Time Out II

A PROFILE OF BC YOUTH IN CUSTODY

The McCreary Centre Society

The McCreary Centre Society
3552 East Hastings St. Vancouver, B.C. V5K 2A7
www.mcs.bc.ca

Time Out II:
A Profile of BC Youth in Custody

© McCreary Centre Society, 2005

10 digit ISBN: 1-895438-72-1
13 digit ISBN: 978-1-895438-72-7

3552 East Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V5K 2A7
Tel: 604-291-1996
Fax: 604-291-7308
E-mail: mccreary@mcs.bc.ca
www.mcs.bc.ca

The McCreary Centre Society is a non-government, non-profit organization committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, education and community-based projects. Founded in 1977, the Society sponsors and promotes a wide range of activities and research to address unmet health needs of young people.

Areas of interest include:

- Health promotion
- Health risk behaviours
- Youth participation and leadership skills development

Project Team

Aileen Murphy
Managing Director

Minda Chittenden
Research Associate

Sarah Haanstra
Research Assistant

Jennifer Cameron
Administrative Assistant

Alison Liebel
Communications Coordinator

Lisa May
Communications Consultant

Elizabeth Saewyc
Methods and Measurement Consultant

Suggested Citation:

Murphy, A., Chittenden, M., & The McCreary Centre Society (2005). *Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody*. Vancouver, BC. The McCreary Centre Society.

Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody was written by Lisa May and designed by Alison Liebel. Cover photo by John Crosby.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Charisse Giarraputo, Youth Custody Services, Youth Justice Policy and Program Support, Ministry of Children and Family Development, and Mark Gosse, Executive Director, Youth Custody Services, Ministry of Children and Family Development, for their support and advice.

McCreary appreciates the cooperation of the custody centre directors and staff:

Anita McDonnell, Mark Caros and Corrine Goldsmith at the Burnaby Youth Custody Centre; Blade Tickner, Paige Mashford, and Hilary McIntyre at the Victoria Youth Custody Centre; and Jim Arnold at the Prince George Youth Custody Centre.

Thank you to the youth from the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks who provided valuable feedback on the custody survey questionnaire.

The McCreary Centre Society wishes to acknowledge and thank the young people who participated in the survey. Their willingness to share their life experiences has made this report possible.

Funding for the Youth in Custody Survey was provided by Youth Justice Services, BC Ministry of Children and Family Development

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the official policy of the Province of British Columbia.

Table of Contents

Introduction 4

Key findings 6

About the youth custody survey 8

The youth justice system 10

BC youth in custody 13

Physical health 15

Emotional health 17

Risky behaviours 20

Family and social support 24

School and community 28

Violence and safety 30

Life on the inside 33

Aboriginal youth in custody 40

At higher risk 43

Recommendations for Action 46

McCreary Centre Society Publications 47

Introduction

Young offenders are often seen as either troubled adolescents or irredeemable villains

In Canada, debate about young offenders has often focused on two disparate perspectives: professionals and researchers who generally support rehabilitation, and public and political demands for harsher punishment. Traditionally, the courts have attempted to strike a balance between these two camps, to protect the public and give youth who commit crimes the opportunity for rehabilitation, healthy development, and a fresh start in life.

New legislation governing young offenders, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)*, came into effect on April 1, 2003. While encouraging moderate sentences and alternatives to imprisonment for less serious crimes, the legislation also changed provisions regarding adult sentences for young people who commit serious, violent crimes.

The number of youth in custody has significantly declined, from about 400 in 1996/97 to 220 in 2002/03, the year before the proclamation of the YCJA (2002/03). In the year following the YCJA, there was a further reduction in the average number of youth in custody to about 155. British Columbia has the lowest rate of youth incarceration in Canada. As a result, four of the seven youth custody centres have been closed since 2002 and the capacity of two of the three remaining centres has been reduced. While fewer youth are detained, those who are represent the most troubled youth committing the most serious crimes.

This report, *Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody*, presents the findings from a comprehensive survey of these youth, conducted by the McCreary Centre Society (MCS), a non-profit, non-government organization, with extensive expertise in youth health research. The Ministry of Children and Family Development, which has responsibility for youth custody centres in the province, requested the study to learn more about youth in custody and their experiences in the justice system. In all, 137 young people participated in the survey, answering questions about their health, their families, their behaviour, their experiences inside and outside the custody centre, and their expectations for the future.

Young offenders are often seen as either troubled adolescents or irredeemable villains. *Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody* focuses on the experiences of these youth, rather than their criminal activities. The goal is to provide insight into the characteristics of young people in B.C.'s custody centres; who they are and why, rather than what they did wrong. The study profiles some of the highest risk youth in B.C., who place the heaviest demands on judicial,

Youth in custody have optimistic aspirations for a better future

social, health, educational and community services, although they represent a small proportion of all adolescents in the province.

This study does not, however, answer complex questions central to the debate about appropriate treatment for young offenders; questions about what influences child and adolescent development; why some young people break the law; how much responsibility individual youth, families, schools and society bear for addressing the problem; what the capacity for change is among youth who commit crimes; and what works to help young offenders find a different path in life.

This report tells an extremely disturbing story. Many of the young people surveyed have survived physical or sexual abuse, and grew up in families where suicide, addiction and criminal activities were common. The majority has lived in government care at some time. Most have ongoing physical and mental health problems, and began using drugs and alcohol at an early age. Many of these young people are lonely and disconnected from their families and communities. Some have felt angry or hopeless enough to think about, or try, taking their own lives. Most of these youth have committed violent offences, and been incarcerated more than once.

To transcend their past and thrive in adult life, young people in custody must overcome enormous obstacles. Despite the difficulties they face, this survey shows that youth in custody have optimistic aspirations for a better future. In fact, most youth in custody want to attain the same goals in life that others want: a future that includes education, jobs, family and a home of their own.

These youth will have to work hard to create constructive change in their lives and make their dreams come true. So will the systems that serve them. Research has shown that health is affected by broader "social determinants," including employment opportunities, income, social supports, environment and early childhood development. Progressive government policies, social services and educational opportunities can improve these determinants of health, and help youth in custody develop healthier personal practices, coping skills, and support networks, factors that help protect youth from risk and provide stability.

The McCreary Centre Society hopes the information in this report will be helpful to those responsible for the well being of youth in the justice system, the families of these youth, and the young people themselves, as they strive to develop skills, surmount challenges, and achieve their aspirations.

Key Findings

Troubled lives

The second survey of youth in B.C. custody centres shows that most young people who commit serious crimes have experienced troubled, chaotic lives, with many obstacles impeding their healthy development. Most of these youth have engaged in risky behaviours, and became involved in criminal activities at a young age. Most have bullied or picked on others, and been in custody more than once. Compared to other youth in B.C., youth in custody are much more likely to have:

- A serious physical or mental health condition or disability, including Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, addictions, learning disabilities, depression, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.
- Less connection with their families and school, and fewer social supports.
- Parents or other family members with a history of substance use, mental health problems and criminal activities.
- Been physically abused, most often by a parent.
- Considered or attempted suicide.
- A family member who attempted or committed suicide, or has died in an accident, or from an overdose or violence.
- Lived in government care, in a foster or group home.
- Experienced severe emotional distress.
- Smoked, drank alcohol and used drugs.
- Been sexually active, starting at a younger age.
- Contracted a sexually transmitted infection (STI), been pregnant, or gotten someone pregnant.
- Been expelled or suspended from school.
- Carried weapons and been in fights.
- Experienced discrimination and homelessness.
- Injured themselves badly enough to need medical attention.
- Obtained income from illegal and street activities.

Interestingly, smoking among youth in custody has decreased since the first survey in 2000, reflecting the overall decrease in smoking among youth and adults in B.C., but the majority still smokes. Abuse rates have also declined somewhat since 2000, but are still extremely high.

Young people who commit serious crimes have led troubled, chaotic lives

Increased risk

Some risk factors make youth even more vulnerable for emotional distress, suicide, drug use, multiple sex partners, fighting and violent crime. One section of this report, *At Higher Risk*, outlines the extra risks associated with disabilities, homelessness, being in government care, crystal methamphetamine use, and being abused. (See page 43.)

High percentage of Aboriginal youth

More youth in custody are Aboriginal than any other single ethnic background, and much higher than the proportion of Aboriginal youth in the general population. Aboriginal youth in custody are at greater risk for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE), suicide, abuse and discrimination. (See page 40.)

Hope for the future

Despite the obstacles they face, youth in custody aspire to a more promising future, with hopes for a job, education, family and a home of their own, just like other people. Most youth like going to school in the custody centres. Youth in custody say job opportunities, ongoing drug or alcohol counselling, changing their peer group, life skills training, and support from adults would help prevent them from re-offending. These youth face tremendous challenges to realize their aspirations, and will require the support of policy makers in social, judicial, health and educational services to ensure they have appropriate opportunities to rehabilitate and build more normal lives.

About the Youth Custody Survey

Q Sample question on the youth justice system
In the past, what have you been charged with or convicted of?

What is the youth custody survey?

The youth custody survey is based on the Adolescent Health Survey (AHS), a study that examined the physical and emotional health of youth attending B.C. schools, and a previous survey of youth in custody in 2000.

The McCreary Centre Society, a non-profit, non-government research organization, conducted province-wide Adolescent Health Surveys, in 1992, 1998 and 2003. More than 72,000 students in grades seven to twelve participated in the three surveys, providing important information about trends among B.C.'s youth. Government agencies, health professionals, schools and community organizations use the survey results in planning programs, policies and services for youth. Survey results have been published in a variety of provincial, regional and special interest reports and fact sheets (see page 47.)

In 2000, McCreary adapted the school-based AHS questionnaire to survey youth in custody. At the time, seven custody centres in the province housed about 300 youth, and 243 of them completed the questionnaire. The centres included secure, open, co-ed and male-only facilities. Secure custody houses youth who commit serious offences, while open custody has less stringent controls. (See page 11 for a more detailed description of secure and open custody.)

What does the survey ask?

The 2004 survey of youth in custody asked many of the same questions as the 2003 school-based Adolescent Health Survey and the previous survey of youth in custody in 2000. As a result, some findings from the youth in custody survey can be compared with results from the survey of youth in B.C. schools. (This report refers to "youth in school" when citing results of the 2003 AHS.)

The questionnaire asked youth about their health status and health conditions; connections to family, school and community; and risky behaviours such as drug and alcohol use, smoking and unprotected sex. Some questions were changed to ask youth in custody about risky behaviours before they were detained, as most of these activities are prohibited in the centres. And questions were added to gather information on living in a youth custody centre and factors associated with detainment. For example, youth were asked about their history of violence and bullying, suicide and self-injury, past involvement with the criminal justice system, their views of programs offered in the custody centre, what would help prevent them from re-offending, and their hopes for the future.

All youth in B.C.'s three custody centres were invited to participate in the survey

Who was involved?

B.C. now has three youth custody centres in Burnaby, Victoria and Prince George, and each centre has secure and open areas. All youth in these centres were invited to participate in the survey, and 137 youth, aged 14 to 19, filled out the questionnaire. Only 14 girls completed the questionnaire. This small sample size limits the ability to report results separately for each gender. In addition, the overall response rate is difficult to assess because the youth population in the custody centres is constantly in flux, with youth being released, admitted or attending court on any given day. However, the overall response rate is estimated at 84%, with 88% of youth in the Burnaby centre participating, 80% in the Prince George centre, and 78% in the Victoria centre.

(Under the Youth Criminal Justice Act, a young person is defined as someone at least 12 years of age, but less than 18 at the time an offence was committed. Children under the age of 12 cannot be charged with a crime in Canada. Youth 12 to 17 can be charged with criminal offences, and some youth may be held in youth custody past the age of 18, if they were 18 or younger when the crime was committed.)

This survey is considered a population study, because the entire youth in custody population in B.C. was invited to participate, rather than a sample of this group.

BC Youth Custody Services Centres

	# participants
Burnaby	80
Victoria	33
Prince George	24

How was the survey conducted?

Researchers from the McCreary Centre Society conducted the survey in November 2004. Participation among youth was voluntary. Youth were assured that no negative consequences would result from choosing not to participate, and that the survey was anonymous and confidential. Neither centre staff nor ministry personnel have access to the questionnaires.

Most youth were able to complete the 141-question survey within an hour. Researchers read the survey questions and answer choices aloud to overcome potential literacy problems, while each youth privately marked answers on the questionnaire. Each participant was given an envelope to seal the survey in, when completed. Survey participants received a small stipend of five dollars or pizza as compensation for their time.

