



2015

Annual Staff Report



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Abbotsford Youth Commission

because youth matter

Vision Statement

Abbotsford is a city where every youth feels included, safe, valued, empowered and connected.

Mission Statement

The Abbotsford Youth Commission exists to identify, promote, improve, increase and provide services and programs for youth in Abbotsford.

Diversity Statement

Everyone Belongs

Background

In 1991, the Districts of Matsqui and Abbotsford established a Youth Commission to ensure that concerns and problems respecting youth in the community would be heard. The goal was to actively identify and promote avenues by which resources in the community could best address youth issues.

In 1996, the Abbotsford Youth Commission (AYC) became a non-profit society. The AYC receives core funding from the City of Abbotsford, collects fees for life skills courses and receives grants and donations to operate free programs and services.

Goals

- A. To advocate on behalf of youth
 - 1. To assist in the development of a positive profile for youth.
 - 2. To provide opportunities for community involvement.
 - 3. To encourage community investment in youth.

- B. Implement programs for youth in the community
 - 1. To continue and enhance preventative leisure/recreation options for youth.
 - 2. To provide training, leadership, and volunteer experiences for youth.
 - 3. To increase the quality of Youth Commission services provided to the community.

- C. Be actively involved with the community in developing programs & services for youth.
 - 1. To encourage healthy youth and families
 - 2. To create avenues for youth involvement in social/political action
 - 3. To focus on awareness and prevention of identified youth social issues.

- D. Share youth information and resources with the community
 - 1. To promote the Youth Commission as a resource for youth, parents, and the community.
 - 2. To enhance and revise materials which promote services for Abbotsford youth.

Message from the Executive Director

On July 4, 1991 the Matsqui Abbotsford Youth Commission held its inaugural meeting and set the mandate, “to work toward shaping the young people of our community and to help them find a place for themselves by getting them involved in different social activities.” For more than 24 years the Abbotsford Youth Commission has been busy doing exactly that! Of course we have grown and changed since that time, but our underlying purpose has remained true to our beginning.

The Abbotsford Youth Commission’s vision is that Abbotsford is a city where every youth feels included, safe, valued, empowered and connected. For almost 25 years now, the AYC has been working to accomplish this vision by providing safe, productive places for youth to go after school, in the evening, and daily in the summer; encouraging youth to live a healthy balanced lifestyle through exercise and recreation; providing an opportunity for youth to talk about issues that influence their development and learn skills to respond to negative experiences; working towards crime prevention by offering youth pro-social activities during high-risk hours; providing youth with the strong adult mentors that they are seeking; giving youth a forum to have their voices heard and assisting them to create positive change in their community. The Abbotsford Youth Commission exists **because youth matter**.



2015 was an exciting year for the Abbotsford Youth Commission. We experienced continued success in our many established programs, started several new programs and participated in a very rewarding process to create our new diversity statement, **Everyone Belongs**. This simple statement was suggested by the Youth Council and the Board of Directors agreed. Although the statement is unassuming, it holds complex significance and is just right for the AYC.

We also moved into the third year of our Character Project taking on the attribute of ‘courage’. Once again we looked to our Youth Council for leadership and they provided the inspiration and direction for the Courage in Action project. The project aims to connect with more than 400 youth over 40 sessions, which will encourage youth to explore what courage really looks like in their everyday lives. In 2015, many youth participated in the ABC’s of Courage – an activity that outlines various scenarios with three (A, B or C) different levels of responses requiring courage, a Courage Jeopardy game, creating Courage videos and ‘news broadcasts’, sharing their thoughts on the ‘wall of courage’, encouraging courage in others through sidewalk chalk messaging and much more.



Another highlight was the creation of LEAD – Leadership Exploration and Development. This program was designed to engage youth in grades 9 and 10 in learning about leadership and act as a gateway into our Youth Council program. As a pilot project, LEAD was a huge success! Recruitment for our Youth Council program in September was a breeze and the youth who had already participated in LEAD arrived ready for what was expected of them in Youth Council.

A final highlight of the year was the inception of our brand new (IN)volved project. This project was a dream of ours all year and we slowly worked on shaping it as we had time. The purpose is to help match youth who would like to volunteer with agencies that support volunteers and also directly with volunteer opportunities in our community. It is not designed to take the place of other volunteer matching programs, but rather to funnel the youth who come to us seeking volunteer work with organizations and agencies that are looking for them. At the end of the year we were able to dedicate some staff resources to the project and it really began to take form. Watch for exciting things from the (IN)volved project in 2016!

In addition to the many programs, events and presentations that we offer, we also spend many hours working to be the voice of Abbotsford's youth and to advocate on their behalf. We chair and host numerous committee meetings every month; these community collaborations help to ensure that youth in our city are not falling through the cracks. The AYC is a hub for youth programs and services providing a place for youth and parents to come in and seek advice. Every year we provide support and referrals for youth who find themselves in difficult situations such as having no place to sleep, needing drug or alcohol treatment or police and ministry referrals for youth who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances. The AYC also partners with numerous other organizations working to improve the lives of youth in our community.

The AYC functions in a community environment and receives many benefits from the involvement of our community partners. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners, our generous funders and donors, our Board of Directors, our practicum students, volunteers and our staff. Without the valuable support provided we would not succeed. Thank you.

Bev Olfert, Executive Director
Abbotsford Youth Commission



Abbotsford Youth Commission – 2015 Annual Staff Report

A. Drop-In Programs

Drop-in Programs at the AYC include our two **youth drop-in centres**, our new **Nutrition Program** and our two **youth drop-in sport** programs.

