

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 1

BC Health and Wellness
YAC launched

Page 2–3

Youth researchers conduct
youth vaping during
COVID project

Page 4

Pets and their young people

Page 5

Virtual YRA

Page 6

Longitudinal study of youth
aging out of care

Page 7

AGM
Trevor Coburn memorial
grants

Page 8

YAC

Page 9

Taking Pride

Page 10

TRRUST collective impact

Page 11

BC AHS
Data access

Page 12

Evaluation update



@mccrearycentre

3552 East Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V5K 2A7

Tel. 604-291-1996

Fax. 604-291-7308

mccreary@mcs.bc.ca

www.mcs.bc.ca

BC HEALTH AND WELLNESS YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL LAUNCHED



We had an exciting start to 2021 with the launch of the BC Health and Wellness Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The provincial YAC

was developed in partnership with the BC Ministries of Health and Education, and will play an important role in informing BC government decisions by raising the views of young people.

The YAC is made up of 18 young people from 12 different communities across BC, and each of BC's five regions is represented. The young people have committed to serving on the YAC for the next two years. Several members of the YAC have already worked for McCreary as youth researchers on the vaping during COVID survey and we are excited that they are continuing their association with us.

The provincial YAC are working together to provide youth perspectives on topics relating to health and wellness, and have initially focused on vaping and tobacco use.

Monthly meetings are being held virtually, and the group will be joined by BC government officials to hear updates and to share feedback. So far, YAC members have provided input into a BC government media campaign to address youth vaping and a curriculum for Grades 8–10 students created by the BC Lung Association. They also met with Jonathan Robinson, Executive Director of the Healthy Living and Health Promotion Branch of the BC Ministry of



BC Health and Wellness YAC hoodies.

Health to hear about the Ministry's goals for the YAC. Jonathan shared his team's interest in gaining the perspectives of YAC members and commitment to taking action on the ideas they present.

Members of the group have also been getting to know each other, hearing about the issues important to youth in their respective communities, and developing strategies to collaborate safely and effectively online. We hope to meet in person when public health guidelines state it is safe to do so, but for now we are relishing the opportunity to come together virtually from these otherwise distant places.

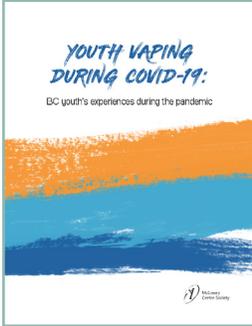
"I'm looking forward to being part of the discussion and getting to know what the BC government needs to know about how to reach teens."

"I'm looking forward to making a positive impact on my community and having a voice for the youth here. The opportunity to work with youth like myself is very exciting for me!"

– Provincial YAC members



YOUTH RESEARCHERS CONDUCT VAPING DURING COVID PROJECT



McCreary's youth vaping during COVID project has entered its knowledge transfer and dissemination phase. The project is sharing data—through a full report, webinar presentations for youth and adult audiences, a video, and an infographic—which

provides a current and up-to-date understanding of vaping during the COVID-19 pandemic from a youth's perspective.

In the spring of 2020, an advisory group comprised of experts in youth vaping was convened, and youth researchers from across BC were recruited and trained to co-develop and deliver online surveys to their peers. A total of three surveys were distributed, with data collection occurring in the months of June, September and December 2020.

A total of 3,580 surveys were collected between June and December from youth aged 12–19, including youth who had vaped and youth who had never vaped. Youth from different backgrounds and perspectives participated and there was representation from all five of BC's Health Authority regions.

Webinar presentations

Presentations of the results are scheduled for:

- March 17th at 9am
- March 18th at 9am and noon
- March 31st at 9am
- April 1st at 3pm

Details on how to join a webinar can be found at www.mcs.bc.ca/youth_vaping_survey.

A message from the youth researchers:

We are a diverse group of 28 youth aged 12–18 from all over BC, including places like Cranbrook, Dawson Creek, Victoria, and Coquitlam.

Our overall role was to give input into the development of the surveys at each of the time-points and connect our communities to the surveys when they were ready to be shared with youth. We also reviewed the survey results after each survey round, and we are now playing an active role in sharing the final results.

We were originally hired in May 2020 and participated in a training session to learn about community-based research, including survey creation and research ethics.

