequate transportation puts young people at risk:

* drinking and driving  hi tchhiking
* not enough seatbelt use  poor driving - running reds  speeding
* rollerblading without helmets

Building a Better Transportation System for Youth Recreation Some ideas included:

* Promoting the Use of Bicycles  bike trail parallel to highway - also for roller and skateboarders
* using bikes is healthv  renting out bikes through school
* Using Cars

. carpooling  coordinated rides to and from town  friends cars and uucks

* Using Taxis  have special student rates for taxis
* need special pick ups for late at night if too much to drink
* underwri te use of cabs by youth after certain hours - open a communitv account and pay with volunteer hours based on use
* Using Vans and Rental Buses  a regional svstem of community vans to serve the nonh - one per community  approach non-profit group who promotes vanpooling in Lower Mainland - donate bus to youth in north?  auto company sponsorship  ensure fixed minimum of van occupants  rent out older vehicles not used much  service club vans for vouth  sponsor youth to get class 4 licences to be able to drive vans  use old buses from BC transit or school districts

Using Public Transit  bus service at night for fixed cost ($2)

* more flexible bus system • need transit from Hazelton to

Other Innovative Ideas

* use horses and carriages in town - summer jobs, etc

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