



'A Picture of Health' Launch



McCreary Research Associate Dr. Maya Peled presents AHS findings

The 2008 B.C. Adolescent Health Survey (AHS) report was launched at the VanCity theatre on April 14th. The well attended event attracted the attention of several television and radio networks, and received extensive coverage across the province and even as far as Bermuda!

Copies of the report, *'A Picture of Health: Highlights from the 2008 BC Adolescent Health Survey'* can be downloaded at www.mcs.bc.ca

Regional AHS Reports

Following the release of *'A Picture of Health'*, McCreary has been working to complete 14 individual reports for the province's Health Service Delivery Areas. The local reports have been completed for the North Shore/ Coast Garibaldi, Fraser North and Fraser South/East regions. Electronic and hard copies will be available soon.

'A Seat at the Table: A Review of Youth Engagement in Vancouver'

McCreary recently completed a review of youth engagement in the decision making process in organizations across Vancouver. Through focus groups, phone interviews and written questionnaires, information was collated and a final report

produced. The report showcases the best practices of organizations, agencies and government bodies who are giving youth a voice and providing youth with opportunities to impact their city's future policies and planning.

'A Seat at the Table: A Review of Youth Engagement in Vancouver' includes a literature review, a profile of youth engagement in Vancouver and offers a checklist for organizations engaging young people in decision making processes. The report will be available in late July.

In the Community

PHAC Youth Engagement Project

With evidence from the National Street Youth Surveillance Project showing a rise in STI's among street youth, the Public Health Agency of Canada commissioned McCreary to facilitate a youth engagement training workshop in Ottawa. At the end of the sessions each province had a plan to develop youth engagement initiatives. Following the workshop, McCreary developed a specific toolkit for each site to engage youth in the project and improve their sexual health knowledge.

Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement

McCreary's partnership with the Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement (CEYE) continues to develop. In addition to two McCreary Youth Advisory Council members attending the second national Young Decision Makers Meeting in Ontario, McCreary staff joined CEYE partners from across Canada in a three day research and youth engagement planning meeting. A number of exciting project ideas were generated and as a result, CEYE partners from Brock University will be at McCreary through the summer as part of an in-depth study using the youth engagement questions from the AHS.

Next Steps Workshops

The Next Steps is a project that offers an opportunity for youth to discuss the results of McCreary's research, prioritize issues, and plan health improvement projects in their communities.

McCreary is currently developing a three month version of the Next Steps in which youth get the opportunity to create clay-mation and other multi media messages about youth health and



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also deliver their own sustainable projects to address the major health issues they have identified in their community.

A condensed version will also be available for teachers, youth workers and health professionals to deliver in classrooms.

For further details or to request a Next Steps workshop in your community, contact sherry@mcs.bc.ca.

Aboriginal Next Steps

After a year and a half of organizing, young people in each of the 10 communities participating in the Aboriginal Next Steps are actively working towards the completion of their youth led community projects. All projects will be completed by September 30th, 2009. Youth in Lytton and Bella Bella successfully implemented the first part of their projects as they coordinated photojournalism, poetry, art installations, hip hop & beatmaking, turntablism, 'Zine', self-discovery and empowerment workshops/training in their community. Youth participant's feedback included appreciating learning technical skills and "everyone gathering together to learn." All the participants of photojournalism stated that they want to continue writing poems, doing photography, art installations and/or collaborating with adults in the community on future projects. Congratulations Lytton & Bella Bella!



Aboriginal Next Steps YAC Jackie and Cherish meet Deputy BC Representative for Children and Youth, Andrew Robson.

The Aboriginal Next Steps Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members have stepped up and are the amazing leaders and/or major supporters of the youth-led projects. YAC from three communities (Nisga'a, Bella Bella, and Courtenay) skillfully presented their community projects at two conferences - one provincial conference and one national conference.

Also, we are delighted to announce that four films made by youth as part of the project were screened in Thailand as part of the Bangkok International Harm Reduction Festival.

Student Placements

McCreary currently has four Langara nursing students on their research practicum placement. These students have been busy organizing the results from the 2008 BC Adolescent Health Survey into data booklets for the 49 participating school districts. Future student contributions include involvement in the PLEA project evaluation, and continued participation in the AHS. Experience in these areas provides insight into the research process, which enables the translation of data into health promoting initiatives.

McCreary's Student Group

We have a number of achievements by members of McCreary's Student Group to celebrate, and two new members to welcome. Yuko Homma (UBC School of Nursing doctoral student) successfully defended her dissertation proposal on April 21st, and has begun analyses on cultural connectedness, sexual health, and risk and protective factors for East Asian teens. Kallista Bell (SFU Psychology masters student) received a SSHRC graduate award, and is planning a thesis on LGB youth suicide. Melissa Northcott (Carleton Psychology masters student) will complete her thesis on sexual risk factors among street-involved youth this summer. Brittany Bingham (SFU Health Sciences masters student) has been accepted into the PhD program at SFU. And we would like to welcome Leonieke van Boekel (University of Maastricht, Netherlands, Public Health masters student working with faculty in the UBC School of Population and Public Health); Leonieke is beginning her analyses about sex under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We also welcomed another new member, Gina Martin



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(UVic Geography masters student), who is currently preparing her proposal on the geographic distribution of positive health indicators.

