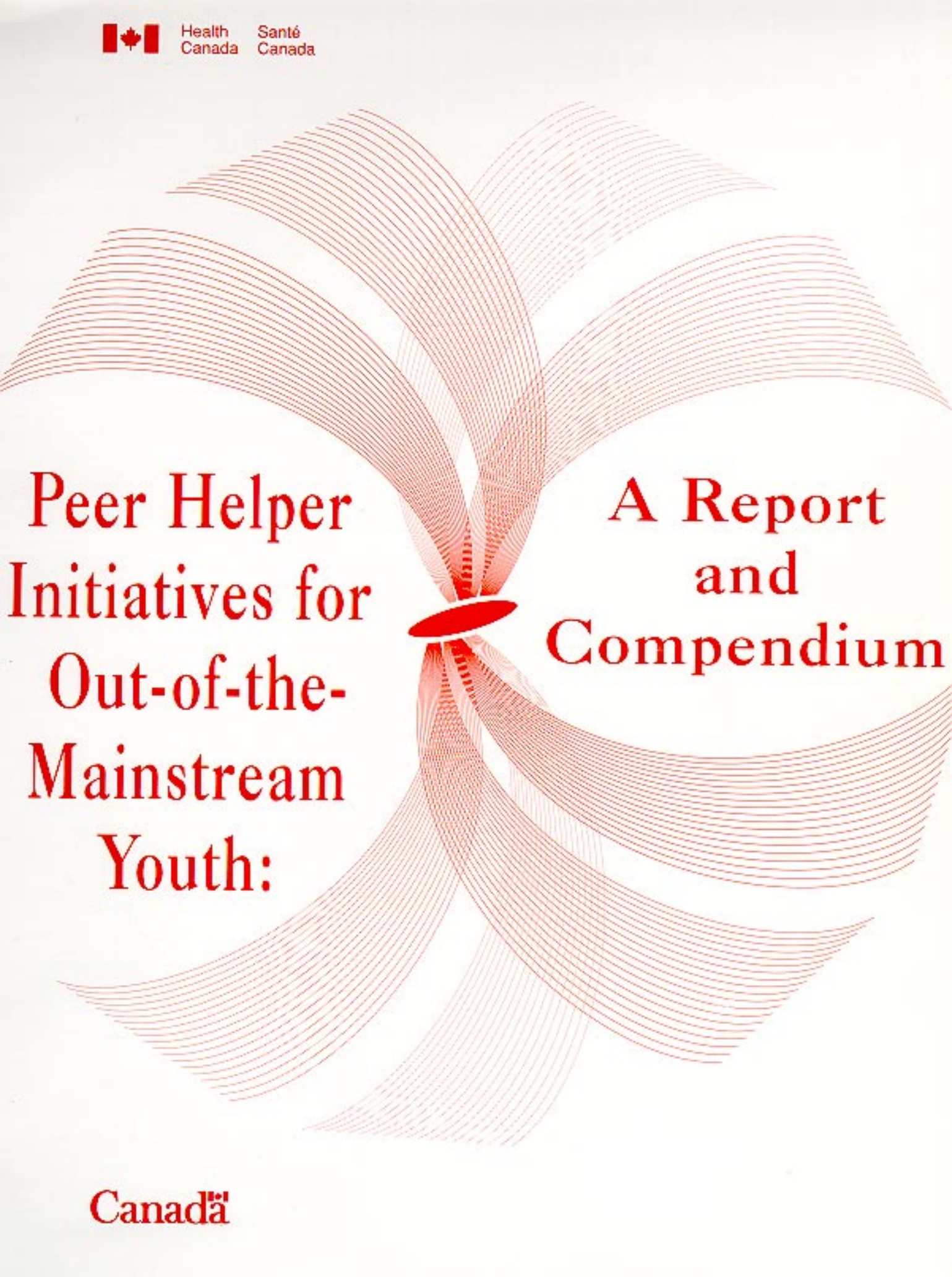




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A large, intricate graphic composed of many thin, overlapping red lines that form a central flower-like or starburst shape. The lines are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, radiating from a central point.

**Peer Helper
Initiatives for
Out-of-the-
Mainstream
Youth:**

**A Report
and
Compendium**

Canada

PEER HELPER INITIATIVES FOR OUT-OF- THE MAINSTREAM YOUTH: A REPORT AND COMPENDIUM

Prepared by:

Tullio Caputo, Richard Weiler and Lara Green

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**A REPORT ON PEER HELPER INITIATIVES FOR OUT-
OF-THE-MAINSTREAM YOUTH**

1.0 Introduction

Health Canada through Canada's Drug Strategy recently involved young persons and service providers in consultations across the country designed to identify those actions which might be taken to respond effectively to the variety of needs of those high risk youth who are out-of-the-mainstream. One of the priority actions noted in this exercise was the need to explore the feasibility of using peer helper initiatives as a means of providing support and service to these young persons. These consultations identified a need for additional information about the use of peer helper initiatives with out-of-the-mainstream youth. In particular, information about the characteristics of peer helper initiatives which contribute to or limit their success in supporting out-of-the-mainstream youth was lacking.

This study results from that interest. It focuses on determining what types of peer helper initiatives are employed in serving this population and what challenges are present in developing or maintaining peer helper initiatives.

This document contains information that may be useful to those working with out-of-the mainstream youth and attempting to create, improve or maintain peer helper initiatives.

This document is based on site visits in five selected communities, interviews, and focus group discussions with out-of-the-mainstream youth and those providing services to these young people.

It includes a review of relevant literature that highlights previous research in this area. A compendium of existing peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth is also provided. The compendium contains information on peer helper initiatives such as their goals and objectives, target populations, training requirements and evaluation strategies.

2.0 Project Components

A variety of activities were undertaken in order to meet the objectives of the current project. A brief review of separate project components follows.

2.1 A Review of Relevant Literature

A review was conducted of literature relevant to this project. This literature deals with the following areas:

- i) the social profile and behaviour of out-of-the-mainstream youth;
- ii) the relationship of these young people to the service system; and
- iii) the use of various types of peer helper initiatives in providing services to out-of-the-mainstream youth population with different needs.

The review also included some peer helper initiatives designed and intended for mainstream youth where there was reason to think that these initiatives could also be used with out-of-the-mainstream youth.

Appropriate material was identified through standard bibliographic search techniques, including the use of electronic data bases. The literature search identified Canadian, American and some international materials relevant to the current project.

Much of the American literature in this area was not useful, however, due to the social response to out-of-the-mainstream youth in that country; the distinctive nature of its youth service system; and the nature of various self-help initiatives such as youth-driven victim programs and self-help programs directed at ghetto residents.

2.2 A Network of Key Informants

A network of key informants was established to assist with various components of the project. For example, they assisted in identifying relevant materials. These experts included researchers; academics; officials in selected institutes and organizations; and experts in the self-help, peer helping and related fields. Members of the network were also asked to assist by identifying existing peer helper initiatives, "opening doors" and facilitating contacts, and providing consultative advice on various aspects of the project. Members of the network were also asked to participate in a consultation held to review project findings.

2.3 A Compendium of Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

One of the primary objectives of this project was to develop a compendium of existing peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth. The compendium is intended for individuals interested in, or working with, out-of-the-mainstream youth. It was developed using a variety of methods. First, an initial list was generated of various types of peer helper initiatives available to out-of-the-mainstream youth. Some programs on this initial list were identified through the literature review,

while others were gleaned from discussions with key informants in the network developed for this project. Representatives of existing peer helper initiatives identified in our initial list were then contacted and asked if they knew of other peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth.

Once a general list had been compiled, introductory letters were sent to potential respondents asking them to participate in the project. These letters were followed by a telephone call to confirm interest and set up a convenient time to conduct a telephone interview. In total, 250 individuals were contacted. Ninety interviews were conducted. Of these, 50 were with individuals working in agencies providing peer helping initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth. These are included in the accompanying compendium. A semi-structured interview schedule was employed, consisting of both closed and open-ended questions. The results of these interviews were used in the preparation of this report and in the compilation of the compendium.

2.4 Site Visits

Site visits were conducted to gather in-depth information on selected peer helper initiatives and to test the findings of the telephone interviews. Sites selected for this project included a range of peer helper initiatives available to the various sub-groups of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population. Additionally, sites were sought that contained a variety of peer helper initiatives designed to assist out-of-the-mainstream youth, especially those involved in or trying to leave the street culture. Five sites were included: Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Data collection techniques used during the site visits consisted of individual interviews and focus group meetings. Both front-line and supervisory staff in agencies providing peer helper initiatives to out-of-the-mainstream youth were invited to participate. Focus group meetings were also held with young people who had experience as either providers or consumers of peer helper services.

2.5 A Consultation on Project Findings

A consultation was held to review the knowledge gained through the various project components. This consisted of a two day meeting with selected key informants, including young people who participated in various aspects of the study. The consultation involved eleven participants. They were asked to consider a conceptual model designed to analyze information obtained during this study (see page 18); key findings from telephone interviews and site visits; and the format and contents of the compendium. The results of their deliberations have been incorporated in this document.

3.0 Who Are the Out-of- the-Mainstream Youth?

During the past several years, research on out-of-the-mainstream youth has shown that, like other groups in society, this target population is not homogeneous. Rather, it is comprised of several distinct sub-groups. Members of these sub-groups differ in various ways, including whether or not they live at home, the amount of time they spend on the street and their involvement in the risky or illegal activities commonly associated with street life. Social and cultural variations also distinguish members of the various sub-groups. These include modes of dress, musical preferences, and affiliation with other elements of the youth population. For example, while "punks" and "skinheads" may share aspects of personal adornment, jewellery and clothing styles, they often hold opposing political and philosophical views. They are also involved in quite different types of activities. Skinheads are more likely to be involved in violent activities and illicit drug use than are punks. They are also less likely than punks to interact or associate with other segments of the youth population.

The heterogeneous nature of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population has resulted in a wide range of terms being used to describe these young people. These include youth-at-risk, runaways, throwaways, homeless youth, wannabees, curbsiders, and entrenched street youth. The term out-of-the-mainstream youth has also been applied to early school leavers (drop outs) and to some delinquent youth. Of course, many young persons who run into trouble with the juvenile justice system may have little or no involvement with street life. Each of these terms describes part of the reality of the young people in question.

Some, for example, are indeed drop outs or runaways. Problems arise, however, since these terms are often not mutually exclusive. Many of these young people can simultaneously be classified in several categories. Thus, a young person could be a drop out who has been involved in delinquent activities and who has run away from home. Similarly, some wannabees or curbsiders spend considerable time on the street and participate in street life while living at home and going to school. Furthermore, the extent to which these young people participate in street life can vary. This is usually evident given the extent and nature of one's home connection.

The lack of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories blurs the boundaries between different segments of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population. Moreover, many of the terms used to describe these young people fail to differentiate between the characteristics of individuals and their participation in certain activities associated with street life. For example, being homeless refers to the objective condition of not having a place to live, while being a delinquent refers to participation in illegal activities. Another complicating factor is that both the characteristics of these young people and their participation in various lifestyle practices can change rapidly over time. For example, many runaways return home after a short period on the street while others exhibit patterns of repeat running. Former drop outs may enrol in some form of educational program after being out of school for a while. How should we classify these young people? Do we identify them according to their current or former identities? How do we decide who to include in our target population?

While these issues focus on the problem of differentiating between various segments of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population, we do know that the sub-groups in this population differ dramatically from each other in their behaviour and experiences. Entrenched street youth, for example, are fundamentally different from those who have run away once or twice and returned home after a short time on the street. Moreover, each sub-group faces different challenges and has different needs requiring different types of service responses. These factors represent challenges which service providers must address if they are to meet the needs of these young people effectively.

Perhaps the most critical factor influencing the service needs of these young persons is the extent and nature of their contact with the street. Service providers' access to, credibility with and ability to provide relevant services to these young people in large part is dependent on agencies' sensitivity to, appreciation of and response to the continuum of needs of these young persons based on the impact of street life on them.

3.1 Criteria for Including Various Young People in the Project

Given the various sub-groups that could be included as part of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population, a strategy was devised to maximize the efficiency of each of the project components. An initial decision was made to use terms to describe the target population when contacting potential respondents. In many cases, the respondents were not familiar with the term "out-of-the-mainstream youth" in which case a brief definition was provided and several alternative terms suggested.

These included youth at risk, high risk youth, street youth, and so on. The marginal nature of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population was stressed and follow up questions were used to ensure that all eligible initiatives would be included.

Interviews were conducted first with representatives of agencies that deal with street youth, the most marginal segment of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population. These were followed by interviews with representatives from more traditional agencies, ending with interviews with those providing peer helper initiatives in schools. This decision was based on the fact that the most marginal members of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population are unlikely to be in school. Additionally, the largest proportion of programs that had been identified were school based and most easy to access.

4.0 Providing Services to Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

The issues discussed in the previous section highlight definitional and related concerns associated with the out-of-the-mainstream youth population. Providing services to out-of-the-mainstream youth presents a series of challenges for service providers. This group of young people is often elusive and suspicious. Their tenure on the street makes them wary of "official" agencies and their representatives. This is especially true with younger persons who risk being apprehended under child welfare legislation. They fear being identified and returned to their homes or residential placements. They dislike being told what to do or being "converted" by those offering assistance.

These young people also have difficulty accessing services provided through conventional, institutionally-based programs. There are often few services available that are socially appropriate, culturally sensitive and available at times and places that are consistent with the practices of these young people. As a result, many do not avail themselves of traditional services. Others avoid becoming involved with the system either because they fear becoming enmeshed in it or they feel the services being provided are inappropriate or ineffective. In many instances, the youth service system is a barrier preventing out-of-the-mainstream youth from accessing services. Rigid rules and regulations often discourage or prevent these young people from obtaining needed services. Competition among agencies for funding, overlapping jurisdictions, conflicting mandates, and restrictive legal and constitutional requirements also represent barriers to young people seeking services.

The manner by which services for young people are designed and delivered can also make it difficult for service providers to reach their target populations. Traditionally, services have been organized around specific perceived needs, such as substance abuse counselling or the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Different agencies have claimed responsibility for providing specific services to meet these perceived needs. In many cases, this has required young people seeking assistance to meet with several service providers, often in different locations. The resulting experience is fragmented, alienating and discourages service use.

