

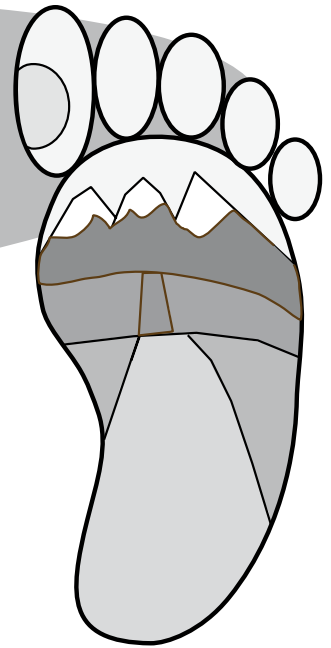
Next Steps workshop in...

# Castlegar

**When: December 9th, 2005**

**Who: 30 youth**

**Where: Stanley Humphries  
Secondary School**



This workshop was organized by Public Health nursing in Castlegar, and was held in the library of Stanley Humphries Secondary school. Thirty young people and a group of supportive adults met to: discuss and identify community health priorities; give youth of Castlegar the opportunity to talk about the issues that face them; brainstorm project ideas around these issues; and pick the best ones to develop *Action Plans* to carry out. The participants had many interesting insights about the health of themselves and their peers. This community report is a summary of all the project ideas, discussion notes, and comments from youth during this workshop.

## About the Next Steps

The *Next Steps* is a workshop that provides youth, along with supportive adults, an opportunity to respond to and discuss the health issues emerging from McCreary Centre Society's 2003 Adolescent Health Survey.

- The day begins with discussing health issues through an interactive trivia game.
- Youth then explore the concept and importance of protective factors through an activity.
- The day ends by creating *Action Plans* to address community health issues.

## Top Health Priorities Youth Identified in Castlegar

1. Racism, bullying and unwanted comments
2. Reducing alcohol and drug abuse while driving
3. Self-esteem issues
4. Reduce unwanted sexual comments
5. Understanding sexual activity and consequences
6. Increase diversity and openness to differences
7. Reduce Smoking
8. Reduce pressures on teens that lead to suicide
9. Get youth involved
10. More info about post secondary opportunities, funding and encouragement

## Provincial Report & Toolkit Available

Results from all workshops have been combined into a provincial highlights report, *Next Steps: Youths' Response to the AHS III and Ideas For Action*. You can also download the Next Steps Toolkit to host your own Next Steps workshop.

Download both from McCreary's website: [www.mcs.bc.ca](http://www.mcs.bc.ca).

## Action Plan #1

Youth brainstormed health issues in their community then broke into small groups; each group identified one idea to develop an Action Plan for.

Community Goal:	To get youth involved
Our Action Project Is:	Create a youth council to represent youth needs to the city council, with the hope to make change that will benefit all our community.
What We Would Do:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We would find students and other youth that are passionate about different aspects of our community like art, environment, or the economy</li> <li>• Create weekly meetings to discuss Castle-gar's issues and plans to fix them</li> <li>• Have a representative on city council to report what we need done</li> </ul>
How will your project improve community health?	It will get the youth more involved. It will give youth more representation.
How would you know you were successful?	If the city council allows this and takes us seriously.
Who and what would you need to get involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated youth</li> <li>• A time and place to meet at</li> <li>• Support from other groups in the community</li> </ul>

## Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

### Were boys or girls more likely to have seriously considered suicide in the past year?

A: Girls | B: Boys | Correct answer: A, girls

Youth said they answered girls because:

- Girls take things more seriously
- Girls are more emotional
- Girls are more worried about their appearance and what others think
- They can have lower self-esteem
- Girls gang up on each other; more subtle, meaner
- Media brainwashes girls into thinking things are bad
- Girls are trained to be more submissive

Youth said they answered boys because:

- Guys don't talk about feelings

These are the comments youth made while playing the AHS Trivia Game. Youth explained why they had chosen their answers and what assumptions they were making about their peers.

