Red Deer & Area
Youth Needs Assessment Report
April 2017

Submitted by Melinda Mercer, Project Secretary

September 19, 2017

4633 – 49 Street, Red Deer, AB T4N 1T4
Phone (403) 342-6500 Fax (403) 342-7734
youthhq.ca   info@youthhq.ca

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

According to the City of Red Deer's 2016 municipal census, there are 25,925 children and youth between the ages of 0 and 24 years of age living in the City of Red Deer. This number only gets larger when you include children and youth from the towns, villages and hamlets throughout Central Alberta. These young people face a variety of challenges that affect how they learn, adapt, and socialize. These challenges ultimately help determine the person they will become as an adult. Our children and youth represent the future of our society. A strong society is built on educated leaders, passionate and creative thinkers, and people who have had the opportunity to develop their skills and talents.

To better understand the needs and challenges affecting youth in our community, Youth HQ conducted a comprehensive needs assessment regarding Red Deer and area youth programs and services. The process determined the issues and challenges faced by youth, and opportunities and directions for improvement in service provision. This report includes findings gathered from interviews, focus groups, and a comparative literature review. The findings will be useful to municipalities, youth-serving agencies, potential funding agencies, and the general public.

The main outcomes for this endeavour are:

- Community social issues are identified and addressed
- Community members indicate and awareness of community social issues
- Individuals and organizations have the necessary knowledge in place to address community issues

This process would not have been possible without the generous support of FCSS.

Method
Data was collected through in-person and telephone interviews, held from February 6 through 28, 2017 and focus group sessions held on March 13 and 25, 2017. The focus group sessions were held to validate the interview findings. Interviews and focus groups were conducted by Melinda Mercer, Master Plan Project Secretary. Interview and focus group participants included individuals from designated stakeholder groups. There were 52 participants in total, including 16 (31%) youth ages 8 to 19.

To determine the reliability and validity of the data generated from this needs assessment, a comprehensive comparative literature review was conducted. This review analyzed and compared the results from Youth HQ's needs assessment to recent assessments conducted in Red Deer, Penhold, Innisfail, Three Hills, and Leduc, Alberta and Kingston, Ontario.

Interview Participants (28) by Stakeholder Group

1. Community – 8 interviewed
   - Staff from community agencies and businesses in Red Deer and Innisfail.
2. Youth-Serving Agencies – 8 interviewed
   - Staff from youth-serving agencies in Red Deer, Penhold and Innisfail.
3. Youth HQ staff/volunteers - 6 interviewed
   - Five staff members, representing all programs (49th Street Youth Shelter, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club, and administration) that have worked with Youth HQ for less than 1 year to over 6 years.
   - One volunteer that has been with Youth HQ for 4 years.
4. Youth - 6 interviewed
   - Children and youth between the ages of 13 and 19 years, from Red Deer, Red Deer County, and Innisfail.

Focus Group Participants (24)

1. Three adult focus groups comprised of 14 participants included staff and volunteers from a variety of organizations in Red Deer and area - including schools, community groups, youth-serving agencies, and faith-based services.
2. One youth focus group included 10 children/youth between the ages of 8 and 16 years.

Key Findings

The 28 interviews determined that children and youth are facing several challenges. The main issues identified were:

1. Lack of parental support and/or limited parental involvement
2. Financial
3. Mental health
4. Transportation

Interview participants identified ways that these issues can be addressed, including:

1. Encourage collaboration between agencies
2. Provide financial assistance
3. Improve access to transportation
4. Raise awareness of existing programs

For a complete list of interview questions and answers, see Appendix A. For a breakdown of interview answers by stakeholder group, see Appendix B.