The Youth Justice System

Many crimes committed by youth are minor, non-violent offences

New legislation

Federal law prescribes the sanctions applied to youth who commit crimes. Changes in legislation over the years reflect the ongoing debate over appropriate treatment for young offenders. New legislation governing youth crimes, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, came into effect in April 2003, replacing the 1984 *Young Offenders Act*, which, in turn, replaced the 1908 *Juvenile Delinquents Act*. The new legislation followed a review of the *Young Offenders Act* and the youth justice system in Canada.

The new legislation is part of the federal government's Youth Justice Renewal Initiative, launched in 1998 to explore how society can address youth crime. The initiative has three key directions: prevention, meaningful consequences for youth crime, and rehabilitation and reintegration to help youth return safely to their communities. The new legislation urges communities, families, parents and others to help prevent youth crime by dealing with the underlying causes, and providing guidance and support to those at risk.

Many crimes committed by youth are minor, non-violent offences. The new legislation supports alternatives to court and other community-based interventions for these offences, which are intended to:

- Repair the harm caused to the victim and the community.
- Provide an opportunity for victims to participate in decisions.
- Ensure measures are proportionate to the seriousness of the offence.
- Encourage families, victims and other members of the community to become involved in the judicial process.
- Be meaningful to the young offender.
- Reinforce respect for societal values.
- Respect gender, ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences, and respond to the needs of Aboriginal youth and youth with special needs.

Under the legislation, a judge can impose a range of sentences, from an absolute or conditional discharge, fines, community service or restitution, to probation, intensive support and supervision, deferred custody and supervision, or detainment in a youth custody facility. The Act specifies that judges should consider several priorities when making sentencing decisions:

- Protecting society.
- Promoting rehabilitation.
- Considering not only the crime, but also the particular circumstances of the offence, such as the level of harm resulting from the crime, the youth's age and family situation, and any prior youth justice history.

Custody is reserved primarily for violent and serious, repeat offenders and youth who fail to comply with non-custodial sentences

Custody is the most serious sentence and is reserved primarily for violent offenders, serious, repeat offenders, and youth who fail to comply with non-custodial sentences. Judges in youth court have the latitude to sentence young offenders to a maximum of 10 years of custody and conditional supervision for first degree murder, and a maximum of seven years of custody and conditional supervision for second degree murder. For other crimes, the maximum sentence for youth is two years of custody and conditional supervision, when the maximum for an adult is less than life imprisonment, for the same offence. When the maximum sentence for adults is life imprisonment, or for multiple offences, the maximum sentence for youth is three years. For less serious, summary convictions, the maximum is six months.

Custody can be secure or open. Secure custody refers to facilities with physical security measures to detain youth, and is used for those found guilty of serious offences, or with a persistent pattern of offending, who cannot be reasonably supervised in a community setting or open custody. Open custody is intended for youth who cannot appropriately be placed in a community setting, but can manage effectively with less stringent controls and more privileges.

(Source: Department of Justice Canada website, 2005)

Youth programs

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* is federal law, but is administered provincially, which accounts for variations in programs, services and sentences among the provinces. In B.C., youth justice services have been under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Children and Family Development since 1997. (The adult correctional system is administered through the federal Correctional Service of Canada and the provincial Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.)

Youth custody centres in B.C. offer programs intended to meet young offenders' needs for rehabilitation and community reintegration:

- **Basic programs** include education, religious support, recreation and family visits.
- **Core programs** include substance abuse management, violence intervention and life skills, which are designed to influence attitudes, lifestyles and skill deficits known to contribute to unlawful behaviour.
- **Specialized programs** include services for Aboriginal youth, female youth, violent offenders, and youth requiring mental health services or drug and alcohol counselling.
- **Reintegration programs** include intensive support and supervision, and community transition beds to facilitate a youth's return to the community.

(Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development website, 2005)

The youth justice system offers rehabilitation and community reintegration programs

Youth justice facts

Overall, youth crime in Canada declined during the 1990s, but increased between 2000 and 2003.

Even though the number of youth charged with a crime declined throughout the decade of 1993 to 2003, the lower number was more than offset by the number of youth "cleared otherwise." This term describes a criminal act for which police have sufficient evidence to lay a charge, but the accused is processed by alternative measures including:

- Formal measures (such as a Crown caution or sanctions), or
- Informal measures (such as a police warning or referral to a community program).

More than 84,000 Canadian youths were charged with Criminal Code offences in 2003, and 100,000 were cleared otherwise. In 2003, violent crime accounted for 21% of youth crime in Canada. However, the majority of violent crime in Canada is still committed by adults; 82%, compared to 18% by youth.

Contrary to national trends, youth crime rates in B.C. have continued to decline throughout the past decade. Violent crime rates among youth in B.C. also declined between 1995 and 2003, with the exception of a very minor increase in 2001.

Most youth in the Canadian justice systems are on supervised probation. In 2002/03, 90% of youth were on probation, 7% were in custody, and 3% were in remand (in custody awaiting a court hearing or sentencing).

Time spent in remand is generally shorter than custody sentences. In 2002/03, more than half of youth in Canada (54%) were released from remand within one week of admission, 30% spent between one week and one month in remand, and 15% were held between one and six months. Fifty-seven percent of youth in secure remand custody, and 40% of youth in open custody, were released within one month.

B.C.'s rate of youth incarceration is the lowest in the country and is significantly lower than the national average. In 2002/03, the incarceration rate for B.C. youth was 6.7 per 10,000 population, compared to the national average of 12.5; in 2003/04, B.C.'s custody rate was 4.7 per 10,000; and in 2004/05, the rate was 4.8. Since custody is used less frequently in B.C., youth in custody here may be a more serious, troubled population than youth in custody elsewhere in Canada.

Aboriginal youth are over represented among youth in custody in Canada, relative to their numbers in the general population (8% in the 2001 census). Aboriginal youth accounted for 44% of admissions to remand in Canada in 2002/03, 46% of custody sentences, 32% of probation admissions, and 21% of extra judicial sanctions.

(Sources: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *Juristat*, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no.85-002, Volume 24; Justice Services, BC Ministry of Children and Family Development)

B.C.'s rate of youth incarceration is the lowest in the country

BC Youth in Custody

Q Sample question on the youth justice system
Is this the first time you have been in a youth custody centre?

Demographics

Most youth surveyed in custody were male in 2004; 90% compared to 10% female. The percentage of females surveyed dropped 11% since the first survey in 2000, when 21% of youth surveyed in custody were female. (According to Ministry of Children and Family Development statistics, the custody population was 85% male and 15% female on average in 2004/05. In 2000/01, it was 82% male and 18% female.) Overall, the majority of these youth are 16 or 17 years old, but ages range from 14 to 19 and older.

Forty-seven percent of youth in custody were Aboriginal in 2004. By comparison, only 7% of the youth in school who completed the 2003 Adolescent Health Survey were Aboriginal.

In 2004, 34% of youth in custody identified their ethnicity as European, lower than the 52% of youth in school. The percentage of youth in custody from multicultural backgrounds remains far below the number of multicultural youth in school. Nineteen percent of youth in custody identified other ethnic backgrounds including South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian or multi-ethnic, less than the 40% of youth in school.

The percentage of youth in custody who speak only English at home is 82%, higher than the 57% of youth in school who speak only English at home. Only 3% of youth in custody speak another language at home most of the time, compared to 16% of youth in school.

BC youth in custody

Gender	
Boys	90%
Girls	10%
Age	
14 years	9%
15 years	12%
16 years	25%
17 years	34%
18 years	15%
19 years and older	5%
Aboriginal	47%

Previous involvement with the justice system

Most youth in custody have a history of involvement with the youth justice system. Only 18% were in custody for the first time, meaning 82% of youth have been in custody before, compared to 77% in 2000. Forty percent were first detained by police when they were 12 or younger, 35% were either 13 or 14 years old, and 25% were 15 or older when first detained.

Twenty-seven percent had been in the custody centre for less than a month this time, 27% had been there for one to three months, 24% for four to eight months, 11% for nine to twelve months, and 10% for more than a year.

The most common offence among youth in custody this time was "breach or escape" (a breach of probation or bail), accounting for 63% of charges or convictions. In addition, 38% of youth had

been charged or convicted of assault or uttering threats, 29% of breaking and entering, 27% of a weapons offence, 26% of robbery, and 18% with a drug offence. Other charges, including homicide and sexual soliciting, were less common. (Youth could choose more than one current charge or conviction on the survey.)

For previous convictions, 67% of youth were charged or convicted of breach or escape, 56% of assault or uttering threats, 52% for breaking and entering, 46% for a weapons offence, 43% for robbery, and 38% for a drug offence.

Overall, the majority of youth in custody in 2004 (83%) had a history of being charged or found guilty of a violent offence, compared to 80% in 2000. Violent offences include homicide or assault, robbery, weapons offences, and sexual offences (not including solicitation). Girls are much less likely to have been charged or convicted of a violent crime (57%) than boys (87%).

The survey shows that youth are in custody for a variety of different offences, but not complying with the terms of their community sentences is quite common. And while the majority of youth crime overall is not violent, among the custody population, violent crime is common. The increase in violent offences likely reflects the change in legislation governing youth crime, as the justice system is now mandated to seek alternative interventions for youth who commit less serious offences, and to reserve incarceration for those who commit more violent crimes.

Ever charged or convicted of† ...	
Breach or escape	79%
Assault or uttering threats	63%
Break and enter	60%
Weapons offence	52%
Robbery	52%
Drug offence	40%
Theft	22%
Homicide	9%
Sexual offence	4%

† Youth could mark all that apply

Most youth in custody already have a history with the youth justice system

Physical Health

Q Sample question on physical health

Do you have a health condition or disability that keeps you from doing things other kids your age do, such as school activities, sports, or getting together with friends?

Health assessment

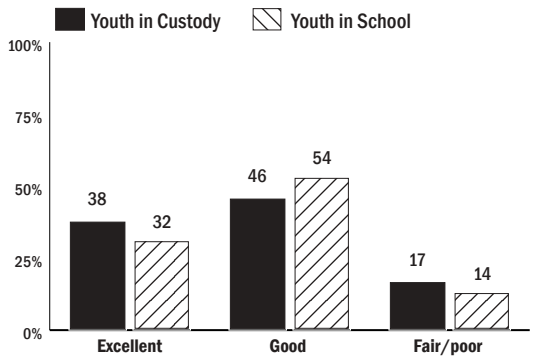
Similar to youth in school, the majority of youth in custody rate their health as "excellent" or "good": 84% of youth in custody compared to 86% of youth in school. Ninety-two percent of girls in custody rate their health as "excellent" or "good," versus 83% of girls in school, and 76% of girls in custody in 2000. The discrepancy may simply reflect that fewer girls were surveyed in 2004, and small changes in their responses have greater impact on the overall percentage as a result. For boys, 83% in custody rate their health as "excellent" or "good," versus 89% of boys in school, and 87% in 2000.

Health risks

Despite their broad self-assessment of good health, 72% of youth in custody said a health professional had at some time diagnosed them with one or more conditions, including problems with anger (42%), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (33%), addiction problems (22%), a learning disability (21%), depression (19%), Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (12%), bipolar disorder (6%), and schizophrenia (6%). Fewer than 4% were diagnosed with panic attacks or epilepsy. Twenty-eight percent have none of these diagnoses, 28% have one condition, 18% have two, 19% have three or four, and 7% have five or six diagnosed conditions.

More youth in custody report having a health condition or disability that limits their activities, compared to youth in school: 17% versus 11%.

Health status



Told by a health professional you have† ...

Problems with anger	42%
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	33%
Addiction problems	22%
Learning disability	21%
Depression	19%
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	12%
Bipolar disorder	6%
Schizophrenia	6%

† Youth could mark all that apply

These conditions included a physical disability, long-term illness, mental or emotional condition, or being overweight or underweight. Interestingly, only a fraction of the youth diagnosed with a health condition reported their condition as a limitation.

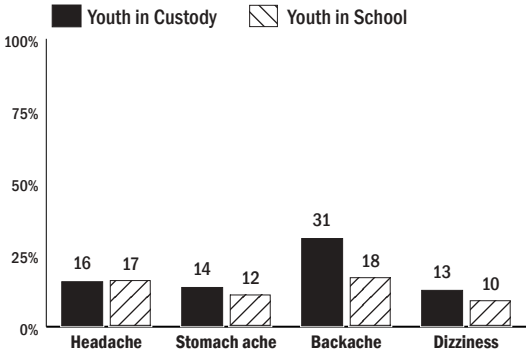
A similar number of youth in custody (38%) experienced one or more common health complaints, including headaches, stomach aches, back aches and dizziness, "a lot" in the past six months, as youth in school (35%).

