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PREPARING FOR THE 2018 BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

Preparations for the sixth BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS), scheduled to be conducted in schools in early 2018, are well under way.

Based on the feedback received from over 30 community consultations and 20 youth focus groups, a draft of the 2018 survey has been created.

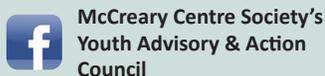
The consultations helped identify new and emerging health issues, and identify any questions on the 2013 survey which were no longer relevant. Drafts of the survey were also reviewed by over 300 youth across BC to gather input on question clarity, relevance to young people, and to ensure that students understood the questions.



The draft survey is now being piloted with BC students in Grades 7–12 to ensure it can be completed in a single classroom period.

If you are interested in hosting a pilot session for youth in grades 7–12, please contact us at mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

A graduate of Argyle Secondary School's Digital Media Academy designed a comic highlighting students' rights as participants in the BC AHS. The comic will be featured on the front page of the 2018 questionnaire.



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THE GARDEN PROJECT

This year we were excited to receive funding through the Vancouver Foundation's Neighbourhood Small Grants program to bring our garden back to life. Originally planted in 2015, the garden has blossomed with the addition of several new raised beds.

Through the loving hands and green thumbs of McCreary staff, volunteers, and Youth Research Academy members, we've had a healthy harvest of beans, radishes, beets, and more. We've also connected with neighbours and contributed to the beautification of our shared alley.

As we transition into fall, we are still enjoying the fruits of our labour!



TRRUST COLLECTIVE IMPACT

McCreary continues to act as the backbone organization for the TRRUST Collective Impact initiative which brings together over 40 Lower Mainland organizations and 20 young people to improve outcomes for youth aging out of government care.

The collective has had a busy summer including hosting the Rata Foundation from New Zealand to share learnings about each others collective impact work, organizing a trip to the waterslides for youth aging out of care and taking on pieces of work to better understand the housing options for youth aging out of care and the barriers they face to employment.

After two years of intensive process to put in place a solid foundation for working together, the results are coming in fast and furious. At the June gathering of collective members, more than 20 positive outcomes on issues concerning youth in and from government care were identified. Although not all are attributable to TRRUST actions, systems are changing for the better.

EVALUATIONS UPDATE

This past summer we completed a couple of evaluations for Vancouver School Board, as well as a project funded by Community Action Initiative focusing on the health of Aboriginal youth and women in the Downtown Eastside.

This fall, we are continuing our evaluation work with the Foundry, as well as other multi-year evaluations for agencies in BC.

To find out more about our evaluation services, including workshops, please contact: evaluations@mcs.bc.ca.

To download our evaluation toolkit for carrying out an evaluation of a local community project, please visit: www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/asking_questions_that_matter.pdf.



YOUTH RESEARCH ACADEMY

The first cohort of McCreary's Youth Research Academy (YRA) completed their last project in late Spring, but the ripple effects from their work continue. Most recently, recommendations from young people with care experience who participated in the education outcomes project with the BC Office of the Representative for Children and Youth were featured in an article in the Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association newsletter. We are excited to have the opportunity to share ideas to improve school experiences for youth in government care which teachers can implement in their schools and classrooms.

As of June 2017, the new cohort has begun with a multitude of assignments such as creating an employment survey for TRRUST: Collective Impact and a literature review on behalf of the Adoptive Families Association of BC.

Moving into the future, we look forward to assisting the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks with their 'Take the Wheel' project evaluation.

-YRA and YRA Alumni



Provincial Intermediate and Middle Years Teachers' Association Fall 2017 Newsletter featuring an article by the YRA. For a copy of the newsletter, email yra@mcs.bc.ca.



YOUTH ADVISORY & ACTION COUNCIL

Fall is often a time of renewal and transition, and this holds true for the Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) this year. After a strong Spring and Summer, we said farewell to a couple of members who graduated and moved away for university. We will miss them, but we are excited to hear what they get up to this coming year!

The YAC recently held their 'Sneak Peek' project—a post-secondary tour for youth who may not otherwise have the opportunity. Tara Chang, McCreary Board Member and coordinator/faculty member of Douglas' Youth Justice Program, was an incredibly knowledgeable and gracious host. She guided youth from Aunt Leah's Place and members of the YAC through the College's New Westminster campus. Many questions were answered and the vision of reducing anxiety and learning what options are out there was definitely achieved.

The YAC have also been involved in the exciting work leading up to the 2018 BC AHS. They created and facilitated a BC AHS consultation workshop, and also had the chance to be involved in an official pilot of the survey. The consultation workshop involved a trip to the Langley Youth Hub to get a sense of some of the key issues youth in Langley are facing. This was a neat opportunity not only to get some real-life facilitation experience, but also to connect with other youth and chat about the health issues important to them. As plans for the BC AHS move ahead the YAC will be developing promotional materials and looking at ways to share the significance of the survey with their peers.

Another exciting thing on the horizon is the fast-approaching workshop weekend on Galiano Island with the YRA! This annual event is a great opportunity for both the YAC and the YRA to come together, get to know each other, and to work on issues that are relevant to them and the greater



Having fun in our 'spare' time at a YAC glow bowling social.

work of McCreary. This year, the focus will be on a workshop developed by the first cohort of the YRA (with the help of some of the YAC!) looking at stress and the ways young people manage it. This has been a neat collaboration between the two groups and will be another opportunity to practice their facilitation skills and to spark dialogue about stress and coping.

Youth Action Grants (YAG)

After an exciting start to the year, the YAG applications have slowed but stayed steady. There have been diverse applications from community gardens to mental health summits, to a new rainbow crosswalk in Rossland. It's been amazing to see how young people across the province are taking initiative and getting creative with their project ideas.

The summer months are traditionally a little slower with schools being out of session, but we are looking forward to seeing more applications as schools gear up for the new year! If you would like more information on our YAG application process, please visit www.mcs.bc.ca or www.youthactiongrants.wordpress.com.



UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Youth Research Academy

The Youth Research Academy offers youth ages 16–24 with government care experience the opportunity to learn community-based research skills while working on projects of interest to youth in and from care in BC.

To learn more about joining the Youth Research Academy, check out www.mcs.bc.ca/research_and_consultation.

Youth Advisory & Action Council

As always, the YAC is on the lookout for new volunteer members! The YAC offers young people with an opportunity to have fun, learn new skills, and meet new people.

If you are, or know of, a young person aged 15–24 with an interest in research and the issues affecting youth health in BC, contact us at: yac@mcs.bc.ca or 604-291-1996 ext. 233.

Celebrating McCreary’s 40th Anniversary

Join us for a celebration of 40 years of youth health, youth research, and youth engagement at our Open House and AGM this fall.

Stay tuned for more details!



Mike Kent, coordinator for Rossland Youth Action Network, and Coun. Lloyd McLellan were both on hand to officially open Rossland’s new rainbow crosswalk on Tuesday morning. (Chelsea Novak/Rossland News)

News coverage of the Rossland Youth Action Network’s rainbow crosswalk, as featured in the Rossland News.



YAC members discuss applications at an August YAG meeting.



The garden takes root with a little help from the YRA.

Founded in 1977, McCreary Centre Society is a non-government not-for-profit committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, evaluation, and community engagement projects.

CONNECT



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