The Next Steps:
A Workshop Toolkit to Engage Youth in Community Action

A Project of the Adolescent Health Survey III

The McCreary Centre Society is a non-government, non-profit organization committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, education and community-based participation projects. Founded in 1977, the Society sponsors and promotes a wide range of activities and research to address unmet health needs of young people. Areas of interest include:

- health risk behaviours
- disease prevention and health promotion
- youth participation and leadership skills development
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Vancouver Foundation’s Youth Philanthropy Council
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McCreary Youth Foundation
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Bryonie Mahe
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Barbara Oates
Community Foundations of Canada
Hailey Smith
Victoria Foundation: Students Who Care

Funding for this project was provided by:
The Vancouver Foundation
The National Crime Prevention Strategy
The Next Steps: A Workshop Toolkit to Engage Youth in Community Action was prepared by David Sadler and Willow Dunlop.

The McCreary Centre Society acknowledges the support for the AHS III Survey of the Province of British Columbia, Ministry for Children and family Development, Ministry of HealthServices, Inter-Ministry Advisory Committee, AHS Project Advisory Committee, staff of participating school districts, and B.C.’s public health nurses.
Welcome...

to the Next Steps Toolkit

The Next Steps is a workshop series that provides youth with an opportunity to discuss the results of the 2003 BC Adolescent Health Survey, make recommendations, and plan projects for improving the health of youth in their communities.

This toolkit contains everything that you will need to organize a Next Steps workshop or workshop series. Within the kit you will find the necessary organizing tips and workshop agendas, along with all the forms and handouts.

In organizing a Next Steps, it is important to understand the toolkit and the theoretical perspectives behind it, but the energy and enthusiasm of the organizing team and facilitator are also critical. We hope that you will combine what we have created with your own energy and style to make your workshop reflective of you and your community.

McCreary will be compiling the results from the Next Steps workshops that are held across British Columbia into a report. To find out how to have your Next Steps included in the provincial report, you must read the Post-Workshop Organizing “Submitting Results to McCreary” section (page 16), and be sure to return all required information to McCreary by November 4, 2005.

How We Can Help

We welcome the opportunity to assist you in creating your vision for the workshop, learning the concepts behind the Next Steps, and exploring strategies for making the event go smoothly.

Between April and November 2005 we will specifically be offering:
- Facilitator training/ toolkit orientation
- A McCreary staff member to facilitate or help facilitate your community’s workshop
- Ongoing consultation on an “as-needed” basis
- Some financial support

Contact me if any of this interests you. We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,
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Youth Participation Coordinator
The McCreary Centre Society
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How the Next Steps Work

A Single Workshop or a Series

Next Steps is designed as a series of two workshops and a community outreach project. Each workshop builds on the concepts of the previous to increase the capacity of the participants. Next Steps first explores the issues, and then empowers youth to focus their energy towards specific goals. Next Steps is flexible. You can choose to do a single workshop, two workshops, or all three. The first workshop is the core of the Next Steps. It engages youth in discussing community issues and developing important feedback and action plans.

1

The first workshop introduces the idea of risk and protective factors. Participants will learn about the results of the Adolescent Health Survey, share their perspectives on health issues in their community, experientially learn about building protective factors, and develop action plans for promoting youth health.

2

The second workshop expands on the concepts of the first workshop, and helps participants develop team-building and project planning skills. Through a community mapping activity, participants will identify local strengths and resources to create strategies for involving the wider community in planning future action. They will also have an opportunity to further develop their action plans.

3

The Community Outreach Project is where Next Steps participants can share their experiences and showcase their projects/messages to the wider community. These projects/events will provide an opportunity to build connections and mobilize networks, as well as celebrate what is positive about the community and what could be enhanced through further collaboration.
Intentions of the Next Steps Workshop Series

Bridging Research and Action
Next Steps uses the results of the Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) as a springboard to create discussion around community youth issues, acting as a bridge between research and action. Participants will learn about the information that the youth of BC collectively provided in responding to the AHS. Using the AHS research, young people will have an opportunity to move beyond the consultation process: to respond and to act.

Promoting Resiliency
Through Community Involvement
Promoting the resiliency of youth, the ability to bounce back from and overcome difficult situations, needs to be a community effort. By providing opportunities for young people to share their experiences and concerns with the wider community, the Next Steps workshop(s) supports a process of including young people in creating plans for action.

Empowerment through Partnership
A strong component of the Next Steps workshop series is the idea of partnership, stemming from our belief that sustainable community development depends on growth from within. Next Steps workshops encourage partnership between youth from diverse backgrounds and between generations. Participants will be brought together in a process that builds on existing relationships and community strengths as a way to promote the healthy development of youth.