Few long-term, integrated and supportive programs exist for out-of-the-mainstream youth. Since we do not expect young people who are at low risk to make the transition from adolescence to adulthood without ongoing, consistent support, why should we expect out-of-the-mainstream youth who face considerably greater challenges to do so? Our experience in studying this issue has consistently demonstrated the need for an integrated, multi-disciplinary, inter-agency response designed to provide consistent, long-term support to out-of-the-mainstream youth. Such a response is largely unavailable, although communities including Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa have begun to move in this direction.

The recent extended period of budgetary restraint is another factor that has made it difficult for out-of-the-mainstream youth to obtain the services they need. The shortage of resources has meant that many agencies have had to reduce services or close down altogether. In response to this situation, some agencies have tried to maximize their ability to provide services to clients by enhancing the use of existing resources or by tapping into previously unused ones. For example, some organizations have increased the role that volunteers play in their programs. Others have become involved in inter-agency, collaborative efforts to make the most of limited resources. In a number of cases, the consumers of services have been enlisted in the delivery of services to their peers. The efficiency and effectiveness of these types of self-help programs has long been recognized. Various forms of peer helping have enjoyed considerable popularity in traditional institutional settings such as schools. Indeed, peer mentoring and peer mediation programs are quite common. Agencies serving out-of-the-mainstream youth recognize that consumers provide credibility in linking street youth to the youth serving agencies.

They can provide basic support services. Of course there are challenges which need to be recognized when involving out-of-the-mainstream youth as peer helpers. A major concern is that such involvement may delay or even preclude completing their transition to mainstream society, particularly in preparing for and making contacts concerning employment in other occupations. How can they avoid being caught somewhere between the street and the mainstream? What can be done to encourage them to make positive connections with mainstream society? These and other challenges require consideration in developing effective initiatives.

5.0 Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

The term peer helper initiative is being used here as an umbrella term that covers a range of programs in which young people provide service to other young people. The work that they do includes providing various kinds of personal support such as informal advice, mediation, tutoring, employment and life skills, and information on issues such as public health and personal safety.

There is little overall agreement as to the nature of peer helper activities. Professionals, academics and practitioners continuously debate the characteristics of peer helper intervention. The research literature in this field suggests that one of the key issues involved is in "placing" peer helper activity within the range of varied services.

This debate revolves around the relationship between peer helping, self-help and mutual aid groups. It involves defining a continuum of care with self-management at one end of the continuum and professional care at the other. Self-help and mutual aid are usually recognized as interventions which function with little or no assistance of professionals' support. They are therefore usually placed at the self-management end of the continuum. Peer helping typically represents one-to-one assistance from peers who are supervised by professionals. It is usually placed in the middle of the continuum. Peer helping initiatives are not however, a substitute for professional care such as the professional counselling often needed by out-of-the-mainstream youth. Rather, the goal of peer helping initiatives is to link out-of-the-mainstream youth to service providers in youth-serving and more traditionally-based agencies. It is a method of service delivery that tends more to the self-managed end of the service continuum, which is responsible for, by far, the largest number of interventions.

For our purposes, we have included those activities which involve youth as helpers, with some evidence of interest and capacity to assist others, and preparation or training related to the specific peer-delivered service. As previously noted, the types of services delivered can include support, education, employment preparation, information dissemination and protection. While ensuring that young persons are meaningfully involved in the development of an agency's programs is usually vital to the success of an agency, (e.g. involvement in youth councils), such participation is not categorized as peer helper activity in our consideration.

Sponsoring agencies in large part included agencies serving street youth, other youth-serving agencies and some schools. They are evident in all regions of the country. They serve various sub-groups of out-of-the-mainstream youth. They are designed to be culturally sensitive and react to various ethnic as well as street culture situations. The services provided may be on an individual or group basis. They may be provided in partnership with other peer helpers, staff members or alone. While the activity is not considered a job, some compensation, especially for street youth, may be provided. The term peer helper is often applied only where an organization has noted it as a discrete program or activity specifically focusing on the peer helper initiative. Often however, the peer helper initiative is integrally related to a more generic program or activity of the agency. Further, many of the agencies involved with street youth do not adopt or rigorously apply the strategic planning and related language often associated with traditional agencies.

Just as the types of programs differ, the roles played by various agencies providing services to young people vary widely. Some agencies, for example, initiate and manage peer helper initiatives. Others (e.g. sometimes schools) provide resources such as training materials, space, professional support including training and supervision, or financial support to those agencies sponsoring peer helper initiatives. It is important to recognize this variation in agency roles since this can influence the success or failure of peer helper initiatives.

Much of the literature and experience with peer helper initiatives does not focus on their relevance or availability to out-of-the-mainstream youth. They tend to emphasize the historical presence of youth peer helper initiatives in settings involving "mainstream" youth such as schools. Those involved as peer helpers in these settings are often considered as successful students who are not at risk. Our experience working with this population however, indicates that much activity that involves peers helping peers does occur with various sub-groups of this population. For example, we know that a great deal of informal peer helper activity is provided by outreach workers working with entrenched street youth. Similarly, alternative schools often sponsor activities in which young people help one another. The challenge is to identify successful peer helper initiatives for different sub-groups in the out-of-the-mainstream youth population. What may work with entrenched street youth may be less appropriate or effective for curbsiders or wannabees.

Peer helper initiatives represent a potentially useful means of delivering services to out-of-the-mainstream youth. Our experience indicates that young people are already involved in less structured ways of helping one another. One of the strongest attractions to the street is the acceptance by others who have experienced similar problems. "Street families," complete with conventional roles such as "street mothers" and "street fathers," exist on the street. The acceptance and understanding provided by these "street families" is likened to that found in conventional families. Many experienced street outreach workers, including community police officers and detached health workers, understand this dynamic and have developed flexible peer helper initiatives to provide services to out-of-the-mainstream youth.

They rely on key individuals in the population to disseminate information and deliver services to other young people.

The discussion above reflects the diversity in types of services, their delivery and the types of agencies involved. While few formally structured peer helper initiatives may be available as full programs to these young people, we are keenly aware of their participation in less structured peer helper activities or services in such venues as alternative schools, community policing efforts and through the initiatives of detached street outreach workers. For the purposes of this report, we use the term peer helper "initiative" to refer to relevant programs, activities or services.

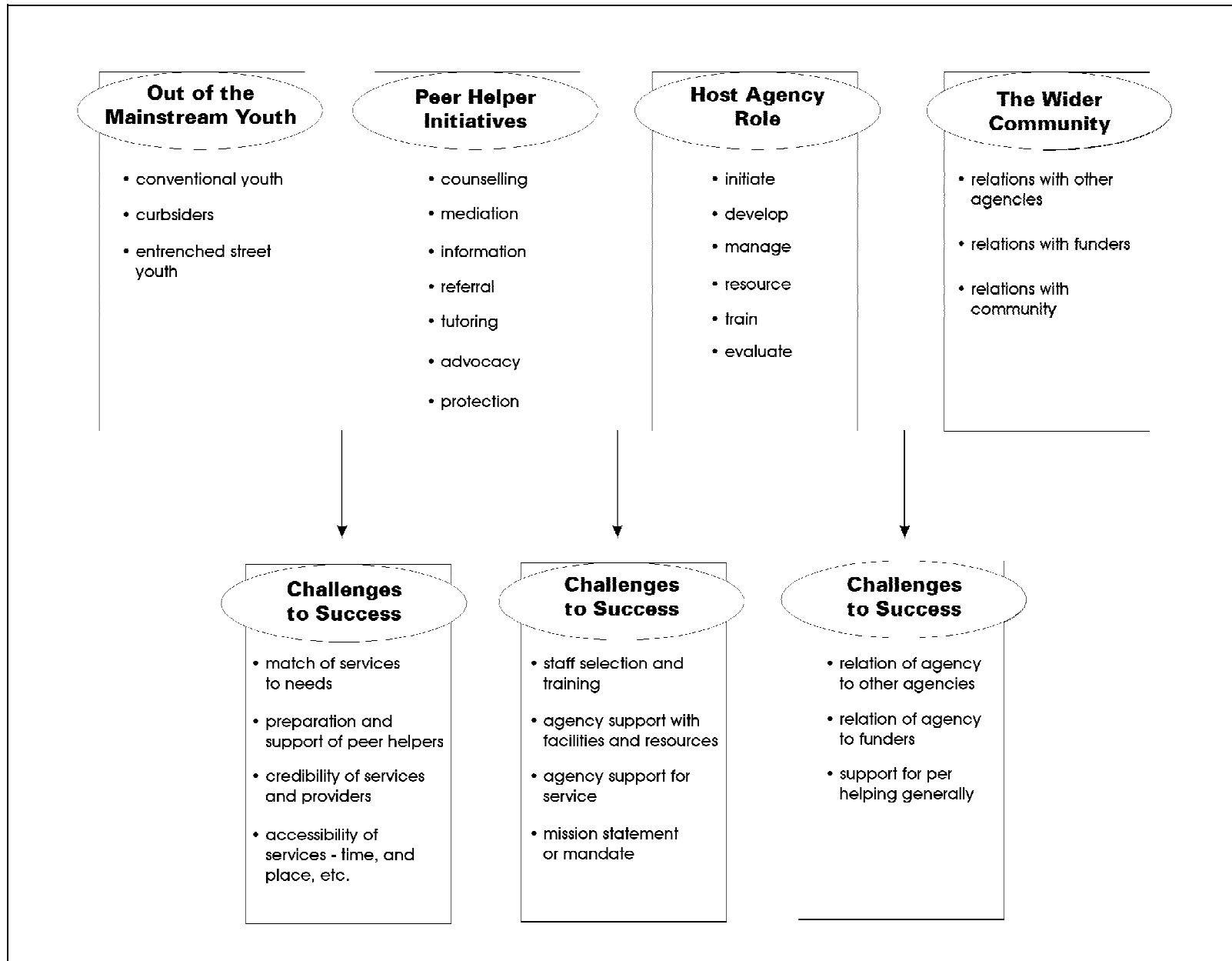
6.0 A Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this project evolved as the project proceeded. The purpose of the conceptual framework was to provide a means of organizing relevant information for both project team members and key informants. It formed the basis for developing interview schedules employed with key informants; front-line service providers; agency supervisory staff; and young people as consumers and providers of peer helper services. It was also used in the analysis of data and the development of the format for the compendium of peer helper initiatives.

The conceptual framework took into consideration such factors as: the service needs of different sub-groups of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population; the variety of services and programs which may be available in peer helper initiatives; the roles and responsibilities of individuals working with out-of-the-mainstream youth who employ peer helper initiatives; and a consideration of the way the structure, operation and organizational culture of sponsoring agencies influence the operation of peer helper initiatives available to out-of-the-mainstream youth. Throughout the project, emphasis was placed on identifying the characteristics that contribute to the success of such initiatives and the barriers that may prevent them from being successful.

The conceptual model begins with descriptions of the following elements: i) a continuum of out-of-the-mainstream youth; ii) the range of services offered in peer helper initiatives; iii) the role that host agencies can play; and iv) the relation of peer helper initiatives to the wider community. The model allowed us to focus on the challenges to success found in the relations among these four categories. Thus, we examined whether different segments of the out-of-the-mainstream youth population used different types of services. We also tried to determine if different types of peer helper initiatives were provided by different types of youth-serving agencies.

PEER HELPER PROGRAMS FOR OUT-OF-THE-MAINSTREAM YOUTH: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL



For example, were the peer helper initiatives provided by "street" agencies similar to those provided by agencies primarily involved in transitional services, eg. employment preparation? Finally, we asked how different types of agencies providing peer helper initiatives related to the wider community, including other youth serving agencies, funders and the general public.

The conceptual model proved useful during the interviews and focus group meetings. It allowed us to focus in on the target group served by specific agencies and the type of peer helper services they provided. The match between the service provided and the young people consuming these services was then easier to explore. Similarly, the model allowed us to recognize that certain types of agencies are more likely to provide support services to entrenched youth than other agencies. The challenges faced by these agencies were often different from those faced by more traditional agencies providing preventative or educational services. These and other factors related to a peer helper initiative's success were then examined. (These are explained in Sections 8 and 9.)

We also noted that the different relationships which existed between these agencies and the wider community could result in challenges to the success of peer helper initiatives. These are discussed in more detail in Section 8. Most agency representatives and young persons involved in site visits and focus group meetings noted that the model adequately represented the out-of-the-mainstream youth population, the types of peer helper services being provided and the types of agencies providing these services. As such, it accomplished what it was designed to do.

7.0 Categorizing Peer Helper Initiatives

A major challenge encountered in the study was defining categories which would effectively distinguish the various types of peer helper initiatives. A number of considerations were examined and subsequently discarded.

Organizing information about peer helper initiatives according to the population of young persons of concern, as noted, for example, in the conceptual framework, would limit the categories to two: curbsiders/wannabees and entrenched street youth. This would not allow for organizing relevant information in a useful manner since the categories are too broad.

Emphasizing the different services required by various groups of youth also proved unsatisfactory. Too often peer helper services such as support, advice, and information sharing are required by young persons whether they be out-of-the-mainstream or not. Thus, organizing peer helper initiatives based on these services required by young persons on the street, in transition to the-mainstream, or otherwise attempting to avoid street life does not provide mutually exclusive categories.

We decided that the best way to organize the material was to focus on the agencies providing these services, emphasizing the main objective of their peer helper activity. In other words, we looked at the main goal of the activity in which peers were involved.

Using this approach, three categories of agencies were identified that roughly mirrored the different types of services offered. These included: i) contact/support agencies; ii) transition/ reintegration agencies; and iii) prevention/education agencies. Each of these categories is described briefly in Sections 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3.

The first group of agencies (contact/support agencies) focuses mainly on entrenched street youth and tries to make contact with young people on the street. The activities of these agencies primarily involve providing support in the way of personal assistance, information, referrals and materials such as clean needles or condoms intended to make life on the street safer. A second group of agencies (transition/reintegration agencies) is primarily involved in providing transition programs such as literacy training, counselling, long term living arrangements and life skills. The young people using these services are no longer entrenched street youth since they are using these services as a means of getting off the street. The third group of agencies (prevention/education agencies) uses peer helper initiatives to deliver prevention and education services. These include peer drug education, information on sexuality and on other topics of concern to young people. The range of agencies involved can include both street agencies as well as traditional organizations, including schools.