More youth in custody have serious injuries than other youth in B.C. Overall, 52% injured themselves seriously enough to require medical attention in the past year, versus 34% of youth in school, or 52% of males and 50% of females, compared to 39% of males and 29% of females in school. In the past year, 24% of youth in custody injured themselves once, 10% did twice, and 18% injured themselves three or more times.

More youth in custody (34%) report looking older than other youth their age, compared to youth in school (29%). Among both youth in school and youth in custody, those who look older are more likely to be involved in risky behaviours. For example, youth in custody who look older than peers are more likely to have:

- Used amphetamines in the month before being in custody (58% of those who look older, compared to 39% of youth who look the same age or younger).
- Been involved in four or more fights in the past year (72% compared to 49%).
- Bullied others in the community (83% compared to 65%).
- Experienced abuse (67% of youth who look older were physically abused, versus 60% of youth who look the same age or younger; 12% were sexually abused, compared to 10%).
- Be severely emotionally distressed (16% of youth who look older were emotionally distressed versus 11% of youth who look the same age or younger).

Experienced common health problems "a lot" in past six months



72% of youth in custody have been diagnosed with mental and/or physical health conditions

Emotional Health

Q Sample question on emotional health

Have you ever witnessed someone in your family being abused or mistreated?

Severe distress

Five survey questions ask about emotional health; for example, "During the past 30 days, have you felt so sad, discouraged, hopeless, or had so many problems that you wondered if anything was worthwhile?" "During the past 30 days, have you been bothered by nervousness or 'nerves'?" An extreme response of "all the time" to two or more questions indicates serious emotional distress.

Thirteen percent of youth in custody experienced severe distress in the past month, compared to 8% of youth in school. And girls in custody had higher rates of severe distress compared to the boys.

Suicide

Many youth in custody have experienced suicide or attempted suicide in their families: 41% have a family member who attempted or committed suicide, 9% did so in the past year, and 32% did so more than a year ago.

While youth in custody are at higher risk for suicide than youth in the general population, these figures have decreased since the previous survey in 2000, which likely reflects the fact that fewer girls were surveyed in 2004 than 2000, and more girls than boys attempt suicide.

In the past year, one in five youth in custody (21%) seriously considered attempting suicide, compared to 16% of youth in school; 18% planned how to kill themselves in the past year, versus 11% of youth in school; 13% attempted suicide in the past year, compared to 7% of youth in school, and 5% were treated by a doctor or nurse after a suicide attempt in the past year. A higher proportion of girls than boys attempted suicide.

Twenty-one percent of youth have ever attempted suicide, and say the reasons for their last attempt include anger (64%), stress (61%), and loneliness or depression (46%).

Suicide

	Youth in Custody		Youth in school
	2000	2004	2003
Family member has attempted or committed suicide	–	41%	14%
Seriously considered in past year	28%	21%	16%
Attempted in past year	22%	13%	7%

Abuse

Physical and sexual abuse among youth in custody declined between 2000 and 2004 for both males and females. The Adolescent Health Surveys have shown that abuse among youth in school also declined over the past decade.

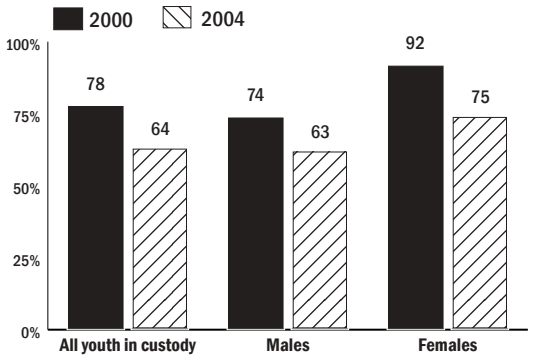
Still, almost two-thirds of youth (64%) reported being physically abused in the 2004 survey. This figure is down from 78% in 2000.

Youth in custody were most likely to be abused by their parents: 32% were abused by their father, 18% by their mother, and 14% by a stepparent. Twelve percent were physically abused by a friend or acquaintance, 11% by other residents in the custody centre, 10% by a partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend, 12% by another relative, and 6% by a foster or group home parent.

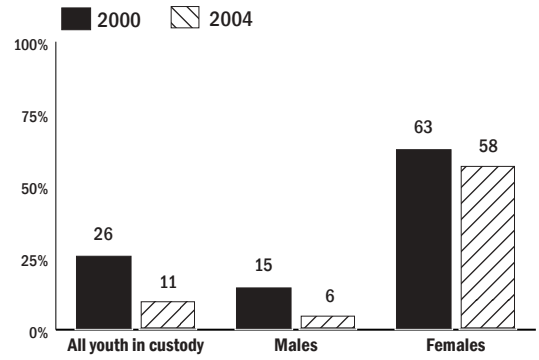
Both boys and girls in custody are much more likely to have been physically abused than youth in school: 75% versus 18% of girls, and 63% versus 12% of boys.

Overall, 11% of youth were sexually abused; 6% by a friend or acquaintance, 4% by a boyfriend or girlfriend, and 4% by a stranger. No youth reported being sexually abused by their mother, and a very small number reported sexual abuse by other relatives or foster parents. Again, more girls in custody have been sexually abused (58%), than girls in school (13%). And 6% of boys in custody were sexually abused, versus 2% of boys in school. Sexual abuse of boys in custody has declined from 15%, since the last survey in 2000.

Physical abuse



Sexual abuse



Physically abused by † ...

Mother	18%
Father	32%
Stepparent	14%
Other relative	12%
Foster or group home parent	6%
Friend or acquaintance	12%
Boyfriend or girlfriend	10%

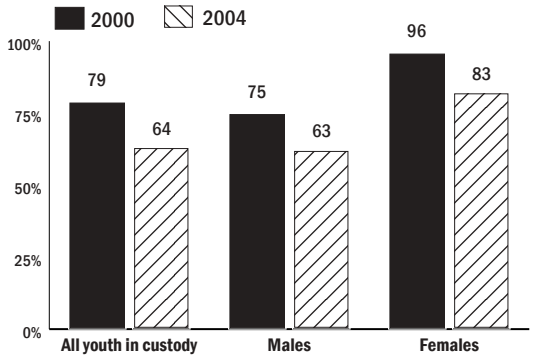
† Youth could mark all that apply

Overall, 10% of youth in custody have been both physically and sexually abused; 50% of the girls and 6% of the boys. Only 36% overall were not either physically or sexually abused, and the number of girls who have not been abused is very small.

Still, almost all residents (97%) are not worried about being physically or sexually abused when they are released from custody.

In addition, more than half of youth in custody (58%) have witnessed someone in their family being abused or mistreated.

History of abuse (physical/sexual or both)



Almost two-thirds of youth in custody have been physically abused

Self injury

Girls are more likely than boys to report ever deliberately cutting or injuring themselves: 50% of girls, compared to 40% of boys. Overall, 29% of youth said they deliberately cut or injured themselves, without trying to commit suicide, when they lived in the community. Twenty percent have done so once or twice, and 9% deliberately cut or injured themselves three or more times. Twenty percent of youth reported having deliberately cut or injured themselves while in a custody centre: 13% have done so one or two times and 7% have done it three or more times. Of youth who have deliberately cut or injured themselves, either in the community or in custody, 32% sought medical attention the last time they did it.

Spirituality

More youth in custody (18%) consider themselves to be very religious or spiritual than youth in school (13%). About a third of youth in custody (31%) are not at all religious.

Risky Behaviours

Q Sample question on drug use
During an average 30-day period before being detained in custody, how many times did you use marijuana?

The Adolescent Health Survey asked youth in custody whether they participate in behaviours that are associated with increased risk for short and long term physical or emotional health problems.

Not surprisingly perhaps, the results of the youth in custody survey show that these youth are much more involved in risky activities—including tobacco, alcohol and drug use, and risky sexual behaviour—compared to youth in school, consistent with the findings of the 2000 survey. In addition, youth in custody engage in these risky behaviours at a younger age than youth in school.

The survey asked about tobacco, drug and alcohol use before youth were detained, as these activities are prohibited in the custody centres.

Smoking

Many more youth in custody smoke daily (63%) than youth in school (4%). But the rate has dropped significantly since the first survey in 2000, when 75% of youth in custody smoked everyday. While the total for youth in custody still far exceeds the general youth population, presumably the decline reflects an overall decrease in smoking rates among all age groups in B.C.

Fifteen percent of youth in custody had not smoked in an average 30-day period before being detained in custody, 10% had smoked on one to nine days, and 13% had smoked on 10 to 29 days.

Drug and alcohol use

All youth in custody (100%) have tried marijuana at least once, the same as in the 2000 survey. Three-quarters (74%) tried marijuana by the age of 12, compared to just 8% of youth in school. Many youth in custody use marijuana frequently. Only 9% did not use the drug in an average month before being detained, 14% used it one to nine times, 12% used it 10-19 times, 9% used it 20-39 times, and more than half, 57%, used marijuana 40 or more times.

The majority of youth in custody centres (90%) has also used other illegal drugs at some time, including cocaine, mushrooms, hallucinogens, amphetamines, prescription pills without a doctor's consent, and heroin or inhalants, compared to 22% of youth in school.

Amphetamine use is up and hallucinogen and heroin use down among youth in custody, since the 2000 survey. This shift reflects a change in the availability of illicit drugs, as crystal methamphetamine has become more readily available.

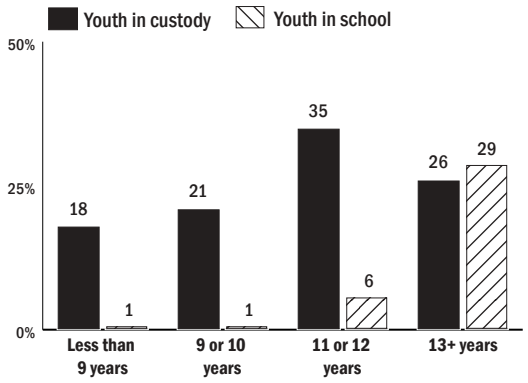
In an average month before being detained, 58% of youth used cocaine, 51% used mushrooms, 50% used hallucinogens, 46% used amphetamines, 33% used prescription drugs, 10% used heroin, 10% injected an illegal drug, and 6% used inhalants. Thirty percent of youth used cocaine 10 or more times, and 27% used amphetamines 10 or more times in an average month.

In addition, 10% of youth used a tattoo or body piercing tool after someone else had used it, a risk factor for transmitting disease, but only a few used a needle to inject drugs after someone else.

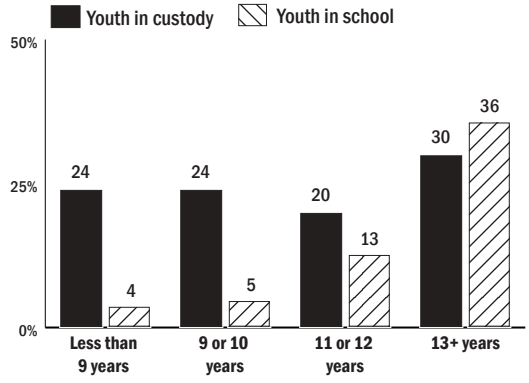
Virtually all youth in custody (99%) have tried alcohol at least once, and 84% drank alcohol in an average month before being in custody. Sixteen percent drank alcohol on one or two days, 24% on three to nine days, 22% on 10 to 19 days, and 22% on 20 or more days. Ten percent of youth in custody drank alcohol daily. About half of youth in custody (49%) first drank alcohol by the age of 10, compared to 9% of youth in school.

First tried:

Marijuana



Alcohol

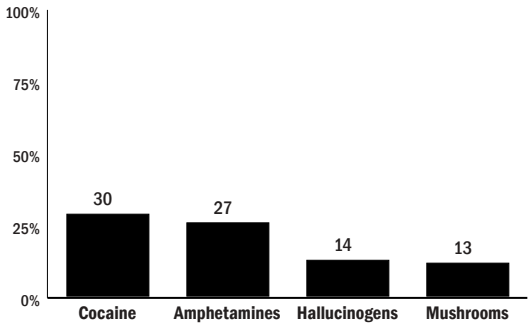


The majority of youth in custody (84%) binge drank at least once in an average month. Binge drinking is defined as five or more alcoholic drinks within a couple of hours. Nineteen percent binge drank on one or two days a month, 31% on three to nine days, 18% on 10 to 19 days, and 16% binge drank on 20 or more days. Among youth in school, a low 2% of students binge drank on 10 or more days in the past month.