Our **youth drop-in centres** located at Abbotsford Recreation Centre (ARC) and Matsqui Recreation Centre (MRC) offer youth a safe, supervised and productive place to spend their time all year round. Youth are able to participate in activities such as: sports, pool, video games, ping pong, foosball, crafts, educational games, special events and more. Staff members build relationships with every youth who comes into the centre and connect them to the program in some way. Fun activities are planned each day and youth come in daily to see what we have ready for them. Healthy snacks are provided to youth every day at no cost as well as a dinner once a month at both of our youth centres through our new Nutrition Program. The caliber of activities and the connection to adult role models makes our youth centres a popular place to be for youth ages 12 – 18 in Abbotsford.

Nutrition Program

2015 was the second year for this successful and much needed Nutrition Program thanks to a generous grant from the Abbotsford Community Foundation. This program provides a healthy after school snack to the youth who attend our drop-in centres as well as a Family Style Dinner twice a month. Youth and staff prepare the meal together and everyone sits down around the tables to eat and interact. This program also provides education around cooking and healthy choices.

Total # of after school snacks served: 3350+

Total # of dinners served: 405

Total # of volunteers: 9

Youth Centre at MRC

At the start of 2015 our program hours at our Youth Centre at MRC were Monday-Thursday 2:30-4:30pm and Fridays 2:30-10:00pm. As of September we increased our hours of service on Monday-Thursday to 5:00pm. MRC is open throughout the school year with closures over spring, winter, and summer break. This year, we had 384 different youth participate in this program with 3764 entrances, for an average daily attendance of 22 youth. This year we had to make a tough decision to keep the youth centre closed for the first two weeks of September due to staffing changes. Even with the two week unexpected closure we managed to hit the highest number of different youth we have ever had at MRC.

Total # of youth participants: 384

Total # of entrances: 3764

Average daily attendance: 22

Total # of volunteers: 12

Youth Centre at ARC

The Youth Centre at ARC is open 52 weeks per year offering Spring Break, Winter Break and Summer Youth Zone programming. 2015 Program hours were Monday-Thursday 2:15-5:00pm, Fridays 2:30-10:00pm and Saturdays 6:30– 10:30pm. This was a change from our 2014 Saturday 5:00pm start. We were finding that most youth were coming later rather than earlier. Open gym continues to be offered every Saturday night where youth have the opportunity to play and learn new sports and games, although the most popular activity continues to be basketball. In 2015, we had 1195 different youth participate in this program with

7946 entrances, for an average daily attendance of 28 youth. This is the highest number of different youth we have ever had at ARC, beating our previous record by 73 youth.

Total # of youth participants: 1195
Total # of entrances: 7946
Average daily attendance: 28
Total # of volunteers: 12

Spring Break (Youth Centre at ARC)

The youth centre at ARC was open 6 days a week over Spring Break in 2015. Monday - Thursday 1:00pm–5:00pm, Fridays 12:00pm–8:00pm, and Saturdays 7:30pm-10:30pm for open gym for a total of 12 days. We had an average of 22 youth attend each day to participate in free activities such as swimming, skating, baking, tournaments and more.

Total # of entrances: 260
Average daily attendance: 22
Total # of volunteers: 7

Summer Youth Zone (Youth Centre at ARC)

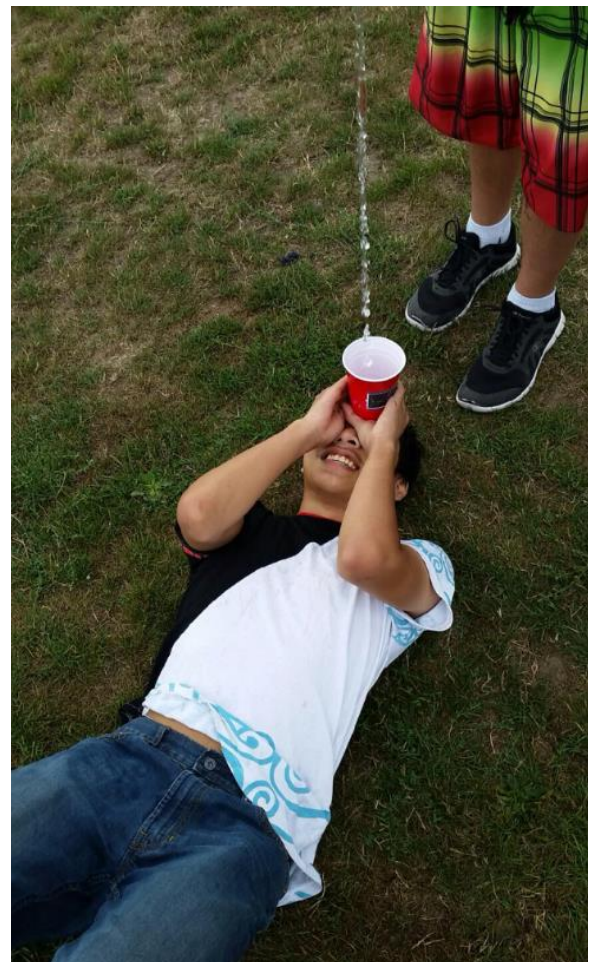
Summer Youth Zone ran out of the youth centre at ARC for ten weeks this summer Monday - Friday from 12:00pm-5:00pm. Each of the ten weeks offered different themed activities. Some of the most popular themes were Super Soaked, Thumb Wars (video game tournaments) World Record Challenges and Roll out the Red Carpet. Each day we had a new activity associated with the themes. Following our Character initiative we ran a six week Courage Group offered on Thursday afternoons. This group introduced the Character of Courage to the youth. Youth got together to talk about what courage meant to them. Each week an activity was presented to the youth to participate in. This group really tested the staffs' creativity and they passed with flying colors. The youth were engaged at each meeting and continued to come back each week. Summer Youth Zone saw 1315 entrances over the ten weeks with an average of 27 youth attending each day. This was an all-time high for entrances, but it was over an unusually long summer of ten weeks.