While this categorization does not represent mutually exclusive categories, our analysis suggests that it is a useful and practical way of organizing and presenting the information that has been collected. It recognizes peer helper initiatives as an effective means of supporting out-of-the-mainstream youth.

The categorization does, however, recognize the fact that there is some overlap in programming. For example, some agencies identified as primarily involved in providing support services may also provide transition or prevention services. Our decision about where agencies should be located in the compendium was based on assessing their main goal in using peer helper initiatives. For example, if contact and support was the main goal, the agency would be identified under the contact/support agencies category even if it also provided some transition services.

7.1 Contact/Support Services

The contact/support category includes agencies providing services aimed primarily at entrenched street youth. These agencies are usually street-based and maintain close contact with the local street scene. They often provide an informal protection service as they are usually aware of who is on the street, including recent arrivals. Street outreach workers employ various creative means to ensure accessibility, e.g. using vans to provide information, hot coffee, condoms, or clean needles. They ensure that the young people know that help is available if they need it. Effective agencies are characterized by users as non-judgmental and sensitive to the street culture. Some of these agencies provide general assistance to street youth while others focus on specific needs such as substance abuse or the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Agencies providing these services usually involve street youth in the development of their programs. Many recruit staff who have previously lived on the street.

7.2 Transition/Reintegration Services

Agencies involved in transition/reintegration efforts provide a wide range of services for out-of-the-mainstream youth seeking to leave street life. The services provided can include counselling and treatment for specific problems such as substance abuse. Transition/reintegration services, however, are usually geared to assisting young people in making the transition to the-mainstream. Thus, life skills training, employment preparation, literacy training and other educational opportunities are the main services offered by agencies in this category. These agencies usually maintain contact with the "street scene". They are also typically more structured than street outreach agencies given the nature of the programs they offer. As well, they are usually more connected to mainstream agencies since many are involved in assisting their clients to gain access to available mainstream services such as welfare, housing, and education.

7.3 Prevention/Educational Services

Some agencies are primarily concerned with preventative/educational peer helper initiatives. They may also use peer helpers to provide contact/support and transitional services. One type of activity used with high-risk youth who serve as peer helpers are "speaks." These are meetings in which young people who have been on the street tell their stories to other young people.

This usually involves presentations to young people still in school. The purpose of these "speaks" is to provide information intended to prevent young people still in school from going to the street. However, our discussions with staff in these agencies and with the young people themselves indicated that the "speaks" often also help former street youth gain self-awareness, self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. Care is needed in selecting and supporting these peer helpers to ensure minimum chance of relapse to the street. These young persons are in transition and therefore are "breaking away" from the street. The "speaks" allow these young people to give something back to their community and hopefully help other young people.

Many of the young people who spend time on the street are still in school. Although many of them are lonely, resentful and may be unsuccessful within the school, school-based programs can offer a way to reach these young people. Effective peer helpers would be those students who can interact with at-risk peers to help break through their feelings of isolation and help them feel more a part of the school.

8.0 Factors Contributing to the Success of Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

One of the main objectives of this project was to identify factors of peer helper initiatives that contribute to their success or represent challenges. In this section, we note some general as well as some specific factors related to the three categories of agencies providing peer helper initiatives. The factors represent positive influences. Lack of these factors can represent barriers to the effectiveness of peer helper initiatives.

8.1 General Factors Contributing to the Success of Peer Helper Initiatives

An agency needs to recognize and acknowledge the positive and effective contribution which can be provided through peer helper initiatives. Peer helpers can gain much through this type of activity. These young people are often themselves from difficult backgrounds, including street experience.

The peer helper effort, if properly supervised, can provide much in the way of self-esteem, a sense of responsibility, development of skills, an appreciation of others, and hope in pursuing their own transition into the-mainstream. However, there are some limitations to effective peer helper activity in this field.

Some services, for example counselling, may best be provided by professionals. Some young persons, given their experiences with street life, may be well suited to provide some services but not others. Pursuing programs where peer helpers are unable to accomplish the intended service goals can be dangerous to both the peer helpers and service consumers. Recognizing, screening for and monitoring the specific needs of out-of-the-mainstream youth is crucial to agencies hoping to sustain effective, ongoing peer helper initiatives for this population.

Initiatives often get started with much enthusiasm and some start-up resources. Maintaining this energy and renewing resources needs to be established as an ongoing commitment of the sponsoring agency if the initiative is to survive. The limited availability of suitable financial support, staff turnover, especially among those serving out-of-the-mainstream youth, staff and peer helper burnout, professional staff's fear for their job security as a result of being replaced by voluntary activity such as successful peer helper initiatives and changing patterns of community support are among the factors which can challenge the ongoing success of peer helpers initiatives.

The following are key factors which were identified in the literature and during interviews and site visits which may influence the success of peer helper initiatives. They relate to:

- (1) young persons as consumers or peer helpers;
- (2) the specific program(s) provided;
- (3) the sponsoring agency's commitment and capacity to plan and provide adequate resources;

- (4) staff response; and
- (5) the reaction of the community at large.

8.1.1 Young Persons as Consumers or Peer Helpers

- ensure that means are available for including the ongoing participation of both consumers and peer helpers in the development of the peer helper initiative.
- ensure that a strong support network is available to assist peer helpers involved in providing assistance to their peers.

8.1.2 The Program Provided

- ensure that programs are socially and culturally relevant and accessible.
- ensure that peer helper initiatives, while often focusing on problems, endeavour to highlight the virtues and strengths of the helper and the service consumer.
- support continuity and sustainability of the effort. Often, programs come to a conclusion with little available to support the young person moving forward. Some youth find some programs to be too short in meeting their needs. Programs may lack relevant contacts outside the street agency network.
- ensure that the agency provides follow up to the initiatives where appropriate.
- ensure that confidentiality is established and maintained as a key factor contributing to the success of the peer helper initiative.
- develop and apply practices which support the individual peer helpers, eg. supporting them in situations where it is appropriate to refer a consumer to another peer helper or professional.

8.1.3 The Sponsoring Agency's Commitment and Capacity to Provide Adequate Resources

- provide ongoing agency leadership, support and necessary structure while maintaining the degree of flexibility required to meet the varying and changing needs of the clients.
- provide resources to re-invigorate the initiative, e.g. training/refresher courses, new training materials, or developing innovative service delivery strategies.

8.1.4 Staff Response

- maintain consistency of staff members involved in the initiative.

Staff turnover in many agencies serving out of mainstream youth can create difficulties in providing consistency, continuity and coordination in the development, supervision and support to peer helper initiatives.

- ensure that the relationship between the staff in the agency and the peer helpers is consistent and ongoing.

Staff should be involved in ongoing, consistent follow-up with peer helpers to ensure that peer helpers are given necessary support.

- develop means of ensuring that agency staff not directly involved in the peer helper initiative are kept informed of the nature, value and impact of peer helper initiatives on the sponsoring agency.
- ensure that staff working with peer helpers are provided with consistent, ongoing support and encouragement.

8.1.5 Community Response

- educate people in the community about out-of-the-mainstream youth to help gain community support for peer helping initiatives.

Providing education to the community about these young people will help dispel negative stereotypes and help the community gain a better understanding about who these young people are and their real needs.

- attempt to establish a network of support in the broader community for peer helper initiatives.

Often agencies providing peer helping services to out-of-the-mainstream youth lack community support. This can be a serious problem given the resulting lack of public understanding of street youth and their needs. It can also be a barrier to acquiring necessary resources.

- provide ongoing public education on the agency's peer helper initiative.

9.0 Factors Contributing to the Success of Peer Helper Initiatives in Specific Types of Agencies

A number of factors are identified as being relevant to the development of peer helper efforts with specific types of agencies serving out-of-the-mainstream youth.

9.1 Contact/Support Agencies Providing Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

- The agency must have a structure that is flexible enough to allow a peer helper initiative to continue effectively.
- These services must be non-directive and non-judgmental to be successful and effective.
- Staff in these agencies have to understand factors which contribute to present circumstances of these youth. They also have to be available and approachable.
- The design of peer-helper initiatives for young people on the street should be suited to the lifestyles of these young people.

Initiatives should address both the short and long-term needs of those consuming the services. Many street youth lead chaotic lives. Continuity and dependability on their pursuing a program plan may be difficult to achieve. Services need to reflect this uncertainty.

- A strong emphasis should be placed on the selection of peers who have experience or knowledge of the street.

Mainstream volunteers often have difficulty gaining the trust and acceptance of street youth, especially if they lack an appreciation of street youth and seem judgmental. Acceptance by the client group is often based on the peer helper having a similar background. However, it may also include having the necessary knowledge and training to provide the service required (e.g. understanding of health matters). This is especially important if the service in question involves more than listening and providing support.

- Select credible peer helpers.

Peer helpers working on the street need a number of qualities, including a respect for the confidentiality of knowledge gained in their peer helping relationships, an ability to put aside one's ego needs when working with consumers, adequate communication skills which might be street-focused but sufficient to allow them to be helpful in providing the services; referring people to agencies in the service system where appropriate; and accepting and supporting young persons who chose to return to the mainstream. Success may be threatening. Peer helpers may avoid dealing with success. They need to be supported in their new roles.

- Training should be incorporated into the service delivery process where appropriate.

Training in many of these agencies often consists of transmitting knowledge about the agency's culture and approach. Debriefings represent the main means of providing feedback and support to peer helpers. In addition, agency staff are often immediately available to provide support to peer helpers when needed. This type of approach is often essential to success in working with this segment of the youth population.

9.2 Transition/Reintegration Agencies Providing Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

- Involve and support appropriate staff.

The selection and training of staff is the key for these agencies/services. Empathetic, energetic and enthusiastic individuals are most successful.

- Select credible peer helpers.

One of the main criteria for selection is whether the individual will provide a positive role model for the client group being served.

- Provide services that are socially and culturally relevant.
- Ensure that the "helper" has something to offer which the consumer finds valuable.

The presence of relevant skills in the peer helper and their ability to convey knowledge and experience to the learner is essential.

9.3 Prevention/Education Agencies Providing Peer Helper Initiatives for Out-of-the-Mainstream Youth

- Determine what message will have the desired effect and how it can be conveyed, especially to young persons at high risk.
- Select young persons who can participate in conducting preventative programs.

Under what circumstances is the impact of the street culture shared by past street youth effective in preventing other youth, especially high risk youth from pursuing this lifestyle?

Conclusion

This document is intended to provide some insight into the applicability of peer helper programs in supporting out-of-the-mainstream youth. It also has identified a number of issues that need to be looked at in more depth in order to give a more complete picture to peer helping. One such issue is the need for more formal program evaluation to measure the effectiveness of this type of intervention. An in-depth assessment of documented evaluation, while considered to be important, was beyond the scope of this study. During the interview process, agencies provided brief descriptions of the evaluation of their respective programs; however, the design and results of the majority of these evaluations are not sufficiently detailed to determine if they are valid measures of program effectiveness.

The use of peer helper initiatives has often proven effective. However, it is recognized that they are not a panacea but need to be employed in conjunction with other services. Hopefully, those providing services to out-of-the-mainstream youth will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to employ peer helper initiatives where appropriate.

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**APPENDIX - A COMPENDIUM OF PEER HELPER INITIATIVES FOR
OUT-OF-THE-MAINSTREAM YOUTH**

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1.0 Introduction

One of the primary objectives of this project was to develop a compendium of existing peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth. This compendium is intended to assist individuals interested in or working with out-of-the-mainstream youth. It provides some appreciation of the range and nature of relevant peer helper initiatives. It also provides an inventory of a number of initiatives located across Canada. It was developed using a variety of methods. These included a review of relevant research literature; initial telephone interviews with key informants in selected communities across the country; in-depth interviews with individuals providing peer helper services to out-of-the-mainstream youth; and site visits to selected communities.

An initial list of existing peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth was developed and expanded throughout the duration of this project. Over 250 individuals were contacted and initial interviews conducted to determine if they were involved in peer helper-type initiatives that met the criteria for inclusion in the current project. As a result of this effort, 90 in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with individuals providing peer helper services to out-of-the-mainstream youth. This was followed by site visits to 5 communities in which interviews and focus group meetings were held to explore peer helper strategies for this population. The information gathered from these efforts was used to develop this compendium. The compendium is not intended to represent an inclusive listing of relevant peer helper initiatives. Rather, it is intended to illustrate the categories of and specific types of peer helper initiatives available to serve out-of-the-mainstream youth.

How To Use This Compendium

Agencies providing peer helper initiatives for out-of-the-mainstream youth have been divided into three main categories. These include: i) contact/support; ii) transition/reintegration; and iii) prevention/education. Decisions about how to categorize each agency were guided by identifying the main objectives of their peer helper activity. For example, **contact/support agencies** focus mainly on entrenched street youth. They try to make contact with these young people on the street and provide support in the way of information, referrals and materials such as clean needles or condoms.

Transition/reintegration agencies are primarily involved in providing transition programs such as literacy training, employment preparation and life skills. By definition, the young people using these services are not entrenched street youth since those using these services are trying to get off the street. Finally, some agencies use peer helper initiatives to deliver **prevention and education services**. These include providing peer drug education, information on sexuality and other topics of concern to young people.

While this categorization does not represent mutually exclusive categories, our analysis suggests that it is a useful and practical way to organize and present the information we gathered on peer helper initiatives as a means of serving the population of primary concern to this study, that is, out-of-the-mainstream youth. The categorization does, however, recognize the fact that there is some overlap in programming. For example, some agencies identified as primarily involved in providing support services may also provide

transition or prevention services, and so on. Our decision about where agencies should be located in the compendium was based on assessing their main goal in using peer helper initiatives. For example, if contact and support was the main goal, the agency would be identified under this category even if it also provides transition services.

The compendium is divided into three main sections according to the discussion above. Each section is introduced with some discussion on the general characteristics of the peer helper initiatives within each category. Mention is made of some of the major opportunities for and challenges involved in developing this type of peer helper initiative. Information on individual peer helper initiatives is provided in a format that includes a range of user-friendly information. This includes information on the sponsoring agency, e.g. address, contact person; program objectives; a description of the peer helper initiative, the youth served, and peer helpers and their activities including selection processes, training, supervision as well as evaluation. The compendium also includes an index designed to assist the reader to identify initiatives according to specific subjects addressed, e.g. substance abuse.