Tobacco, marijuana and alcohol use (average 30-day period before being in custody)

	Youth in custody	Youth in school
Smoked on 1+ days	85%	13%
Smoked every day	63%	4%
Used marijuana 1+ times	91%	21%
Used marijuana 40+ times	57%	3%
Used alcohol	84%	40%
Used alcohol daily	10%	<1%

Used Drugs 10+ times (average 30-day period before being in custody)



90% of youth in custody have used illegal drugs

Ever used other illegal drugs

	Youth in Custody		Youth in school
	2000	2004	2003
Cocaine	78%	80%	5%
Mushrooms	87%	80%	13%
Hallucinogens	83%	68%	7%
Amphetamines	40%	63%	4%
Prescription pills without a doctor's consent	42%	50%	9%
Heroin	41%	20%	1%
Inhalants	14%	14%	4%
Injected an illegal drug	9%	11%	1%

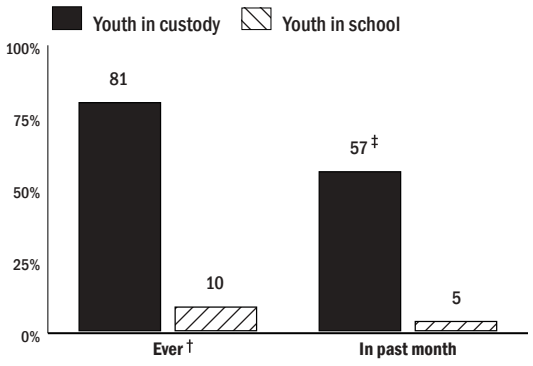
Drinking and driving

Overall, 81% of youth in custody have driven after using alcohol and drugs, compared to 10% of youth in school, and 57% did so in the month before being in custody. Seventeen percent drove after drug or alcohol use once, 19% two or three times, and 21% four or more times.

Only 14% of youth in custody have a driver's licence (a learner's, novice or full privilege license). Of these, 79% had ever driven a vehicle after drinking alcohol or taking drugs, compared to 91% in the 2000 survey. The introduction of graduated licensing means that the "learner" and "novice" stages are restricted to a zero blood-alcohol content. Thirty-two percent of licensed drivers drove a vehicle after using alcohol in the 30 days before being detained.

Among youth without a licence, even more (81%) have driven after using alcohol or taking drugs, similar to 76% in 2000, and 61% drove after using alcohol in the month prior to being in custody.

Drinking and driving



† Driving after using alcohol or drugs
‡ Prior to being detained

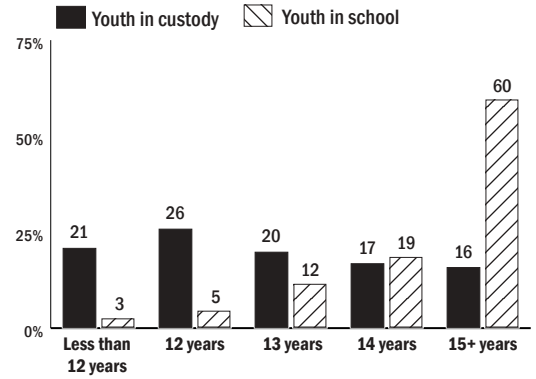
Sexual activity

Almost all youth in custody are sexually active, and most started having sex much younger than youth in school. For example, 96% of youth in custody have had sexual intercourse at least once, versus 24% among youth in school.

Among sexually active youth in custody, two-thirds (66%) first had sexual intercourse before the age of 14, compared to 20% of youth in school. Early sexual activity is often associated with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unwanted pregnancy. Of sexually active youth, 19% had sex with one or two people in their life-time, 18% with three to five people, and 64% had six or more sexual partners, similar to 60% in the 2000 survey. Having multiple sex partners also increases the risk of contracting STIs.

Almost all youth in custody are sexually active, and most started having sex much younger than youth in school

Age when first had sexual intercourse (of sexually active youth)



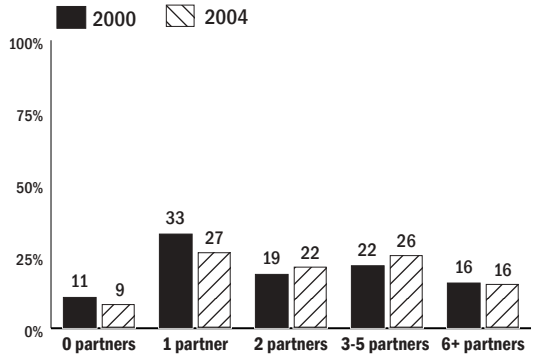
In the three months before being detained, 27% of sexually active youth had sex with one person, 22% had sex with two different people, 26% had sex with three to five people, and 16% had sex with six or more people. Among sexually active youth in school, 6% had sex with three or more people in the three months before the survey.

Yet fewer sexually active youth in custody (59%) used a condom the last time they had sex than sexually active youth in school (68%). A health professional had told 13% of youth in custody that they had a sexually transmitted infection, including chlamydia, syphilis, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, herpes or genital warts, compared to only 1% of youth in school.

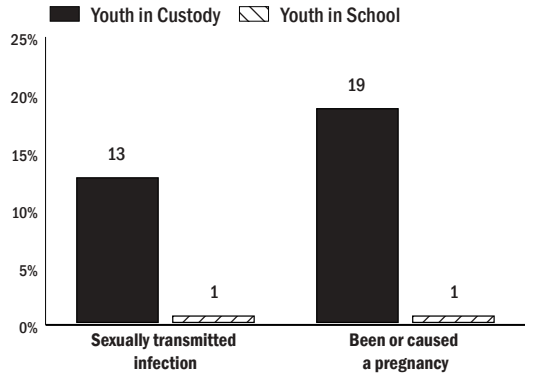
Nineteen percent of youth in custody have either gotten someone pregnant or been pregnant once, 12% two or more times, and 5% were not sure how often they got someone pregnant. Only 1% of youth in school have been or gotten someone else pregnant.

Eleven percent of youth in custody have been forced to have sex during their lifetime; 5% by an adult, and 7% by another youth. Among youth in school, 4% have ever been forced to have sex.

Number of sexual partners in three months prior to custody (of sexually active youth)



Ever had an STI or been/caused pregnancy



A third of girls in custody have been forced to have sex, compared to 6% of girls in school.

When asked about sexual orientation, 91% of youth said they were 100% heterosexual, compared to 85% of youth in school, 6% were mostly heterosexual or bisexual, and 3% were not sure. No youth identified themselves as mostly or 100% homosexual, and no boys identified as bisexual.

Family and Social Support

Q Sample question on family connections
How much do you feel that your family pays attention to you?

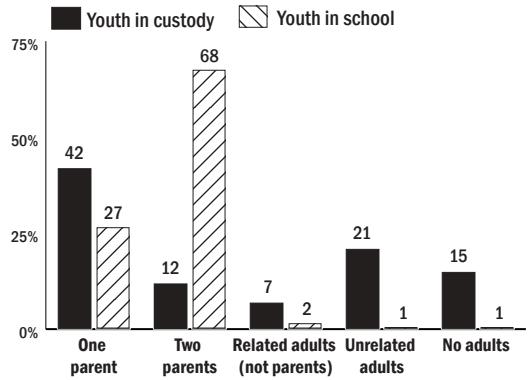
The Adolescent Health Surveys have shown that strong connections with family, school and the community promote healthy youth development. Youth who feel connected and safe have better health, take fewer risks, and have higher educational aspirations.

However, the results of the custody centre survey show youth in detention experience less connection to their families and school, and have fewer social supports to guide them in making healthy choices and give them a sense of belonging.

Family connectedness

In 2004, only 12% of youth in custody reported living with two parents most of the time. Most live in a one-parent household or with unrelated adults. By comparison, 68% of youth in school live with two parents.

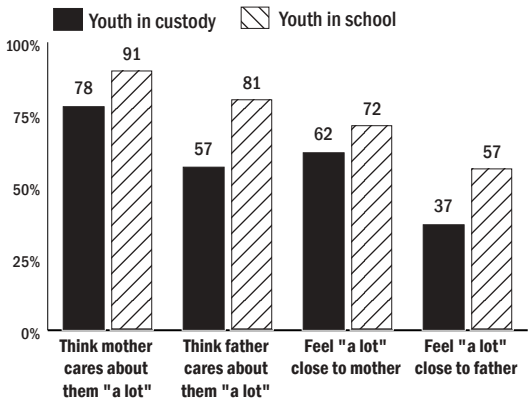
Live with most of the time



The survey asked several questions about youth relationships with parents and family, such as "How close do you feel to your mother?" "How much do you think your father cares about you?" "How much do you feel the people in your family understand you?" The responses were combined to give a family connectedness score between zero and one. For example, if someone gave answers indicating no connection on all questions, the score would be zero. A high degree of connection on all questions would result in a score of one. A lower score is associated with greater risk taking.

Youth in custody have an average family connectedness score of .66, lower than youth in school, who have an average score of .78.

Relationship with parents



35% of youth in custody had a family member die from overdose, suicide or violence

Even so, 78% of youth in custody felt their mother cares about them a lot, and 57% felt their father cares about them a lot. More youth in school feel cared about by their parents: 91% felt their mother cares about them a lot, and 81% felt their father cares about them a lot. Overall, 84% of youth in custody have at least one parent they feel cares about them a lot, compared to 95% of youth in school.

Fifty-nine percent of youth in custody were often satisfied with their relationship with their mother, while 36% were often satisfied with their relationship with their father. About a quarter (24%) felt their family understood them a lot, 59% said their family understood them somewhat, and 18% felt their family didn't understand them at all.

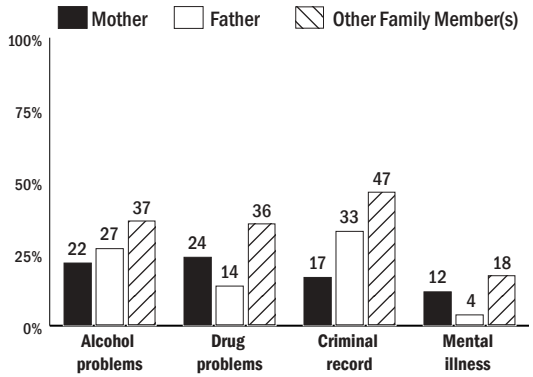
Twenty-four percent of youth in custody felt their family had fun together a lot, 53% said their family had fun together some of the time, and 22% felt their family didn't have fun together at all. In addition, 42% of youth felt their family paid attention to them a lot, 47% said their family paid attention to them some of the time, and 11% said their family didn't pay attention to them at all.

Family problems

Many youth in custody have family members who struggle with addictions or mental illness, or have a criminal record. In fact, 62% of youth have a parent with one or more of these problems.

Overall, 38% percent of youth said one or both parents have problems with alcohol, 22% said their mothers did, 27% said their fathers did, and 37% said another family member was an alcoholic.

Family members who have ...



Twenty-eight percent of youth said one or both parents have a drug problem, compared to 23% in the 2000 survey. Twenty-four percent said their mother had a drug problem, 14% said their father did, and 36% said another family member was addicted to drugs.

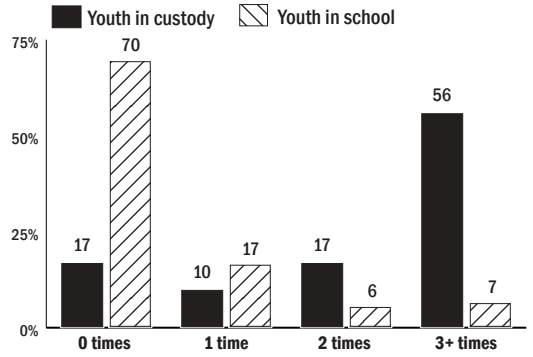
In addition, 39% of youth have a parent with a criminal record, versus 33% in the 2000 survey. Seventeen percent said their mother had a criminal record, 33% said their father did, and 47% said another family member did.

Sixteen percent of youth have a parent with a mental health problem. Twelve percent of youth said their mother had a mental illness, 4% said their father did, and 18% have another family member with a mental illness.