Total # of entrances: 1315
Average daily attendance: 27
Total # of volunteers: 3

Winter Break (Youth Centre at ARC)

The AYC youth centre at ARC was open for six days over the two week winter break. The youth enjoyed hanging out at the youth centre and participating in fun activities such as making gingerbread houses, making ornaments, street hockey and a gift exchange during our Christmas party.

Total # of entrances: 82
Average daily attendance: 14
Total # of volunteers: 0



Drop-In Basketball

Basketball is offered once a week, every Wednesday from 8:00pm-10:00pm at Abbotsford Middle School during the school year. Each session is started off with a warm up then it is game time. Depending on the mood of the youth we may play a full court game or two half court games. We had 120 different youth join us in 2015 along with an average of 16 youth attending each night, a slight dip from last year's amazing record breaking year.

Total # of youth participants: 120

Total # of entrances: 462

Average attendance: 16

Total # of volunteers: 2

Drop-In Floor Hockey

Drop-In Floor Hockey is offered each Thursday after school from 3:30pm-5:00pm throughout the school year. This year we have seen a group of new youth attend, with a large portion coming from Chief Dan George Middle School. Records were set this year with 112 different youth over the year, 723 entrances, up 292 from 2014, and an average of 23 youth attending each session, up from an average of 14 in 2014.

Total # of youth participants: 112

Total # of entrances: 723

Average attendance: 23

Total # of volunteers: 13

Total # of APD participants: 11

B. Leadership Programs

Leadership Programs at the AYC include **Youth Council**, **LEAD – Leadership Exploration and Development**, **Youth Focus**, and our **Character Project**

Youth Council

2015 was a memorable year for Youth Council. We were happy to have a youth representative from every public school in Abbotsford as well as from several private schools. Members met twice a month to work on building leadership skills, listen to guest speakers and work on our yearly project. The project this year was an ambitious one, our first Photo Project. All youth from Abbotsford were invited to take part in our photo contest depicting things they like about Abbotsford and things they would like to see changed. The end result of the project was amazing with The Reach inviting us to hang our photos in the gallery for a full month. We held an opening night and had our Youth Council members on hand to explain and discuss the photos to our esteemed guests, the Mayor, city councillors, school principals, along with the photographers and their family and friends. The master of ceremonies was a very confident and well-spoken Youth Council member who blew the socks off of everyone there. It was a very proud moment for the AYC when our project was requested to hang in City Hall for the remainder of the year. There was also interest in the photos from the Abbotsford Police Department as well as the Tradex.



Total # of youth participants: 31

Total # of volunteers: 1

LEAD – Leadership Exploration and Development

LEAD was a new program in 2015. This program was developed as a stepping stone into Youth Council, as we were struggling each year to recruit new youth. We were not sure if it would be successful, but it ended up being great! The program was open to all youth in grades 9-12. LEAD consisted of four meetings, once a month from 4pm to 5:30pm from March to June. The program focused on planning and delivering a special event. All 11 youth met to plan the 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament for BC Youth Week. Youth went through the process of planning the event as well as volunteered at the event. The feedback from the youth was super positive with recommendations to continue to run the program in 2016. Not only was LEAD successful it definitely served its purpose of helping youth step into Youth Council. All 11 LEAD members moved on to join Youth Council as 13 Youth Council members graduated in 2015 leaving lots of vacant spaces.

Youth Focus Program

Youth Focus is a leadership program that offers youth participants the opportunity to have a say in what goes on in the youth centres. Interested youth gather to develop leadership skills, offer feedback on programs, directly engage in the program and event development process, become a role model, and discuss pertinent issues facing youth. The program runs for an hour each week at both MRC and ARC. Youth in the program also participated in both the Integrity Project and Courage in Action in 2015.

Total # of youth entrances at MRC: 238

Total # of youth entrances at ARC: 195

Character Project

Another highlight this year was the continuation of our Character Project. In 2015, our Character Project had two streams –TIPs – The Integrity Project and CIA – Courage in Action. **The Integrity Project** (TIPs) started in 2014 and wrapped up in June 2015. Over the course of the year-long project youth discussed the attribute of integrity and came up with their own answers to the question, “What does it mean to live with integrity?” The project engaged 419 youth in 42 sessions. Highlights from the program include the t-shirt that was designed as an ‘artifact’ representing the youth’s learning; community member interviews and tweets; sidewalk chalk messaging campaign, and the Integrity Jenga game that was created by our staff and practicum students.

