



Providing support, direction and protection for Canada's youth

Overview

Supporting Canadian youth is one of the RCMP's five strategic priorities. The RCMP's strategic approach to youth is to prevent and reduce their involvement in crime, both as victims and offenders. The RCMP also believes that youth themselves have valuable solutions to offer.

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

A Holistic Approach

The RCMP's Youth Priority has five primary objectives:

1. Reduce youth involvement in crime, both as victims and offenders;
2. Support sustainable long term responses to youth crime and victimization;
3. Support approaches that are consistent with youth justice law;
4. Focus on early intervention and root causes; and
5. Youth engagement.

The long term plan consists of a balance between crime prevention

through social development activities (CPSD) and appropriate criminal justice system responses. These approaches encompass prevention and early intervention efforts, enforcement and the re-integration into the community of young people who have been in conflict with the law.

CPSD – 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 priority.

The organization believes that crime can be prevented by taking a holistic approach that ensures children and youth have a healthy support system, access to social services and have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with adults.

Every RCMP Division has appointed a youth coordinator to act as the key point of contact for the youth priority at the provincial or territorial level.

Partnerships Are Key

The RCMP believes that addressing youth issues and bringing about significant change is a long-term objective which requires sustained efforts and which can only be accomplished through very close cooperation with the law enforcement

Quick Facts

In 2001, Canada's youth comprised 24.6 per cent of the country's population with nearly 7 million under the age of 18, including just over 380,000 Aboriginal youth and 1.1 million visible minority youth, of whom 30 per cent were immigrants or non-permanent residents.

(Statistics Canada 2003)



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community, service providers, partners, stakeholders and schools.

Working With Our Communities

Members across the country, utilizing the RCMP Aboriginal and Youth Community Plans Development Guide and Quality Assurance Guide have partnered with their communities to identify and develop a plan addressing their youth issues, including underlying causes, risk and protective factors. Community plans received from 368 detachments point to the top 20 issues facing youth and their communities to be addressed through initiatives and supporting tools.

Supporting Front-line Members

The RCMP continues to move forward on a National Youth Officer Program, promoting a consistent and comprehensive program for police in schools. The Youth Officer Resource Centre is an internal website aimed at providing members with the tools and resources required to assist their interactions with youth.

Focus on Northern Communities

The RCMP has committed under the Northern Youth Action Strategy to undertake a community-based CPSD pilot project in a community in Nunavut. Tailored to meet the needs

of the community and undertaken in partnership with community members, federal, territorial, municipal and Aboriginal partners, and NGOs, the goals of this project are to improve quality of life for children, youth and their families, to reduce crime and to build community capacity for the future.

www.deal.org

Created in 1998, the RCMP-based deal.org program run by youth under the age of 29 is a bilingual Internet resource for Canadian youth. The Webzine, DLN and Knowzone sections of the site are great resources for learning about issues affecting youth across Canada.

For police officers, youth workers and teachers looking to connect with youth and encourage them to problem-solve actively, the Toolbox provides PowerPoint presentations, curriculum-based activities and icebreakers relating to youth concerns. These tools are downloadable directly from <http://toolbox.deal.org>.

For more information, please visit www.rcmp.ca/youth/index_e.htm.