McCreary Youth 2025 Photovoice Project

Over the past decade, McCreary Centre Society's BC Adolescent Health Survey has shown a decline in youth participation in organized sports and exercise.

For this photovoice project, youth across BC were invited to reflect on the role of physical activity in their lives.

Please enjoy their submissions and reflections!

Skiing is one of the activities that I enjoy the most. It makes me feel free and adventurous I love skiing down the mountain, feeling the cold wind on my face, and seeing the beautiful scenery. Skiing is also a way of connecting with nature which helps me relax and clear my head. I prefer skiing with my friends because we can laugh at each other's falls and help each other get back up. My friends also help me get out of my comfort by encouraging me to try new slopes and tricks.

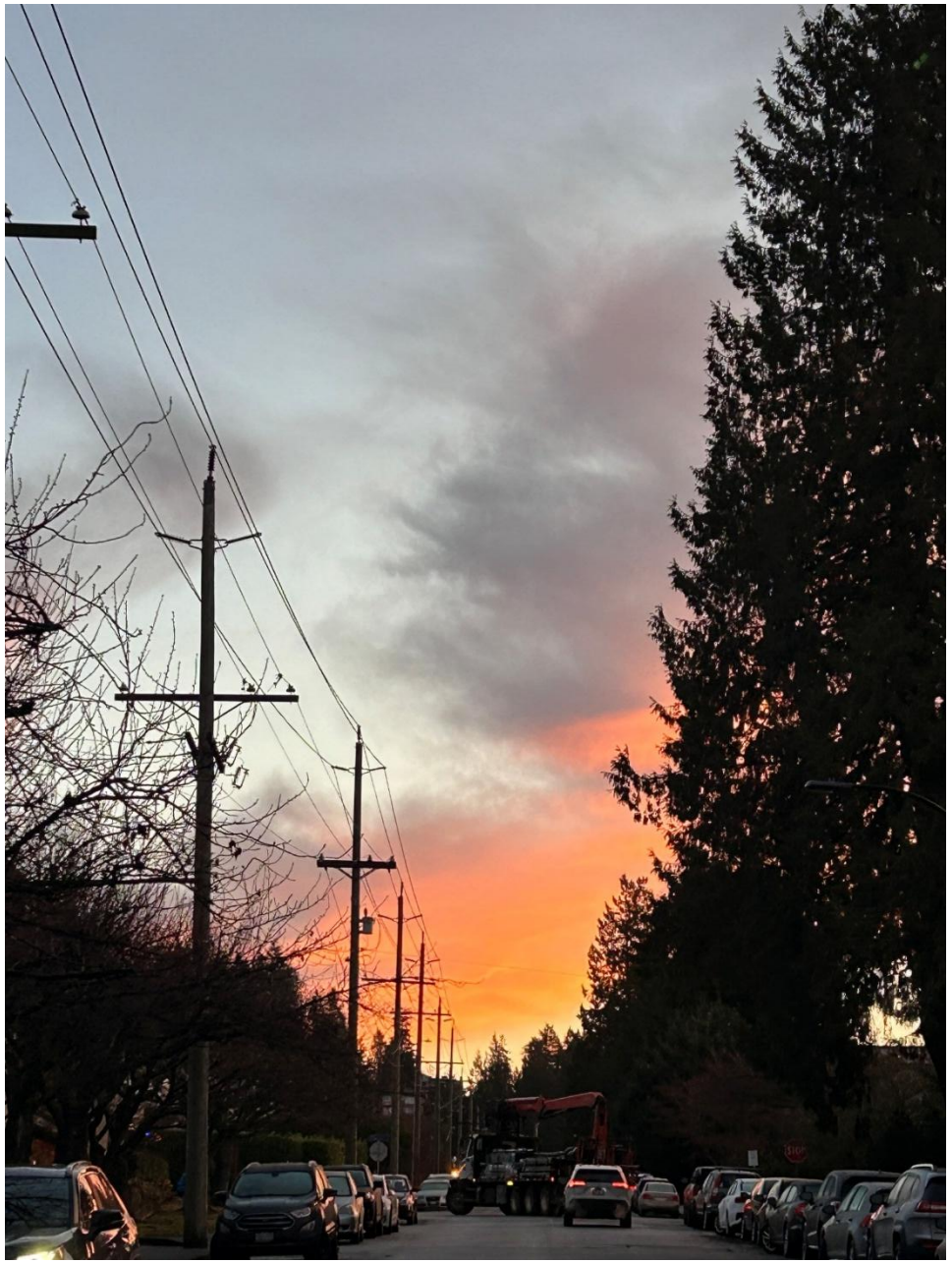
Youth, Grade 12, Vancouver

Hiking is an activity that is fun, adventurous, and healthy for the mind and body, Not only are you spending more time in nature, the fresh air and exercise can help clear your mind and recharge after a busy week. After a hike, or any form of exercise, I feel fulfilled and ready to tackle my next task! Many youths do not have the opportunity to participate in activities like this. Field trips allow students to experience and explore many activities that they normally would not be able to.