In June 2015 we moved into the third year of our Character Project taking on the attribute of ‘courage’. Our Youth Council provided the inspiration and direction for the **CIA - Courage in Action** project coming up with the activities and methods for engaging other youth. This project aims to connect with more than 400 youth over 40 sessions that will encourage youth to explore what courage really looks like in their everyday lives. In 2015, many youth have already participated in the ABC’s of Courage – an activity that outlines various scenarios with three (A, B or C) different levels of responses requiring courage, the Courage Jeopardy game, creating Courage videos and ‘news broadcasts’, sharing their thoughts on the ‘wall of courage’, encouraging courage in others thought sidewalk chalk messaging and much more. This project will continue until June 2016.

C. Self Esteem Programs

Just for Girls

Just for Girls is a psycho-educational program for grade seven girls which is facilitated in the school environment by practicum students from several different faculties of study at the University of the Fraser Valley including: Nursing, Criminology, Child and Youth Care, and Social Work. The objective of the program is to prevent harmful emotional and behavioral issues such as low self-esteem, eating disorders and abuse.

The Just for Girls program is facilitated with staff and practicum students combined. In the past we had run more groups each sessions, but in the fall of 2014 we slimmed the program down to 5 groups each session in order

to focus on quality rather than quantity and it paid off as our completion rates for the program have increased significantly. We now focus the first two weeks of the program on making things super fun along with ensuring we are calling the parents of all interested youth. We have seen a great increase to the number of youth attending each week.

Total # of participants: 144

Total # of entrances: 1034

Total # of volunteers: 8

Guys Alive

Guys Alive is a psycho-educational program for grade seven boys which is facilitated in the school environment by practicum students from several different faculties of study at the University of the Fraser Valley together with part-time staff members at the AYC. The objective of the program is to educate boys on peer pressure, bullying, relationships, healthy living and teamwork.

In 2015, the Guys Alive program was in 10 schools with 108 boys completing the program. This is the highest completion rate in this program since 2010. Comments by the participants about the program were all positive in nature and showed that the boys enjoyed the discussion topics.

Total # of participants: 108

Total # of entrances: 848

Total # of volunteers: 4

D. Healthy Living Programs

Girls Nite Out

Girls Nite Out is a non-competitive social recreational program that is designed to support healthy living through balanced lifestyle choices including exercise and play. The program atmosphere is designed to encourage girls to try new activities in a fun and supportive environment while enjoying the activities at their own pace and ability. The program runs two separate sessions a week three times a year for eight weeks at a time. In 2015 we tried several new activities with the girls groups including: Walleyball, Dance Trio (ballet, jazz and hip hop), Digital Scavenger Hunt and Rhythmic Gymnastics. All the new activities went well, but Rhythmic Gymnastics was the big hit.

Total # of youth participants: 81

Total # of entrances: 489

Total # of volunteers: 3



Guys Nite

Guys Nite is a non-competitive program that gives boys an opportunity to try a new activity or sport while teaching them the values of teamwork and active living. The program's focus is on participation in all activities allowing the boys to develop skills without the fear of failure or competition. Guys Nite is offered three times a year and meets at various locations in Abbotsford. In 2015, we saw our highest number of participants to date, at 59! This surpassed our yearly goal of 45. This year, the boys participated in different activities such as: Maan Farms Corn Maze, TRex Bootcamp, the driving range, judo, and a mini Popat test hosted by auxiliary Abbotsford Police Department members.

Total # of youth participants: 59

Total # of entrances: 383

Total # of volunteers: 1

E. Life Skills Programs

AYC Life Skills Programs are designed to teach basic skill and increase life skills in youth. All programs are offered in a fun and engaging safe atmosphere. Some of these programs are offered each month and others only a few times a year.

Below are the programs that ran in 2015:

Winter 2015

Babysitter Training #1	15	Search Party	9
Food Safe	7	Baking	10
Babysitter Training #2	18	Babysitter Training #3	12
Babysitter Training #3	25	Water World	8
Leadership Training	7	Adventure Zone	13
		Babysitter Training #4	12

Spring 2015

Food Safe #1	7	New Age Games	10
Babysitters #1	13	Food Safe #2	15
Food Safe #2	9	Leadership	14
Babysitters #2	15	Babysitting #5	11

Summer 2015

Employment Readiness	7	Fall 2015	
Food Safe #1	11	Babysitter Training #1	16
Babysitter Training #1	7	Food Safe	9
Retro Games	5	Babysitter Training #2	12
It's a Girls Thing	6	Babysitter Training #3	20
Cooking	8	Santa's Workshop	10
Babysitter Training #2	7	Babysitter Training #4	14

Total # of programs: 32

Total # of youth participants: 304

Total # of registrations: 362

Total # of volunteers: 5



F. Other Programs

Noon Hour Games

Noon Hour Games runs during the school year at Colleen and Gordie Howe, W. A. Fraser, and Chief Dan George Middle School once a week during noon hour. AYC staff play board games, cards, crafts, sports etc. and build relationships with youth at the schools. Activities are open to any youth in the school who wishes to attend. The purpose of the program is to promote all AYC programs and to invite youth to our youth centres. At Colleen and Gordie Howe Middle School we had an average of 11.5 youth participate each week, which is quite a bit lower than our average at Fraser. This is due to the school fields being closed and having to deal with smaller groups due to lack of space. We expect once the fields re-open that this number will go up. At W.A. Fraser Middle School we had an average of 19 youth participate each week. We started off the year with an average of 21 youth participating each week. We have seen a good deal of youth coming to check out the youth centres as well as join other programs due to the promotion being done during Noon Hour Games.

