

# COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Youth Aging Out of Care—Vancouver

May 2016—Issue 6



## Phase 1 Final Gathering



**DRUM ROLL PLEASE....**announcing the CI-YAOC backbone for Phase 2: McCreary Centre Society! There was overwhelming support for McCreary taking over the role of backbone for the initiative.

Six youth presented their journey maps—the Drop Box link for these in on the next page along with the answers to all of your questions. The Vancouver Foundation made a short presentation on the Write the Future. Mark and Joshua (pictured on the right) helped us text to sign the petition. Have you signed the petition yet? <http://www.fosteringchange.ca/petition>



*Heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all of you who supported Phase 1 of the CI-YAOC initiative since April 2014! We look forward to moving into action with you in Phase 2.*

We also worked on governance and structure models and put some final touches on the 'caring connections' success pillar. The Interim report is currently being revised along with the addition of a draft governance model for Phase 2.

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# Youth Journey Map Results

At the May 13th gathering, six youth shared the results of their journey mapping day. They addressed three key questions: What's working, What's broken and How do we fix it? The questions looked at four key areas: MCFD and service provision, health and well-being, education and career and housing. The graphic maps created by Avril Orloff from Outside the Lines are available for download at this drop box link: [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/285b3iut7xz6osa/AACbg5q6pSP6O5TPPnSkoL1\\_a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/285b3iut7xz6osa/AACbg5q6pSP6O5TPPnSkoL1_a?dl=0). We hope the maps will help inform your work and be useful to engage others in conversations about youth aging out of care. Youth who have been highly engaged in the process are excited about opportunities to present their work. Please contact Lucie if you would like to schedule a presentation.



## Answers to your questions

Youth met on May 22nd. Over pizza and wings they thoughtfully answered your questions from May 13th. Others not available to meet sent their answers via email. Kudos to all of you for your dedication and commitment!

**Question: What suggestions do you have for building positive, non-paid relationships? How can service providers help with this?**

- Involving students in social work programs and folks who are interested in teaching, mentoring and training young people—similar to Big Brothers and Big Sisters; get community leaders to train young people as peer mentors—start mentorship at 16 or 14
- Bringing former youth in care & current youth in care together; connecting youth to their community

**Question: Who do you connect with now, go to for support that you**

**would like to maintain throughout adulthood? Where or who would be the best places to develop these continuous connections?**

- Youth mentorship leader, family, former youth worker
- Leave Out Violence gatherings; BYRC, a place where youth socialize

**Question: What is your number one advice for service providers working with youth in and from care?**

- Be supportive and encouraging always! ; Be patient as they could be operating in survival mode
- Asking the right questions—have you eaten? Have you slept? What do you want to focus on today? Problems or having fun? Youth don't know how to balance the two!
- Take youth to a variety of things—hikes and fun stuff too.
- Connected to other adults (non-paid)
- Be there past the 9 to 5—half work 9 to 5 and half work 4 to 9

**Question: Who is Kent Danielson?**

- Kent is a psychotherapist for Aboriginal youth—works for MCFD with youth who have suicidal tendencies

**Question: How can the organizations that are part of the collective impact better work together to support youth to reach their goals?**

- Ask youth what their goals are—would you like to choose from this list?
- Youth representation—youth on staff
- Help youth focus on their wellness—maybe use youth journey map from First Nations Health Authority (online tool)

**Question: Was there any youth that received services from VACFSS? If so were VACFSS services different from MCFD?**

- Yes and there are differences: VACFSS tracks success and wellness—always looking for improvements; homecoming—connection to reserve and respect culture; one time per month youth make a presentation at the Foster Parent orientation; social workers meet with youth once a month whereas MCFD does this every three months; VACFSS YAC helps with policy change within organization

# Answers to your questions...continued

**Question: If you could sit down with one person involved in the 'system' (ie. Minister MCFD) and ask them anything, who would it be and what would you ask? Do you think they would listen or it would make a difference?**

- MCFD Minister—currently have limited youth engagement with a YAC that meets 3 times per year—Ask for meaningful youth engagement in decision-making and to inform policy—why are VCOs treated differently than CCOs?
- We want the HART's ladder of participation used
- Minister of Finance—what's up with money?
- Minister of Education—why no funding for school? Its so expensive to go back and finish
- Would they listen? Maybe—we are hopeful based on what we saw in Olympia—in BC it seems young people are not given a chance to meet with elected officials

**Question: What are some of the most important things that could be done/changed for children/youth in care BEFORE the time one ages out? Are there things that can happen much earlier while still in care?**

- Independent living, youth agreements: earlier to instill responsible mindset; more transitional housing + better staffed
- Talk about planning for 'aging out' sooner to better prepare youth; expectation for youth should not be welfare after aging out
- Medical benefits (dental, optical, etc.) should not be limited; treat PTSD and provide tools for dealing with stress, depression/anxiety
- Stress the outcome of not valuing education = hard to get a job and have a happy life—need high school diploma; support stability in schools—when youth move homes they should not have to move schools too; don't view alternate schools as bad as they are supportive—have more options for alternate schools and give the option to choose them
- Biological family mediation or counselling—youth often return home after aging out
- Ask runaways (from foster families) why they decided to run away (usually are simply returned to the home without questions)
- Celebrating with/for youth (birthdays, successes); Finding out youth's passions early on to begin mastery creating purpose/belonging

**Question: How can we best engage youth when we as service providers come across a lot of resistance for help or guidance?**

- Be open minded and have an open door policy; be persistent and consistent; first offer food, then your ear—maybe they'll open up. When they do, ASK what they'd like to work on. If they don't know, they need guidance, list suggestions, but make sure this is the last thing you do, not the first! Be loyal to the youth!
- Loyalty
- Criminals can get pardoned for their mistakes, why cant youth have something similar so their 'bad' actions don't follow them after they've proven to have changed + TRACK THE GOOD AND BAD—what about more 'grey matter' influencing positivity!

**Question: the Public Guardian and Trustee's office offers educational bursaries for all CCOs—they send social workers a letter a few months before your 19th birthday to do a final review (outstanding legal or financial issues) and to tell you about the bursary. Does this information get passed along to you? If not, what is a better way for us to get this information to you?**

- We have not heard of this—posters in offices that are BIG, bright and noticeable might help—also facebook, email
- Maybe send a letter to last known mailing address from SW BEFORE aging out—at age 18 or earlier



- *Final Interim Report with evaluation and draft structure and governance*
- *Transition to McCreary Centre Society*



**We're connecting with other initiatives to figure out how our puzzle pieces fit!**  
Child & Youth Mental Health Collaborative  
Youth Matters—Ray Cam

For more information contact: Lucie Honey-Ray, Project Manager, (604) 807-2422—lhoneyray@gmail.com