Our process was to meet before each survey to review and suggest changes to the questions and brainstorm places to share the survey link. We met again after each survey to review the results, suggest additional analyses, pick out key messages, and debrief about the data collection process.

Our aim is to use the information gathered to better support youth in BC to make the decisions that are right for them when it comes to vaping, and to ensure the right resources are in place for all youth.

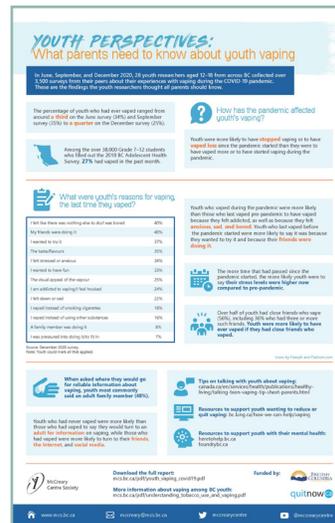
"I personally wanted to be involved because moving into high school I noticed lots of people turning to vaping as a result of stress or peer pressure and I wanted to see what motivates people to vape. I also wanted to learn about how to support youth that struggle with vaping, how to spread awareness and information about vaping to youth that need it."

– Youth researcher

Continued on next page...

Key findings from the surveys:

- Data collected in June, September and December showed that around a quarter to a third of youth had tried vaping.
- On all three surveys, youth were more likely to have stopped vaping or to have vaped less since the pandemic started than they were to have vaped more or to have started vaping. However, by December, there was an increase in the percentage who started vaping and who vaped more in the past three months, and a decrease in the percentage who reported vaping less.
- Youth who had last vaped pre-pandemic were more likely than those who vaped during the pandemic to report it was because they wanted to try it and because their friends were doing it. Youth who vaped during the pandemic were more likely to have vaped because they felt addicted, were vaping instead of smoking cigarettes, as well as for emotional reasons such as feeling anxious, sad, and bored.
- The more time that had passed since the start of the pandemic, the more likely youth were to report their stress levels were currently higher compared to pre-pandemic.
- Around 1 in 5 youth reported that returning to school in September had affected their vaping, most commonly because their school-related stress had increased, or because they were again socializing with peers who vaped after an extended leave due to the pandemic.
- The vast majority of youth who vaped (93%) had shared a vaping device, including 56% who shared one during the pandemic. The more frequently youth vaped, the more likely they were to share a device.



Youth researchers selected key findings they felt were important for parents to know.

- Among youth who vaped daily in the past month, three quarters (75%) had their first vape within 30 minutes of waking up, including around a third (34%) who had their first vape within five minutes of waking up.
- Youth who had never vaped were more likely than those who had vaped to report trusting vaping information that came from health experts, their school, and family. In contrast, youth who had vaped were more likely to trust health information that came from social media and vaping companies.

The report *Youth vaping during COVID-19: BC youth's experiences during the pandemic* is available at www.mcs.bc.ca/download_resources, as is an infographic which highlights the findings youth felt were most important for parents to know. A video for students will also be available soon on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/McCrearyCentre).

The project was supported by the BC Ministry of Health and the BC Lung Association.



PETS AND THEIR YOUNG PEOPLE



In the Fall, McCreary released *Connections and companionship II* in partnership with Paws for Hope Animal Foundation. The report is a sequel to a 2016 report which was the first in the province to look at the relationship between adolescents and their pets.

The 2020 report includes data from the 2018 BC Adolescent Health Survey (BC AHS) and from a 2020 survey specifically about youth’s relationship with their pet.

Results in *Connections and companionship II* showed that around half of BC youth had a pet, which came with benefits as well as challenges. Benefits included being physically active, youth feeling like they were skilled at something, and feeling connected to nature. Challenges associated with having a pet included finding and maintaining housing, missing out on leisure activities, and some youth not accessing needed medical care and mental health service for themselves.

McCreary’s Executive Director Annie Smith and former McCreary Youth Foundation Coordinator Kathy Powelson, now the Executive Director and founder of the Paws for Hope Animal Foundation, have been sharing the results widely since the report was released, including a series of regional webinars to youth service providers.

Discussions generated through the webinars have shown a lack of consistency in policies towards pets, and have highlighted many of the struggles youth-serving agencies are having developing pet policies which are flexible enough to meet the needs of the young people they serve, whilst also ensuring the safety of humans and animals, and conformity with licensing regulations. These conversations have led to a student practicum placement with students from Douglas College conducting a global environmental scan of available pet policies and procedures, which could be adapted for use in BC.