As well, many youth in custody have had to face the loss of a family member: 43% had a family member die due to illness, 28% had a family member die in an accident, 18% had someone die from an overdose, 15% died as a result of violence, and 18% had a family member commit suicide. Overall, 35% of youth in custody had a family member die from overdose, suicide or violence, down significantly from 55% in the 2000 survey.

36% of youth in custody lived with unrelated adults or no adults most of the time

Moved in past year



Unsettled lives

More than half of youth in custody lacked stability at home: 56% had moved three or more times in the year before being in custody. Seventeen percent moved twice, 10% moved once and 17% didn't move at all in the year before being in custody. Some youth moved between living with their parents and other situations during the year. Conversely, among youth in school, only 7% of youth had moved three or more times in the past year, 6% moved twice, 17% moved once and the majority, 70%, didn't move in the previous year.

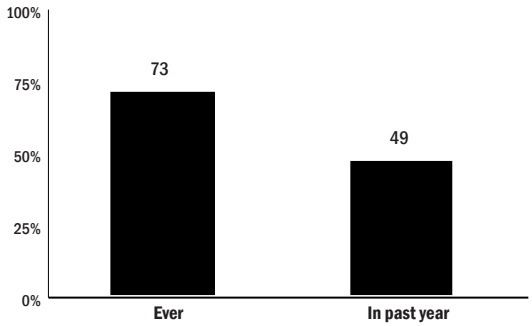
Most youth (73%) have been in government care at some time, up from 63% in the 2000 survey, and nearly half (49%) were in care in the past year, compared to just 2% of youth in school.

Street life

Most youth in custody have spent time on the streets. In the year before living in the custody centre, about two-thirds of youth (68%) had either run away or been kicked out of their home.

More than half (53%) of youth ran away from home in the year before being detained. Sixteen percent of youth in custody had run away from

Been in government care
(foster or group home)



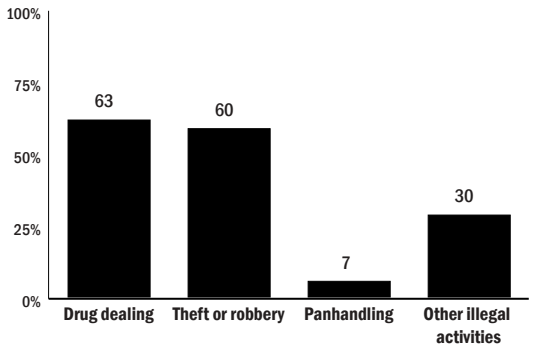
home once or twice, and 36% had run away three or more times. Of the girls participating in the 2004 survey, 71% ran away from home three or more times. Overall, 47% did not run away at all in the year before living in custody. By comparison, only 9% of youth in school ran away from home one or more times in the previous year.

Experiences of homelessness (in year before being in custody)

Ran away from home	53%
Kicked out of home	52%
Slept on the street	19%
Slept in an abandoned building	11%
Slept in a shelter or safe house	13%
Had no permanent home (couch surfing)	32%

Q **Sample question on living arrangements**
In the year before living in the youth custody centre, how many times did you get kicked out of home?

Income sources from street or illegal activities in month before being in custody



About half of youth (52%) were kicked out of their home in the year before living in custody. Twenty-six percent were kicked out once or twice, and 26% three or more times, while 49% had not been kicked out at all.

Almost half of youth in custody (46%) experienced homelessness in the past year: 19% of youth had slept on the street, 11% in an abandoned building, 13% in a shelter or safe house, and 32% had couch surfed because they had no permanent home. And in their lifetime, 18% of youth in custody have lived on the street or in a safe house for more than a month at a time.

Most youth (78%) obtained income from illegal and street activities in the month before being detained, but the number is down from 92% in the 2000 survey. Sixty-three percent got money from drug dealing, 60% from theft or robbery, and 30% from other illegal activities. Seven percent obtained money panhandling. Interestingly, none of the youth in custody reported income from squeegee work (washing windshields).

However, 16% said they had engaged in sexual activity in exchange for money or goods, while living in the community. A quarter of the girls and 15% of boys reported exchanging sexual favours, most for money (61%), and drugs or alcohol (61%).

Many youth have peers who have been charged or convicted of a crime: 38% said all or most of their friends had been (versus 46% in the 2000 survey), 40% said only some of their friends had (versus 34% in 2000), and only 18% said few or none of their friends had been charged with or convicted of a crime. In addition, 29% reported being part of a gang, compared to 35% in 2000.

Seeking help

A similar number of youth in custody (79%) and youth in school (78%) said there is an adult in their family they would feel okay talking to if they were having a serious problem. More youth in custody (81%) said there is an adult outside their family they could talk to about a serious problem, than youth in school (59%).

Overall, 92% of youth in custody have an adult, within or outside the family, they would feel okay talking to about a serious problem; 8% do not.

School and Community

Q Sample question on school connections
How often did you have trouble getting along with your teachers?

The survey asked youth about school experiences before they were detained in custody.

Many youth expelled or suspended

In the 2004 survey, youth in custody said they were in grades seven through 12, with the majority in grades 10 and 11.

Still, the majority of these youth have been expelled or suspended from school at some time: 92%, compared to 96% in the 2000 survey. The main reasons include threatening, assaulting or fighting with other students; not attending classes regularly; smoking, drinking or doing drugs at school; having a weapon at school, and cheating. A few youth said they had been suspended or expelled for dealing drugs at school.

92% of youth in custody have been expelled or suspended from school

School connectedness

The survey asked youth several questions about relationships with teachers and peers and their sense of belonging at school, including: "Before you were in the youth custody centre, how did you feel about going to school?" "How much did you feel that your teachers cared about you?" "How often did you have trouble getting along with other students?" These questions were combined to give a score between zero and one. A high score is associated with a high degree of connection, while a lower score is associated with less connection.

Youth in custody had an average school connectedness score of .55, lower than youth in school, who had an average score of .67.

More than half of youth in custody (53%) didn't like school, much higher than the 21% of youth in school. Forty percent of youth in custody liked school, and 7% liked it very much.

Among youth in custody, 25% felt their teachers cared about them "quite a bit or very much," compared to 28% of youth in school; 49% got along with their teachers, compared to 82% of youth in school; and 64% felt they got along with other students, compared to 85% of youth in school.

Reasons suspended or expelled from school

	2000	2004
Threatening, assaulting or fighting with other students	83%	62%
Not attending classes regularly	80%	58%
Smoking, drinking or doing drugs at school	74%	58%
Having a weapon at school	50%	38%
Threatening or assaulting a teacher	49%	32%
Cheating	14%	8%

93% of youth said school in the custody centre was helpful

In 2004, 46% of youth in custody felt like a part of their school, up from 31% in the 2000 survey; 50% were happy to be at school, up from 38% in 2000; 63% thought teachers treated students fairly, up from 47% in 2000; and 66% felt safe at school, compared to 63% in 2000.

School in custody

Despite negative experiences attending school in the community, 93% of youth said school in the custody centre was helpful, and three-quarters said they always feel safe being there. (See *Life in Custody* on page 33 for more details.)

Youth may respond more positively to attending school in the custody centre than in the community, because the teaching environment is designed for them. As well, custody centre teachers may be more prepared for working with this challenging population of youth than teachers in the community. Consequently, the public school system may need to consider additional support for youth with problematic behavioural markers to help these youth remain in the school system.

Work and community

In addition to illegal sources of income, 31% of youth earned money from a legal job in the month before being in custody. Only 12% got money from child welfare or income assistance, and 35% received money from their parents or family.

Sixty-two percent of youth in custody participated in an organized, extracurricular activity in the past year. Fewer youth in custody (39%) took part in activities once or more a week, including sports with a coach, aerobic classes, art or drama lessons, and community clubs, than youth in school (72%). Thirty percent of youth play sports with a coach once or more a week, 18% take part in dance, aerobics, art, drama or music lessons, and 8% participate in community groups. In addition, 69% of youth participate in sports without a coach once or more a week, compared to 71% of youth in school, and 37% do a hobby or craft once or more a week, versus 43% of youth in school.

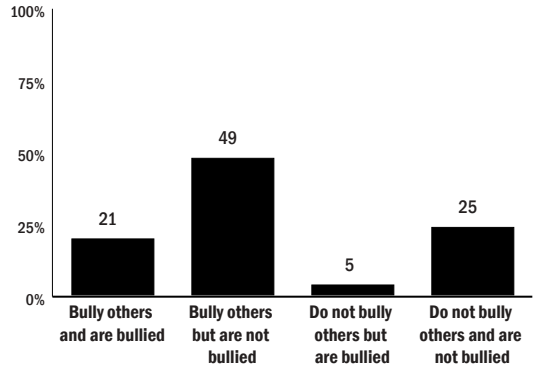
Relationships at school

	Youth in custody	Youth in school
Teachers cared "not at all" or "very little"	49%	29%
Had trouble getting along with teachers almost everyday or everyday	39%	8%
Had trouble getting along with other students almost everyday or everyday	27%	6%
Did not feel like a part of my school	35%	14%
Was not happy at school	33%	17%
Was not treated fairly by teachers	25%	14%
Did not feel safe at school	15%	10%

Violence and Safety

Q Sample question on bullying
When you were living in the community, how often did you bully or pick on others?

Bullying behaviour in the community



Bullying in the community

	Been Bullied		Bullied Others	
	2000	2004	2000	2004
Never	73%	74%	25%	30%
Once or twice	20%	20%	32%	34%
Once a week or more	7%	6%	43%	37%

70% of youth in custody bullied or picked on others

Bullying in the community

More than two-thirds of youth in custody (70%) bullied or picked on others while living in the community (67% of the girls and 71% of the boys), compared to 75% in the 2000 survey. Bullying involves physically harming or verbally harassing someone to get something, such as money, food or cigarettes, or to make them do something against their will. More than a third of youth (37%) bullied or picked on others one or more times a week or every day, compared to 43% in 2000.

Almost half of youth in custody (49%) bully others but are not bullied themselves, while 21% bully others and are also bullied. And 5% of these youth are victims of bullying, but do not bully others. Only 25% of youth in custody are not involved in any bullying in the community.

A quarter of youth (25% of girls and 26% of boys) had been bullied or picked on while living in the community, most once or twice.

Given the prevalence of bullying among youth in custody, bullying behaviour could be interpreted as a marker for intervention among these youth, while they are still in the public school system, as it often reflects life experiences that lead to future problems with the justice system.

In 2004, 13% of youth in custody had deliberately killed or hurt a pet or other animal, down from 27% in 2000.

Carrying weapons

Youth in custody are much more likely to carry weapons than youth in the general population: 76% said they carried a weapon in an average 30-day period before being detained, compared to 8% of youth in school who reported carrying a weapon to school (and 72% in the 2000 survey). Twenty-two percent carried a weapon on one to five days, and more than half (54%) carried a weapon on six or more days.

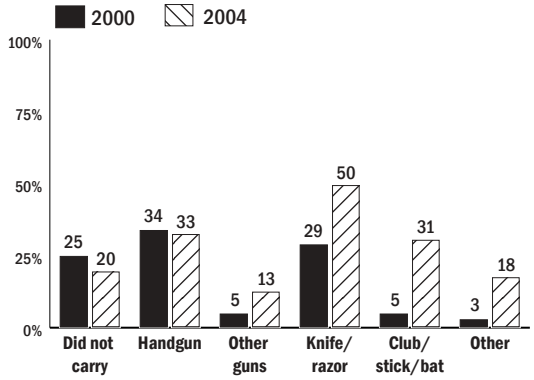
A third of youth (33%) carried a handgun in an average month before being detained, while less than 1% of youth in school carried handguns. Fifty percent of youth in custody carried a knife or razor, up from 29% in 2000; 13% carried a rifle or shotgun; 31% carried a club, stick, bat or pipe; and 12% said they carried bear mace.

Fighting

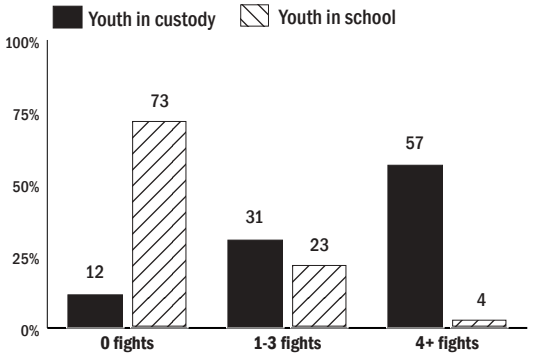
Most youth in custody (88%) were also in fights in the past year, compared to 27% of youth in school (36% of boys and 18% of girls).