The three adult focus groups validated the results generated from the interview process. Overall, the 14 participants agreed with the interview results (see Appendix C). The adult focus groups determined that, as a community, the next steps should be:

1. Increase collaboration among agencies to ensure:
   - efficient mobilization of volunteers
   - efficient allocation of funding and pooling of resources
   - adequate information and referrals
   - streamlined advocacy for children and youth services/programs
   - consistency between agencies' professional codes of conduct
2. Create a central source of information for children and youth that is easy to access. Suggestions were a website, app, and booklet. This central source would include information on events, programs and services available in the community with links to each organization's website.
3. Improve transportation options to allow children and youth to access programs and services. Options included:
   - provide free bus passes
   - increase usage time for youth bus pass
   - offer bursary/subsidy funding
   - enhance advertising for transportation options available
4. Provide easier access to funding sources, as parents/caregivers are often overwhelmed by the paperwork involved in applying for subsidy.

5. Improve services for addiction, including counselling and treatment facilities. There should be increased awareness of existing resources, and the issues faced by children and youth.
6. Create a one-stop-shop service available to children and youth, so they have easy access to programs and services (including information and referral). This service should be family-friendly, and have flexible rules and scheduling.
7. Provide children and youth the opportunity for life skills training. These skills include, but are not limited to: cooking skills training, resiliency training, coping skills, problem-solving education, money management and employability training.

For a complete breakdown of results see Appendix C: Adult Focus Groups.

The youth focus group validated the results generated from the interview process. The 10 youth focus group participants determined that, as a community, the next steps should be:

1. Easier to use and less expensive public transportation for children and youth.
2. A youth centre in Red Deer that has a variety of different activities available, and the programs should be free.
3. Programs and events advertised where youth will see it.
4. More arts and music programs offered in our community.

For a complete breakdown of responses see Appendix D: Youth Focus Group.

Recommendations for Program and Service Planning

Based on the findings of the needs assessment, six priority areas for direct service include (in no particular order):

1. Collaboration: Youth-serving agencies should come together to not only share, but collectively create program and service strategies to respond to identified youth needs.
2. Program awareness: Youth-serving agencies should use their expertise to educate and inform the public (youth, stakeholders, funders, and other youth-serving agencies) on youth issues in general, the program and services available, and how to access them. There should be a central source of information for children and youth that is easy to access, such as a website, app, or booklet. This central source would include information on events, programs and services available in the community with links to each organization's website.
3. Centralized services: There should be a one-stop-shop service available to children and youth, so they have easy access to programs and services (including information and referrals).
4. Financial assistance: Children, youth and families should have easy access to financial assistance. There should be more advertising for subsidy programs. Children, youth and families should have access to assistance with food and shelter, including breakfast/lunch programs and affordable housing options (transitional/emergency/permanent).
5. Transportation: Organizations should advocate on behalf of youth with local transportation providers to increase availability of transportation services and explore additional options for transportation. Transportation should be more affordable.
6. Mental health: Children, youth and families often have difficulty accessing mental health services, and/or they are not aware of how to access services. Services should be easy to access, and be widely advertised. School staff should be properly educated so as to provide appropriate mental health information and referral to students and parents.

Comparative Literature Review

The purpose of the review was to compare previous youth needs assessment literature with the results of the current assessment. The findings from the seven reviewed reports are strikingly similar to the results of Youth HQ's youth needs assessment. Similarities noted in the results from previous assessments are as follows:

1. Red Deer Community Conversations Report
   - Zehr (2015, p. 20) noted the major issues in Red Deer are the lack of:
     - i. Affordable housing
     - ii. Collaboration between agencies
     - iii. Mental health support
     - iv. Effective advertising to promote programs and services
2. Leduc Social Needs Assessment, 2015
   - Pandit (2016, p. 25) noted the following issues facing youth in Leduc:
     - i. Public transportation is limited during off-peak hours
     - ii. Bullying and mental health issues
     - iii. Youth identified the need for a youth centre
3. Penhold Community Needs Assessment, 2015
   - The Town of Penhold (2015, p. 5) recommended:
     - i. An increase in collaboration between community groups
     - ii. Improved funding support for people to participate in activities
4. Innisfail Social Needs Assessment, 2014
   - In the Analysis of Needs Assessments (2016, p. 10), Pandit identified the top social needs for youth in Innisfail as follows:
     - i. Bullying
     - ii. Unsupervised children and youth
     - iii. Financial
     - iv. Mental health
5. CrossRoads Church Social Needs Assessment, 2012
   - Issues identified in Pandit's Analysis of Needs Assessments (2016, p. 18) are:
     - i. Homelessness is increasing in several demographics – women, children and youth
     - ii. Services need to be easy to access, with a single point of access for information
     - iii. Youth need increased access to mentors
6. Three Hills Social Needs Assessment, 2011
   - Findings identified in Pandit's report (2016, p. 16) are:
     - i. "insufficient recreational facilities and awareness of facilities and programs"