Paws for Hope released a series of social media messages to share key findings and to promote the launch of the report, *Connections and companionship II*.

A finding in the report has also led to another joint project with Paws for Hope. The report showed that many youth felt ill-prepared to care for their pet and noted they would have benefited from training which included tips on walking, grooming, and feeding their pet. The new project will support high school students to create a curriculum which they will deliver to elementary school students on how to care for pets.

A copy of the report *Connections and companionship II* is available at www.mcs.bc.ca/download_resources.

VIRTUAL YOUTH RESEARCH ACADEMY



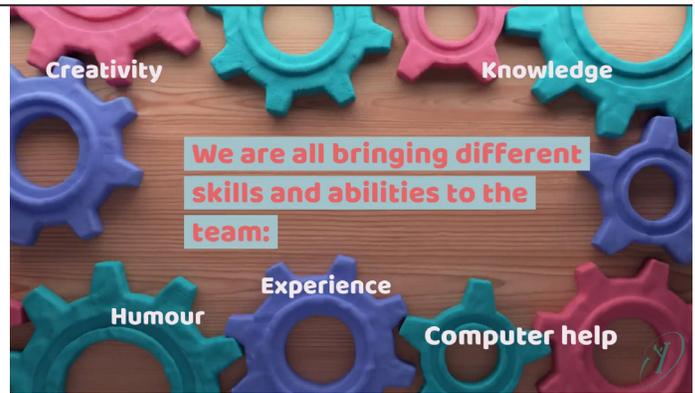
November 2020 brought the start of the fifth cohort of the Youth Research Academy (YRA), our first ever completely virtual cohort, as well as our first ever cohort made up of YRA alumni. Despite

the challenges of not being able to meet in person, members of the YRA have remained engaged and productive.

One of their first jobs was to launch the report *Supports in the spotlight: A youth-led research project into supporting BC youth in and from government care*. The report was primarily developed by previous cohorts of the YRA, and members of the current cohort created a webinar presentation and an infographic poster of the results to share the key findings. Their first two webinar presentations were attended by over 80 MCFD staff members, and were also attended by other interested youth service providers. The report, PowerPoint presentation, and poster can all be found on McCreary's website (www.mcs.bc.ca/download_resources). A short animation film of the results will be available soon.

Another opportunity to practice virtual presentation skills came in the form of a 'lightening talk' at an online conference hosted by UBC. The talk focused on the YRA's knowledge summary *Coping and hoping: Meaningful youth engagement practices that target low-resourced youth who use substances* which was originally created for the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA). Members of the YRA were able to present the highlights from the knowledge summary and hone their skills in creating succinct presentations!

On March 11th, the YRA co-hosted a successful webinar with CCSA, Foundry BC, and Alberta Health Services where they shared a more in-depth version of the presentation and participated in a panel. Over 120 people registered for the event and four members of the YRA presented their findings and answered a wide range of audience questions.



YRA members create a video outlining what they are bringing to the Academy and what they are hoping to get from it.

The YRA has been working on another literature review, this time looking at best practices for online youth engagement, as well as a toolkit for other organizations interested in engaging youth in research. They have also been continuing to work on their youth transitioning out of care study, including learning how to interpret data and read statistical output, writing up the findings in easy-to-understand language, creating tables and graphs from the results, and working on an interim report.

As with every cohort of the YRA, the current cohort began with participants making a video outlining what members are bringing to this experience and what they are hoping to get from it. Unlike other cohorts, this film could not be made with clay at the McCreary office, but a suitable online substitute was found! The film can be found on McCreary's YouTube channel www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQvQ7sAAnk4+&feature=youtu.be.

It has been a lot of work but we have had some fun too. In December, alumni from previous cohorts joined members of the current cohort for a virtual holiday celebration which included games of online Scattergories and Pictionary! It was fun to connect and have some laughs together, despite being apart. Although this cohort has had to operate differently, it has been amazing to be able to work together and learn how to continue to further the work of supporting youth in and from care in BC.



LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF YOUTH AGING OUT OF CARE

Since the middle of 2019, the YRA have been conducting a longitudinal study of BC youth transitioning out of government care and alternatives to care. Youth in the study have the option to complete a survey every six months, and some youth who have been with the study since the beginning have recently completed their fourth survey. The study is scheduled to continue through 2023.