Thirty-one percent of youth in custody were in one to three fights in the past year, 31% in four to 11 fights, and 26% had been in a fight 12 or more times. Similar to boys, 25% of girls in custody had been in 12 or more fights in the past year.

Weapons carried
(in average 30-day period pre-custody)



Physical fights in past year



Q Sample question on violence

During the past 12 months, how many times were you in a physical fight?

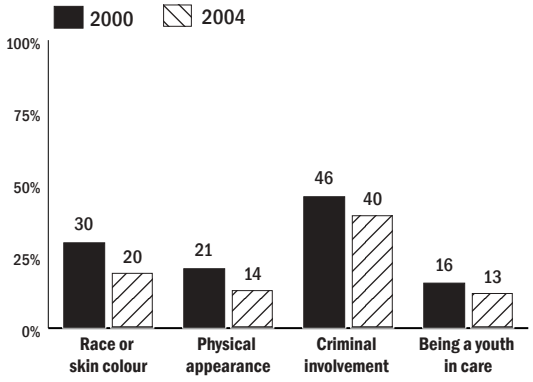
More than half of youth in custody have experienced discrimination

Discrimination in the community

More than half of youth in custody (55%) experienced discrimination or were treated unfairly in the community, compared to 29% of youth in school. Fifty-eight percent of the boys and 25% of the girls reported discrimination in the community.

More youth in custody were discriminated against due to their race or skin colour than youth in school: 20% versus 12%. Conversely, fewer youth in custody were discriminated against due to their physical appearance, compared to youth in school: 14% versus 20%. As well, 40% of youth in custody were discriminated against due to their criminal involvement, and 13% for being a youth in care. Only a few youth reported discrimination due to sexual orientation or a disability.

Discrimination in the community because of ...



Q Sample question on discrimination

While living in the community, have you been discriminated against or treated unfairly?

Life on the Inside

Q **Sample question on the youth custody system**
Have youth custody centre staff involved you in making decisions about your release plan?

This section of *Time Out II: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody* compares the experiences and perspectives of youth on life inside the custody centre, in 2000 and 2004.

Youth in custody in 2000 and 2004

Youth were asked about their life experiences and behaviours in both the custody centre and the community before they were detained. Many of their experiences were similar in 2000 and 2004. The main difference was more youth were in custody in 2000, and a higher proportion of the youth custody population was female. More youth were surveyed then as a result.

Feelings of safety

Most youth in custody in 2004 reported feeling safe in the custody centre. Three-quarters of youth "always" felt safe in a variety of places in the centre, including their rooms, the school and at meals. A few youth (4%-6%) reported "rarely" or "never" feeling safe in the centre.

In addition, youth in custody are more likely to report feeling safe attending school in the custody centre than youth attending public schools in B.C.: 76% compared to 40%.

Girls in custody were more likely to report feeling safe than boys. Almost all the girls reported "always" feeling safe everywhere in the centre.

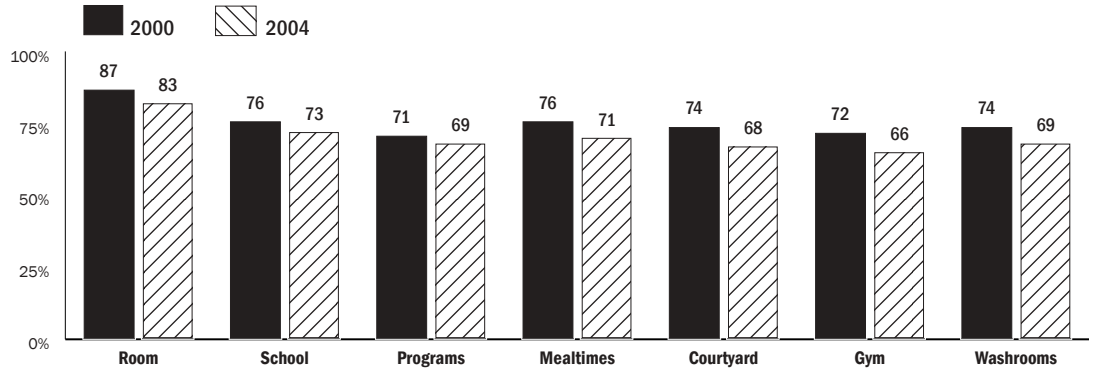
Youth were asked who they would talk to if they felt unsafe in the custody centre. Forty percent said they would talk to "no one," 26% would talk

Youth are more likely to feel safe at school in the custody centre than youth attending B.C. public schools

Profile of youth in custody

	2000	2004
# youth surveyed	243	137
Females	21%	10%
Ever in government care	63%	73%
Ever charged or convicted of a violent offence	80%	83%
Have a chronic illness or disability	11%	17%
Physically abused	78%	64%
Males who have been sexually abused	15%	6%
Males who attempted suicide in past year	17%	12%
Binge drank 10+ times in a month	37%	34%
Used marijuana 40+ times in a month	58%	57%
Used cocaine 3+ times in life	58%	59%
Used amphetamines 3+ times in life	24%	50%
Used hallucinogens 3+ times in life	63%	49%
Used heroin 3+ times in life	25%	8%
Ever had sex	98%	96%
Used a condom last time (of sexually active)	56%	59%
12+ physical fights in past year	25%	26%
Bully others in the community	75%	70%

Youth in the custody centre always feel safe in ...



to a staff member in the centre, 21% would talk to another resident, and 13% would talk to someone not in the centre.

Bullying in custody

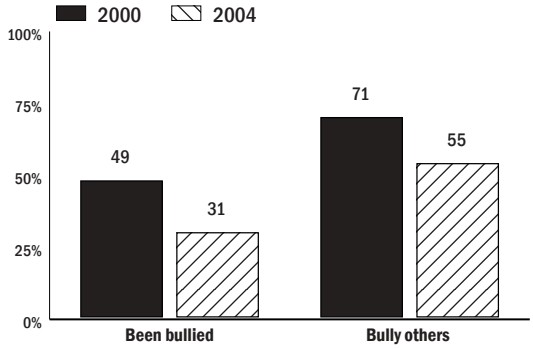
While bullying is still prevalent in the custody centre, it did decline between 2000 and 2004.

About a third of youth (31%) were bullied or picked on while living in the custody centre in 2004, down from 49% in 2000 (26% of youth were bullied in the community). About half (55%) of youth who are bullied in the community also report being bullied in custody.

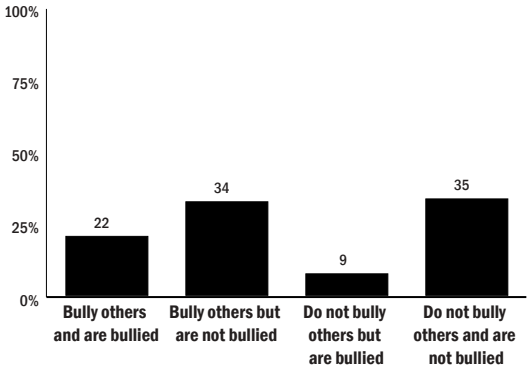
Twenty-four percent of youth were bullied or picked on by other residents in the custody centre in 2004, versus 26% in 2000; and 10% said they were bullied or picked on by staff in 2004, compared to 14% in 2000. Youth were most commonly bullied by having mean or unpleasant things said to them, being threatened, pressured or intimidated, and being punched, hit or beaten up.

In 2004, 55% of youth bullied others in custody, less than the 71% in 2000. Seventy percent of youth bullied others while in the community, and 72% of those who bullied in the community also bullied in the custody centre.

Bullying experiences in the custody centre



Bullying behaviour in the custody centre



Bullying behaviours declined between 2000 and 2004

Over half of the girls reported bullying others in the centre, while almost all the girls said they were never bullied in custody. Presumably, these results indicate the girls are bullying boys.

Fifteen percent of youth said staff never knew when a resident was being bullied or picked on, 29% said staff rarely knew when it was happening, 30% thought sometimes staff knew, and 21% thought staff knew "most of the time" or "always."

About half of youth said staff in the custody centre "never" or "rarely" made it easier for bullying to occur, but 27% thought staff "sometimes" made it easier, and 16% said staff "most of the time" or "always" made it easier for bullying to occur. Nine percent said they didn't know how often a staff member made it easier for bullying to happen.

Almost half of youth (49%) thought staff try to stop bullying in the custody centre "most of the time" or "always," 23% thought staff try to stop it "sometimes," 15% said staff "rarely" try to stop it, and 7% said staff "never" try to stop bullying. Similarly, 29% of youth in 2000 thought that staff "rarely" or "never" try to stop bullying, and 46% thought staff try to stop it "most of the time" or "always."

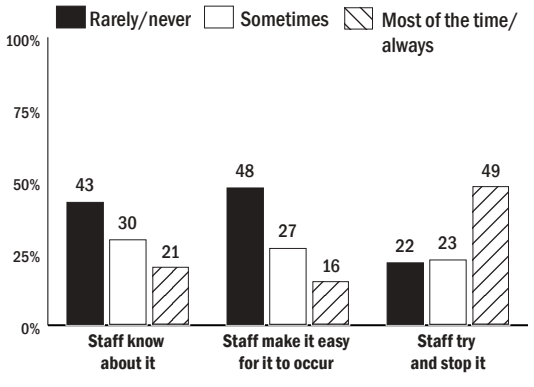
Ways youth bullied others in custody

Said mean or unpleasant things	43%
Punched, hit or beat up others	34%
Threatened, pressured or intimidated others	32%
Excluded or ignored others	23%
Took others' belongings by threat or force	21%
Made unwanted sexual comments or jokes	12%

Ways youth were bullied in custody

Mean or unpleasant things said to them	21%
Threatened, pressured or intimidated	15%
Punched, hit or beaten up	13%
Unwanted sexual comments or jokes directed at them	11%
Excluded or ignored	9%
Belongings taken by threat or force	9%
Touched or grabbed in a sexual way	6%

Youth perception of staff knowledge of and response to bullying



Q Sample question on the youth custody system
Have you ever been physically restrained by staff in a youth custody centre?

Physical restraint and abuse

Even though most youth say they feel safe in the custody centre, 67% reported being physically restrained by a staff member, and of those who had been restrained, 48% felt staff used too much or excessive force when restraining them.

In addition, 21% of youth felt they had been physically abused or mistreated by staff in the custody centre in 2004, not including physical restraint. In 2000, 22% of youth reported being physically abused by custody staff. (The question was asked differently in 2000 and 2004. In 2004, youth were asked not to include physical restraint.) Almost all the girls reported no physical abuse by staff.

No youth reported being sexually abused by custody centre staff in 2004, versus 1% in 2000.

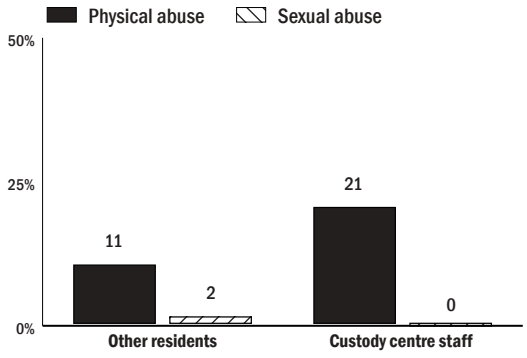
Fewer youth reported being physically abused by other residents in the centre in 2004 than in 2000: 11% compared to 28%. Two percent of youth reported being sexually abused by other residents in 2004, versus 3% in 2000. No girls reported being sexually abused by other residents.

Self harm and suicide

A similar percentage of youth said they deliberately cut or injured themselves, without trying to commit suicide, 20% in 2004 and 19% in 2000. Thirteen percent did so once or twice, and 7% did so three or more times. Youth said they deliberately cut or injured themselves because they were feeling angry (9%), stressed (8%), and bored (7%). (Youth could mark more than one reason.)

Six percent reported ever attempting suicide in a custody centre in 2004, compared to 12% in 2000.

Abused by ...



Discrimination in custody

In 2004, 39% of youth reported being discriminated against or treated unfairly by other residents, primarily because of their race or skin colour (20% in 2004, versus 22% in 2000), or their physical appearance (13% in 2004, compared to 21% in 2000).

About a third of youth (32%) felt discriminated against or treated unfairly by staff in 2004; 13% because of their race or skin colour, compared to 14% in 2000, and 13% because of their physical appearance, compared to 12% in 2000.