Summer Survivor Camp

In early July we ran a four day camp for 23 students of Howe Middle School. Students engaged in activities such as cooking, baking, science experiments, crafts, scavenger hunts and more. As far as the students were concerned they were having a super fun time, however, the goals of the program were to improve literacy and numeracy. All activities had a literacy or numeracy component and set students up for a successful summer.

C3 – Character, Connection & Confidence

C3 was a new program for the AYC in 2015 which started in spring at Eugene Reimer Middle School. This registered program was created to build character, leadership and confidence through group activities as well as to give students some time to complete their homework. The program started running twice a week after school in the spring with great success. In September the school invited us back but requested that the program run three days a week. We are now providing service to the youth three times a week after school for an hour and a half each day. In 2015 we have worked with 47 youth in this program.



G. Highlights of our Special Events

At the AYC we run many special events. Some of them are large full scale community events, some are directed towards a group or a specific target of the population, some are open to anyone in the community, and others are offered weekly at our youth centres. Highlights of our special events not already documented are:

Pool Duel at MRC Youth Centre

On February 20th, thirty nine youth came to MRC to participate in a free swim in the pool as well as a giant pool tournament that took place from 3pm-9pm.

Bullying Awareness Rally – Pink Shirt Day

On February 25th we held our annual “Take a Stand against Bullying” rally. Members of our Youth Focus group greeted children, youth and adults and handed out bullying awareness magnets to everyone. We had pink t-shirts cut out on paper for everyone to either design a t-shirt on or to write whatever come to mind about bullying. The t-shirts were then hung up of the wall for everyone to see. A short video was shown about bullying, then we took to the streets around ARC with our posters and pink shirts to raise awareness about bullying.



Spring Break at ARC Youth Centre

From March 16-28 we held our Spring Break programming at ARC. The youth center was open Monday to Thursday 1pm-5pm, Friday 1pm-8pm and Saturday 7:30pm-10:30pm. Activities were planned each day to keep the youth happy and engaged. All in all we were open for twelve days with an average of 21.5 youth attending each day.

Colleen and Gordie Howe Middle School Tours

In March 2015 we were invited for the second year in a row to have all of the grade 7 and 8 students from Colleen and Gordie Howe Middle school into the MRC youth centre for a tour during school hours. Students rotated through in 20 minute intervals. All students heard a very short presentation about the AYC and then were able to try out some of the youth centre activities. For months after the tours we were seeing new youth who were excited to come hang out with us.

Teen Fest

On April 11th the AYC set up at an interactive booth at Teen Fest. Christy and Erik spent the day with thousands of youth playing Minute to Win it games with youth passing by. Through these fun games the staff were able

to promote the AYC and all the programs we have to offer youth. It was a super busy day that was worth all of the effort as there were many adults there as well who were interested in what we do as an organization.

Youth Week 2015

Youth Week is an international celebration of youth held annually during the first week of May. It is a week of fun, interaction and celebration intending to build a strong connection between young people and their communities and to profile the issues, accomplishments and diversity of youth across the province. Here at the AYC Youth Week is a huge event that we are proud to host for all of Abbotsford's youth.

Following is an outline of Youth Week activities that were offered in 2015:

Friday, May 1st – Family Dinner Night at MRC

This free spaghetti dinner was a super fun evening. Youth invited their friends and family to join us for dinner, dessert and door prizes. We were able to use the MRC Seniors Centre to accommodate a larger dinner crowd. The room was set up Italian style with red and white checkered tablecloths and flower centre pieces. The room looked fun and inviting as well smelled so good. We had lots of youth eager to help set up, prepare, cook and clean up. In total 36 dinners were served along with some great dinner conversations. Everyone who attended received a pair of BC Youth Week sunglasses and some lucky winners walked off with some cool door prizes. We even had a grandma bring her two grandchildren from Mission for dinner!

May 2nd Capture the Flag at ARC

This was a collaborative event between the AYC and the Sweeny Youth Centre. The City kindly provided staffing support as well as a popcorn machine for the evening. It was great to see a few youth from their group join in with our youth. We had an enthusiastic group of youth come out and play capture the flag with us. It was a nice hot, sunny evening and everyone was running hard trying to outsmart the other team. This was a busy evening with 56 youth attending.

May 3rd - \$2 skate /swim at ARC and MRC Recreation Centres

The City of Abbotsford was happy to offer all youth 12-18 a \$2 skate or swim.

May 4th – Photo Exhibit: Abbotsford – Through the Eyes of Youth

The Photo Exhibit was a Youth Council project that started with a city wide photo contest open to all youth 12-18 with two questions in mind, what do you like about Abbotsford? What would you change about Abbotsford if you could? Youth Council chose the winners and put together the exhibit. They were super proud to present speeches to City Councillors, the Mayor and the general public. All in all, approximately 80 people attended the exhibit that night and from what we hear many more went to the Reach over the month of May specifically to see the exhibit. After Youth Week the exhibit was hung up in City Hall for the remainder of the year.



May 5th – Uroc Awards

The URoc Awards were an amazing success again this year with 92 people in attendance! It is always an honor to present these awards to the people in our community who make it a better place for our youth.

May 6th – 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament

This LEAD driven event had eight teams of three or four players come out to compete. It was great to see so many ages and skill levels. The teams were pretty evenly matched and there were no blow out games which was great! LEAD members did a super job checking teams in, making up the round robin schedules and overseeing the games. Lots of prizes and BC Youth Week swag were given out. There were 45 players out to the event as well as a handful of parents popping in to catch a game or two.