Experience of Community Building and Celebration
The experience of community building that occurs while working together is as important as the final product. It is by encouraging youth to form community partnerships while exploring issues and discussing ideas for action that Next Steps encourages building community from the inside out. Next Steps focuses on identifying existing strengths and celebrating successes great and small along the way.

Background
The Next Steps is an initiative of The McCreary Centre Society and is designed to give youth an opportunity to respond to and act on information from the third Adolescent Health Survey (AHS). Following both the first (1992) and second (1998) AHS, The McCreary Centre Society developed a Next Step Project in order to share the results with youth, and to give youth an opportunity to make recommendations for addressing youth health issues.

The Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) is a questionnaire used to gather information about youth health. Administered in 1992, 1998 and 2003 to BC students in grades 7 to 12, the AHS provides information about physical and emotional health and about factors that can influence health during adolescence or in later life. Over the past decade, over 70,000 BC youth have participated in the AHS. Modified versions of AHS have been conducted with special populations of youth including street youth, gay youth and youth in custody.
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Look in this section for all the nuts and bolts of planning the workshops.

Look in this section for detailed workshop agendas and checklists.

Look in this section for all the handouts & instructions you will need.

Look in this section for additional resources and theory that enrich the Next Steps experience.
Organizing

In this section you will find all the logistics that you will need to organize and consider when putting on Next Steps. We at McCreary would like to help where we can so don’t hesitate to contact us if you need assistance or have questions. This section is divided into pre-workshop tasks and post-workshop tasks.

In this section you will find information on:

Organizing Checklist
(a list of things you have to accomplish leading up to the workshop)

Pre-Workshop
Organizing & Facilitating Team
(the team you put together to organize and facilitate the workshop)
Youth Participants
(youth who will be participating in the workshop)
Adult Participants
(you guessed it, adults who will be participating in the workshop)
Registration (self explanatory really)

Location
(considerations when looking for a location)
Time & Timeline
(how to plan so that the workshops fit well together)
Food (mmm-mmm them’s good eating)
Supplies (markers and flip-charts and pens oh my!)
Budgeting & Fund-raising
(not a lot of people like doing this, but let’s put the fun back in fund-raising!)

Post-Workshop
Evaluation and Submitting Results to McCreary
(what, how and why to get the results back to us)
Other Follow up
(thanking supportive groups, keeping momentum going, starting Youth Advisory Committee and other things)
Organizing Checklist

Initial things to do:

- Put together an organizing committee.
- Go through the Next Steps Toolkit and as a group start brainstorming ideas around the content and style of the workshop.
- Decide whether you will do one workshop or two workshops plus event.
- Brainstorm/create a list of the organizations that you would like represented at the workshops.
- Decide how many people you want at the workshop.
- Set a date for the first workshop.
- Prepare a budget that outlines the costs of the workshop.
- Find a location for the event and if necessary begin looking into transportation for participants.
- Start approaching organizations for funding and local businesses for donations of supplies, food or prizes.

Next things to do:

- Begin publicizing the event and recruiting participants.
- Finalize the agenda for the workshop.
- Assign or recruit a workshop facilitator or co-facilitators.
- Begin making arrangements for food and snacks for the workshop.

Final preparation:

- Prepare event materials.
- Have supplies confirmed.
- Finalize who will be attending the workshop.
- Finalize transportation for participants.
- Finalize arrangements for food and snacks.

After the Workshop:

- Submit results to McCreary.
- Thank groups who made contributions.
- Share results with community.
- Create and send out press release.
- Pat yourself on the back.
Forming an Organizing Team

This group will discuss the workshop agendas provided in the toolkit and decide how to adjust them to best suit the community. This group will also work to organize all of the logistic details of the event, such as the location, the food and the promotion. It is also up to this group to decide on a strategy for inviting adults and youth to the workshop (who do you want involved or represented in the workshops?).

Working with an organizing team of 5 to 6 members is recommended. It will allow the workload involved in organizing the Next Steps to be broken down and shared. It will also bring together peoples’ diverse ideas, strengths and experiences. A team made up of both youth and adults will be most effective in putting on a Next Steps. If the resources are available, the organizing committee might consider hiring a Next Steps workshop coordinator to take care of all the logistics.

Facilitator

You will need one or two primary facilitator(s) to run the workshop, or you may choose to have several facilitators with each one taking responsibility for a portion of the agenda. Finding the right facilitator for any event can be tricky. You want to have a facilitator who is experienced, energetic, informed and able to create a connection with the participants. We suggest that if possible a youth facilitates or co-facilitates the workshop.