2.0 Contact/Support Services

The contact/support category includes agencies providing services aimed primarily at entrenched street youth. These agencies are usually street-based and they maintain close contact with the local street scene. These agencies often provide an informal protection service as they are usually aware of who is on the street, including recent arrivals. Street outreach workers use various creative means to ensure accessibility, e.g. using vans to provide information, hot coffee, condoms, or clean needles. They ensure that the young people know that help is available if they need it. Effective agencies are characterized by users as non-judgmental of and sensitive to the street culture. Some of these agencies provide general assistance to street youth while others focus on specific needs, such as substance abuse, or the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. Agencies providing these services usually involve street youth in the development of their programs. Many recruit staff who have previously lived on the street.

Some of the opportunities and challenges confronting contact/support agencies include:

- **The agency must have a structure that is flexible enough to allow a peer helper initiative to continue effectively.**
- **These services must be non-directive and non-judgmental to be successful and effective.**
- **Staff in these agencies have to understand factors which contribute to present circumstances of these youth. They also have to be available and approachable.**
- **The design of peer-related initiatives for young people on the street should be suited to the lifestyles of these young people.**

Initiatives should address both the short and long-term needs of those consuming the services. Many street youth lead chaotic lives. Continuity

and dependability on their pursuing a program plan may be difficult to achieve. Services need to reflect this uncertainty.

- **A strong emphasis should be placed on the selection of peers who have experience or knowledge of the street.**

Mainstream volunteers often have difficulty gaining the trust and acceptance of street youth, especially if they lack an appreciation of street youth and seem judgmental. Acceptance by the client group is often based on the peer helper having a similar background. However, it may also include having the necessary knowledge and training to provide the service required (e.g. understanding of health matters). This is especially important if the service in question involves more than listening and providing support.

- **Selection of peer helpers.**

Peer helpers working on the street need a number of qualities, including a respect for the confidentiality of knowledge gained in their peer helping relationships, an ability to put aside their own ego needs, adequate communication skills which might be street-focused but sufficient to allow them to be helpful in providing the services; openness to and acceptance of the need to refer people to agencies in the service system; and acceptance of and support to persons choosing to return to the mainstream. Success may be threatening. Peer helpers may avoid dealing with success. They need to be supported in their new roles.

- **Training should be incorporated into the service delivery process where appropriate.**

Training in many of these agencies often consists of transmitting knowledge about the agency's culture and approach. Debriefings represent the main means of providing feedback and support to peer helpers. In addition, agency staff are often immediately available to provide support to peer helpers when needed. This type of approach is often essential to success in working with this segment of the youth population.

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Operation Go Home 72 Besserer Street Ottawa, ON K1N 6A6	Sterling Irvine Tel: (613) 230-4663 Fax: (613) 230-8223	Name: Street Outreach Program Type of Service: Outreach, referral, information sharing
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide a meaningful experience for volunteers. ◆ To make contact with youth on the street and let them know what services are available. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>The Street Outreach Program was designed to create opportunities for contacts with youth on the street. Volunteer street outreach workers go out four nights per week and talk with street youth letting them know what is available through Operation Go Home and other relevant services.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Runaways and street youth between the ages of 16 and 18. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are recruited by word of mouth. ◆ They include university/college students and youth previously from the street. ◆ A screening process is in place which includes an application, a police check and an interview. ◆ Criteria: youth with street background must be off the street for five years before becoming an outreach volunteer and must be 21 years old. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are given information to read at the interview. ◆ They initially receive a two-hour orientation. ◆ They do nine hours of office work. ◆ They attend a two-day non-violent crisis intervention workshop. They must attend bimonthly training meetings. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There are monthly volunteer meetings. ◆ Staff are available 24 hours a day for support in the event of a crisis. ◆ Staff meet with each volunteer on a monthly basis to see how each one is doing. ◆ Outreach workers debrief with volunteers after each night on the street. ◆ Outreach workers must hand in written reports detailing their meetings with youth. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Informal evaluations are conducted during monthly meetings. ◆ Volunteers evaluate the program once a year. Evaluations are assessed by a strategic planning team, feedback is provided and changes are made. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
T.I. Murphy Learning Centre 95 Water Street St. John's, NF A1C 1A5	Tim Turner Tel: (709) 579-6606 Fax: (709) 579-2655	Name: Peer Counselling Program Type of Service: Support, referral
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide youth with the option of talking to one of their peers if they do not feel comfortable talking to a counsellor/staff member about addressing their addiction problems. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The Peer Counselling Program is a component of the Prevention Plus Program. Young people who have been off drugs and alcohol for at least a year are available to talk to their peers who might not be ready to talk with a counsellor about their problems. The program operates under the philosophy that peer counsellors do not necessarily need to know what to do but when to get help.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth, ages 16 to 25, at risk for or who already have problems with alcohol and other drugs. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff know well the youth they select as counsellors, have watched them grow and have seen them naturally offering help to others in the centre. ◆ Criteria: youth must not have used drugs for at least a year and must be serious about wanting to help their peers. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal training is provided. ◆ Youth selected as counsellors have been around the centre a long time and know how the centre operates. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors informally discuss issues that peer counsellors have discussed with their peers. ◆ Counsellors are available to peer counsellors when needed. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Projet intervention prostitution Québec (P.I.P.Q.) 710, Du Roi Québec, PQ G1K 2X7</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Pierre Maheux Tel: (418) 641-0168 Fax: (418) 648-9201</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: "Aide offerte dans leur milieu naturel" Type of Service: Street outreach, referral, support, information sharing</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate and sensitize street youth to the dangers of the street. ◆ To offer help and support to street youth as they take steps to improve their well-being. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The organization's mandate is to offer services to street youth. Peer helpers, along with street workers, go out on the streets and talk to youth about the resources available to them. Peer helpers provide support to their peers and often act as a link between the youth and outreach staff.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth with problems linked to drug dependency and/or prostitution. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are identified by and have links with the outreach workers of the organization. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive a basic orientation to learn about the organization. This is followed by a three-day training on natural peer helping. ◆ The organization also offers peer helpers other types of training, as needed. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street workers supervise peer helpers during street outreach. ◆ Workers are available to provide support and guidance when needed. ◆ Staff follow-up with helpers through regular team meetings. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An evaluation, funded by Health Canada, was carried out by the natural peer helpers of P.I.P.Q. ◆ The evaluation report is available through Health Canada's regional office. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
L'association pour les jeunes de la rue de Joliette 220, rue Lajoie Sud Joliette, PQ J6E 5L2	Guylaine Vallée Tel: (514) 753-3692	Name: "Projet de la Rue" Type of Service: Outreach, support, information sharing.
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate street youth about healthier life practices in order to avoid the consequences associated with life on the street. ◆ To provide help and support to street youth. ◆ To provide them with the resources they need to help themselves. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
L'association pour les jeunes de la rue de Joliette is an outreach-focused agency designed to provide help to street youth. Peer helpers work alongside street workers to educate street youth about safer health practices and available resources and to provide support to youth living on the street.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Entrenched street youth between the ages of 15 and 30. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer and may also be identified by staff. ◆ Those selected as peer helpers are known by the staff and relate well to their peers. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is informal. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street workers from the organization supervise youth on the street. ◆ Workers are available to provide support and guidance when needed. <p>Evaluation:</p> <p>No formal evaluation has been done to date.</p>		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
La maison des Jeunes des Basses Laurentides 53, rue St-Lambert Ste-Thérèse, PQ J7E 3J9	Eric Martin Tel: (514) 437-0335	Name: "Jeunes et entraide" Type of Service: Outreach, problem solving, information sharing
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate adolescents and increase their awareness about the dangers of the street. ◆ To help youth at risk learn how to help themselves. ◆ To provide youth at risk with the tools to help them differentiate between problems they can resolve and those they should refer to professionals. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
La Maison des Jeunes is a drop-in centre for youth ages 12 to 17 who have a place to live but spend most of their time on the street. Peer helpers share their experiences with other youth and help them find alternative solutions to their problems.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth at risk who may be school drop-outs, have alcohol/drug dependencies, family related problems, and/or behavioral problems. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer. Some are staff-selected. ◆ Youth selected are those who staff feel can handle the responsibility. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive an initial orientation. ◆ They attend ten, ninety-minute training sessions. ◆ The training manual "Jeunes et entraide" is used. Helpers learn communication and problem solving skills and facts about specific issues. ◆ There is an emphasis on the fact that peer helpers are not professionals. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street workers supervise helpers on the street and in the centre. Peer helpers work side by side with workers. ◆ Supervisors act as facilitators. ◆ Supervisors follow-up on the progress of the peer helpers. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted to date. ◆ Peer helpers and trainers discussed the training program and recommended that it be shorter and geared more to specific needs. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
<p>Centre d'intervention et de prevention en toxicomanie de l'Outaouais 42, rue Hôtel de ville Hull, PQ J8X 4E3</p>	<p>Josée McCann Hector Gaudreau Tel: (819) 770-7249 Fax: (819) 778-6534</p>	<p>Name: "Groupe de jeunes pairs aidants" Type of Service: Referrals, information sharing, support</p>
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate street youth and increase their awareness of the dangers of drug abuse. ◆ To provide workshops for youth on active listening, self esteem, communication skills, etc. ◆ To provide information on appropriate resources. ◆ To provide street youth with help and support. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>Centre d'intervention et de prevention en toxicomanie is a drop-in/resource centre whose mandate is to provide youth with support. Peer helpers co-lead group discussions and provide one-on-one support to other youth in need. They provide their peers with information on the prevention of and the negative consequences related to drug abuse.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any youth considered at risk including street youth, school drop-outs, youth with alcohol/drug dependencies. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer. ◆ Some are asked by staff if they would be interested in becoming peer helpers. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators receive an informal orientation on the centre and its mandate. ◆ Training is ongoing. Peer helpers meet with agency staff once a week to discuss their role as peer helpers and to learn specific facts about drugs and alcohol, AIDS, etc. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Three workers from the agency provide helpers with supervision/support. ◆ Workers facilitate meetings, discussions, etc. ◆ Workers meet regularly on a one-on-one basis with peer helpers. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <p>Ongoing, informal evaluations are conducted by peers and staff. Discussions are on program problems, suggestions for change etc.</p>		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Halifax County Board of Education Suite. 300 1496 Bedford Highway Bedford, NS B4A 1E5</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jim de la Mothe Tel: (902) 864-6745 Fax: (902) 864-6750</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Youth To Youth Type of Service: Peer education, support.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To increase the opportunity to provide immediate support to students experiencing unusual stress. ◆ To provide the opportunity for students to develop skills/strategies to assist in peer intervention and support. 		
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Youth To Youth is a community-based initiative to encourage young people to stay in school by providing immediate peer related support for identified difficulties, in an attempt to reconnect youth to the larger school community.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Senior elementary and high school students, 12 to 19 years old, at risk for dropping out of school. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are selected through staff and peer referral. ◆ Potential peer helpers must complete a student application form. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers attend a two-day training workshop. ◆ They attend monthly training sessions that are topic and/or strategy specific. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are supervised by the school counsellor and a classroom teacher. ◆ The counsellor and teacher provide support and guidance to peer helpers when needed. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Clients, assisted by peer helpers complete a questionnaire. ◆ Peer helpers review the program/services. ◆ Staff complete a questionnaire/interview. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Centre jeunesse Terrebonne 1044, rue Belcourt Terrebonne, PQ J6W 2G4	Daniel Champagne Tel: (514) 964-5598 Fax: (514) 964-9672	Name: Intervention Toxicomanie Type of Service: Referral, education, support
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate adolescents and make them aware of the dangers of the street. ◆ To provide support to youth with drug and alcohol dependencies. ◆ To provide youth with an environment in which to exchange information. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>Centre jeunesse is a place for youth to meet and talk informally. The goal of the program is to provide alternatives to drug and alcohol abuse and street life. Peer helpers hold group discussions on various issues of concern to their peers (specific attention is given to drug/alcohol dependencies). The main role of peer helpers is to make their peers aware of the negative consequences of substance abuse, to identify agencies that they might go to for assistance and to provide support. Emphasis is on the fact that the peer helping aspect of the program happens naturally and informally.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any youth considered at risk, particularly youth with alcohol/drug dependencies. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer informally. <p>Training:</p> <p>Training is informal; guidelines on how to facilitate discussions are given informally to youth.</p> <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street workers provide support and guidance to peer helpers during group discussions. ◆ Workers meet with peer helpers regularly to see how they are doing. ◆ Workers are available to provide additional support, counselling, etc. to peer helpers when necessary. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been done. ◆ Peer helpers, youth at the centre and staff discuss issues that arise, and provide suggestions for changes to be made to the program. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Coalition sherbrookoise pour le travail de rue C.P. 501 Sherbrooke, PQ J1H 5K2</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jean-Francois Roos Tel: (819) 822-1736 Fax: (819) 565-9855 information sharing</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: "Stratégie canadienne antidrogue" Type of Service: Referral, support,</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate and sensitize adolescents about the health risks associated with drug/alcohol abuse and to identify safer health practices. ◆ To provide support to youth currently experiencing drug/alcohol dependencies. 		
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p>		
<p>"Stratégie canadienne antidrogue" was designed to provide interventions for youth experiencing alcohol/drug dependencies, other social problems. Peers provide information about health risks related drug/alcohol abuse and identify safer practices through group discussions.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth between the ages of 13 and 25. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p>		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer or are asked if they would be interested in becoming peer helpers. ◆ Criteria: past experience with the street lifestyle, demonstrated leadership potential. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive an orientation. ◆ Training is informal. Peer helpers learn general communication and active listening skills and specific facts about drugs and alcohol. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street workers are present during discussion groups to provide guidance and support. ◆ Workers follow-up with helpers on a regular basis. ◆ Are available when necessary to provide counselling, guidance, etc. to peer helpers. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <p>A formal evaluation was conducted in 1993 and is available through the Centre Local Service Communautaire (CLSC).</p>		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Clinique des jeunes St-Denis CLSC Centre-ville 1250, rue Sanguinet, 3^e étage Montréal, PQ H2X 3E7</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Lucie Biron Tel: (514) 844-0630 Fax: (514) 847-0728</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: "C'est dans la rue que ça ce passe" (Phase One) L'intervention par les pairs, dans la rue au Centreville (Phase Two) Type of Service: Outreach, referrals, reintegration, prevention, social activity.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To prevent the transmission of HIV and STD's amongst street youth in downtown Montreal. ◆ To inform and encourage safe sex practices and safe IV drug use amongst street youth. ◆ To link street youth with existing services. 		
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Street youth are vulnerable to the transmission of HIV and other STD's because of their lifestyle. They are often difficult to reach because they mistrust mainstream services. To overcome this difficulty, this project is experimenting with using peer helpers to reach street youth in their own environment.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth under 20 years old. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youths are referred by other partner community agencies. ◆ Clinic staff talk with youth and ask if they would like to become peer helpers. ◆ Criteria: youth must have personal knowledge of street life and have started social reintegration. They must demonstrate leadership and natural peer helping abilities. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive an intense training on a number of topics including the prevention of STD's and AIDS, self-esteem, helping techniques, suicide prevention, community resources, etc. ◆ Peers apprentice in the street and in youth shelters to strengthen their natural peer helping abilities. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A community coordinator, hired by the Clinic, supervises project activities. ◆ During the apprenticeship period, each peer helper is linked with a street worker from a community partner organization. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The sponsoring organization of the project conducted a summary evaluation of Phase One. The results encouraged the development of Phase Two of the project. ◆ A funded action research is being carried out during Phase Two to evaluate the process as well as the effectiveness of peer helping in the street life environment. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Stepping Stone 2224 Maitland Street Halifax, NS B3K 2Z9	Nancy Hunter Tel: (902) 420-0103 Fax: (902) 422-9665	Name: Street Outreach Program Type of Service: Outreach, referrals.
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide support in a non-directive, non-judgmental manner. ◆ To provide resources to make the street as safe as possible for young people who are working there. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
Stepping Stone is an outreach program for young people involved in street prostitution. Workers contact youth on local "strolls" and provide information, bad trick sheets and condoms. Drop-in services are available and counsellors are on duty.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Entrenched street youth involved in prostitution and youth at risk of becoming involved in prostitution. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff are recruited through advertisements. ◆ Those selected are usually familiar with the agency and identify with its approach. ◆ Previous experience in the street lifestyle is a hiring priority. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is "on the job" and reflects the agency's philosophy and approach. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are supervised by senior staff. Peer helpers are paid. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An evaluation was conducted by the City of Halifax Social Planning Department and a report is available. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Street Outreach Services (SOS) 622 Yonge Street, 2nd Fl. Toronto, ON M4Y 1Z8	Terri Henderson Tel: (416) 926-0744 Fax: (416) 926-9552	Name: SOS Peer Program Type of Service: Outreach, information sharing
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Primary objective is to use a "peer model" to educate street youth on prevention and other issues related to HIV/AIDS. ◆ To assist peers in gaining skills, experience and knowledge around safer sex issues. ◆ To help solidify the desire of peers to make healthy choices. ◆ To increase self-esteem through skill building. ◆ To provide a work experience for youth. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The SOS Peer Program was designed to act as a bridge for street youth making the transition away from street life. Peer educators are contracted and paid for up to 10 hours per week. They develop language accessible materials on HIV/AIDS, do supervised street outreach, co-facilitate workshops and are positive role models who educate/inform youth on issues of HIV/AIDS and STD'S.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth, ages 16 to 24, involved in or at risk of becoming involved in prostitution. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Prospective peers are referred by their SOS worker. ◆ Interviews are conducted by the HIV/AIDS Peer Program Supervisor. ◆ Peers are clients of SOS. ◆ Criteria: potential peers must be actively addressing their issues. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ongoing opportunities for training exist through workshops, etc. ◆ Training is discussion-oriented and often specific in terms of facts and issues covered. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators attend weekly team or individual meetings with their supervisor to discuss work-oriented issues. ◆ Each peer meets with his or her SOS worker to deal with all other issues. ◆ Staff are available when needed. ◆ Peers are supervised on outreach. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators self-evaluate every 3 months and make suggestions for program improvement. ◆ Peer educators and supervisors fill out performance appraisals and compare their results. ◆ The program is improved based on evaluations. ◆ Statistical information is maintained. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Odyssey II - Substance Abuse Services For Youth 2875 St. George Vancouver, BC V5T 3R8</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Dawn Embree Tel: (604) 879-8853 Fax (604) 879-6133</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Peer Counselling Program Type of Service: Peer education, support.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide counselling to youth and families addressing substance abuse issues. ◆ To provide social and recreational activities for young people that are alcohol and drug free. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Odyssey is a substance abuse program for youth. The agency provides individual and family counselling, group activities, a drop-in centre and education for the community on substance abuse. Peer counsellors play various roles. They work in the office, lead group discussions/talking circles, do presentations in alternate schools and for parent groups and plan and run recreational events.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth who are at risk for or already struggling with alcohol/drug dependencies. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer and staff approach potential peer helpers who they know well. ◆ Staff conduct interviews to find out why youth want to be involved and to determine their level of interest. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive 8 weeks of training in communication skills, two to three hours per week. ◆ Peer helpers do an internship that is individualized depending on what they want to do in the agency. ◆ Peer helpers and staff have developed a training manual. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff meet informally with the peer helpers each week. ◆ Meetings focus on peer interaction, ongoing orientation and group activities. ◆ Staff are available to provide additional support and guidance to helpers when needed. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. ◆ Informal evaluations occur continuously through staff interaction. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Planned Parenthood Nova Scotia 100 - 6156 Quinpool Road Halifax, NS B3L 1A3	Youth Project volunteers Tel: (902) 492-0444 Fax: (902) 492-7155	Name: The Lesbian, Gay & Bi-Sexual Youth Project Type of Service: Support, peer education, a phone line, advocacy.
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide support, education, advocacy and a peer network for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth. ◆ To educate young people and staff in schools, group homes, etc., about homophobia, heterosexism and issues of concern to lesbian, gay and bi-sexual young people. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>The Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Project was developed to provide support to young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual through a toll-free telephone helpline, social and recreational activities, gay community involvement and regular youth group meetings. Peer helpers do outreach to high schools and community groups. They also make contact with other lesbian, gay and bisexual youth groups and provide support, information and resources to other youth.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth ages 25 and under.		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth who are interested in becoming guest speakers, educational workshop leaders or peer helpers sign up for training and activities during youth group meetings. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is both formal and informal. Youth are trained during training workshops and are given ongoing direction, feedback and support by adult facilitators. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is ongoing communication between adult volunteers and peer helpers. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Two internal evaluations have been conducted. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Youth Assisting Youth 3080 Yonge Street, Suite 4080 Toronto, ON M4N 3N1	Robert Mout Tel: (416) 932-1919 Fax: (416) 932-1924	Name: Youth Assisting Youth Type of Service: Friendship, role modelling
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide friendship, support and encouragement to children and young people at risk for involvement in crime and/or demonstrating behavioural problems, low self-esteem or cultural adjustment issues. ◆ To provide positive role models for children and youth at risk. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The Youth Assisting Youth Peer Helping Program was designed by the Ministry of Corrections, Big Brothers and social workers as a crime intervention initiative. However, the program has developed a far wider focus. Peer helpers volunteer to be buddies/friends to other young people. Each volunteer is matched with a young person seeking the programs assistance.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any young person, referred by a professional, who needs extra attention, direction and building of their self-esteem. Recently, the initiative became more concerned with assisting new Canadian young people. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are recruited through presentations to schools, churches, community groups, etc. ◆ Staff screen potential volunteers which includes home visits, police and reference checks. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers receive an initial orientation. ◆ They attend a pre-match workshop. ◆ Once they have a buddy, volunteers are required to attend workshops on multiculturalism, substance abuse, and sexual abuse. Occasional group support meetings are also organized. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are linked with a caseworker. ◆ Workers provide close supervision and support to youth volunteers. ◆ Monthly and annual events are organized providing support, networking and contact with the caseworker. ◆ Each parent of a child in the program is also connected to a caseworker. <p>Evaluation:</p> <p>Telephone surveys have been conducted of entire client and volunteer populations. Results were positive. Both clients and volunteers expressed satisfaction with the program.</p>		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>N'Swakamok - Native Alternative School 110 Elm Street Sudbury, ON P3C 1T5</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Pat Rogerson Tel: (705) 674-2128 Fax: (705) 671-3539</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Buddy System Type of Service: Role modelling, information sharing</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide opportunities for native youth to be successful. ◆ To provide leadership opportunities for native youth. ◆ To assist new students in making the transition back to school. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Buddy System was designed to assist new students to build friendships and make a smooth transition back to school. A new student chooses a "veteran" of the school to be his/her buddy for the first few weeks of school. Buddies help new students find their way around the school, meet new people and become tutors and mentors to their peers.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All new students to the school because all are at risk for dropping out. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially, staff ask specific students if they would like to be mentors. ◆ New students are told about the buddy system. ◆ New students choose a buddy from students identified. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal training is provided. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervision is informal. ◆ After 3 to 4 weeks the guidance counsellor checks with the buddies. ◆ New students are entitled to change buddies if they wish but must let the guidance counsellor know. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluations have been conducted. ◆ The guidance counsellor informally assesses the success of each "buddy" relationship. ◆ Many match-ups have been very successful. ◆ Males are not as responsive as females to having a buddy. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Planned Parenthood of Toronto 36B Prince Arthur Avenue Toronto, ON M5R 1A9	Alex Walsh Tel: (416) 961-0113 Fax: (416) 961-2512 Teen Sex Infoline (416) 961-3200	Name: Teen Sex InfoLine Type of Service: Counselling, information, referrals
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide accurate, non-judgmental information about sexuality in an easily accessible format. ◆ To provide a supportive, rewarding experience for teen counsellors where they can increase their knowledge about sexuality, improve communication skills and feel they are doing something worthwhile. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The Teen Sex InfoLine is a free, confidential information line for youth 16 to 19 years old to call to talk to trained teen counsellors about sexuality, pregnancy, birth control and STD's including HIV/AIDS. The counsellors provide accurate, information-based, supportive, client-focused counselling and make referrals.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any young person may call. Counsellors are youth between the ages of 16 and 19. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teen counsellors are recruited through ads, other agencies and word of mouth. ◆ Interested teens must fill out an application and go through an extensive interview. ◆ Criteria: comfort level dealing with sexual health issues, willingness to learn, listening and communication skills, the ability to place limitations on a call or make a referral to a different service and the ability to perform non-judgmental, information-based counselling. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer counsellors must complete 35 hours of training. ◆ They must complete a period of observation, i.e. watch an experienced teen counsellor. ◆ When comfortable, they begin taking calls. ◆ They are encouraged to attend monthly in-services. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors are supervised at all times. ◆ Supervisors (volunteer adult counsellors) provide support during calls, debrief after calls and are available to take over during crisis calls. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors evaluate the training and program. ◆ Counsellors are evaluated once per year. ◆ A peer advisory committee evaluates the program. ◆ Evaluations have been positive. Changes are made regularly to improve the program. 		