       ii. 70% of respondents said that "they need more activities for families and 68% said they need more activities for youth"
7. Kingston (Ontario) Report, 2012
   - Taylor and Brook (2012, p. 56) noted the following are needed:
     i. Improved collaboration between agencies
     ii. Increased awareness of youth programs
     iii. Improved access to public transportation
     iv. Improved access to financial subsidies

Appendix A: Interview Questions and Responses (28 interviewees)

1. **What are the issues or challenges that you believe children and youth face across our community?**

Lack of Parental support	11 responses - Children and youth are left alone too often and do not have adequate supervision (due to a number of factors, including being from single-parent families, or situations where both parents work outside the home). Children and youth lack direction and discipline from family members.
Financial	10 responses - Youth, parents and caregivers do not have enough money to participate in programs.
Mental Health	10 responses - There are children and youth who have mental health issues that need to be addressed and/or they have difficulty accessing services.
Transportation	8 responses - Youth, parents and caregivers do not have access to transportation, or cannot afford transportation. This limits the child/youth's participation in programming.
Recreational Opportunities	8 responses – There are not enough activities for children and youth.
Positive Supports in General	6 responses – Children and youth do not have positive supports, including support from school, friends and extended family. They do not have positive role-models. The connection to community, family and each other is lacking.
Bullying	5 responses - Children and youth are subjected to bullying, both in-person and on-line. There is a lack of bullying enforcement.
Peer Pressure	4 responses - Children and youth face a variety of peer pressures, from drug and alcohol use to what groups and activities they should participate in.
"Safe Spaces"	4 responses - There are not many "safe spaces" where children and youth can go where there is not a stigma attached, or where they feel comfortable to do activities that they enjoy. Safe spaces also include where youth can go to talk with an adult about their problems. Lack of safe spaces for LGBTQ youth.
Social Media	4 responses – Children and youth rely too much on social media to decide what is appropriate for them (i.e., behaviour and activities).
New Immigrants	3 responses – There are not enough services to help new immigrants and refugees feel at home in our community. Lack of English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) resources and understanding of other cultures within the community exists.
LGBTQ Issues	2 responses – No safe gathering space for LGBTQ youth. LGBTQ youth don't see themselves as represented in the community (e.g., role models). Lack of support for LGBTQ families.
Physical Health	1 response – There is a need for more free services that enhance health.

2. **What programs, resources, services, and supports are you aware of that meet the needs of children and youth across our community?**

Youth HQ	18 responses
School programs and activities	13 responses (includes after-school programming provided by the school, and family school wellness workers)
Sports Groups	12 responses (includes programs like hockey, soccer, lacrosse)
Municipal Programming	9 responses (programs include swimming pools, skateboard parks, recreational programming, and arts and culture programs)
Counselling Services	7 responses (includes only psychiatrist/psychologists)
Church Groups	5 responses
Street Ties	4 responses
Music lessons	4 responses
McMan	3 responses
Vantage Community Services	3 responses
Dance schools	3 responses
Alberta Health Services	3 responses
Family Community Support Services	2 responses
Catholic Social Services	2 responses
Red Deer Native Friendship Centre	2 responses
Hope Mission	2 responses
JumpStart	2 responses
Red Deer Public Library	2 responses
Penhold Youth Club	2 responses
Playschools	2 responses
Daycares	2 responses
Bowling Alleys	2 responses

2. Continued…What programs, resources, services, and supports are you aware of that meet the needs of children and youth across our community?