Gophers

During the workshops, the rest of the organizing team can play an important role in keeping all of the little details running. It is important to have ample help on the day of the conference because the facilitator will want to concentrate on their facilitation, and not on logistic aspects such as if the lunch arrived on time. The organizing team should identify themselves with a special name tag or mark so that if anyone has a concern or questions they will know who to ask.
Participants
You will want to invite a diverse group of 40-50 youth, and roughly 10 or so supportive adults to your Next Steps. A smaller group would also work; if you decide to go with a bigger group, make sure you have sufficient people to help manage the workshop. It is important to adjust the size of small groups during the day depending on how many people you have. If you have too many small groups some of the reporting back activities will get cumbersome; you should therefore think about forming larger groups.

Youth Participants
Youth are the integral part of the workshop. Conducting the Next Steps on a school day (in cooperation with schools) will ensure youth can participate. A weekend event may conflict with extracurricular activities or jobs, but whatever ultimately works for your community is best. Unless you are totally confident that all of the youth you invite are coming, invite extra, but not so many that if they all come the group will be too large. We strongly recommend that you invite diverse youth to the event. Having a diverse group of youth leads to having a wide range of opinions and knowledge at the workshop. Also try to involve youth who are often excluded or labelled as difficult. If your Next Steps will take place at a school, and you will be recruiting only through that school, make sure to involve students from different cliques and grades, so a variety of youth voices will be represented in the workshop.

Recruiting Youth
To recruit youth effectively, information about the Next Steps workshop should be made widely available. There are all sorts of different strategies to find youth participants, and it is wise to not rely on a single method. For example, you could put up posters, distribute flyers, send out emails, talk to youth directly, and talk to youth service providers. Places to look for youth participants include: youth networks, youth serving organizations, schools, community centres, religious organizations or anywhere young people hang out. It is important to use different strategies, because it is possible to reach different youth in different ways. Also involve youth in the promotion for the workshop - youth can design posters and undertake other promotional activities.
To interest youth, appeal to their desire to make a meaningful contribution and let them know that it is an opportunity for youth voices to be heard. If possible, we suggest that you talk to youth face to face whenever you can, because this way you can explain the Next Steps project better.

Depending on resources and sponsorship available you might consider providing incentives or recreational/social activities as part of the Next Steps event.

For an example of a poster or flyer that you can hand out, see the Workshop Resources section (page 86).

**Adult Participants**

Adults are also important to the Next Steps workshop series because of their experience and perspective. Recruit adults who work in the field of youth engagement, who are interested in youth health or who are interested in hearing youths’ perspectives. Many adults are interested in youth issues even if they do not work directly in the field or with youth. Ideally, try to find adults who have experience in working in partnership with youth or who are in decision making positions.

**Recruiting Adults**

To find adults we suggest looking at who is providing services to youth in your community, be it health, social, recreational, municipal or educational services. These people would probably be interested in Next Steps, or could at least think of people to ask. When looking for youth, you may stumble across adults, and vice versa, so keep your eyes open.

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**Roles for adults in youth participation initiatives include:**

- **Caring**
  Being available and showing genuine concern for young people.

- **Flexibility**
  Being willing to listen and adapt.

- **Support**
  Listening and offering suggestions, reassurance, resources and time; working with youth rather than doing things for or to youth.

- **Commitment**
  Valuing the rights of youth to have a voice in decisions affecting their lives, and creating opportunities for meaningful involvement.

- **Respect**
  Demonstrating acceptance of young people’s contributions, values and opinions.
Logistics

Timeline
One of the first tasks of the organizing committee is to create a timeline of how the Next Steps will progress. This includes deciding on the number and frequency of planning meetings, when food and supplies will be confirmed, when the location will be confirmed by, and the times and dates of the workshops. We have included a organizing checklist at the beginning of this section to help this planning (page 8).

Registration
Registration procedures will vary between Next Steps workshops. It helps to confirm attendance in advance because it allows you to estimate the amount of food and other supplies that you will need. Knowing who will be attending also allows you to fulfill any requirements of the participants, such as a permission slip or dietary needs, so that you are not surprised at the last minute.

On the morning of the event have a registration sheet for participants to sign. On that sheet have name and contact information, organization they represent (if applicable), and any other relevant information. This is also the point to hand out name tags and participant copies of the agenda.

Special Concerns
It is wise to be aware of special concerns that participants may have so that they can get the most out of the workshop. When registering participants make sure to determine if they will require anything. For instance dietary concerns: are they vegetarian? Are they allergic to peanuts? Another thing to consider is accessibility of the workshop. Is it wheelchair friendly?