CATEGORY 1: CONTACT/SUPPORT SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region P.O. Box 70039,160 Elgin St. Ottawa, ON K2P 2C4	Mary Stem Tel: (613) 238-1089 Fax: (613) 238-1116	Name: Youthline Type of Service: Applied peer counselling, referrals
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To meet an expressed need to provide distress services to youth on a peer-to-peer basis. ◆ To provide young people with training and leadership opportunities which might assist them in establishing career goals. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
Youthline is a part of the Distress Centre of Ottawa and region. It is a telephone distress line that is available to young people seven days a week between 4 p.m. and 11 p.m. Peer counsellors (between the ages of 16 and 22) do crisis intervention, provide anonymous counselling and make referrals to other youth who are in distress. After hours, calls are forwarded to regular distress lines.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any youth in distress in the region, including part of Western Quebec. Collect calls are not accepted. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<i>Selection:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are recruited through school assemblies and a volunteer centre. ◆ They must complete an application, a telephone interview and provide references. ◆ Criteria: an ability to empathize; some emotional stability to deal with the stress of crisis calls; the ability to be non-judgemental. 		
<i>Training:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is 56 hours over 6 weeks. ◆ Training is both general and specific, e.g. potential counsellors learn communication, listening and questioning skills. They also attend a 2-day Suicide Assessment Workshop that is highly interactive and involves role playing. ◆ Annual workshops and a library are available. 		
<i>Supervision:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff attend the workshop and are able to see how potential volunteers respond under pressure. ◆ Peer counsellors are directly supervised by a trainer for the first two months and thereafter by the service manager. ◆ A senior volunteer team provides help in the event of a crisis. ◆ Counsellors are required to keep call reports that are monitored by the service manager. 		
<i>Evaluation:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It is difficult to contact callers given the anonymous nature of the service. ◆ Volunteers are monitored on an ongoing basis. 		

3.0 TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

Agencies involved in transition/reintegration efforts provide a wide range of services for out-of-the-mainstream youth seeking to leave street life. The services provided can include counselling and treatment for specific problems such as substance abuse. Transition/reintegration services, however, are usually geared to assisting young people in making the transition to the mainstream. Thus, life skills training, employment preparation, literacy training and other educational opportunities are the main services offered by agencies in this category. These agencies usually maintain contact with the "street scene". They are also typically more structured than street outreach agencies given the nature of the programs they offer. As well, they are usually more connected to mainstream agencies since many are involved in assisting their clients in gaining access to available mainstream services such as welfare, housing, and education.

Some opportunities and challenges confronting these agencies in dealing with peer helper initiatives are:

- **Involve and support appropriate staff.**

The selection and training of staff is the key for these agencies/services. Empathetic, energetic and enthusiastic individuals are most successful.

- **Select credible peer helpers.**

One of the main criteria for selection is whether the individual will provide a positive role model for the client group being served.