Child Protective Services	2 responses
Scouts/Guides	2 responses
Salvation Army	1 response
High School QSA's	1 response
Mustard Seed	1 response
KidSport	1 response
Suicide Prevention Centre	1 response
Sexual Assault Centre	1 response
Junior Achievement	1 response
Central Alberta Women's Outreach	1 response
Central Alberta Refugee Effort	1 response
Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association	1 response
High Risk Youth Coalition	1 response
Cadets	1 response
4H	1 response
John Howard Society	1 response

3. As a community, how can we better meet the needs of children and youth?

Collaboration between agencies	11 responses – Agencies should use their collective energy to work together to provide improved programming.
Financial Assistance	9 responses – Children, youth and families should have access to financial assistance to participate in programs.
Improved Transportation	8 responses – Transportation should be free so that children and youth can attend programs.
Program Awareness	8 responses – Agencies should ensure that people are aware of their programs, through improved advertising or education between service providers. Agencies should use social media more effectively.
Offer More Programs	7 responses
"Safe Space"	6 responses – There should be a "safe space" for children and youth in Red Deer where they can go without judgement, stigma, and be able to participate in activities they enjoy. Should be centrally located, with easy/free access.
Youth Input	4 responses – Agencies should listen to children and youth; children and youth should have input on programming.
Make Programs Free	3 responses
Program Funding	3 responses – increase funding to existing programs.
Mental Health Intervention	3 responses – identify needs early on in a child's life and connect them with the proper supports. Educate schools/teachers on resources available.
More job opportunities or apprenticeship programs for youth	3 responses
Collaboration with funders	2 responses – non-profits and funding agencies should work together to use funds more effectively.
Trauma Training	2 responses – provide trauma training for people who work with children and youth.
"One-Stop-Shop"	2 responses – Red Deer needs a place for children and youth to go that not only provides programming, but also offers information/referral to services available within the community.

3. Continued… As a community, how can we better meet the needs of children and youth?

Transitional Housing	1 response – Red Deer needs a transitional housing program for youth.
Inter-faith Network	1 response – Red Deer needs an inter-faith network to promote understanding between cultures.
Cyber-bullying Prevention	1 response
More Programs Similar to Hope Mission	1 response
More Opportunities for Youth to Participate in Service Projects	1 response
Translation Services	1 response - Easier access to a translator for new immigrants/refugees.
LGBTQ Programs	1 response – add programs for LGBTQ youth.
Holistic Approach	1 response – current programs fall short (not a total package for kids/youth).

Appendix B: Interview Results - Breakdown by Stakeholder Group

Question 1: What are the issues or challenges that you believe children and youth face across our community?

Response	Comm.	YS Agency	Staff/Vol	Youth	Total
Lack of parental support	4	2	3	2	11
Financial Issues	5	2	2	1	10
Mental Health	4	4	0	2	10
Transportation	3	2	3	0	8
Lack of Recreational Opportunities	4	0	4	0	8
Lack of Positive Supports in General	2	0	4	0	6
Bullying	1	1	0	3	5
Peer Pressure	0	1	1	2	4
Lack of "Safe Spaces"	2	0	2	0	4
Social Media	1	0	3	0	4
New Immigrants	1	2	0	0	3
LGBTQ	1	0	1	0	2
Trauma	0	0	1	0	1
Diversity	0	0	1	0	1
High School Completion	0	1	0	0	1
Physical Health	0	0	0	1	1

Key:

Comm = community stakeholders
YS Agency = youth-serving agency
Staff/Vol = Youth HQ staff and volunteers
Youth = community youth

Question 2: What programs, resources, services and supports are you aware of that meet the needs of children and youth across our community?

