



Providing support, direction and protection for Canada's Youth

Quick Facts

- Children and youth (under age 20) make up more than one-quarter of Canada's total population.
- Teenagers and young adults account for 21 per cent of those charged with Criminal Code offences.
- Young people are less likely than any other age category to report a crime to police when they are the victims.

(Statistics Canada 2001)

Overview

The RCMP's strategic approach to youth is to prevent their involvement in crime, as both offenders and victims.

The RCMP supports numerous community-based programs, participates with various partners to run innovative programs that support children and youth, and, when necessary, works with community partners to implement the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

A Holistic Approach

The RCMP's National Youth Strategy has three primary objectives:

- Engage youth in crime prevention;
- Reduce youth involvement in crime, both as victims and offenders; and
- Deal effectively with youth who offend.

The strategy is a long-term plan that incorporates many roles of the RCMP, from general responses to young people, to a more focused response to those youth who are at risk of coming into conflict with the law.

Social development – addressing the root causes of crime so that young people are less likely to come into contact with the law – is at the heart of the RCMP's Youth strategy. The RCMP believes crime can be prevented by taking a holistic approach that ensures children have a healthy support system, access to social services and have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with adults.

Each Division of the RCMP has appointed a Youth Priority Co-ordinator to act as the focal point for the National Youth Strategy at a provincial or territorial level.

Partnerships Are Key

The RCMP works with communities to fund programs that help youth build supportive relationships with RCMP volunteers and other adults through recreational activities.



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Other programs that build bridges between the RCMP and youth include the Summer Student Program, the School Liaison initiative, suicide prevention and drug awareness programs, and hundreds of other locally-organized initiatives.

For example, some detachments have organized trips for youth to visit the RCMP Training Academy in Regina. In some Aboriginal communities, RCMP members build relationships with youth by arranging sporting events and school visits. They also address concerns such as substance abuse and suicide, when warranted.

In partnership with Scouts Canada, the RCMP developed "Be Bright – Think Right", a national interactive safety awareness program for school-aged children that helps Scout leaders or RCMP officers teach children about school bus safety, Internet safety, respect for diversity and bullying.

Working with Industry Canada and other organizations, the RCMP supports the Canadian Strategy to Promote Safe, Wise and Responsible Internet Use. As well, the RCMP will continue to address Internet safety further through the work of the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre.

For Youth, By Youth

Since 1998, the RCMP has provided a Web-based forum – www.deal.org – for youth to communicate, explore research and express ideas.

The program – run largely by young people under 20 – encourages youth to make healthy life decisions and become more involved in their communities. It also allows young people from across Canada and around the world to connect with each other in a virtual forum.

Working in close cooperation with a number of government and private sector organizations, [deal.org](http://www.deal.org) harnesses the energy and talent of young people and helps demonstrate that youth are not the leaders of tomorrow, but of today as well.

For more information, please visit www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca and/or www.deal.org