Experienced discrimination in the custody centre because of ...

	By other residents	By staff
Race or skin colour	20%	13%
Physical appearance	13%	13%
A disability	9%	6%
Type of offence committed	7%	6%
Being labelled a snitch or rat	8%	4%

Family contact

Fewer youth in custody had contact with their parents in 2004 than in 2000. Almost half (47%) said their parent or parents never visited them in custody in 2004, compared to 38% in 2000; 16% have parents who visit less than once a week; 25% have parents who visit once a week; and 11% have parents who visit a few times a week or every day.

More than half of youth (53%) talked to their parents on the phone a few times a week or every day while in custody, and 14% talked once a week. Still, 23% never talked to their parents on the phone in 2004, compared to 11% in 2000, and 10% talked with parents less than once a week.

In 2004, 30% received letters or email from their parents while in custody, compared to 36% in 2000, 11% once a week or more.

Overall, 16% of youth had no contact with their parents through visits, telephone calls, email or letters, up from 9% in 2000, while 72% had weekly contact.

Fifty-five percent of youth in custody reported feeling that someone cares about them, 27% felt no one cares about them, and 18% don't know if someone cares about them. Youth mostly listed family, including foster parents, and friends as the people who care about them, and a few mentioned custody centre staff.

Contact with parents while in custody

	Visits	Telephone calls	Letters or email
Never	47%	23%	70%
Less than once a week	16%	10%	19%
Once a week	25%	14%	7%
More than once a week	11%	53%	5%

Q Sample question on the youth custody system

When you first arrived at the youth custody centre, were your rights clearly explained to you by staff?

Treatment in the custody centre

Youth were asked if they were familiar with their rights and custody centre rules. Most youth confirmed that staff informed them of the custody centre rules (62%) and their rights (56%) when they first arrived at the centre.

Almost all youth (90%) also know they have the right to make a formal written complaint about their treatment in the custody centre. Eighty-four percent know how to make a complaint, and 39% have made a formal written complaint. Of those who submitted a complaint, 39% received help in making the complaint, and 36% felt the custody centre responded fairly to their complaint.

About half of youth (49%) thought all or most of the staff treated them fairly and with respect, 42% felt some staff did, and 9% felt few or none of the staff treated residents fairly and with respect.

Rights awareness

† when first admitted to the centre

The majority of youth participate in programs at the custody centre and most find them helpful

Programs and services

Youth in the custody centres have access to alcohol or drug programs, counselling, school, life skills training, work programs, Aboriginal programs, health care, recreational activities, chaplain services, and hobbies, such as arts and crafts and wood working. Youth were asked if they participated in these programs, and whether the services were helpful. In all cases, a majority of youth used the programs offered in the custody centre. Among youth who used these services, the majority found them helpful.

Almost half of youth (49%) felt their cultural, spiritual or religious needs were being met in the custody centre, 14% felt these needs were not being met, and 37% said they didn't have any cultural, spiritual or religious needs.

A third of girls (33%) said there are enough programs to meet the needs of females in the centre, half (50%) said there aren't enough programs for females, and 17% said they didn't know if there were enough programs for females.

Twenty-two percent of youth think there are enough programs to meet the needs of youth with disabilities, 31% said there aren't, and 47% said they didn't know.

In addition, 58% of youth said custody centre staff involved them in making decisions about the programs they participate in, and 56% said staff involved them in making decisions about their release plan.

Percentage of youth using the centre's programs and services

Health and social services	
Health Care	78%
Alcohol and drug programs	73%
Mental health services	69%
Chaplain services	75%
Aboriginal programs†	72%
Skills and recreation	
School	91%
Life skills programs	84%
Work programs	74%
Recreational activities	91%
Hobbies	84%

† of Aboriginal youth

Programs and services in the custody centre are helpful (of youth who use the service)

Health and social services	
Health care	85%
Alcohol and drug programs	74%
Mental health services	73%
Chaplain services	83%
Aboriginal programs†	88%
Skills and recreation:	
School	93%
Life skills programs	89%
Work programs	80%
Recreational activities	89%
Hobbies	88%

† of Aboriginal youth

Preventing re-offending

Youth were asked to identify services and supports that would help prevent them from committing more crimes after their release from custody. Like other youth in society, most youth in custody want a job, a place to live and better access to education. Youth identified job opportunities as the most important preventive measure. More than half of youth in custody also recognized the need to change their peer group. Many need ongoing drug or alcohol counselling. Some youth also need life skills training, and support from an adult or counsellor to prevent re-offending.

Hopes for the future

Most youth in custody share the same aspirations for the future as other people: almost three-quarters hope to have jobs in five years, more than half want a home, and many want a family of their own. Almost a third hopes to be in school. And despite their history of criminal behaviour, only 9% expect to be committing crimes and 9% to be in prison five years from now. However, a small number of these youth have no hope for the future: 7% expect to be dead in five years.

When you are released, what would keep you from re-offending?

Job training or job opportunities	63%
Hanging out with different people	51%
Drug or alcohol counselling	45%
Better or more school programs	45%
A place to live	41%
Probation that did not interfere with work or school	41%
Life skills training	30%
Other counselling/treatment	29%
A caring adult to provide support and advice	25%
Counselling for my family	19%

Where do you see yourself in five years?

In a job	73%
Having a home of my own	56%
Having a family	41%
In school	31%
Don't know	11%
Committing crimes	9%
In prison	9%
Dead	7%

Most youth in custody share the same aspirations for the future as other people

Aboriginal Youth in Custody

Q Sample question on youth background
Do you have First Nations status?

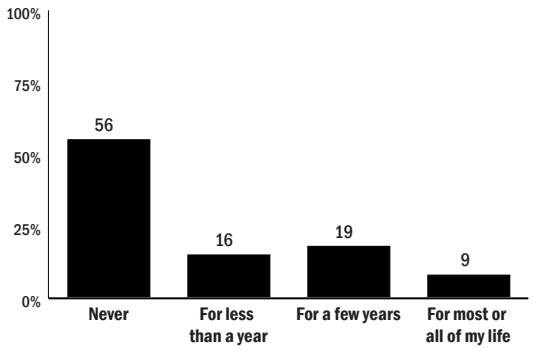
The proportion of Aboriginal youth in custody dramatically exceeds their numbers in the general population: 47% of youth in custody said they were Aboriginal in 2004. By comparison, just 8% of youth in B.C., and 4% of the total B.C. population, are Aboriginal.

Of the Aboriginal youth in custody, 76% have First Nations status, and most have never lived on reserve. Only 9% have lived on a reserve for most or all of their life.

Aboriginal youth in custody are more likely to have experienced disruption or trauma in their home life than their non-Aboriginal peers, including having a family member die of an overdose (25% versus 11%), violence (23% versus 9%), or suicide (26% versus 10%). And more Aboriginal youth (78%) have been in government care than non-Aboriginal youth (69%).

The survey shows that risk behaviours are fairly similar among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth in custody. However, Aboriginal youth face greater risk for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE), suicide, abuse and discrimination. Knowing these risks, decision makers in social, health and justice services can target more culturally appropriate resources to address these issues, in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

Lived on reserve (of Aboriginal youth)



Disabilities

Similar proportions of Aboriginal (69%) and non-Aboriginal youth (74%) have been told by health professionals they have one or more health conditions, including anger problems, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), addiction problems, a learning disability, depression, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE), bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, chronic anxiety or epilepsy.

Aboriginal youth are at greater risk for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, suicide, abuse and discrimination than non-Aboriginal youth

Told by a health professional they have† ...

	Aboriginal youth
Problems with anger	37%
Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	32%
Addiction problems	23%
Learning disability	24%
Depression	24%
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	19%

† Youth could mark all that apply

However, Aboriginal youth are at greater risk for FAS/FAE: almost one in five Aboriginal youth (19%) said they were diagnosed with FAS/FAE, compared to 6% of non-Aboriginal youth. This proportion has not changed since the 2000 survey, when 19% of Aboriginal youth in custody also reported a diagnosis of FAS/FAE. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome can cause brain damage; difficulties with learning, attention, memory and problem solving; heart, liver and kidney defects; and vision and hearing problems.

(Source: National Organization on FAS website, 2005)

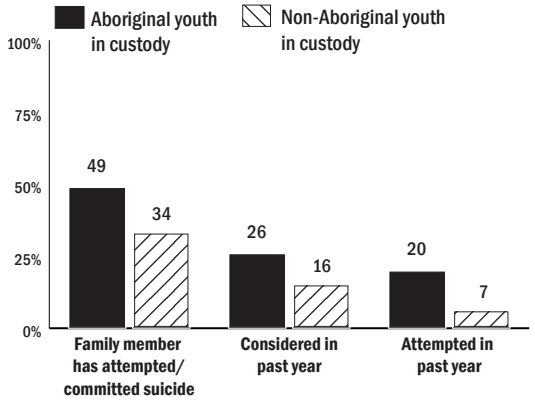
Suicide

Aboriginal youth in custody are much more likely to consider and attempt suicide than Aboriginal youth in school and non-Aboriginal youth in custody.

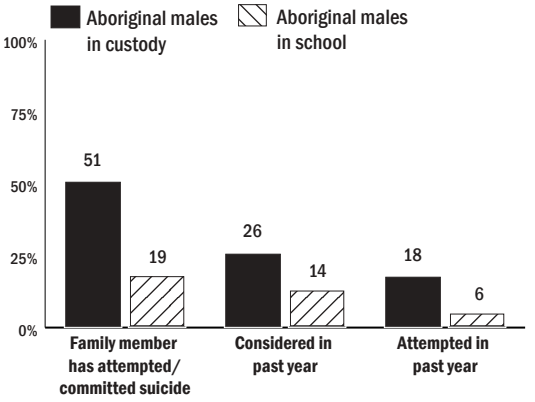
In 2004, 26% of Aboriginal male youth in custody considered suicide in the past year, compared to 16% in the 2000 survey, and 18% attempted suicide in 2004, compared to 11% in 2000. (Males were compared because the small number of Aboriginal girls in custody in 2004 made it difficult to compare results for females.)

In addition, Aboriginal youth in custody are more likely to have a family member who attempted or committed suicide than non-Aboriginal youth in school and non-Aboriginal youth in custody.

Suicide — Youth in custody



Suicide — Aboriginal males



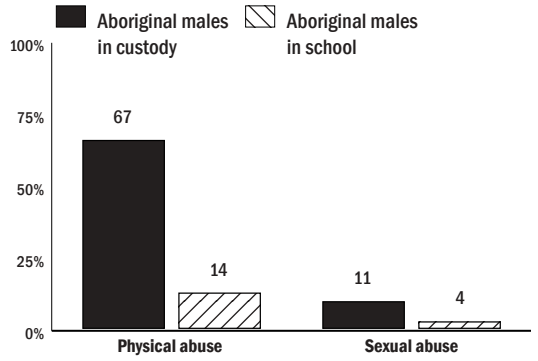
Abuse

Aboriginal youth in custody are also more likely to have a history of abuse than their Aboriginal peers in school or non-Aboriginal youth in custody, and to have traded sexual favours for food, clothing, shelter, money, transportation, or drugs and alcohol. While still extremely high, the proportion of Aboriginal males in custody with a history of

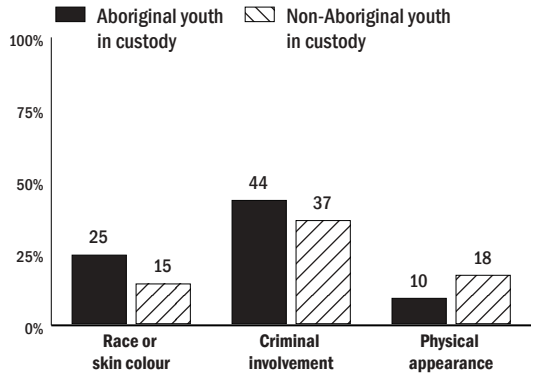
The proportion of Aboriginal youth in custody dramatically exceeds their numbers in the general population

Abuse — All Youth

Abuse — Males



Discrimination in the community due to ...



physical abuse was 80% in 2000, compared to 67% in 2004, and 18% in 2000 verses 11% in 2004 for sexual abuse.

Discrimination

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth in custody experienced similar levels of discrimination when they lived in the community (56% compared to 54%). But Aboriginal youth were more likely to report discrimination due to race or the type of offence they committed, and less likely to report discrimination due to their physical appearance.