Response	Comm.	YS Agency	Staff/Vol	Youth	Total
Youth HQ	7	4	5	2	18
School Programs	5	3	1	4	13
Sports Groups	4	3	3	2	12
Municipal Programming	3	1	3	2	9
Counselling Services	2	2	1	2	7
Church Groups	2	2	1	0	5
Street Ties	1	0	3	0	4
Music Lessons	2	0	0	2	4
Vantage Community Services	2	1	0	0	3
McMan	1	1	1	0	3
Alberta Health Services	1	1	1	0	3
Dance Schools	1	0	2	0	3
FCSS	0	1	1	0	2
Catholic Social Services	0	0	2	0	2
Penhold Youth Club	0	1	1	0	2
Red Deer Native Friendship	0	0	2	0	2
Scouts/Guides	2	0	0	0	2
Hope Mission	0	1	1	0	2
JumpStart	0	1	1	0	2
Red Deer Public Library	2	0	0	0	2
Daycares	1	1	0	0	2
Playschools	1	1	0	0	2
Child Protective Services	1	0	0	1	2
Bowling Alleys	2	0	0	0	2
High School QSA	1	0	0	0	1
Mustard Seed	0	1	0	0	1
Salvation Army	0	1	0	0	1
KidSport	0	0	1	0	1
Sexual Assault Centre	0	1	0	0	1
Suicide Prevention Centre	0	1	0	0	1
Junior Achievement	1	0	0	0	1
Central Alberta Women's Outreach	1	0	0	0	1
Central Alberta Refugee Effort	0	0	1	0	1
Central Alberta Immigrant Women's Association	0	1	0	0	1
Cadets	1	0	0	0	1
High Risk Youth Coalition	1	0	0	0	1
John Howard Society	1	0	0	0	1
Pregnancy Care Centre	0	0	1	0	1
LGBTQ Support Groups	0	0	1	0	1
4H	0	0	0	1	1

Question 3: As a community, how can we better meet the needs of children and youth?

Response	Comm.	YS Agency	Staff/Vol	Youth	Total
Collaboration between agencies	3	4	3	1	11
Financial assistance	5	2	1	1	9
Improved transportation	4	1	3	0	8
Program awareness	4	2	2	0	8
Offer more programs	2	1	2	2	7
"Safe space"	2	0	3	1	6
Youth input	1	2	1	0	4
Mental health support/intervention	2	1	0	0	3
Make programs more accessible	1	0	2	0	3
Make programs free	1	0	1	1	3
Program funding	1	2	0	0	3
More job opportunities for youth	1	0	0	2	3
Collaboration with funders	2	0	0	0	2
"One stop shop" for youth	0	0	2	0	2
Trauma training	1	0	0	1	2
Inter-faith network	1	0	0	0	1
Cyber-bullying prevention	1	0	0	0	1
More programs like Hope Mission	0	1	0	0	1
More opportunities for service projects	0	1	0	0	1
Translation services	0	0	1	0	1
LGBTQ programs	0	0	1	0	1
Harm reduction/resiliency training	0	0	1	0	1
Transitional housing	0	0	1	0	1
Holistic program approach	0	0	1	0	1

Appendix C: Adult Focus Groups - Validation of Interview Results and Recommendations (3 Adult Focus Groups, 14 participants in total)

1. **What are the issues or challenges that you believe children and youth face across our community? Participants added the following issues/challenges:**
   - Lack of addiction services
   - Lack of permanent and temporary housing
   - Lack of positive role models
   - Children and youth don't know what is available
   - Lack of resiliency skills
   - Lack of understanding of basic life skills (problem-solving, finances)
   - Lack of meaningful volunteer opportunities
   - Lack of employment opportunities
   - Unhealthy body image

2. **What programs, resources, services, and supports are you aware of that meet the needs of children and youth across our community? Participants added the following agencies/services:**
   - Kids Help Phone
   - Shalom
   - Pride
   - Pregnancy Care Centre
   - Catholic Social Services – anger management
   - Old program: P.O.W.E.R.
   - Rainbows grief counselling
   - Red Deer Hospice
   - Volunteer Central (pilot project with Red Deer Public Library)