May 7th - Floor Hockey with the APD

This annual event is always something our youth look forward to each year. Thirty three youth had a ball playing against the nine APD members who so kindly gave up their time to hang with our youth. The youth are already talking about a rematch.

Summer Kick off BBQ

At the end of the school year, on June 26th, we held a summer kick off BBQ at ARC with free hotdogs, pop and chips for all youth. During the BBQ staff promoted our summer programs and summer youth centre hours and activities. We had 27 youth in attendance.

Summer Special Events

Over the summer we held the following special events:

- Master Chef Express: Youth rummaged through a bin full of different foods and sauces to create an all new sandwich, never made before. They had a great time getting creative, but you won't be seeing any of their creations on any menu! We had 25 youth participating this day.
- Wipe Out: A gauntlet of crazy, wacky things were set up for 20 youth to run through outside. It was fun and challenging, there were a few wipe outs, but no one was hurt, except their faces from all the laughs.
- AYC's Got Talent: Thirty two youth showed up to watch a few youth show off their talent.
- Water Fight: We had the fields all set up with wet and wild activities, but can you believe it was a rainy day? The youth thought it was too cold and didn't want to get wet, so they cancelled their own event.

Back to School Root Beer Floats

To celebrate the start of another school year and to draw youth back to the youth centres we gave away free root beer floats to 55 happy youth on September 25th.

Murder Mystery Night

On October 23rd at both ARC and MRC we had our practicum students plan this super fun, engaging activity. Youth were taken through challenging puzzles that they had to complete to receive their next hints. At MRC 30 youth followed the clues and solved the mystery, and 20 youth did the same at ARC.

Guys vs. Girls Challenges

On November 29th youth at MRC and ARC participated in mini Minute to Win It games all evening. It was a great competition between the boys and the girls. This whole evening was planned and executed by our valuable practicum students. Overall we had 47 youth participate between the two youth centres.

Christmas Tree Lighting

On November 29th AYC staff and Youth Council members hosted a booth at the Christmas Tree Lighting in Downtown Abbotsford. Everyone enjoyed giving out homemade cookies and hot chocolate to all the residents of Abbotsford who came to the event. It was a freezing cold day, but it was a great experience to have us all together working as a team outside of our regular working environment.

Halloween & Christmas Celebrations

For these fun holidays, the Youth Focus groups planned and hosted events complete with party games, contests, themed activities, skating, snacks and more. Holidays are always a highlight for the youth.

H. Impact on Youth 2015

Drop-in Programs

MRC Drop in	384 youth	3764 entrances	average 22
ARC Drop in	1195 youth	7946 entrances	average 28
• Spring Break (ARC)		260 entrances	average 22
• Summer Youth Zone (ARC)		1315 entrances	average 27
• Winter Break (ARC)		82 entrances	average 14
Basketball	120 youth	462 entrances	average 16
Floor Hockey	112 youth	723 entrances	average 23
Nutrition Program	405 Dinners served	3350+ snacks served	

Leadership Programs

Youth Council	31 participants and 216 entrances
LEAD	11 participants and 35 entrances
Youth Focus	433 entrances
Character Project- TIPS	148 entrances
Character Project- Courage	312 entrances

Self Esteem Programs

Just for Girls	144 participants and 1034 entrances
Guys Alive	108 participants and 848 entrances

Healthy Living Programs

Girls Nite Out	81 participants and 489 entrances
Guys Nite	59 participants and 383 entrances

Life Skills Programs

Winter	5 programs	72 registrants
Spring	4 programs	44 registrants
Summer	17 programs	165 registrants
Fall	56 programs	81 registrants
Total	32 programs	362 program registrants
	765 entrances	304 individual participants

Other Programs

C3 at Reimer	47 participants and 635 entrances
Noon Hour Games	Average weekly attendance of 17 with 701 entrances

Summary of 2015 Impact on Youth Statistics

In 2015 we reached all-time highs in the following programs:

- Guys Nite- Total Registrations,
- Floor Hockey- Different Youth, Entrances, and Average,
- Summer Youth Zone Entrances,
- Spring Break Entrances,
- ARC Drop-In- Different Youth, and
- MRC Drop-In- Different Youth.

MRC Drop-In:

Highest # of youth who came in one day: 47

Lowest # of youth who came in one day: 7

Average number of youth who came in per day throughout the year: 22

Number of different youth: 384

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 3,764

Comparison to 2014: Number of entrances decreased by 7.1% and average decreased by 4.7%.

ARC Drop-In:

Highest # of youth who came in one day: 86

Lowest # of youth who came in one day: 8

Average number of youth who came in per day throughout the year: 28

Number of different youth: 1,195

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 7,946

Comparison to 2014: Number of entrances decreased by 6.3% and average decreased by 7.4%.

- **Spring Break at ARC:**

Total number of entrances: 260

Average number of youth who came in per day: 22

Comparison to 2014: Number of entrances decreased by 11.3% and average decreased by 8.3%.

- **Summer Youth Zone at ARC:**

Highest # of youth who came in one day: 58

Lowest # of youth who came in one day: 15

Average number of youth who came in per day throughout the summer: 27

Total number of entrances throughout the whole summer: 1,315

Comparison to 2014: Number of entrances increased by 5.2%, and average decreased by 8.7%.

- **Winter Break at ARC:**

Total number of entrances: 82

Average number of youth who came in per day: 14

Comparison to 2014: Number of entrances increased by 13.9%, and average increased by 16.7%.