- **Provide services that are socially and culturally relevant.**

- **Ensure that the "helper" has something to offer which the consumer finds valuable.**

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Alberta Safe House 110 - 18th Avenue S.W. Calgary, AB T2S 0B9	Heather Cotton Tel: (403) 244-4737 Fax: (403) 244-4737	Name: Peer Counselling Program Type of Service: Positive role modelling, counselling, life skills
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide positive peer role models for clients. ◆ To break down authority issues - counsellors show that youth can have relationships with adults. ◆ To help peer counsellors solidify their gains. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The Peer Counselling Program was designed to provide street youth with the opportunity to gain employment experience. The primary role of peer counsellors is to be a positive role model to youth who live/stay in the house. They live and work in the house teaching their peers life skills, providing information on available resources, etc.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth under the child welfare system. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<i>Selection:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors are recruited through newspaper advertising and word of mouth. ◆ Interested young people go through an extensive interview process. ◆ Criteria: "fit" with needs of the staff, have a good sense of interpersonal boundaries and are able to maintain confidentiality. 		
<i>Training:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors are provided with on-the-job training. ◆ Counsellors are also given more formal training in general basic counselling and listening skills during weekly staff meetings. 		
<i>Supervision:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Counsellors meet weekly with the supervisor. ◆ A staff member is always available. ◆ Peer counsellors report events in a log book. ◆ Supervisors keep the focus on learning and on making the experience positive. 		
<i>Evaluation:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Informal evaluations are done weekly. ◆ A formal evaluation is in process. Peer counsellors and young people from the house are being interviewed to determine the effect of the program. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Children's Aid Society of Ottawa-Carleton 1602 Telesat Court Gloucester, ON K1B 1B1</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jim Butler Tel: (613) 747-7800 Fax: (613) 747-4456</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name of Activity: Children's Aid Society Teens (C.A.S.T.) Type of Service: Advocacy/education/social</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To advocate for youth in care within the C.A.S., in the community and to all levels of government. ◆ To hold events and help reduce feelings of isolation of youth in care. ◆ To educate about the needs of youth in care and reverse stereotypes at community and agency levels. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>C.A.S.T. is an advocacy program for youth in care. Eleven to twelve youth in C.A.S.T. represent the core planning team. They plan events for youth in care and try to build relationships with their peers, to advocate for youth in care, and to educate the public about the needs of youth in care. Workshops, presentations, social/recreational activities and a newsletter are the main forums to "get the message out".</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth in care, ages 13 to 24. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Members of the planning team are referred by staff. ◆ Criteria include: being "in care" and 13 years of age or older, a desire to help others, and an ability to work in groups. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is ongoing. Opportunities are provided to team members to build leadership skills, public speaking abilities, etc. ◆ When team members do "speaks", they practise first in front of their peers on the team. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Weekly meetings are held. ◆ The coordinator oversees and assists in the delegation of responsibilities. Team members are held accountable by the group to do their part. ◆ After each "speak" there is a debriefing. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. Feedback from youth, staff and the community has been favourable. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Beat The Street 290 Jarvis Street Toronto, ON M5B 2C5	Shawn Conway Tel: (416) 979-3361 Fax: (416) 979-3292	Name of Activity: Peer Tutoring Type of Service: Tutoring
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To teach reading and writing skills to street youth. ◆ To give street youth an opportunity to explore their abilities. ◆ To provide a meaningful role for street youth. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>Beat the Street is a drop-in learning centre for street youth. Youth are referred or hear about it through word of mouth. Participation in the tutoring program is voluntary. About ten to twenty peer and adult tutors work one-on-one with ten to twenty students. Tutors help their peers build their literacy skills, learn to use computers, write a resume or do a job or housing search. Tutors and their peers are involved in the ongoing development of the program.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth, ages 16 to 25. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer tutors volunteer or are selected by staff. ◆ Informal interviews are conducted. ◆ Tutoring is often informal. Students who know how things work help those just starting. ◆ Criteria include: a desire to help others and having skills to share. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer tutors receive 16 hours of training. ◆ Tutors learn the values of the program, about teaching strategies and learning styles; and, through street walks, about life on the street. ◆ Experienced tutors often act as co-trainers. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tutors meet informally with their trainer once a week to talk about how things are going. ◆ Tutors help students identify goals and conduct a self-evaluation as to whether or not goals have been achieved. ◆ A youth worker is available to provide personal support to tutors at any time. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Annual program evaluations are conducted using the Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutoring Program Evaluation Kit and the Ontario Training Assistance Board Guidelines. ◆ Many peer tutors return to school. ◆ Peer tutoring is effective given the transient nature of students' lives. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Boyle Street Co-Op Box 1262, Main Post Office Edmonton, AB T5J 2M8</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Richard Johnston Tel: (403) 424-4106</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Peer Tutoring Type of Service: Support, tutoring</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To build self-esteem in youth attending the alternative school. ◆ To build a positive, natural community support system. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Peer Tutoring is an informal peer helper activity that developed naturally among students attending the Education Centre at the Co-Op. Peer tutors with strengths in particular subjects offer help to students experiencing difficulty in those subjects.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth between the ages of 12 and 19 who dropped out of school when they were younger but now want to go back. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer tutors self-select. ◆ Tutors are usually students who have a good foundation in various subjects. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal training is provided. ◆ Students train one another. The activity is based on a mutual support model so that there is no "hierarchy" among the students. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff are available to provide assistance whenever necessary to peer helpers. ◆ Staff attend every youth group meeting to provide support and guidance to helpers. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. Students and tutors provide ongoing feedback to one another and to the staff. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>N'Swakamok - Native Alternative School 110 Elm Street Sudbury, ON P3C 1T5</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Pat Rogerson Tel: (705) 674-2128 Fax: (705) 671-3539</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Peer Tutoring Program Type of Service: Tutoring</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide opportunities for native youth to be successful. ◆ To provide leadership opportunities for native youth. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Peer Tutoring Program was designed to provide assistance on a peer-to-peer basis to students experiencing difficulty in various subjects. Tutors assist their peers by using practical activities to explain more abstract concepts, (e.g. using beadwork to explain ratios).</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Native youth who have dropped out of school but are now trying to complete high school through alternative education. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff recruit and select peer tutors who they believe will be interested in helping their peers. ◆ Tutors must have the skill to communicate abstract principles in a simple, practical way. ◆ A list of tutors names is advertised to help those who need help to find help. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal training is provided. ◆ Tutoring is very flexible and unstructured. ◆ Tutors help their peers make the connection between what they know in their own cultural background to concepts they need to understand. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervision is very informal and indirect. ◆ Staff check to see how tutors and their peers are doing. ◆ Staff are available if tutors or their peers run into difficulty. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No evaluations have been conducted. Tutoring is provided on the assumption that peers can and do learn from their peers. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Centre Youville Centre Ottawa-Carleton Inc. 19 Melrose Avenue Ottawa, ON K1Y 1T8	Sister Elizabeth Ann Kinsella Tel: (613) 729-6748 Tel: (613) 729-6927 Fax: (613) 729-3885	Name: Peer Support System Type of Service: Information sharing
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To support young mothers' commitment to finish their education and to live independently. ◆ To encourage natural helping among peers and to build team spirit and unity by encouraging young mothers to support one another. ◆ To provide an environment for high-risk young single mothers that will facilitate the growth of mothers and their children in self-worth, self-confidence and the skills necessary to thrive in society. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>Tutoring and information sharing occur spontaneously at the Youville Centre and are encouraged by staff as a means of building self-esteem and confidence. An integrated classroom setting allows veteran students to help newcomers adjust to school/the centre and give spontaneous peer support and wisdom about real-life issues including dealing with stress, difficult relationships, the frustrations of being a young parent, confronting emotional obstacles and developing friendships.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ High-risk young single mothers. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is no selection process among students; young mothers are encouraged to share talents and experiences and to reach out to those in need/new to the program. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No structured training exists. A spontaneous approach is used, relying heavily on the development of trust and friendship. ◆ All peer helping is based on experience that veterans to the centre have to offer to newcomers. ◆ Conflict resolution workshops for all students help with peer counselling. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervision/encouragement is provided by teachers, daycare and support staff and the Executive Director. ◆ Director meets weekly with young mothers to discuss issues, affirm those who are helping their peers and provide incentives for attendance, etc. ◆ Conflict resolution workshops for all students help with peer counselling. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Daily evaluations are conducted in the classroom. ◆ Staff monitor the well-being of young mothers and children and their growth in confidence and self-esteem on an ongoing basis. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
The Ambassador Partnership 277 Victoria Street, Main Fl. Toronto, ON M5B 1W1	Ahea Jackie Barrett Tel: (416) 392-0807 Fax: (416) 392-0635	Name: The Ambassador Partnership Type of Service: Peer education, work experience
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To financially and psycho-socially support street and disadvantaged youth while they return to formal education. ◆ To develop interventions that address personal, social and family conditions amongst youth at risk. ◆ To implement a peer education program for street youth combining academic and co-operative education. ◆ To create a positive peer support group to carry out the interventions. ◆ To increase awareness of substance issues among youth at risk in the community. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
The Ambassador Partnership is a program developed and maintained by nine inner city youth-serving agencies. It is an alternative school for street youth that assists them in making the transition from the street to mainstream life by providing them with the opportunity to obtain high school credits and work experience as peer educators. In addition, they educate their peers and younger students about their life experience with leaving/staying in school, substance abuse, being on the street and leaving the street. This is done through "Speak Out" presentations.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street/disadvantaged youth ages 16 to 24. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators are referred to the Partnership by supervisors from the nine youth agencies. ◆ There is an extensive application and interview process. ◆ Criteria: youth have made the decision to leave the street. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ongoing weekly group support/training, 4 hours per week. ◆ There is additional training with the co-ordinator, as necessary. ◆ There is regular supervision with the sponsoring agency supervisor. ◆ Three times a year, one-week training events are held to support peer educators as they prepare to do their first "speaks", to build community among participants and to further develop the program. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer. educators receive support from supervisors and the coordinator of the school. ◆ There is weekly supervision with the sponsoring agency supervisor. ◆ "Speaks" are attended by three peer educators and the Coordinator. ◆ There is a debriefing after each presentation. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An evaluation was conducted and the resulting " Stay In School" report is available. ◆ There has been positive response from elementary and high schools, young people and the community. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Wood's Homes 805 - 37th Street N.W. Calgary, AB T2N 4N8	Randy Diddams Tel: (403) 270-1707 Fax: (403) 270-4102	Name: PASSAGES Type of Service: Peer education, work experience
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide youth who have lived on the street with the opportunity to gain access to acceptable education and employment experience. ◆ To assist these youth to develop a stable personal lifestyle. ◆ To provide these youth with the opportunity to build their self-esteem and gain some control over their lives. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>PASSAGES is a job development program directed to young persons who have been on the street who are under employed or unemployed. It includes an educational component and employment training within Wood's Homes. In addition, a mentorship program has been developed to enhance the supports already in place for students of PASSAGES.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Young people between the ages of 18 to 24 inclusively who have lived on the street who are trying to gain the necessary skills to enter the mainstream employment system. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidates apply for the program by resume and then undergo an intensive three-stage interview and screening process. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The candidates receive 19 months of training divided into two learning segments. The first segment involves a 7 month training position within Wood's Homes. The second involves a one year full time position as a Youth and Family Counsellor Aide for a year. ◆ The candidates attend weekly seminars and learning workshops. ◆ During the first training period, candidates audit two courses through Mount Royal College. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Candidates meet with their supervisors twice weekly to talk about goals, problems that may have arisen and any questions they may have. ◆ Supervisors provide candidates with guidance, support and direction for both their work and their personal life space. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A formal evaluation is available for all of the programs offered through Wood's Homes, including PASSAGES. ◆ Candidates are positive about the program and the opportunities it provides. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Boyle Street Co-Op Box 1262, Main Post Office Edmonton, AB T5J 2M8</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Daryll Langevin Tel: (403) 424-4106 Fax: (403) 425-2205</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Young Adult Crafts Type of Service: Life skills, employment preparation.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To assist youth in developing life skills. ◆ To provide opportunities for youth to increase control over their own lives. ◆ To assist youth in becoming self-sufficient so that they do not have to rely on the welfare system. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Young Adult Program is an employment initiative that was designed to assist youth in gaining marketable skills. Young adults in the program learn budgeting, marketing and accounting skills as they create and sell crafts in various locations in the city. Staff assist the young adults in developing a budget, determining locations where the crafts can be sold and in preparing the payroll, and assessing expenses and revenue.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth between the ages of 18 and 24 - predominantly aboriginal young people. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p>		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No selection process exists. ◆ Young people indicate interest in the program or are invited to attend by staff or youth already involved in the program. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ongoing, informal training is provided in various ways, e.g. youth train each other, share skills, bring in professionals from the community to conduct workshops on entrepreneurial skills, and learn through observation. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff provide ongoing support and guidance, to youth involved in the program. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. ◆ The program is client-centred and client-driven, so the young adults evaluate the program on an ongoing, informal basis. ◆ In addition, staff make observations of activity level, number of participants, the youths' development, etc. 		

CATEGORY 2: TRANSITION/REINTEGRATION SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Boyle Street Co-Op Box 1262, Main Post Office Edmonton, AB T5J 2M8</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Richard Johnston Tel: (403) 424-4106 Fax: (403) 425-2205</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Lunch Program Type of Service: Life skills, employment preparation</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To assist youth in developing life skills. ◆ To provide opportunities for youth to increase control over their own lives. ◆ To assist youth in developing interpersonal relationship skills. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Lunch Program began when young people attending the alternative school identified an area where there was a gap in services. The program provides youth with the opportunity to gain both interpersonal and employment skills. Students were involved in writing a proposal and are involved in the ongoing development of the program including creating a budget, purchasing food, making meals and doing any necessary cleaning.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth between the ages of 12 and 19 attending the school. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No selection process exists. ◆ All of the students in the school take part in the lunch program. ◆ Four or five students are responsible each month to make all of the arrangements for meals during the month. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No training is provided. ◆ Staff provide guidance and ideas about what the students might need, however, the young people do all of the decision making and preparation. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <p>Staff provide ongoing support, guidance, transportation, etc. for the young people responsible for the lunch program each month.</p> <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. ◆ The program is client-centred and client-driven, so there is a continuous feedback loop. Students evaluate the program on an ongoing, informal basis. ◆ In addition, staff make regular observations of activity level, the youths' development, etc. 		