### In what survey did more youth report driving after they had been using alcohol or drugs, 1998 or 2003?

A: 1998 survey | B: 2003 survey | Correct answer: A, 1998

Youth said they picked 1998 because:

- The rules weren't as strict and you could get away with it
- The driving laws got changed around that time
- It is like the #1 killer of teens
- Not as young and dumb as now

<b>Action Plan #2</b>	
Community Goal:	Making people's day a bit brighter
Our Action Project Is:	Pay-It-Forward Post Its!
What We Would Do:	Post-Its with random [inspirational] quotes placed in random locations, for example on the door of houses. It will make people's day a bit brighter. On the back write a little blurb about how you have to send a post-it to someone else.
How will your project improve community health?	Maybe it wont, but if the people of the community are happier, you can't even pretend it wouldn't be a better place.
How would you know you were successful?	If we find a Post-It somewhere that we didn't write.
Who and what would you need to get involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-Its and a pen!</li> <li>• People to stick them places</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan #3</b>	
Community Goal:	Understanding sexual activities and consequences
Our Action Project Is:	Having a doctor or sexual health counselor come to the school
What We Would Do:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone go gets checked out for STIs</li> <li>• Have the opportunity to ask anonymous questions so that people don't feel embarrassed</li> </ul>
How will your project improve community health?	It will stop diseases and infections from spreading, and it will lower the amount of unwanted pregnancies
How would you know you were successful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There would be less pregnancies and diseases in school</li> <li>• Survey teens</li> </ul>
Who and what would you need to get involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor</li> <li>• Counsellor</li> <li>• Teachers/friends/family</li> </ul>

### Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

#### In what grade are students less likely to report feeling safe in school?

- A: Grade 8  
 B: Grade 9  
 C: Grade 10  
 D: Grade 11
- Correct answer: A, grade 8

Youth said they chose grade 8 because:

- They are new
- They are too small on food chain
- It's easier to see if younger person is having problems
- It is easier to get bullied when young

Youth said they chose grade 10 because:

- Grade 10s don't share feelings as easily

#### Did more students say they had ever tried marijuana in the 2003 survey or the 1992 survey?

- A: 1992  
 B: 2003
- Correct answer: B, 2003

Youth said they chose 2003 because:

- They live in the Kootenays, it's more common here
- People do it to be cool
- People do it "to suppress their feelings"
- There is more pressure and pot is more common

#### What percent of students plan to graduate from a college, university or trade school?

- A: 24%  
 B: 49%  
 C: 69%
- Correct answer: C, 69%

Youth said they guessed lower than 69% because:

- Lots cannot afford college
- Grades might not be good enough
- It's hard to get out of routine
- Need education but don't like to think about future
- Some go straight to jobs
- Negative messages from teachers (teachers frustrated)
- More scholarships money and hard-to-get jobs without college
- There is a lot of pressure

<b>Action Plan #4</b>	
Community Goal:	To raise self-esteem
Our Action Project Is:	School activities that include everyone. Learn to support each other. Creating a support network to talk to our peers about our issues.
What We Would Do:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to the counsellors about the idea</li> <li>• Have a phonenumber dedicated to supporting students in need</li> <li>• Have websites designed to boost self-esteem levels (inspirational personal stories)</li> <li>• Mentors who are “personal listeners”</li> </ul>
How will your project improve community health?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less bullying</li> <li>• Higher self-esteem</li> <li>• Better atmosphere</li> </ul>
How would you know you were successful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If we would notice significant differences in people’s attitudes</li> <li>• The atmosphere would be happier</li> <li>• More acceptance of self</li> </ul>
Who and what would you need to get involved?	Websites, counsellors, mentors, phone-line, health nurse, organizers.

<b>Action Plan #5</b>	
Community Goal:	More youth activities in the community.
Our Action Project Is:	Survey youth to see what they want to do.
What We Would Do:	We would make a school wide survey asking what activities people would be interested in. From there, we would make and form the activities that the majority wanted. Hopefully this will get more youth involved in activities and everyone would slowly become more open to others.
How will your project improve community health?	Everybody will be more active. It will help with self-esteem and since others are on a team they would bond.
How would you know you were successful?	If people became more open and kind to others.
Who and what would you need to get involved?	Teachers, students, coaches, after school directors.

### Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

**What percent of students exercise 3 or more days a week?**

- A: 43% |  
 B: 66% |  
 C: 75% |      Correct answer: C, 75%

Youth said they chose 75% because:

- They know lots of dancers
- P.E. class is mandatory
- People have to walk their dogs
- Lots of people play sports
- Because the media puts pressure on you

Youth said they chose less because:

- The world is obese

**What percent of students were discriminated against due to race or skin colour in the past year?**

- A: 1% |  
 B: 6% |  
 C: 15% |      Correct answer: B, 6%

Youth said:

- Some people may not realize students are racist
- There are not many non-caucasian people in the Kootenays
- People still make racial comments
- Racial slurs happen a lot
- There are harsh communities in the province because of the differences in cultures

<b>Action Plan #6</b>	
Community Goal:	To raise self-esteem
Our Action Project Is:	Offering a workshop for youth to explore themselves, and find ways to deal with pressure.
What We Would Do:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We would set up a workshop that's open to everybody</li> <li>• We would research youth topics</li> <li>• We would want a health nurse, counsellor, power speakers, life coaches or specialized public speakers there</li> </ul>
How will your project improve community health?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved self-esteem</li> <li>• Less suicide</li> <li>• Less bullying</li> </ul>
How would you know you were successful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics on suicide</li> <li>• Better attitude of people</li> <li>• Better atmosphere in school</li> </ul>



"I liked that I got to find out who wants to make the community better"  
 -Youth participant

### Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

#### Were more students sexually active in 2003 or 1992?

A: 1992 |  
 B: 2003 | Correct answer: A, 1992

Youth said 1992 because:

- Now there is more knowledge about STIs
- It is all over the media
- Internet allows for outlets

#### What percentage of students volunteered in the last year?

A: 54% |  
 B: 63% |  
 C: 84% | Correct answer: C, 84%

Youth picked A or B because:

- People are lazy now
- People use community service to get jobs
- Youth are too busy trying to make money
- Youth have a lack of time

#### What percentage of students said that they have an adult in their family who they would feel ok talking to if they had a serious problem?

A: 34% |  
 B: 52% |  
 C: 80% | Correct answer: C, 80%

Youth said that they guessed low because:

- Youth keep things to themselves
- Families aren't that close
- Some parents are never home or are too busy
- There is a lack of trust and some parents don't know how to react
- Parents don't understand
- Parents are going through their own problems and youth don't want to add to their parent's stress
- Most kids don't want to see their parent's disappointed in them

Youth said that they guessed 80% because:

- Youth might be able to find someone in their extended family who they could talk to
- It will get back to the parents eventually
- Youth can talk to their siblings

## Action Plan #7

Community Goal:	To increase acceptance of social diversity.
Our Action Project Is:	Do community performances with subliminal messages.
What We Would Do:	We would create several plays with subliminal messages and travel around schools and communities.
How will your project improve community health?	It will increase awareness and decrease the level of mockery, racism and bullying leading to suicide and other such actions.
How would you know you were successful?	The overall level of social acceptance will increase, suicide will decrease.
Who and what would you need to get involved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors (friends)</li> <li>• Willing schools and communities</li> </ul>

## Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

### At school, where do students feel safest? In the...

- A: Classroom  
 B: Washroom  
 C: Library  
 D: Outside on school property
- Correct answer: C, library

This is what youth said about class:

- It's class because none of the others make sense
- It's not class because of pressure from the teachers
- It's not class because of classmates
- It's not class because you might not be as smart as other kids

This is what youth said about the library:

- The librarian makes you feel safe
- Nerdy people don't dis
- You are expected to be quiet – disturbances are more noticed
- "It's the books"
- It's the only place I felt I fit in
- It's better supervised

## Questions from the AHS Trivia Game

### True or False: boys are more likely than girls to ride with a driver who had been drinking alcohol?

Correct answer: False

Youth said they chose false because:

- Boys pick the girls up in their cars for dates
- Girls get coerced more
- Girls more susceptible to being forced –more manipulated by their boyfriends
- More girls go out with older boys

### Did more students say they had tried smoking in 1998 survey or the 2003 survey?

A: 1998  
 B: 2003 | Correct answer: A, 1998

Youth said they guessed 1998 because:

- Bigger media image before
- Not so much advertising
- Smoking is not cool any more
- The stink is a turn off, its disgusting
- Smoking and birth control not good

### What percent of girls had unwanted sexual comments, jokes or gestures made to them in the past year?

A: 27%  
 B: 40%  
 C: 58% | Correct answer: C, 58%

Youth said they picked 58% because:

- They feel its very common
- Guys have a limited repertoire (poor role models)
- A lot of girls accept it
- Some guys are sexist
- Some guys are immature
- Girls sexually harass guys too
- People say stuff that hurts other people even if they're joking
- Guys don't know what to say
- Girls wear revealing clothing