Basketball: 29 sessions in 2015

Highest # of youth: 40

Lowest # of youth: 7

Average number of youth who participated throughout the year: 16

Number of different youth: 120

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 462

Comparison to 2014: 33.5% decrease in total entrances and 19.5% decrease in different youth.

Floor Hockey: 32 sessions in 2015

Highest # of youth: 37

Lowest # of youth: 9

Average number of youth participated throughout the year: 23

Number of different youth: 112

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 723

Comparison to 2014: 68% increase in total entrances and a 15% increase in different youth.

GNO:

Highest # of youth in one program: 16

Lowest # of youth in one program: 10

Average number of youth who participated in the program throughout the year: 14

Number of different youth: 63

Total number of registrations for the year: 81

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 489

Comparison to 2014: A 2.5% increase in total registrations and a 1.6% increase in number of different youth.

GN:

Highest # of youth in one program: 22

Lowest # of youth in one program: 16

Average number of youth who participated in the program throughout the year: 20

Number of different youth: 46

Total number of registrations for the year: 59

Total number of entrances throughout the whole year: 383

Comparison to 2014: An 11.3% increase in total registrations and a 12.2% increase in number of different youth.

Life Skills Programs:

Winter	5 Programs	72 Registrants
Spring	4 Programs	44 Registrants
Summer	17 Programs	165 Registrants
Fall	6 Programs	81 Registrants
Total	32 Programs	362 Program Registrants
	765 Entrances	304 Individual Participants

Number of times a youth participated in a program

Number of youth

1	276
2	13
3	7
4	4
5	12
6	1
7	1

Total number of programs: 32, a 2.3% increase compared to 2014.

Total number in all programs: 362, a 19.5% increase compared to 2014.

Average number from all programs: 11, an 8.3% decrease compared to 2014.

Number of different youth: 304, an 18.3% increase compared to 2014.

I. Community Development

In addition to the many programs, events and presentations that we offer, we also spend countless hours working to be the voice of Abbotsford's youth and to advocate on their behalf. We chair, host and attend numerous committee meetings every month that work to improve the lives of Abbotsford's youth. These community collaborations help to ensure that at-risk youth in our city are not falling through the cracks. Highlights from this year's community involvement include:

Community Development and Committee Work

Four years ago the AYC became a champion of the **Character Abbotsford** movement, and over the years, we have been working to engage youth with the attributes of: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Empathy, Courage and Service. In 2015, Bev Olfert was elected as the Chair of Character Abbotsford and will serve in this position for one year. As a part of Character Abbotsford Bev has been able to participate in various presentations, lead a workshop, bring greetings at the conference and speak at the Leadership Forum. Of course all of these commitments also provide the opportunity to raise the profile of the AYC as well. Our involvement with Character Abbotsford has been a significant commitment of time and energy that we feel is a valuable contribution to our city.

Another highlight this year was the continuation of our **Character Project**. In 2015 our Character Project had two streams: TIPS – The Integrity Project and CIA – Courage in Action.

The **Youth Table**, a service that the AYC has been providing to the community for more than 20 years, continued to thrive in 2015. Monthly themes included: restorative justice, youth transitioning out of care, trends of recent criminal incidents involving youth, and affordable appropriate housing for youth. The Table also held an 'Abbotsford' citizens circle and had a presentations from Call Out around creating supportive communities for LGBTQ+ youth. In 2015 we had an average of 12 people attend each meeting.

The AYC was invited to participate in two steering committees this year In It Together and Human Trafficking Response and Prevention.

The AYC partnered with the **Fraser Valley Community Action Team** again this year to host a rally to acknowledge Sexual Exploitation Awareness Week. More than 40 people attended this outdoor event.

The AYC was awarded the contract to provide coordination / consultant services for **BC Youth Week** again this year. The work is in a large part completed by our Administrative Assistant with the assistance of our Supervisor of Recreation.

The Executive Director and Supervisor of Recreation sit on many committees in Abbotsford to provide a youth perspective, raise awareness of youth issues, assist in the development of a positive profile for youth, and to act as a resource for youth, parents and the community.

The committees that we participated in this past year are:

Abbotsford Child and Youth Committee

BC Youth Week Committee

Canadian Tire Jump Start Committee

Character Abbotsford (Executive Member / Chair)

BC Schools of Character

Fraser Valley Community Action Team

Fraser Valley Human Dignity Coalition

In It Together Steering Committee
Middle Years Table
Abbotsford Downhill
Youth Table (Chair/hosted by AYC)

All of these committees consider their AYC representative to be an invaluable asset to the committee. More community groups and committees approach the AYC for support each year; however, this is the extent of our ability to provide service at this time.

Partnerships

The AYC is a hub for youth programs and services and provides a place for youth and parents to come in and seek advice. We provide a safe place as well as referrals and support for youth who find themselves in difficult circumstances such as having no place to sleep, needing drug or alcohol treatment, or police and ministry referrals for youth who have been abused.

We were also pleased to partner with **WJ Mouat Secondary** again this year on their Youth Philanthropy project.

A final highlight in December 2015 was our participation in the **Downtown Abbotsford Christmas Tree Lighting**. As the AYC we hosted the hot chocolate and cookie stand. This event brought together staff and Youth Council in a fun activity serving our community.