Hint: What does “Youth Friendly” mean? It means a place where youth feel welcome and wanted. If you are unable to find a place that is youth friendly, it’s your job to make whatever you have as inviting and welcoming as possible. Youth friendly is not an office feel, or a city hall feel. Look for a space where chairs can be arranged in a circle, where people can sit on the floor, and it feels welcoming.

Location
Find a youth friendly location with room for about fifty people. There will need to be an area large enough for everyone to meet all at once, but also the ability for small breakout groups. A separate area for registration and food distribution would also be helpful, but not necessary. Other considerations for location are accessibility and cost.
Date and Time

Workshop One and Two are full day workshops, running from 9 am to just after 3 pm. Youth can be very busy individuals between school, jobs, volunteer work and extracurricular activities so it may be hard for them to fit the workshop into their schedule. To make it easier for youth to schedule and commit, it is helpful to confirm the time and date at least a month before each workshop. It will probably work best to do the workshop on a school day that doesn’t conflict with any major exams or events, or on the weekend.

It is ideal for the second workshop to be done as soon as possible after the first workshop. This is because much of the team-building and group dynamics may be lost if the workshops are scheduled too far apart. Make sure to remind the participants of the time and date of the second workshop at the first workshop. If the two workshops are being held over a weekend, you might consider holding the Next Steps at a camp so youth can stay overnight.

The timing for the third Next Steps event – the Community Outreach Project – depends on what the participants believe will be an appropriate conclusion to what they have accomplished. If they want to showcase completed projects, it will have to happen later. If the youth want to tell the community about their ideas for projects, it could happen sooner. We suggest that it may not be necessary to have projects finished and ready to showcase at the outreach event as this could be an opportunity to show project ideas in order to gather support and resources from the wider community. For more discussion or help with the Outreach Project, contact McCreary.

Material Stuff

Food

For some reason, the thing that everyone remembers from workshops is the food. That’s why to leave a positive impression in the minds of the participants... food is important. If possible choose healthy, simple food that is easy to store, prepare, distribute and eat when it is time.

Also, be sure that there are snacks on hand for the breaks such as muffins or fruit, and drinks such as juice and water.

Supplies

There are checklists of specific supplies (organized by workshops) that you will need to run a Next Steps workshop in the Workshop Agendas section (page 20, 26).
The Money

Fund-Raising

There will be some costs associated with putting on a Next Steps workshop. However, the quality of the workshop series does not depend on the size of the budget. If you do not have lots of funds to work with that does not mean that the workshop will be any less successful.

There are many ways to cover the costs of the Next Steps workshop series. We encourage you to seek out as many donated services and materials as possible. This includes things like food, workshop supplies, and even the location.

How To

When budgeting for your Next Steps workshop, it is useful to break down the costs into the different phases. This is a rough breakdown of what the costs could be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food (lunch, snacks, drinks)</td>
<td>$750 ($15 a person x 50 people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prizes</td>
<td>$50-$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies (Pens, Markers, Flip charts)</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Tickets (At $2 a ticket x 50 people)</td>
<td>$100 (may not be necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 foot by 4 foot Base Map</td>
<td>$14-$120 per map (Depending on b/w or colour)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helpful
Fund-raising Tips
Adapted from Power of Hope, www.powerofhope.org

Who To Ask
Make a list of people and organizations that you think would be interested in helping out, such as local businesses or your chamber of commerce. When you ask people on this list, also ask them if they know of any other individuals or groups you could approach. Your networking will go even faster!

Many businesses give money regularly when they are asked. Start with businesses you have a connection to, or places that have young customers. Go in person and make sure it is a good time for the business.

Your town probably has many local service clubs who donate funds to youth. Look them up in the Yellow Pages under “Clubs”. Call first to set up a meeting. Sometimes they will want you to come to talk to their group about your event.

How to Ask
Asking for money can be intimidating whether this is your first time or if you’ve done it dozens of times before. The following tips may help you to be as effective and confident as possible.

Always have your fund-raising letter, and/or a Next Steps promotional sheet with you. Having some materials is a great way to open the conversation. Think about what you want to say and why you want to do this before you talk to people. Be prepared.

Be real with the person you are approaching. If they see that you genuinely are excited, chances are that they will find a way to help you out. Always be friendly and polite, and above all, genuine.

Don’t take “No” personally. Remember that not everyone will contribute or is able to contribute and it is mostly likely not about you if they say no. Thank the person for their time and remember that the more people you contact, the better chance you have of hearing “Yes”.

Personalize your appeals letter, if you are mailing letters to people, use their names instead of “Dear Friend”. Don’t forget to follow up. If someone says they would like you to come back later, set up a good time to return.