As noted earlier, the YRA are currently working on their first interim report with the data collected so far, and will be completing a report each year until the study's completion.

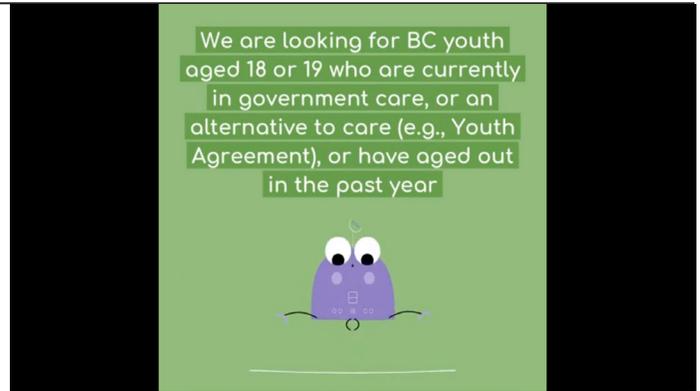
The pandemic has made it more difficult for the YRA to connect with youth who might be interested in joining the study. If you know youth in and from government care aged 18–20 who are transitioning out of care in the next year or have transitioned out of care in the past year, and who might be interested in participating in this anonymous and confidential survey, please share the links below.

The survey takes about 20 minutes to complete and asks questions about youth's background, health (including mental health and substance use), experiences in care, living situations, education, employment, money, goals, access to services and supports, strengths and needs, and experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Access the survey online

The survey for youth in care who are 18 or who are older and have had their care supports extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic is available at <https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/I/YouthTransitionTIME1>.

The survey for youth who are 19 or 20 and have transitioned out of care within the past year is available at <https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/I/YouthTransitionTIME2>.



A short video promoting the longitudinal study of youth aging out of care is available on McCreary's YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/McCrearyCentre.

Youth who complete the survey receive a \$20 e-gift card and have the option of completing follow-up surveys approximately every six months and receiving a \$20 e-gift card for each time point completed.

Check out this short video promoting the survey and please share it with anyone you think might be interested: www.youtube.com/watch?v=yV0unC9GhUc&t=4s.

This project has been approved by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Garrett at garrett@mcs.bc.ca or 604-291-1996 (ext. 222).

2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In November we held our first ever virtual AGM. It proved to be a huge success with 64 people in attendance—more than would ever fit in our building for an in-person event, and most of those in attendance stating they would prefer to attend events virtually in the future.

The AGM included a welcome address from Elder Bruce Robinson, a video message from Vancouver Whitecaps captain and McCreary Board member Russell Teibert (www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRzipKrszpE), and a presentation about the youth vaping survey by youth researcher Hannah Qin. The AGM felt very different to usual, not only because it was online but also because Trevor Coburn was not in attendance. It was therefore fitting that we launched the Trevor Coburn Memorial Grants at the AGM.

TREVOR COBURN MEMORIAL GRANTS

In August last year we said our final goodbye to a dear member of the McCreary family, Trevor Coburn. Trevor was involved with McCreary for over 15 years as a member and peer mentor of McCreary's Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC), an adult support at our Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges by-youth-for-youth health conference, and as a researcher and facilitator on projects relating to homelessness and substance use.

In honour of Trevor's commitment to improving youth health in our province, McCreary has launched the Trevor Coburn Memorial Grants program. This grant program provides up to \$500 towards youth-led projects addressing one or more of the areas of youth health that Trevor was passionate about: Peer mentorship, youth homelessness, youth substance use, or any issue impacting youth in and from care. Projects must be led by youth between 12 and 29 years old and be supported by an organizational representative (such as a supervisor, youth transition worker, support worker, social worker, counsellor, teacher, adult mentor, etc.).



Screenshot from a video message from Vancouver Whitecaps captain and McCreary Board member, Russell Teibert, which was played at the 2020 AGM.



McCreary staff present highlights from the year at the 2020 AGM.

Apply for a grant or make a donation

To apply for a grant or to make a donation to support the Trevor Coburn Memorial Grants Program, please visit www.mcs.bc.ca/trevor_coburn_memorial_grants.