Community Research Partnership

The community research partnership between McCreary, PLEA Community Services Society, and Douglas College (Faculty of Child, Family and Community Studies) is continuing to carry out exciting research projects. Douglas College students are using PLEA's data on service recipients to answer important questions about the high-risk youth who access PLEA services and the types of services that these youth benefit from. The most recent practicum students focused on whether youth who receive additional support by PLEA staff to complete their Community Work Service hours have higher completion rates compared to youth who do not receive this support. McCreary is looking forward to welcoming the next cohort of Douglas College practicum students.

Program Evaluation

McCreary is carrying out independent program evaluations for PLEA, Directions Youth Services Centre, and Watari's Transitions to Independence Program (TTIP) for Pregnant and Parenting Teens. By surveying high-risk youth involved with these organizations, the goal is to gain a better understanding of the services and programs that these youth need for supporting their healthy development and for promoting best practice within the organizations.

Please be Patient

McCreary's website is in need of an overhaul. We are currently working on a new site which we hope to have up and running by the fall. If you have any strong views on how the new site should look, please complete the survey at the current website: www.msc.bc.ca

Presentations

UBC Celebrate Research Week- SARAVYC

On March 9th, 2009, McCreary's research partner, the Stigma and Resilience Among Vulnerable Youth Coalition (SARAVYC) hosted a day of presentations for the community at Robson Square in Vancouver as a part of UBC's "Celebrate Research Week." Seven of the 12 presentations showcased McCreary-SARAVYC joint projects. Jayson Anderson and Christopher Drozda presented the main findings from the "It's Not What You Think" report on the sexual exploitation of youth in BC, and Laura MacKay highlighted the gaps in services for boys and young men who are sexually exploited in her presentation. Annie Smith gave a brief summary of the "Moving Upstream" report about Aboriginal street-involved and marginalized youth, and Elizabeth Saewyc presented, "Stigma on the Street: LGBTQ marginalized and street-involved youth in BC". Stephanie Martin shared the focus group analyses from the Enacted Stigma project, which brought research back to lesbian, gay, bisexual teens and youth workers for their solutions on how to make schools safer places. Finally, Yuko Homma reported how harassment and stigma are linked to problem substance use for Asian sexual minority youth, also as part of the Enacted Stigma project. The presentations were well received and people from the community in attendance were interested to know more details, and how these findings might support the work they are doing with youth.

A look at some recent presentations

Peled, M., Smith, A., & the McCreary Centre Society (October, 2008). A review of alternative education programs in BC. Poster presented at the 7th International Conference on Urban Health, Vancouver, BC.

Smith, A., & Peled, M. (October, 2008). Overcoming the odds: Research evidence on the education, housing and support of young parents in BC. Oral presentation at the Young Parent Program Conference, Victoria, BC.

Smith, A., & Peled, M. (October, 2008). Research on the education, challenges & support of young parents in BC. Oral presentation at the annual meeting of the Federation of Child & Family Services of BC, Vancouver, BC.



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Stewart, D & Smith, A. - Excitement, concern and opportunity: The effects of the 2010 Olympics on the lives of BC Youth – BCEOHRN, May 2009

New publications

Smith, A., Stewart, D., Peled, M., Poon C, Saewyc, E. and the McCreary Centre Society. (2009) 'A Picture of Health: Highlights from the 2008 BC Adolescent Health Survey', Vancouver, BC : McCreary Centre Society

Poon, C., Saewyc, E., Homma, Y., Clark, T. (2009). 'Reducing problem substance use in Asian sexual minority and heterosexual youth'. Journal of Adolescent Health, 44, S6.

Saewyc, E. (2009). 'Alcohol and other drug use among BC students: Myths and realities'. Visions, BC's Mental Health and Addictions Journal, 5(2), 8-9.

MacKay, L. (2009). 'School connectedness: It matters to student health'. Visions, BC's Mental Health and Addictions Journal, 5(2), 18-19.

Saewyc, E.M., Brunanski, D., Bingham, D., Hunt, S., Northcott, M., Smith, A., & the McCreary Centre Society. (2009). 'Moving Upstream: The Health of Aboriginal Marginalized and Street-Involved Youth in BC', Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society

Partner With Us Today!

The support of government, business and community members is critical as we look toward funding more priority initiatives, conducting future research and implementing community-based youth leadership projects. McCreary needs your support to ensure that we can continue to promote the health development of young people and their communities.

Donation Form:

The McCreary Centre Society (MCS) is a not-for-profit organization that is committed to improving the lives of BC youth. This organization has a 30-year tradition of developing youth engagement and leadership models, engaging in research and community-based projects and ensuring that the voices of youth are heard by policy makers and program planners.

I would like to contribute to the McCreary Centre Society

Name Address.....

Postal Code..... Phone NumberEmail.....

Enclosed, please find my donation of:

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$150 Other _____

Please send donations and forms to: McCreary Centre Society, 3552 E. Hastings, Vancouver, BC, V5K 2A7 (Registered Charity # 1294218632 RR0001) A tax receipt will be issued to acknowledge your generosity. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of young people in BC.