The AYC also partners with numerous other organizations working to improve the lives of youth in our community:

Abbotsford Addictions Centre	City of Abbotsford
Abbotsford Community Services	Cyrus Centre
Abbotsford Parks, Recreation & Culture	Fraser Valley Regional Library
Abbotsford Police Department	IMPACT
Abbotsford Restorative Justice	MRC Senior Centre
Abbotsford School District	United Way of the Fraser Valley
ARC Senior Centre	West Abbotsford Community School
Big Brothers Big Sisters Fraser Valley	Xyolhemeylh
Central Abbotsford Community School	YMCA
Child and Youth Mental Health	Youth Resource Centre
Chilliwack Society for Community Living	Youth Unlimited

Resources

One of the goals of the Abbotsford Youth Commission is to share youth information and resources with the community. We do this through:

- Youth Workers Resource Guide at www.abbyyouth.com/resources/referral-guide.html
- Our newsletter the Whatz-Up
- Our Resource Library
- Referrals over the phone and in person
- Youth Table email distribution list
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Our website www.abbyyouth.com

Promotion

To let people know about the resources, programs and services available at the Abbotsford Youth Commission we promote the AYC throughout the year.

A highlight from 2015 was the **Howe Middle School Student Tour** day which saw more than 275 youth tour the youth centre at MRC in groups. Youth had the opportunity to try out the centre and learn about AYC programs and services.

Over the year we ran 4 ads for our programs in the **Abby News** We were featured in articles in the Abby News 6 times!

We also promote our programs and services through:

- Our email newsletter through Constant Contact
- Hosting our information booth at various community events. This year we put up our information booth at locations including: Middle Years Information Fair, Abbotsford School District Parent Conference, Teenfest, UFV Hiring Fair, and Abbyfest
- Presentations to the community including Clearbrook Kiwanis Club, Soroptomist International of Abbotsford Mission, Abbotsford Rotary Club, two Social Services classes at UFV, School Board of Trustees, and Keynote Speaker at the Character Abbotsford Leadership Forum on the topic of how we integrate the values into our work with youth at the AYC.
- Advertising in the Abbotsford Program Guide put out by Parks, Recreation and Culture three times a year
- Creating and distributing our Whatzup newsletter four times a year
- Creating hot sheets for programs and events and distributing these at school, and rec centres
- Sending press releases to the local newspapers
- Handing out coupons for free concession items for our Youth Centres in hopes of drawing in new youth
- Offering coupons for \$5.00 off summer programs in the local newspapers and on flyers handed out around the community.
- Featuring our upcoming programs and events in other newsletters such as the Entertainment Word, and What's On Abbotsford
- Phoning youth who have not attended our programs for a while and or to tell them that a program is starting up again
- Emailing and phoning past participants and school youth workers about upcoming programs
- Updating our website which is a great resource for youth and parents
- Class to class presentation in local middle schools
- Promotion to youth in Abbotsford Schools
- Twitter and Facebook
- This year we continued with paid Facebook Ads for the first time. This is low cost and we believe that we have a reasonable return
- Programs and events featured on the Abby News Website, Facebook and Slice of Life as well as the Highstreet and Chief Dan George websites
- Delivering flyers to homes near our youth centres and businesses for their staff rooms
- Our Recreation Leads at both youth centres attend their closest Middle School after school two days a week to remind youth and parents about our youth centres
- Promoting our programs and building relationships with youth during our Noon Hour Activities at Howe, Chief Dan George and Fraser Middle
- The reader boards at Abbotsford Recreation Centre and Matsqui Recreation Centre
- Offering 'bring a friend for free' night at Girls Nite Out
- Postcards promoting Girls Nite Out and Guys Nite to Just for Girls and Guys Alive participants

In 2015, we continued to concentrate our promotion efforts in developing new ways to reach our target audiences of youth and their parents. We thought outside the box and expanded our efforts with distributing inexpensive photocopied fliers, social media, increasing our presence in the schools, encouraging staff to cross-promote programs, and calling youth to remind them about the programs.

Abbotsford Youth Commission – Board of Directors 2015

Les Stagg	President
Stan Petersen	Vice President / School Board Representative
Cheryl Unger	Secretary
Karl Olfert	Treasurer
Carol Powell	Director/APD Representative
Patricia Ross	Director/City Council Representative
Jenny Thornton	Director/City of Abbotsford Representative
April Iguidez	Director
Balbir S. Gill	Director
Jasica Grewal	Director
Jessica Yarwood	Director
Raman Dhillon	Director
Teresa Pippus	Director
Hanna Araza	Director/Youth Council Representative
Kenton Palmer	Director/Youth Council Representative

Thank You to Our Volunteers and Donors

Our Volunteers

Finally, we would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations that assist us in providing programs and services for youth in Abbotsford. A special thank you to our Board of Directors and to our volunteers; without their help our programs and events would not be possible. Thank you so very much!

Our Donors and Supporters

In 2015 the AYC received financial assistance from:

City of Abbotsford
Province of British Columbia
Service Canada
Abbotsford Community Foundation
Abbotsford Rotary Club
Abbotsford School District
Abbotsford Social Activity Association
Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program
Hamber Foundation
Individual Donors
Kiwans Club of Clearbrook
Participation
Soroptomist International of Abbotsford Mission
Worksafe

In 2015 the AYC received in kind support from:

City of Abbotsford
Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
Abbotsford Community Services
Abbotsford News
Abbotsford Parks Recreation and Culture
Abbotsford Police Department
Abbotsford School District
HSBC Bank Canada
United Way of the Fraser Valley
University of the Fraser Valley