For questions or to learn more, send us an email at mccreary@mcs.bc.ca or give us a call at 604-291-1996.

YOUTH ADVISORY & ACTION COUNCIL



With the start of the new year, McCreary's long serving Youth Advisory and Action Council (YAC) continues to meet virtually and make progress on our ongoing projects. One benefit to virtual meetings has been the large influx of new members from across the Lower Mainland, and we are very excited to have welcomed so many new faces to our team! In December, the YAC joined the YRA in a virtual holiday party, which included an evening of festive cookie decorating and games.

The YAC recently collaborated with Options for Sexual Health for the 2021 Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week, which focused on youth this year. The YAC compiled questions on sexual health based on youth comments on the 2018 BC AHS. These were used in a video interview with a nurse and a staff member from Sex Sense, which Options hosted on Facebook Live. The YAC also created a sexual health poster, which shared important statistics from the 2018 BC AHS. (www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/2018bcahs_sexual_health_poster.pdf)

In addition to the sexual health poster, we added a few more posters to our 2018 BC AHS poster series. These shared key findings in a 'by youth for youth' format on the topics of mental health, substance use, and community connectedness.



Download the YAC's 2018 BC AHS poster series at: www.mcs.bc.ca/youth_resources.



Students in Sicamous launched a nine-day Digital Detox Challenge with support from a Youth Action Grant.

The YAC is currently working on a sports-related injuries infographic, which aims to share findings from the 2018 BC AHS and raise awareness about sports-related injury prevention in organized sports.

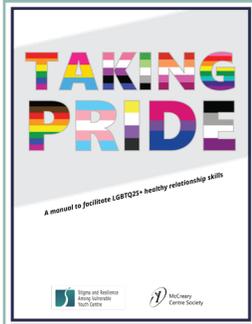
The YAC still encourages youth to apply for the Youth Action Grant (YAG) program! These grants provide up to \$500 to youth-led initiatives responding to the key findings from the 2018 BC AHS and which contribute to improving the health and wellness of BC youth aged 12–19.

The YAC has recently funded several exciting YAG projects, including a Digital Detox event at Eagle River Secondary in Sicamous. The project was so successful it received media attention from various news outlets, including the youth project leader being interviewed by the CBC! Another project funded in December was a sock and mitten drive, and mask-making workshop. This was put on by the Roundhouse Youth Council and all donations were collected for homeless and street-involved youth.

Any youth wanting to apply for a YAG can fill out the short application form available at www.mcs.bc.ca/youth_action_grants or by emailing yag@mcs.bc.ca. Projects must address one of the key findings from the 2018 BC AHS, and be supported by an adult.

The YAC are also available to facilitate an interactive grant-writing workshop. For more information on this workshop, or about the Youth Action Grants program, contact yag@mcs.bc.ca or call us at 604-291-1996.

TAKING PRIDE: LGBTQ2S+ HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WORKSHOPS



Taking Pride is a product of our partnership with UBC’s Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre (SARAVYC). The interactive curriculum is aimed at high school students and has been developed with input from LGBTQ2S+ youth from

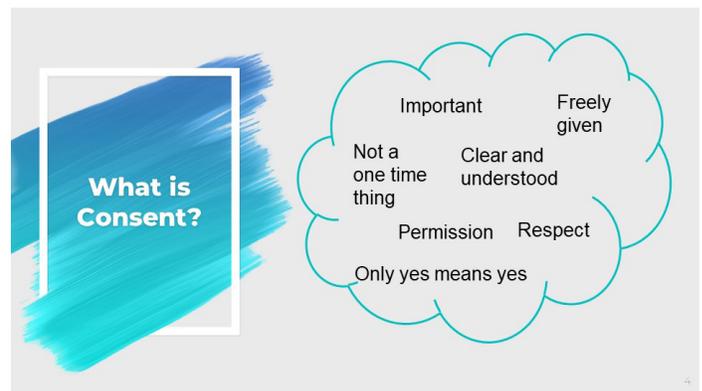
around the province. The curriculum focuses on building healthy relationships skills for LGBTQ2S+ youth. The six 40-minute modules cover topics such as setting boundaries, communicating through conflict, consent, recognizing unhealthy relationship patterns, and being a good friend/ally. Each module is co-facilitated by a youth and an adult ally.