4.0 PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Perhaps the most difficult group of agencies to categorize were those primarily concerned with preventative/educational peer helper initiatives. This is because many agencies involving their peer helpers in educational activities also provide support and transition services often with the assistance of peer helpers. One of the main activities used with high-risk youth serving as peer helpers are "speaks." These are meetings in which young people who have been on the street, tell their stories to other young people. This usually involves presentations to young people still in school. The purpose of these "speaks" is to provide information intended to prevent young people still in school from going to the street. However, our discussions with staff in these agencies and with the young people themselves indicated that the "speaks" often also help former street youth to gain self-awareness, self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. The "speaks" allow these young people to give something back to their community and hopefully help other young people avoid making the same mistakes they made.

Some of the opportunities and challenges confronting these agencies include:

- **Determine what message will have the desired effect and how it can be effectively conveyed especially to young persons at high risk.**
- **Select young persons who can effectively participate in conducting preventative programs.**

Under what circumstances is the impact of the street culture shared by past street youth effective in preventing other youth, especially high risk youth from pursuing this lifestyle?

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Crossroads 1901 Capital Square - 10065 Jasper Ave. Edmonton, AB T5J 3B1</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Helen Krimmer Tel: (403) 474-7421 Fax: (403) 425-5911</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Public Education Forums Type of Service: Peer Education, referrals</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate younger adolescents about the dangers of the street. ◆ To provide an opportunity for healing those who have been on the street. ◆ To assist those who have been on the street in building their self-esteem. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Crossroads is an outreach service to youth involved with prostitution. It is also a prevention focused agency providing public education forums on prostitution and street life to junior high students in hopes of preventing high risk youth from turning to the street. Five young women who previously worked the streets go into the schools to tell their stories and dispel myths about the glamour and adventure of street life.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conventional youth ages 11 to 13, who are invisible, i.e. at risk but hidden, and street involved youth. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p>		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer or are asked if they would be interested in "speaking out". ◆ Most peer educators are girls between the ages of 15 and 17. ◆ Criteria: being off the street for six months. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training is informal. ◆ Peer educators receive an orientation. ◆ Peer educators discuss what they will talk about in the forum and potential questions that might arise during the presentation. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A staff person goes to schools with peer educators to provide support. ◆ After each session there is a debriefing. ◆ Feedback is provided. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been done. ◆ Letters of support and phone calls are received from schools indicating that the program has had a strong impact on the students. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Street Connection (formerly P.O.W.E.R. - Prostitutes & Other Women for Equal Rights) 50 Argyle Avenue Winnipeg, MB R3B 0H6</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jane Runner Tel: (204) 943-6379 Fax: (204) 582-1341</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Youth Intervention/ Prevention Project Type of Service: Education, sharing, referral</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate inner city youth about the dangers and realities of prostitution and street life. ◆ To assist the peer educator in healing and making the transition from the street. ◆ To enhance the educator's self-esteem and assist her in her transition. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Youth Intervention/Prevention Project lesson plan on prostitution was developed by P.O.W.E.R. in collaboration with the Winnipeg School division to help educate children and youth about exploitation and the realities and dangers of prostitution/street life. A staff person and the peer educator co-facilitated classes in inner city schools. The peer educator would share her experiences, stressing the dangers and also noting available resources. This program is temporarily on hold due to budget cuts. Staff and peers still provide education through regular program activities and, with time permitting, still do public education presentations.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth in inner city high schools, ages 14 to 18. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The peer educator is staff-selected. ◆ Has proven credibility with staff over time. ◆ Has good public speaking abilities. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators receive 16 hours of orientation that includes spending time at the drop-in centre, reading relevant materials and with the coordinator. ◆ Ongoing, more specific training is provided through workshops on topics such as crisis intervention. ◆ The peer educator and staff member talk before each presentation about the format and about who will share which information. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The peer educator and a staff person usually work as a team during presentations. ◆ There is a debriefing after each presentation. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pre- and post-tests were conducted on knowledge and understanding. Findings indicated changes in student's perceptions about prostitution and street life. ◆ A comparison of teacher-taught with peer-taught classes showed that students taught by the peer educators and agency staff member demonstrated significantly higher knowledge and understanding of the material covered. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
<p>Maison des Jeunes de Val-Bélair 1447, Pie IX sud C.P. 8002 Val Bélair, PQ G2M 1K9</p>	<p>Isabelle Chabot Tel: (418) 843-5166 Fax: (418) 845-2692</p>	<p>Name: Peer helping activities Type of Service: Referral, information sharing, peer support, group discussions and self help.</p>
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To make youth aware of the dangers of the street. ◆ To help prevent substance abuse by encouraging youth to redirect their energies toward other activities such as creative arts and sports. ◆ To help youth increase their self esteem and confidence. ◆ To encourage youth to share their life experiences. ◆ To help youth become more responsible and autonomous. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>La Maison des Jeunes de Val-Bélair is a drop-in/resource centre. Youth workers facilitate activities for youth at risk, including sporting and cultural events and group discussions as a means of providing alternatives to activities on the street particularly those related to substance abuse.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth at risk between the ages of 12 and 17, including school drop-outs, youth with alcohol/drug dependencies, single mothers, etc. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer or are selected by staff. ◆ Peer helpers are those who are known by staff and who have some skills and knowledge to bring to the various activities that are planned. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive an orientation on available resources and on the kinds of problems youth may be experiencing. ◆ Peer helpers are given a choice of the kind of role they can play in the groups depending on their interests, experiences, skills, activity, etc. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff from the agency supervise peer helpers at all times. ◆ Workers are available to provide support and assistance when necessary. ◆ Workers participate in the planning and facilitation of all activities. ◆ Upon request, youth can meet one-on-one with workers. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers share their thoughts and feelings about activities and suggest future events, ways to improve services, etc. ◆ After each event, peer, participants and staff evaluate group activities. ◆ Youth at the centre also provide input and feed-back on ongoing program development. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
The John Howard Society of Red Deer 5018 - 50th Street Red Deer, AB T4N 1Y3	Janet Lundquist Tel: (403) 343-1770 Fax: (403) 346-8740	Name: (Y.O.O.T.H.) Youth Offering Others Their Help Type of Service: Education, peer sharing/support
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To raise awareness about chemical dependency and teach life skills related to diversion of chemical dependency. ◆ To provide positive peer support with a focus on addressing issues faced by children of alcoholics. ◆ To develop community responsibility in promoting positive social change related to chemical dependency. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
Y.O.O.T.H is a chemical abuse prevention program for adolescents. Youth may come back into the program as peer leaders once they have completed the training program. They take on an active role in the delivery of all project activities including rap sessions, one-on-one counselling, education and community gatherings. Youth take responsibility for the meeting place which gives them a sense of ownership and allows them to view it as a "safe place". Youth feel comfortable in taking risks, being honest and receiving support from their peers.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth experiencing difficulties in school, children of alcoholics, youth experiencing negative consequences as a result of their using drugs. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially, workers from eleven agencies referred youth. ◆ Any youth who volunteers/self refers. ◆ Criteria: must be drug-free, have a desire to work with youth and be a good role model. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Must complete a ten week training program which includes training in counselling, listening and communication skills. ◆ Youth also attend workshops related to self-esteem, effective communication and healthy lifestyles. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervision is indirect and informal. ◆ Peer helpers must participate in a peer leader support group. A staff person is present. ◆ Peer leaders are required to go to one-on-one meetings with a counsellor on a weekly basis. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer leaders evaluate the program half way through and at the end of the training session. ◆ Agencies referring youth do a monthly evaluation assessing how clients are responding. ◆ An evaluation committee reviews feedback from youth; ascertains the effectiveness of project goals and objectives; and, if necessary, recommends changes to program delivery. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Victoria Youth Empowerment Society 658 View Street Victoria, BC V8W 1J7</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Marilyn Fennell Tel: (604) 383-3514 Fax: (604) 383-3812</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: G.O.A.L.S. - Getting Youth Off Alcohol & Substances Type of Service: Education</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide youth with the opportunity to talk with their peers about their experiences with drugs and alcohol and how they have overcome their dependency. ◆ To prevent alcohol and substance abuse. 		
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p>		
<p>G.O.A.L.S. is a six week alcohol and substance abuse prevention/risk reduction program. Young-people who have been clean for a certain period of time go into alternative high schools once a week with a G.O.A.L.S. staff person to share their stories about how they got involved in drugs, how they stopped and what they are doing to stay clean. Peer helpers also identify available resources.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth ages 13 to 19 years old, at risk of or already involved in drinking/drugging. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p>		
<p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer. Some peer educators are staff-selected. ◆ Staff know the peer educators well before taking them into schools. ◆ Criteria: must be clean for a specific period of time and have a desire to help educate their peers about the negative consequences associated with alcohol and drug abuse. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Very informal. Staff and peer educators meet to discuss the presentation format and what the talk will be about. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A staff person goes into the schools with the speaker(s). ◆ There is a debriefing after each presentation. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluations are done at the end of the program to assess knowledge gains of participating students and to provide feedback to peer educators on their presentations. ◆ Schools have provided positive feedback. ◆ There have been requests for the program from other schools. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
T.I. Murphy Learning Centre 95 Water Street St John's, NF A1C 1A5	Tim Turner Tel: (709) 579-6606 Fax: (709) 579-2655	Name: Prevention Plus: The User Friendly Program Type of Service: Peer Coaching
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide alternatives to abusing alcohol and other drugs. ◆ To help youth to feel comfortable enough to talk about their problems. ◆ To educate youth about the negative effects of drugs. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
Prevention Plus is an alcohol and substance abuse prevention program which focuses on providing youth with alternatives to drinking and drugging. Peer teachers who have gone through meditation and deep breathing classes act as coaches to their peers who sign up for the classes.		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth ages 16 to 25, at risk for developing or who already have problems with drugs and alcohol. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<i>Selection:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Some youth volunteer to be peer coaches. ◆ Most youth are evaluated by staff during classes and are chosen to be peer coaches. ◆ Criteria: must have gone through classes, feel comfortable enough to lead a group, have a desire to help others and are emotionally able to provide help. 		
<i>Training:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth must go through a class before they can teach one. ◆ Staff co-coach with peer coaches the first few classes. ◆ Peer coaches then lead classes on their own. 		
<i>Supervision:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A counsellor is always present during classes taught by peer coaches. ◆ Group meetings are held after each class to discuss feelings/issues that arise during class. ◆ Coaches may meet once a week. ◆ Counsellors are available to talk one-on-one with youth. 		
<i>Evaluation:</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Informal meetings are held at the end of each semester to discuss the program and suggest changes. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Council on Drug Abuse 16 Scarlett Rd. Toronto, ON M6N 4K1</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Fred Burford/Don Smyth Tel: (416) 763-1491 Fax: (416) 763-5343</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: "Peers, Transitions, Alternatives"/"Pairs, Transitions, Alternatifs" Type of Service: Peer education, follow-up support for referrals</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To target a prevention program to identified risk factors and other predictors of substance abuse. ◆ To assist young adolescents to evaluate a range of personal and social motives for substance abuse. ◆ To correct misperceptions commonly held by intermediate level students about the prevalence of smoking, alcohol and other drug use among older adolescents. ◆ To provide, when needed, a confidential peer-led resource for self-identification by students at-risk. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>"Peers, Transitions, Alternatives" is a non-judgemental senior-peer led program for students in Grades 9/10 and 11/12. An emphasis is given to reasons and motives for substance use. A team of five diverse senior students typically work with a class conducting small group discussions and problem-solving activities. The peer teaching spans two class periods. A Parents' Forum and Safe Graduation are additional components.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Both conventional and high-risk adolescents in schools and community settings. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Students may self-select through a high-impact presentation on positive peer influence. ◆ Criteria: peer leaders must be concerned senior students, peer helpers, or members of a related organization. Lifestyle criteria are not set for participation in the training phase but self-selection and staff review occurs at the end. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Students receive a day of intensive training. ◆ One half day is devoted to role plays, small group problem-solving & feedback sessions. ◆ A second half day involves preparing for the presentations. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ At least one teacher/ counsellor provides ongoing support the peer educators. ◆ Teachers are not usually present during small group discussions. Feedback sessions are held after classroom sessions. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Pre- and post-test surveys assessing knowledge and attitudes are conducted. Post-test findings indicate changes in knowledge and attitudes towards alcohol and other drug use. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Covenant House 20 Gerrard Street East Toronto, ON M5B 2P3</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Charlotte Genova Tel: (416) 598-4898 Fax: (416) 204-7030</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Runaway Prevention Program Type of Service: Referrals, peer education</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate youth, parents and professionals about the realities of street life and why young people run. ◆ To make youth aware of viable alternatives to running away. ◆ To inform youth, parents, and youth-serving professionals about sources of help available to youth, runaways and street kids. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Runaway Prevention Program tested a pilot program with peer educators going into local schools to educate their peers about the potential dangers and consequences of running away from home. It has been adopted by Covenant House as a new program initiative to involve peer educators on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Due to long-term staff illness, the program currently is on hold; however, the goal is to include a peer facilitator component in the program sometime in the future.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conventional youth ages 12 to 21, who are hidden but at risk. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Potential peer educators completed an application with the supervisor at Covenant House. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is an initial training on the philosophy of the program and ongoing training in presentation and group facilitation skills, disclosures, etc. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff provide support and appropriate counselling. ◆ Staff ensure that peer educators are prepared, supported and debriefed after each "speak out". ◆ Staff meet monthly with peer educators to provide ongoing support. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Debriefings provide informal feedback. ◆ Evaluations by students who have attended the presentations have been consistently positive. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
Reconnect Youth Program #4 - 1365 Johnston Road White Rock, BC V4B 3Z3	Brian Davison Tel: (604) 538-5060 Fax: (604) 538-5092	Name: Peer Helper Program Type of Service: Mediation, referrals, information sharing. Focus on prevention.
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To prevent young people from leaving home. ◆ To assist youth in going home. ◆ To provide opportunities for youth who might be fearful of speaking to adults, to share their feelings, thoughts, etc. with one of their peers. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>The Peer Helper Program was designed to provide youth at risk of leaving home or those at risk who want to return home the opportunity to talk with someone who is not an adult. Peer helpers teach problem solving skills, make referrals and share information with youth in the agency and on the street.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conventional youth who are hidden, but at risk, and entrenched street youth 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are staff-selected, complete an application and are interviewed. ◆ Criteria include: past peer counselling training, good listening skills, able to maintain confidentiality. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peers are given 12 hours of peer mediation training. ◆ Training is specific, focusing on problem solving skills development. ◆ Peer helpers are encouraged to get involved at their schools. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are always with an outreach worker. ◆ Peer counsellors can provide counselling on their own. Workers follow-up on conversations helpers have with clients. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been done. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Coalition sherbrookoise pour le travail de rue C.P. 501 Sherbrooke, PQ J1H 5K2</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jean-Francois Roos Tel: (819) 822-1736 Fax: (819) 565-9855</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: "École avant tout" Type of Service: Referral, support</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate and sensitize adolescents about the dangers of the street. ◆ To prevent youth from leaving school. ◆ To encourage and assist youth who have left school to return. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>"École avant tout" is a program designed to encourage youth who are considering leaving school to remain and to encourage those who have left to return. Peer helpers identify available resources and provide one-on-one support to their peers.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth between the ages of 13 and 25. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer or are asked if they would be interested in becoming peer helpers. ◆ Criteria: have themselves been out of school at one time. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers receive an orientation to the program. ◆ No formal training is provided. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supervision and follow-up are informal. ◆ Peer helpers are encouraged to talk to those who are considering leaving school. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been conducted. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