Youth, Grade 10, Fraser

This trail by the beach is where I go to walk, think, and reset when life feels too fast. It's more about reconnecting with nature and myself than working out, and sometimes, what helps me be more active isn't motivation but rather just having peaceful spaces like this that make movement feel natural and healing.

Youth, Grade 12, Vancouver



This photo was taken on a freezing December morning and I can honestly say that I didn’t want to get out of bed, but there was a little voice in my head that said I would feel amazing after going on a run. During the run, I witnessed the gorgeous sunrise, and I knew that I had made the right choice. This photo reminds me that physical activity isn’t always easy or fun; sometimes it's just me holding myself to my own promise.

Youth, Grade 9, North Vancouver

On days when I don't feel like going out for a walk, I do short strength workouts in my room when I'm feeling stressed or overwhelmed with school and responsibilities. It's not always exciting, but it helps me feel a bit more in control when everything else feels chaotic. Even if it's not an intense workout, I still pride myself on the consistency of these small actions

Youth, Grade 12, Vancouver

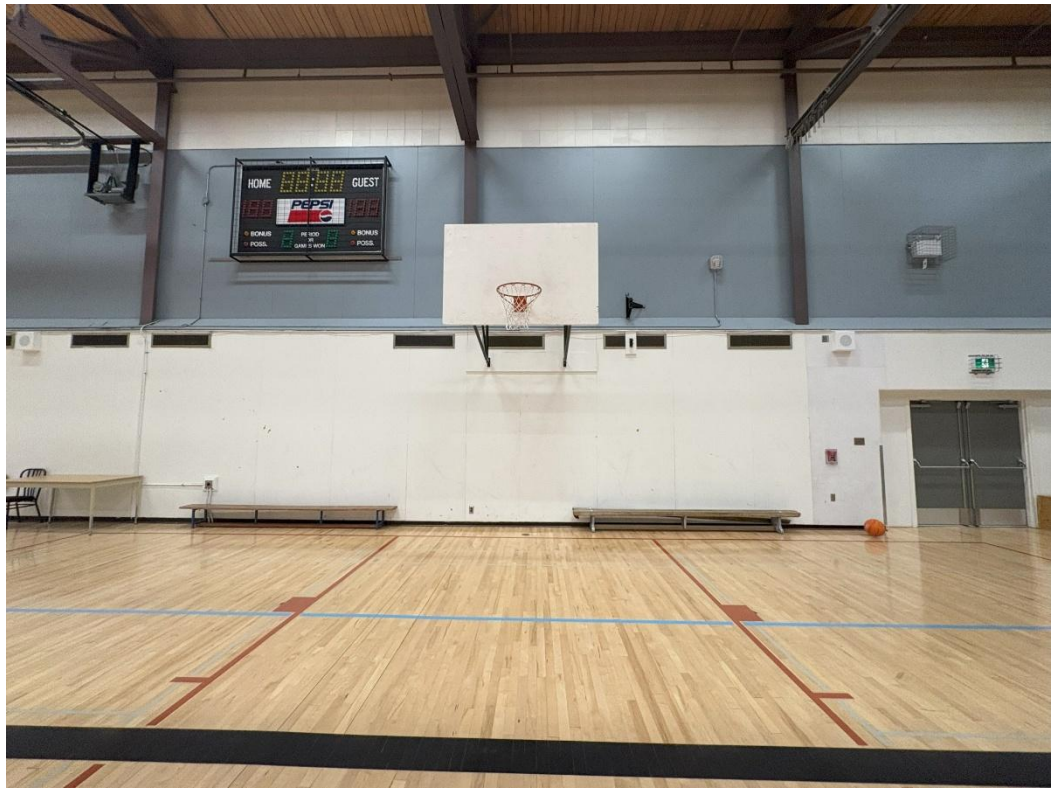
This moment at Deep Cove reminds me of how physical activity doesn't always have to be fast or intense. Walking to the cove and taking a moment near the water to just slow down and take a moment to breathe deeply, allowed me to feel more connected to myself and the world around me.

Youth, Grade 9, North Vancouver

Physical activities for me are activities that make me sweaty, my heart pumping, and my mood soaring.

The key factor for me to be active is to have people to do these activities with, whether that is someone dragging me to the gym (thanks my boys) or encouraging someone to start being more active with some after dinner walks.

Youth, Richmond



Basketball is not just a game it’s a way to move, connect, and grow. When I first started, I wasn’t very good, but I didn’t give up because every time I played, I felt something different, something powerful. If I had never tried, I would’ve never discovered how much I love this sport. So never give up on your dreams.

Youth, Grade 10, North Vancouver

To me, physical activity doesn't have to be intense or exhausting, it can be as simple as a 20 minute walk. It might not take much effort, but it always helps lift my mood. I especially enjoy walking on sunny days, when I'll stop to take photos of the sky along the way.