3. As a community, how can we better meet the needs of children and youth?

- Collaboration between agencies:
  - ➢ There are great services available in Red Deer, but they are fragmented. We need to combine the clusters of agencies into partnership.
  - ➢ Better able to mobilize volunteers, acquire/use funding, network, pool resources, know what is available, get the word out, advocate for system change.
  - ➢ Systematic program mapping; focus on end goal.
  - ➢ Organizations would be able to speak a common language (including teachers, social workers, and youth-serving agencies).
  - ➢ Provide consistency between professional codes of conduct, consistency between mandates.
  - ➢ High Risk Youth Coalition has been collaborating for a couple of years.
  - ➢ Government needs to be at the table, and they need to be responsible for some of the work; would allow the opportunity for government to acknowledge some of the work being done.
  - ➢ The Red Deer & District Community Foundation has funding available for collaborative projects.
  - ➢ Would allow agencies to be aware of programs throughout the community, thereby being better able to provide referral and support.
  - ➢ Would allow agencies to be proactive and provide prevention services, if everyone is aware of what all the agencies provide.
- Program awareness:
  - ➢ Improve program awareness by creating a website or app that shows what is available and how to access services.
  - ➢ High Risk Youth Coalition creates and distributes a booklet for youth that has contact information for youth-serving agencies.
  - ➢ Organizations should use social media more effectively.
- One-stop-shop:
  - ➢ Know where to go, easy to access, triage, flexible scheduling, flexible rules, non-intimidating, family-friendly.
  - ➢ Organized – children/youth go to one place, and then they are funneled to the appropriate agency or government service.
  - ➢ The POWER Youth Initiative was a three-year pilot project that was part of the Safe Communities Innovation Fund (SCIF). A program similar to POWER would be valuable.
  - ➢ Acts as a "safe space" (non-judgmental), and provides a sense of belonging.

- Funding:
  - Provide easier access to funding sources (parents are overwhelmed with paperwork).
  - Funding hasn't kept up with programming costs (KidSport, tax rebates).
  - Not as much funding available for arts/music activities.
- Transportation:
  - Provide bus tickets; every youth should have a bus pass.
  - Advertise the transportation options available.
  - Riding the bus should be free for caregivers/youth workers.
  - Youth passes only work until 5pm – should work all day long.
  - Improve bus schedule.
  - BOLT – doesn't work to get to/from school and it stops running early in the evening (around 5pm)
- Mental health issues:
  - Counselling services are not always accessible in smaller communities.
  - Some counsellors only deal with diagnosed issue.
  - Need more education on what services are available.
  - Disconnect between schools and mental health agencies.
  - Should consider a youth-targeted survey of mental health issues. (where are the supports, what do they look like, how many fall through the cracks, who are the fringe kids, who is at high risk).
  - Health intervention at hospital (suicidal kids turned away).
  - Better identify issues like anxiety and depression in youth and teach coping strategies.
- Addictions treatment and awareness of addiction issues in youth:
  - Red Deer should have a youth treatment facility.
- Life skills training:
  - Cooking, hygiene, employability.
  - Coping, resiliency and problem-solving.
  - Aspen Heights runs a Micro-Society School that teaches real-life skills for students. It includes peer mentoring, employment skills, and cash handling.
  - Schools should continue to offer guidance and academic counselling.
- Expand definition of "potential for high risk":
  - Different for each youth.
  - Should consider youth from affluent communities, as well as lower income communities.
- Improved programming:
  - Offer non-traditional sports programs (archery, cycling, and triathlon). Often these programs are cheaper than traditional sports programs (this should be advertised more).

- ➢ Programming should be affordable, or programs should offer discount/free days.
  - ➢ Offer free Saturday drop-in, art-based programs.
  - ➢ Offer more summer programming.
  - ➢ All-inclusive programming:
    - WrapAround program model (Ontario): all inclusive, family driven programming; child isn't seen as separate.
    - Home Church and CrossRoads church offer programs that come to the client (food, transportation, spiritual support).
- Transitional, permanent, and temporary housing:
  - ➢ Youth Winter Inn: this program closed down, but the community needs something like this.
    - Youth need a place to lay their head in -40.
    - Youth leave with socks, toque, food; are directed to other programs to help with issues (e.g., addiction).
- Access to food:
  - ➢ Breakfast/lunch programs.
  - ➢ Community kitchens.
  - ➢ Use kitchens in community centres to provide cooking lessons for children and youth. Difficulty would be to find supervisors, funding and getting the children/youth to attend.
  - ➢ Loaves and Fishes in Red Deer provides lunches.
  - ➢ In Quebec, old produce is donated to schools.
- Access to clean clothing, accessories, and school supplies:
  - ➢ Provide cheap "stores" in schools where students can buy clothing items, hygiene products, school supplies (or volunteer in the store to pay bill).
  - ➢ Provide children and youth the opportunity to clean their clothes and have a shower.
  - ➢ Dress for Success – offer a similar program for children and youth.
- Use schools for programming:
  - ➢ Schools often sit empty after 4pm.
- Improve youth leadership:
  - ➢ Get kids involved in their own programming; give them ownership so they have a vested interest in the activity.
  - ➢ Let them use their talents and abilities for others; pay it forward.
  - ➢ Children/youth who take part in high risk behavior still have a lot to offer.
  - ➢ You don't have to be old to be an elder – youth have a lot that they can teach younger kids.