AGENCY:	CONTACT:	PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:
YOUTHLINK Inner City 149 Gerrard Street East Toronto, ON M5A 2E4	Graham Vardy Tel: (416) 922-3335 Fax: (416) 922-1282	Name: Peer Education and Street Youth Type of Service: Peer health, education, information sharing.
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To employ former street youth as Peer Educators. To educate high risk youth on issues related to HIV and AIDS, street life and problem solving. ◆ To provide support to youth making the transition from the street culture to mainstream society. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>The Peer Education Program helps youth at high risk of becoming street involved avoid the negative consequences of the street lifestyle through education, particularly on HIV and AIDS. Peer educators go into schools, community centres and other agencies to share their experiences of the "street culture", to discuss the dangers faced by youth on the street and to offer information and resources to encourage a safer lifestyle.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any youth in any community setting, high school or junior high, young offender homes, hostels or group homes. 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Positions for Peer Educators are advertised within the agency. ◆ Staff identify youth who they feel would do well as Peer Educators on the basis of skills, knowledge around HIV and AIDS, and experience in the "street lifestyle". ◆ Potential educators are interviewed by staff. ◆ Criteria: must be prepared to speak to other young peers about their lives; must have in place a counsellor or youth worker as a support; and must be drug and alcohol free while working on the project. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer Educators are pre-tested on knowledge around issues related to life on the street. ◆ Peer Educators receive training on interpersonal skills development, crisis intervention, team building, conflict resolution and AIDS prevention. ◆ Public speaking presentation on their lives, before, during and after they were on the street. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff go to "speaks" with peer educators to provide support. ◆ Staff and Peer Educators debrief after each speak. ◆ Peer Educators meet one-on-one with the coordinator on a weekly basis. ◆ Peer Educators meet weekly as a group to provide support and encouragement to one another. ◆ Counselling staff of YOUTHLINK Inner City are available to provide additional support. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer Educators do regular, informal evaluations of their speaks and the overall program. ◆ Peer Educators provide feedback questionnaire to young people hearing the presentations. ◆ The Coordinator reports project progress to the Manager of YOUTHLINK Inner City and the funder on a quarterly basis. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>St. Albert Family and Community Support Services 5 St. Anne Street St. Albert, AB T8N 3Z9</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Scott Rodda Tel: (403) 459-1507 Fax: (403) 458-5417</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: (S.P.T.T.) St. Albert Suicide Prevention Teen Team Type of Service: Education, support</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To raise awareness about suicide prevention through community-based presentations. ◆ To provide support to youth in difficulty. ◆ To act as a liaison between youth and the adults who can help them. 		
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>S.P.T.T. was started in 1989 by three youth whose friend had committed suicide. The main goal of the program is to raise awareness among young people about suicide - signs, facts, and how to respond. Eleven youth are currently on the team. They go into local schools and community agencies and facilitate interactive discussions with their peers.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth in grades 7 to 12. Every young person is considered potentially at risk. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth are recruited by word of mouth. ◆ Youth complete an extensive application, are interviewed and must provide references. ◆ Criteria: commitment and stability. Team members must develop a support network for themselves. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially, team members go through two days of intensive training on suicide prevention and intervention. ◆ Team members are required to attend monthly meetings and attend ongoing training sessions. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff act as guides and consultants. ◆ Staff are always present at presentations but team members do the entire presentation. ◆ Staff supervision/support varies depending on what team members need. ◆ Debriefing sessions are held after each presentation. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluations are ongoing. Team members discuss changes to be made during debriefings. ◆ Evaluations assess knowledge gains and provide feedback about team members. Results have been positive. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>St. Albert Family and Community Support Services 5 St. Anne Street St. Albert, AB T8N 3Z9</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Scott Rodda Tel: (403) 459-1507 Fax: (403) 458-5417</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: S.P.P.A.T. St. Albert Suicide Prevention Performing Arts Troupe Type of Service: Education, support</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To raise awareness about suicide prevention through dramatic arts and interactive discussion. ◆ To provide support to youth in difficulty. ◆ To act as a liaison between youth and adults who can help them. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>S.P.P.A.T. was developed in response to suggestions made by youth that suicide prevention messages might have a greater impact if they were accompanied by drama/music. The fifteen S.P.P.A.T. members wrote, directed and regularly perform a play on suicide. They go into schools and perform alongside the Suicide Prevention Teen Team that does an audio-visual interactive presentation on suicide.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth in grades 7 to 12. Every young person is considered potentially at risk. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth are recruited by word of mouth. ◆ Youth complete an extensive application and interview and must provide references. ◆ Criteria: commitment, stability (team members must have a support network) and acting ability. ◆ Drama group members tend to be marginal students. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Initially, team members go through two days of intensive training on suicide prevention and intervention. ◆ Team members must attend refresher training after 5 performances. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A staff person acts as a guide and consultant on the content of the play. ◆ A professional actor acts as a consultant regarding the performance of the play. ◆ Staff are always present at presentations but team members do the entire presentation. ◆ Debriefing sessions are held after each presentation. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Evaluations are ongoing. During debriefings, team members discuss changes to be made. ◆ Feedback has been positive. There is a waiting list of people interested in seeing the drama. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Indian and Métis Friendship Centre 168 Wall Street Saskatoon, SK S7K 1N4</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Darlene Longneck Tel: (306) 244-0174 Fax: (306) 664-2536</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Youth Summer Camp Type of Service: Positive role modelling</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide positive role models for native youth. ◆ To keep the lines of communication open between youth in the city and youth on reserves. ◆ To provide cultural education to urban youth. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Native Youth Summer Camp is planned and run by native youth. The activities during the week-long camp focus on the prevention of alcohol and substance abuse among native youth. Youth bring in resource people from the native community each day to talk about issues with the campers and to provide any needed counselling.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Aboriginal youth ages 12 to 16. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth workers are selected by staff. ◆ Criteria include: graduated(ing) from high school, high scholastic standards and act as a positive role model. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth receive an orientation to the program. ◆ Training in St. John Ambulance certification, CPR, etc. is also provided. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A staff person meets regularly with youth workers to plan the event and is directly involved at this level. ◆ The staff person acts as a guide helping youth decide on program content, supplies needed, resource people, etc. ◆ Supervision by staff at the camp is minimal. Youth are responsible for the program. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Feedback from participants has been positive and includes suggestions for activities, program changes, etc. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>The Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa-Carleton 412 Nepean Street Ottawa, ON K1R 5G7</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Jim Washer Tel: (613) 232-7316 Fax: (613) 230-0891</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Leadership Program Type of Service: Positive role modelling</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To provide training for recreational and social leadership. ◆ To provide the opportunity for youth to learn how to work as a team. ◆ To give youth the opportunity to make a contribution to their community. ◆ To provide training for later employment. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Leadership Program provides youth with the opportunity to gain organizational and leadership skills as well as training in other related areas. Peer leaders plan and run events for their peers including arts and crafts activities, coach teams and assist in fundraising over the course of the school year.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any young person. A high proportion are youth from economically challenged or single parent families. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer leaders are recruited by word of mouth. ◆ Staff sometimes invite specific youth to become involved. ◆ Criteria: willingness to work in a group and a commitment to goals established by the group. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ There is an initial start-up meeting. ◆ Meetings are held weekly. ◆ There are ongoing training opportunities. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A staff person is assigned to run the leadership program. ◆ This person meets with the peer leaders weekly and acts as a guide and facilitator. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Informal, ongoing feedback is given by peer leaders. They enjoy being part of the group and are committed to the program. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Joe Duquette High School 919 Broadway Avenue Saskatoon, SK S7N 1B8</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Kevin Pilon Tel: (306) 668-7490 Fax: (306) 668-7488</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: The Cultural Program Type of Service: Peer coaching</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To create an opportunity for students to get to know their native elders and vice versa. ◆ To provide students with the opportunity to learn skills and cultural teachings. ◆ To create a dance troupe. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Cultural Program was designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn beading, regalia making, drumming and dance along with cultural teachings from aboriginal Elders. Grade 11 students help the elders teach these skills and teachings to Grade 9 students in the school.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Grade 9 students enrolled in the Cultural Program. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff ask students who have been in the school for a few years and who have skills in one of the areas being taught. ◆ Criteria: youth who have experienced difficulties in various areas and are trying to change their lifestyle. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Students are trained to be teachers. ◆ They have gained the skills they need through learning them at school or at home. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Elders keep track of how peer teachers and other students are doing. ◆ Students will sometimes teach the class when Elders cannot be there. ◆ When students teach they are fully supported by the school principal(s) in matters related to discipline. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Because the program is new, there has been no evaluation. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Rainbow Youth Centre 2338 Dewdney Avenue Regina, SK S4R 1H5</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Keitha Kennedy Candice Liscowich Tel: (306) 757-9743 Fax: (306) 757-9759</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Peer Support and HIV/AIDS Awareness Type of Service: Referrals, counselling, information sharing, HIV education</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To train at least 40 youth for peer helping related to HIV/AIDS awareness and other community work. ◆ To plan community events to raise awareness among youth about HIV/AIDS. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>The Rainbow Youth Centre has recently adopted a new peer helping initiative to raise HIV/AIDS among young people in high schools and community centres. Peer helpers are chosen from local school peer helping programs and are required to commit to meet once a week for 16 weeks for training. Interested peer helpers will work with staff to plan community events. In addition, the Centre plans to have peer counsellors available on a regular basis for clients of the Centre.</p>		
<p>YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Any youth needing the service. 		
<p>PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Young people are invited to attend an information meeting on the new program. ◆ Peer helpers are selected from school peer helping programs and from those who attended the information meeting. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer helpers are required to meet once a week for 16 weeks of training. Helpers are retrained in peer helping skills and receive training in HIV/AIDS awareness, suicide intervention and leadership development. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A full-time staff person is available as a counsellor, trainer and resource person to the peer helpers. ◆ The staff person meets with peer helpers once a week to provide training and follow-up. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An evaluation component, based on a protocol developed by the Haemophilia Society of Canada, is built in to the overall program and includes a component on peer helpers evaluating themselves. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY:</p> <p>Entraide Jeunesse Québec 571, 3e Avenue Québec, PQ G1L 2W4</p>	<p>CONTACT:</p> <p>Susan Audet Tel: (418) 649-9706 Fax: (418) 649-7471</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY:</p> <p>Name: Offering help in their natural environment Type of Service: Referral, information sharing, support, etc.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To foster the growth and development as well as the physical, mental and social well-being of adolescents and young adults by offering them help and support through prevention activities. ◆ To work with other organizations who also help youth experiencing difficulties. ◆ To educate, inform and increase awareness in youth and those who work with youth on the importance of and the ways to promote mental health in youth. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Entraide Jeunesse Quebec is a community organization for youth ages 12 to 25. The philosophy of mutual aid at the centre is "youth helping youth". Staff and peer helpers offer youth at the centre and in high schools, awareness, help and support related to the different problems they face.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">YOUTH SERVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All youth considered at risk including street youth, school drop-outs and youth with alcohol/drug dependencies. 		
<p style="text-align: center;">PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:</p> <p><i>Selection:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Natural peer helpers may be identified by street workers, others are volunteers at the centre. Youth who are natural peer helpers are linked with the street workers. <p><i>Training:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth receive a basic training on the work of the centre and on available resources. An informal training is provided based on the needs of the peer helpers. ◆ High school teachers also receive an orientation on the program. <p><i>Supervision:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Volunteers are considered to be part of the centre. ◆ Peer helpers receive support from street workers. <p><i>Evaluation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An evaluation report is available from the organization. 		

CATEGORY 3: PREVENTION/EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

<p>AGENCY: La Maison Tangente Inc. 1481, rue Desjardins Montréal, PQ H1V 2G5</p>	<p>CONTACT: Roger Fréchette Tel: (514) 252-8771 Fax: (514) 252-9829</p>	<p>PEER RELATED ACTIVITY: Name: "Programme Santé" Type of Service: Referrals, peer education</p>
OBJECTIVES:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ To educate, sensitize and reintegrate youth back into mainstream society. ◆ To provide opportunities for street youth to return to school or gain employment. 		
DESCRIPTION:		
<p>La Maison Tangente Inc. is a safe house for street youth. The organization's mandate is to reintegrate youth into society. Programme Santé was designed to provide guidance and support to youth experiencing drug/alcohol dependencies and family related problems including violence. Peer helpers occasionally facilitate small group discussions with their peers which focus on these issues. Helpers provide support and information and assist their peers in developing problem solving skills.</p>		
YOUTH SERVED:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Street youth and school drop-outs 		
PEER HELPERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES:		
<p>Selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Youth volunteer to be peer helpers. ◆ Some helpers are selected by staff. ◆ Criteria: known by staff, demonstrate leadership potential. <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Peer educators receive an orientation about the agency and their role as peer helpers. ◆ Training is informal. Helpers are given instructions at the beginning of each activity. ◆ Ongoing training/coaching occurs as helpers learn the skill of leading discussion groups. <p>Supervision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff are always present to provide support and guidance during discussion groups. ◆ They provide additional assistance when necessary. <p>Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No formal evaluation has been done. ◆ Peers and staff informally evaluate the program. ◆ Clients feel that peer helpers have helped them discuss problems that they otherwise might not have addressed. 		

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