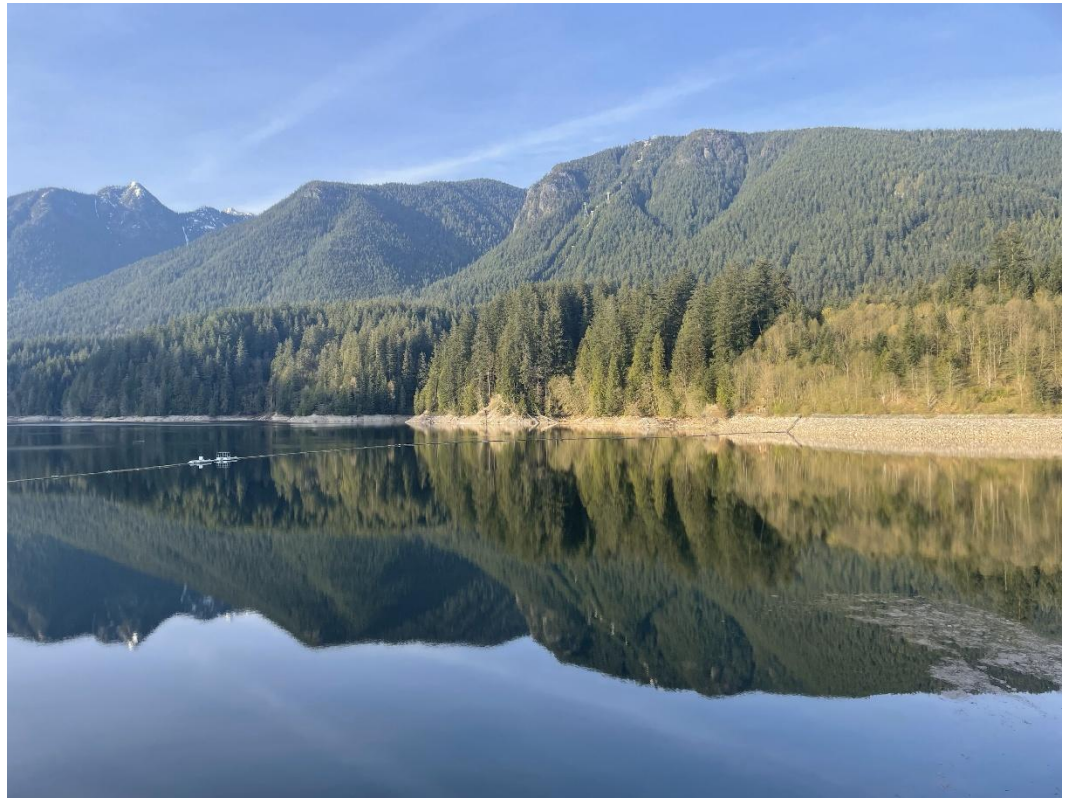
Youth, Grade 10, Vancouver

I have chosen an image of my beloved pet rabbit, Papaya, to compare and contrast what physical activity looks like in both mine and her life. At a little over two years old, Papaya is a young adult in terms of rabbit development. Like any other animal, she loves to play, run, and jump around - but I wonder to myself what she thinks about while she does so. As humans, we are very caught up within our own systems of social classes, and as such often exercise purely for the image it would give us, so as to “fit in”. While others do it solely for health benefits, many among us - including myself - do it primarily for social image. But my rabbit, she has no knowledge of such things - she moves all about not for others, but for herself. I think that is a quite beautiful thing, and something I would strive to do in my own, non-rabbit life.

Youth, Grade 11, Interior

As an avid dragon boater, this picture of the water and the dragon boats reminds me of the serenity and strong sense of camaraderie that physical activity facilitates. As I partake in this sport, I gain a great appreciation for the water around me, my teammates around me, and the community I have found myself in.

Youth, Grade 10, Vancouver



Hiking in nature helps me clear my mind and feel healthy. It makes me happy to do something good for my body. In summer, wildfires sometimes stop us from hiking, and I wish we could protect nature better.

Youth, Grade 10, North Vancouver

What does physical activity look like in my life?

I usually go on the treadmill when I want a focused workout for around 30 minutes. It's a bit repetitive, but it helps me clear my head and feel like I've done something productive. Sometimes I watch movies as I go on the treadmill to make it less repetitive.

Youth, Grade 10, Vancouver

In my life, physical activity primarily looks like badminton. I take badminton classes and also play with my family on the weekends. Badminton is my favourite sport because it combines physical activity with social interaction, quick reflexes, and strategic thinking. The speed and unpredictable nature of the shuttle adds to the thrill! An additional perk is that it can be played year round as it is an indoor sport.

Youth, Grade 9, North Vancouver

My school's field is a traditional example of being physically active, as I partake in physical education with a strong community. Being physically active helps communities grow stronger and bond through competitiveness, growth etc.

Youth, Grade 10, Vancouver