The curriculum was originally designed to be delivered in-person but this fall, an LGBTQ2S+ drop-in group from West Vancouver piloted our virtual version. It was exciting to be able to see how the adaptation worked, and to be able to have some real-time feedback on activities that still needed tweaking! The pilot was facilitated by a YRA member and a McCreary staff, with youth participants and their adult supports. It was a valuable (and fun!) experience and definitely improved the virtual version of the curriculum.

Feedback from youth who took part in the pilot process...

“The boundary thermometer game is good! It’s easy and gets people talking.”

“It’s good to have different interpretations of things with two different facilitators.”



Slides from Module 4, which engages LGBTQ2S+ youth to explore the topic of consent in relationships.

With the pilot completed, we were able to start reaching out more broadly and have since run the virtual curriculum with GSAs on Vancouver Island and in North Vancouver. Groups are also being scheduled in Fort Nelson and Burnaby. It’s been a great experience for our YRA co-facilitators, and there have been interesting conversations with the youth participants around consent, setting boundaries, and how difficult it can be to recognize potentially unhealthy relationship patterns.

If you are running a virtual group for LGBTQ2S+ youth, or you know someone in your community who might be interested in participating in this curriculum, please email katie@mcs.bc.ca.

TRRUST COLLECTIVE IMPACT



McCreary continues to support TRRUST Collective Impact as its backbone agency, coordinating logistics, and securing and distributing funds on behalf of the collective. The collective is comprised of over 70 agencies working together to improve outcomes for youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver. A major focus over the past year has been to support young people with care experience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Access to technology was identified early on in the pandemic as a crucial need to help youth stay connected to family, friends, and support systems. McCreary supported TRRUST to secure 98 phones with data plans and purchase 130 laptops which were distributed to youth in and from care through partner agencies.



Learn more about the TRRUST Emergency Youth Housing Subsidy at www.mcs.bc.ca/trrust_opportunities.

With the support of McCreary, TRRUST was additionally able to secure two large grants to establish an Emergency Youth Housing Subsidy program to address housing insecurity issues for youth in and from care. This subsidy is currently available to young people (up to age 30) with care experience who are facing urgent housing-related financial need.

TRRUST's other two funds, the Opportunity Fund and the Graduation Fund, continue to support young people with care experience in accessing meaningful opportunities and celebrating large milestones such as graduation. For information on the Emergency Youth Housing Subsidy, Opportunity Fund, or Graduation Fund, please visit: www.mcs.bc.ca/trrust_opportunities.



TRRUST partner agencies distributed 130 laptops to youth in and from care to help them to stay connected during the pandemic.

TRRUST's Collective Young Leaders adapted their Journey Maps presentation for an online audience for the first time in February. They have also continued to meet monthly and support the work of each of the five clusters (working groups).

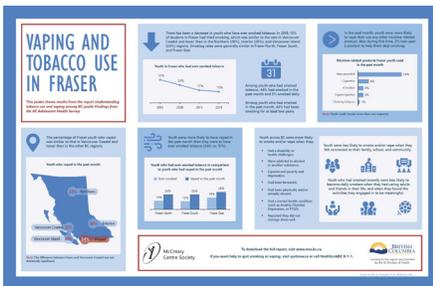
The collective holds quarterly gatherings for all partners. The last two virtual Collective Gatherings have featured exceptional keynote speakers in Louisa Mitchell, Chief Executive of West London Zone, a London-based Collective Impact initiative seeking to improve educational outcomes for vulnerable students, and Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth, the Representative for Children and Youth in BC who shared key messages from her recent report *A Parent's Duty: Government's Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood*.

To learn more about TRRUST, to get involved, or to be added to the distribution list, please visit www.mcs.bc.ca/trrust or reach out to TRRUST Project Manager, Erica Mark, at erica_trrust@outlook.com.

BC ADOLESCENT HEALTH SURVEY

Recent publications using data from the 2018 BC AHS include reports, fact sheets and posters. All resources are available free to download or hard copies can be ordered at mccreary@mcs.bc.ca.

Understanding tobacco use and vaping among BC youth This report takes an in-depth look at tobacco use among BC adolescents (aged 12–19), including trends over the past 15 years, the use of different smoking products, and risk and protective factors for regular smoking. It also considers vaping and how that differs from the use of cigarettes and other nicotine products. Five regional infographic posters of the results are also available, as is a poster highlighting the associations between smoking, vaping and sports participation.