Always say “thank you”. Regardless of whether people have donated or not, thank them for taking the time to listen to you. If they do contribute, thank them for their gift. Take their address so that you can send them a thank you note after the Next Steps. Include some pictures in the thank you if you can.

Post-Workshop Organizing

Evaluation

Evaluation is important to any project because it allows us to document what has been accomplished, measure the difference it has made and learn from the experience. We have included a number of evaluation forms in the Workshop Resources section: the Youth and Adult Participant Feedback Forms (for each of the workshops, page 87), and the Coordinator Feedback Form (page 97). The Participant Feedback Forms are for participants at the end of each workshop to evaluate the day. Make sure to pay attention to what they have to say after Workshop One if you plan to do a second workshop. The Coordinator Forms are for the facilitator or organizing committee to fill out after all the workshops you are planning to hold have taken place.

There is time set aside for evaluation at the end of each workshop day. Remind participants that evaluation is very important and helps us to learn from the experience.

Provincial Report

The participants in the Next Steps workshop will be creating a wealth of information and ideas. Through the course of the workshop series they will have identified community issues, community goals, protective factors and action plans to address issues.

Information from Next Steps will be compiled by McCreary into a final report. This report will contain all the results of the Next Steps workshops that are held in communities around the province during April-October 2005. The report will provide an important overview of BC youths’ perspectives of their communities and their ideas for taking action to promote youth health. If you would like the information from your workshop(s) to be included in this provincial report, please return the results to us as soon as possible. The absolute latest we will accept results is November 4, 2005.

Submitting Results to McCreary

Please return to McCreary:

Workshop 1

• Completed Evaluation Forms
• Definition of community that the group represents (flip chart or copy)
• Protective factor web brainstorm list (flip chart or copy)
• Action planning forms
• List of community issues and goals, and the narrowed down important ones

Workshop 2

• Completed Evaluation Forms
• Copy of Community Maps
• Outcome Planning Forms
**Workshop 3**

We would like the following information:

- What was your event and how did it go? (lots of detail please)
- Who organized and implemented it?
- Which community members did it involve?
- Do you have future plans for this project?
- Quotes, opinions, or examples of materials from the project.
- Completed evaluation forms

Completed Coordinator Feedback Form (or at the end of Workshop One, if that is all you will be doing)

Please feel free to send any additional information about your Next Steps. We would like to hear about anything that gives us additional insight into what happened at your workshops. We will send you the report once the information is compiled and it is written in late 2005.

**After & Between the Workshops**

**Getting the Word Out**

An important aspect of the Next Steps project is using the results to advocate for action. You’ve put all of this time and effort into creating results, so now use them. Bring them to the wider community. Present them to people in power, to the media, to the school board. Here are some people who might be interested in the results:

- Parent Advisory Committees
- School Districts
- Health Authorities
- Police
- Politicians
- Community Agencies
- Local Government
- And of course, the Media

Use the results to advocate for policy or programming. Let the youth voice be heard.

We have included a sample press release in the Workshop Resources section, but we encourage you to adapt it for your own community (page 85).
Sustaining Momentum

A very common phenomenon is for people to get very excited and motivated during workshops and conferences, only to have that excitement and motivation fizzle out as time goes by. Harness that youth energy and keep the momentum going! One way to do this is to create a method of regular contact between the participants. This could be through email, meetings or a newsletter. Also, getting youth more involved in planning the workshops will keep the momentum strong between the workshops. This is something for your organizing committee to think about. Ask the youth how they would like to keep the momentum going.

Forming a Youth Advisory Council (YAC)

A great way to keep youth participants motivated is to develop a Youth Advisory Council, or YAC. YACs are councils made up of youth interested in advocating on youth issues and undertaking projects. The ingredients for a successful youth council include a group of motivated youth with big ideas and supportive adults. By putting on a Next Steps workshop this is exactly what you have assembled! For more information about YACs, visit the McCreary website at www.mcs.bc.ca.

Debriefing Process for Organizing Committee

Debriefing after the Next Steps is an important process for the organizing committee. Debriefing allows discussion about what worked well, what came up as challenges, and how everyone felt about the workshop. It is also an opportunity to celebrate and give yourself a big pat on the back.

Recognizing the Contributions of Groups in the Community

It is important to thank anyone who supported your Next Steps workshops with time, money or in-kind support. One way of showing your gratitude is to invite them to the Community Outreach event. We also suggest sending thank you letters to those who contributed. Make a simple certificate of thanks that businesses could hang on their walls. They love that sort of thing! You will want to maintain a relationship with groups that helped you out, because you never know when you will want to call on them in the future.