- ➢ Provide more mentoring opportunities (with local business, youth organizations, and municipalities).
  - ➢ Ask youth what they want and need.
- Increase local scholarships to ensure every youth who wants post-secondary education can afford to attend:
  - ➢ There should be a subsidy for youth who cannot afford to pay the post-secondary application fee.
- Ensure the provision of on-going crisis intervention:
  - ➢ Teams like Police and Crisis Team (PACT) should continue to be funded, and continue to increase capacity to meet community need.
  - ➢ Figure out how to identify potentially at-risk or high-risk children and youth – provide intervention before they become vulnerable or high risk.
- Improve how we deal with on-line bullying:
  - ➢ Many people think that only schools need to deal with it.
  - ➢ Each school district has its own approach to dealing with bullying.

Appendix D: Youth Focus Group - Validation of Interview Results and Recommendations (One Youth Focus Group, 10 participants in total)

1. **What are the issues or challenges that you believe children and youth face across our community?**

The youth focus group participants did not have any additions to the list of issues. They agreed with the following issues identified by interview participants:

Financial

Transportation

Bullying

Peer Pressure

2. **What programs, resources, services, and supports are you aware of that meet the needs of children and youth across our community?**

Youth focus group participants did not have any additions to the list of services available.

3. **As a community, how can we better meet the needs of children and youth?**

No responses. More information was gained through the following additional questions.

4. **What activities do you currently take part in?**
   - Soccer – 4 responses
   - Art club – 3 responses
   - Hockey – 3 responses
   - Basketball – 3 responses
   - Badminton - 2 responses
   - Bike riding – 2 responses
   - Skiing/snowboarding – 2 responses
   - Drawing/coloring – 1 response
   - Gymnastics – 1 response
   - Swimming – 1 response

5. **What activities would you like to do, that you are not currently taking part it?**
    - Dance – 2 responses
    - Canoeing – 1 response
    - Violin – 1 response
    - Guitar – 1 response
    - Snowboarding – 1 response
    - Football – 1 response

6. **If you can't take part in an activity, why not?**
    - Programs cost too much – 10 responses
    - Transportation to/from activity – 9 responses
    - Too much going on – 3 responses
    - Time and commitment – 2 responses

7. **Where do you find information about youth programs and activities?**
    - School – 5 responses
    - Friends – 3 responses
    - Websites – 2 responses
    - Parents – 2 responses
    - Posters – 1 response

8. **Do you use any of the following:**
    - Radio – 10 responses
    - Television – 10 responses
    - Computer / Chromebook – 10 responses
    - Internet Searches for Information – 9 responses
    - Tablet – 9 responses
    - Phone – 7 responses
    - School Newsletter – 1 response
    - Newspaper – 0 responses

9. **Validation of Results from Adult Focus Groups:**
    - Would you use a website or booklet that lists all of the programs available for children and youth (yes=9)
    - Should there be a central youth centre in Red Deer or your community (yes=10)

References

Brook, J., & Taylor, C. (2012). Youth Strategy Report: Phase 1 Research, Kingston, ON.

Pandit, A. (2016). Analysis of Need s Assessments. Youth and Volunteer Centre. Red Deer, AB.

The Town of Penhold. (2013). Community Needs Assessment. Final Research Report, Executive Summary. Penhold, AB.

Zehr, T. (2015). City of Red Deer Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Community Conversations Report. Red Deer, AB.