A smaller proportion of Aboriginal youth (34%) reported discrimination by other residents than non-Aboriginal youth (43%), or staff in the custody centre (27% versus 37%).

Aboriginal youth and the justice system

More Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal youth said staff explained the centre's rules (72% compared to 54%), and their rights (63% versus 50%), when they first arrived in the centre. While 90% of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth knew about their right to make a formal complaint, 28% of Aboriginal youth have actually lodged a complaint, compared to 47% of non-Aboriginal youth.

About half of Aboriginal youth (49%) said their cultural needs are being met in custody, 19% said these needs are not being met, and 32% reported not having any cultural needs.

Almost two-thirds of Aboriginal youth (63%) found Aboriginal programs offered in the custody centre useful, 9% did not find them helpful, and 28% didn't use the programs.

At Higher Risk

Decision makers can target prevention programs to address risks and support healthier development among youth

The population of young people in custody appears to be a fairly homogeneous group:

- Predominantly male
- Multiple contacts with the justice system
- Trauma and instability in their families
- Problems at school
- Sexually active
- Misuse substances

However, youth in custody also face diverse challenges. This section correlates specific risk factors—having disabilities, being homeless, being in care, using crystal methamphetamine and suffering abuse—with poor health outcomes. These youth are more vulnerable and at even greater risk for emotional distress, abuse, suicide, drug use, multiple sex partners, fighting and violent crime, and are less connected to their families and school.

Decision makers can use this information to target prevention programs to address risk factors and support healthier development among these youth.

Youth with disabilities

Almost three-quarters of youth (72%) had a health professional tell them they have one or more health conditions, including a learning disability, epilepsy, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAS/FAE), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, chronic anxiety disorder, addiction problems, or problems with anger. Interestingly, only 23% of youth with one or more diagnoses indicated they have a health condition or disability that limits their activities.

Health condition† correlates

	Youth with health condition	Youth with no health condition
Emotional distress in past month	17%	3%
Physically abused	72%	42%
Used marijuana 40+ times a month	63%	40%
6+ sexual partners in life	68%	47%
4+ physical fights in past year	61%	47%
Don't like school	58%	42%

† Youth told by a health professional they have one or more of the following: a learning disability, epilepsy, FAS/FAE, ADHD, schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, chronic anxiety disorder, addiction problems, or problems with anger

Among youth who have been diagnosed with a health condition, 17% experienced severe emotional distress in the past month. Only 3% of youth without a diagnosis were distressed. Similarly, youth with a diagnosis were more likely to have been physically abused, have had multiple sex partners, been involved in physical fights, and not like school.

Correlates of being in care†

	In care	Not in care
Physically abused	72%	56%
Sexually abused	14%	8%
Used marijuana 40+ times a month	70%	44%
Used amphetamines 3+ times a month	44%	22%
4+ physical fights in past year	72%	42%
Didn't like school	59%	48%

† in the past year

Correlates of experiencing homelessness†

	Homeless	Not homeless
Attempted suicide in the past year	18%	9%
Physically abused	75%	55%
Used marijuana 40+ times a month	68%	47%
4+ physical fights in past year	71%	44%
Didn't like school	66%	43%
Family connectedness‡	.57	.73

† in the past year
‡average score out of a maximum score of 1

Youth in care

About three-quarters of youth in custody (73%) have been in government care, in a foster or group home at some time, aside from being in custody. Of these youth, 49% were in care in the year before being detained.

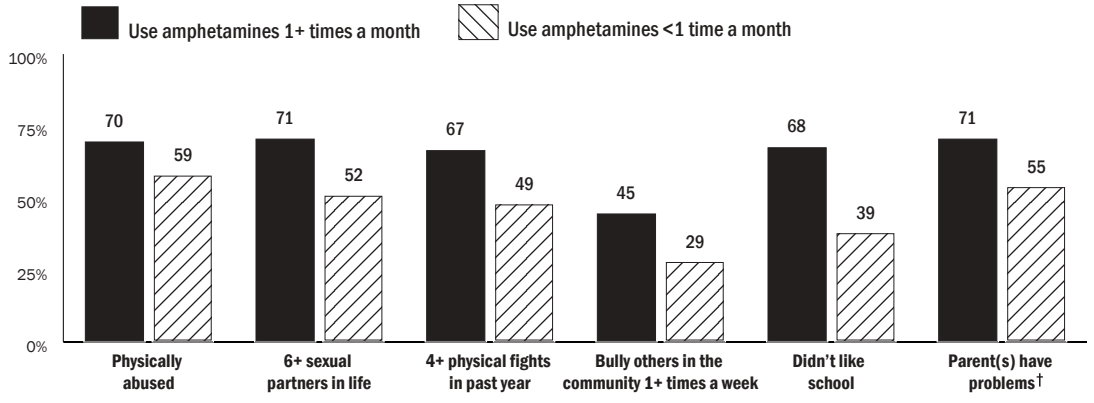
Homelessness

Close to half of youth in custody (46%) experienced homelessness in the year before living in custody. These youth either slept on the street, in an abandoned building, in a shelter or safe house, or had no permanent home and lived all over (called couch surfing).

Using crystal methamphetamine

Forty-six percent of youth used amphetamines once or more in an average 30-day period before being detained. Crystal methamphetamine is highly addictive and associated with many health risks, including a rapid heart rate, increased blood pressure, and damage to blood vessels in the brain, which can lead to stroke, as well as episodes of

Amphetamine use correlates



† one or both parents have a substance use or mental health problem or a criminal record

violent behaviour, paranoia, anxiety, confusion, and insomnia. Psychotic symptoms can persist for months or years after using the drug.

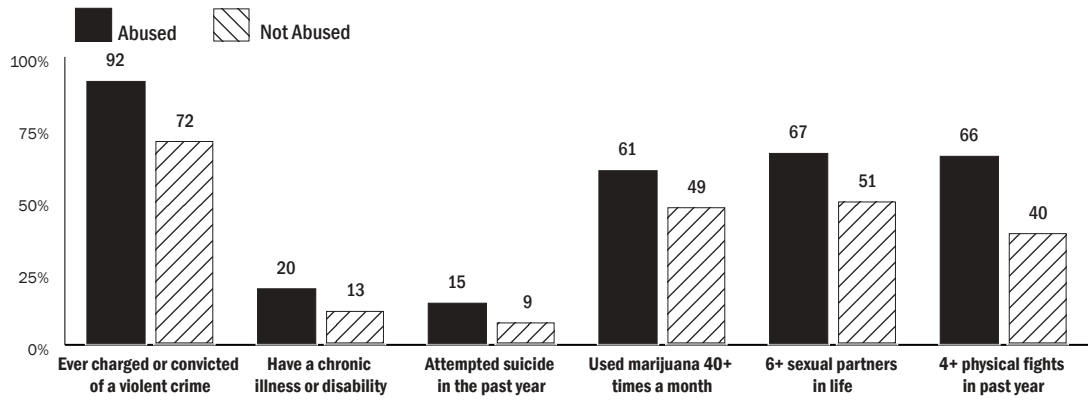
(Source: BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information website, 2005)

Abuse

Sixty-four percent of youth in custody were abused, physically, sexually or both. In the Adolescent Health Survey, abuse was associated with risky behaviours among youth in school. Not surprisingly, abuse is correlated with even greater risk taking among youth in custody.

Abuse is associated with risk taking among youth in custody

History of abuse correlates



Q Sample question on abuse

Have you ever been physically abused or mistreated by anyone in your family or by anyone else?

Recommendations for Action

There are no simple solutions that address the complex issues faced by youth in custody. These young people will require considerable support to attain the possibility of making a healthy transition through adolescence and into adulthood. Their problems need more than a commitment of youth justice services; health, education and social service systems also have an important role to play. Prevention and intervention strategies must occur early, respond to health problems, and provide opportunities for positive growth to promote the healthy development of youth in custody, and those at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

Intervene early

The majority of youth in custody were in trouble by the time they reached 12 years of age. Programs providing early intervention in childhood and early adolescence offer the best hope of preventing youth from spending their adolescent years in the justice system.

Respond to health problems

Mental health problems, addictions and disabilities are rampant among the youth custody population. Some of these problems likely result from youths' experiences of trauma, including abuse and serious family problems, which are the norm among youth detained in custody.

Provide opportunities for positive youth development

Most young people in custody have been excluded from supportive and nurturing homes, and from enjoying success at school. Like other youth, these young people need access to caring adults who can provide support and mentorship, and to opportunities that will allow them to develop skills and competence in academic, social and vocational areas.

Prevention and intervention strategies must occur early, respond to health problems, and provide opportunities for positive youth development

McCreary Centre Society Publications

Reports for AHS III

British Columbia Youth Health Trends: A Retrospective, 1992-2003 (2005)

Healthy Youth Development: Highlights from the 2003 Adolescent Health Survey III (2004)

Adolescent Health Survey III Regional Reports for: Northwest; Northern Interior; Thompson Cariboo Shuswap; Okanagan; Coast Garibaldi/North Shore; Kootenay Boundary; East Kootenay; North Vancouver Island; Central Vancouver Island; South Vancouver Island; Vancouver; Richmond; Fraser; and Fraser North

Reports for AHS II

Healthy Connections: Listening to BC Youth (1999)

Adolescent Health Survey II: Regional Reports for: Kootenays Region; Okanagan Region; Thompson/Cariboo Region; Upper Fraser Valley Region; South Fraser Region; Simon Fraser/Burnaby Region; Coast Garibaldi/North Shore Region; Central/Upper Island Region; North Region; Vancouver/ Richmond Region; Capital Region; East Kootenay Region; Kootenay Boundary Region; North Okanagan Region; Okanagan Similkameen Region; Thompson Region; Cariboo Region; Coast Garibaldi Region; Central Vancouver Island Region; Upper Island/Central Coast Region; North West Region; Peace Liard Region

Reports for AHS I

Adolescent Health Survey: Province of British Columbia (1993)

Adolescent Health Survey: Regional Reports for: Greater Vancouver Region; Fraser Valley Region; Interior Region; Kootenay Region; Northeast Region; Northwest Region; Upper Island Region; and Capital Region (1993)

Special Group Surveys and Topic Reports

Healthy Youth Development: The Opportunity of Early Adolescence (2003)

Accenting the Positive: A developmental framework for reducing risk and promoting positive outcomes among BC youth (2002)

Violated Boundaries: A health profile of adolescents who have been abused (2002)

Violence in adolescence: injury, suicide, and criminal violence in the lives of BC youth (2002)

Between the Cracks: homeless youth in Vancouver (2002)

Homeless youth: an annotated bibliography (2002)

Time Out: A profile of BC youth in custody (2001)

The Girls' Report: The Health of Girls in BC (2001)

No Place to Call Home: A Profile of Street Youth in British Columbia (2001)

Making Choices: Sex, Ethnicity, and BC Youth (2000)

Raven's Children: Aboriginal Youth Health in BC (2000)

Lighting Up: Tobacco use among BC youth (2000)

Silk Road to Health: A Journey to Understanding Chinese Youth in BC (2000)

Mirror Images: Weight Issues Among BC Youth (2000)

Being Out-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Youth in BC: An Adolescent Health Survey (1999)

Our Kids Too-Sexually Exploited Youth in British Columbia: An Adolescent Health Survey (1999)

Adolescent Health Survey: AIDS-Related Risk Behaviour in BC Youth - A Multicultural Perspective (1997)

Adolescent Health Survey: Youth & AIDS in British Columbia (1994)

Adolescent Health Survey: Chronic Illness & Disability Among Youth in BC (1994)

Adolescent Health Survey: Street Youth in Vancouver (1994)

AHS II Fact Sheets

Safe & Sound: Injury Issues Among BC Youth

Keeping Fit: Physical Activity Among BC Youth

Marijuana: Use Among BC Youth

Healthy Connections: Connectedness and BC Youth

Mirror Images: Weight Issues Among BC Youth

Silk Road: Health of Chinese Youth in BC

Lighting Up: Tobacco Use Among BC Youth

Next Step

The Next Steps: A Workshop Toolkit to Engage Youth in Community Action. A project of the Adolescent Health Survey III (2005)

The Aboriginal Next Step: Results from Community Youth Health Workshops (2001)

Our Communities – Our Health: Young People Discuss Solutions To Their Health Issues. The Next Step Report (2001)

Adolescent Health Survey: Next Step - Community Health Action By Youth. Results from 1994 Youth Health Seminars in British Columbia (1995)