Download regional infographic posters at: www.mcs.bc.ca/download_resources.

School commute fact sheet considers the length of a student’s school commute, and the type of transportation they use, in relation to health and well-being.

(www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/2018bcahs_factsheet_7.pdf)

Volunteering fact sheet looks at the potential benefits of volunteering regularly.

(www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/2018bcahs_factsheet_8.pdf)

Supportive teachers, school counsellors and youth workers posters Each poster looks at youth’s experiences with supportive teachers, school counsellors, or youth workers, and highlights the positive role that these adults can play in youth’s lives.

(www.mcs.bc.ca/supporting_bc_youth_poster_series)

DATA ACCESS

McCreary’s survey data is a rich source of information on adolescent health in BC, and despite the pandemic we have continued to welcome a large number of external researchers and students to conduct projects with the data.

One of our long-standing academic partnerships is with UBC’S Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Centre (SARAVYC). Members of the team continued their work with the BC AHS data on several projects including those focused on exploring the impact of GSAs (Gay Straight Alliances or Gender Sexuality Alliances); trends in sports participation; as well as trends in East Asian, South Asian, and Indigenous youth health. The Centre is also partnering with McCreary on a report about transgender and non-binary youth health, and a follow up to the 2007 *Not yet equal* study which looked at the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual students.

Another UBC collaboration with Drs. Jennifer Lloyd and Jennifer Baumbusch and PhD student Danjie Zou also continued, and they recently had a paper published in the *Journal of Community Psychology* called, “Community lives of adolescents across multiple special needs: Discrimination, community belonging, trusted people, leisure activities, and friends”. The paper, which used the 2013 BC AHS data, is available at <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22498>. The group is currently working on new projects using the 2018 data.

The winter has also seen a number of students and health professionals begin their projects. One is using the 2018 BC AHS to study the health care needs of youth in government care. Students from both UBC and SFU are also looking at data over several cycles of the BC AHS to study school climate victimization and the relationship between body mass index (BMI) and experiences of bullying, discrimination, and suicidality. Another SFU student is using data from both the most recent BC AHS and Homeless and Street-involved Youth Survey (HSIYS) to look at risk and resilience in sexual and gender minority youth.



EVALUATION UPDATE

Over these past few months, we have continued to evaluate a variety of youth health initiatives of other agencies, as well as our own, through online platforms. For example, we did an internal evaluation of the youth researchers' experience working on the vaping during COVID project. In response to a question about what they liked most about taking part in the project, youth researchers commonly identified learning about the research process and contributing to community-based research, as well as reviewing the survey findings, and the opportunity to engage with other youth across the province who had similar interests.

Most of the youth researchers also reported gaining skills and knowledge in areas such as community-based research (93%) and research ethics (e.g., confidentiality; 80%). Virtually all youth also reported at least some improvement in their communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. Most youth did not report experiencing challenges to participating in virtual meetings for this project or in administering the vaping surveys. However, a few identified difficulties with encouraging other young people to complete the surveys, and noted that some of their peers were reluctant to participate because they did not feel online surveys were anonymous or secure.

Other evaluation-related activities for community agencies have included writing literature reviews of promising practices relating to youth mentoring programs and to harm-reduction approaches when working with youth. These literature reviews are intended to highlight benchmark practices so that agencies can carry out internal reviews of their own programs, and/or to help guide future external evaluations.

What youth researchers gained from their involvement in the vaping project...

"I really enjoyed the research experience I obtained from this project."

"I enjoyed taking part in this, and think it was great preparation for future jobs."

"I really enjoyed meeting other youth and sharing experiences about what was happening in their community and all the data we were able to collect about all youth throughout B.C."

"I helped out my community and participated in a really cool project!"

"I got to earn valuable experience and help the community."

"I wanted work experience and to do something interesting and meaningful during lockdown, and that's what I got from taking part."

"I hoped that I would be able to identify problems around youth vaping in our province and that is what we were able to achieve."

We are also continuing to collect evaluation data for various initiatives, such as a province-wide mindfulness program; a skills-development and employment program for refugee and immigrant youth; and a series of projects focusing on preventing potentially risky alcohol use among girls.

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.



www.mcs.bc.ca



604-291-1996



mccreary@mcs.bc.ca



McCreary
Centre Society

3552 East Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V5K 2A7