



**COMMUNITY  
SERVICES**

see what's possible...

# Maple Ridge / Pitt Meadows Youth Services Annual Program Report 2021-22

## About us

Our Youth Services provide an integrated network of outreach services that are tailored to meet the unique strengths, needs and circumstances of each youth (12 -18 years of age) and family referred.

These services are provided to youth residing in Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows and the Katzie First Nation. Services are funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), with whom we are co-located.

Although this report is organized to reflect the variety of services we offer, it is important to recognize that our staff delivers services in a fully integrated manner. For example, our Family Counsellor provides family mediation and reunification services through a mixed caseload that includes counselling, family support, parent-teen mediation. We have been providing these services since 2004.

The aim of the services we provide varies according to each youth's individual goals. However, common areas of focus include reconnecting with family, improving individual skills, accessing stable housing, finding employment, engaging in school, complying with court orders, and connecting with other community resources and supports.

## Who we served...

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases <sup>1</sup>	221	232	260	243	218	194
# of youth served	164	182	188	181	218	145
% young women	49	44	44	47	46	46
% young men	42	48	52	50	52	52
% self-identified as transgender	9	8	3	4	2	2
% self-identified as Indigenous	35	36	34	30	32	34
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	16	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	413 (N=114)	348 (N=115)	295 (N=140)	297 (N=132)	368 (N=112)	311 (N=97)
Average monthly caseload	117	132	133	123	117	102
Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened)	76 (N=104)	28 (N=108)	52 (N=149)	48 (N=139)	55 (N=121)	75 (N=96)

<sup>1</sup> # of cases is greater than the # of youth because some youth received multiple services or were re-referred.

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The number of youth we serve in the Ridge Meadows area has decreased and the number of days in program has increased significantly. This reflects the need to support youth longer and help them prepare for independent living. Caseload numbers were decreased allowing workers to spend more time with their participants. There were some staff on leave which left referrals on the waitlist for longer periods of time.

## How we did...service delivery

### Youth Development

**Youth Development Services** are provided on a one-to-one outreach basis. Our workers support youth with reconnecting to educational programs, being successful in school and graduating. They assist youth with accessing employment programs and securing jobs. Finally, they encourage youth to participate in social and recreational activities, creating opportunities for them to participate in events that provide positive and mutual peer support.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	68	77	70	62	73	73
# of youth served	68	77	70	60	73	72
% young women	40	35	46	55	49	42
% young men	51	56	50	37	47	53
% self-identified as transgender	9	9	4	8	4	4
% self-identified as Indigenous	38	38	40	30	31	33
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	15	15	15
Average # of cases per month	44	46	37	34	45	44
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	579 (N=19)	366 (N=32)	494 (N=25)	466 (N=31)	541 (N=36)	421 (N=29)
Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	77 (N=23)	26 (N=32)	102 (N=39)	36 (N=25)	62 (N=29)	91 (N=32)

As mentioned, the number of youth served decreased and the number of days in program increased significantly. This addressed staff caseload limits but resulted in a longer waitlist for referrals.

Our services also assist young people on **Youth Agreements** to meet their identified goals, which can include securing safe and stable housing, participating in educational programs and/or meaningful employment, managing their day-to-day responsibilities, and connecting to resources and supports.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	21	21	33	36	25	19
# of youth served	21	20	32	36	25	18
% young women	62	57	45	44	44	53
% young men	28	38	52	50	52	47
% self-identified as transgender	10	5	3	6	4	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	29	29	28	22	28	21
Average age when cases were opened	17	17	17	17	17	17
Average # of cases per month	11	14	18	17	14	9
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	589 (N=10)	426 (N=10)	322 (N=21)	284 (N=15)	404 (N=12)	470 (N=7)

Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	16 (N=10)	14 (N=9)	29 (N=12)	14 (N=23)	27 (N=13)	47 (N=9)
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Youth agreement participants numbers have remained consistent. However the number of days in program rose significantly as MCFD supports were extended to March 2022 in response to the pandemic and our services have responded accordingly.

## Youth Justice

Our **Intensive Support and Supervision Program** is a community-based one-to-one service for youth who are medium- to high-risk, and who have been sentenced to a court order. The program is an alternative to custody. Our workers provide intensive support and supervision, which complements the case management and supervision provided by the referring youth probation officer.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	10	15	18	21	13	9
# of youth served	9	15	18	21	13	8
% young women	10	13	6	5	15	33
% young men	90	87	94	95	85	67
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	20	27	28	19	15	33
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	17	17

The number of ISSP participants has decreased again as overall youth justice numbers trend downward.

**Community Work Service** (CWS) includes developing, in consultation with probation officers, reconciliatory placements for youth to complete their Community Work Service hours. A range of placements with not-for-profit organizations is maintained that provide meaningful experiences for the youth, enhance their sense of contribution to the community and engage the community in assisting them. We assess the suitability of placements for youth, and support and monitor the completion of the work.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	5	9	16	15	13	11
# of youth served	5	9	15	14	13	11
% young women	60	56	25	27	15	-
% young men	40	44	75	73	85	100
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	0	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	20	44	31	27	15	18
Average age when cases were opened	17	16	16	16	17	16
Average # of cases per month	1	3	5	5	4	4
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	123 (N=4)	138 (N=7)	130 (N=12)	140 (N=11)	148 (N=9)	108 (N=9)
Community Work Service hours completed	45	167	192	182	269	368

The number of CWS participants has decreased significantly as youth justice numbers overall continue to trend downward.

We also provide comprehensive **Curfew Monitoring** services. The primary goal is to minimize the use of youth custody by effectively monitoring youths' compliance with their court orders, and to ensure that they return to court

for their scheduled appearances. Curfew checks are conducted 7 days per week at varying hours (depending on the probation orders) by phone or in person.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	8	13	12	13	18	12
# of youth served	8	12	11	11	18	11
% young women	-	8	17	8	6	25
% young men	100	92	83	92	94	75
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	50	46	33	23	28	58
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	16	17
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	392 (N=5)	197 (N=7)	215 (N=8)	114 (N=10)	199 (N=12)	262 (N=5)

The number of Curfew Monitoring participants has decreased; however, the number of days in program increased significantly. Additionally, we continue to provide services for a few Tri-Cities referrals as requested by Youth Probation.

## School Program

**Connex** is an alternate school program provided through a partnership between School District #42, MCFD and PLEA. Our worker provides comprehensive support services to youth who are referred by their probation officers. The program includes academic curriculum, life skills, and recreational activities. Youth are able to access our support services after regular school hours and during the summer.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	-	2	6	4	4	6
# of youth served	-	2	6	4	4	5
% young women	-	-	17	-	-	17
% young men	-	100	83	100	100	83
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	-	50	50	50	100	17
Average age when cases were opened	-	15	15	15	16	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	-	433 (N=2)	384 (N=4)	82 (N=1)	91 (N=3)	282 (N=5)

The number of participants in the PLEA/Connex Program decreased to zero as youth justice numbers overall declined. Despite extending the services to all alternate school programs in SD42, there were no referrals from probation.

## North Fraser Youth Outreach Program

### NFO Ridge Meadows

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases	7	9	17	17	2
# of youth served	7	9	17	16	2

% young women	57	56	59	65	-
% young men	29	22	41	35	100
% self-identified as transgender	14	22	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	29	22	12	18	-
Average age when cases were opened	16	15	16	15	13
Average # of cases per month	4	5	7	8	0.58
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	521 (N=4)	294 (N=5)	221 (N=13)	151 (N=9)	0 (N=0)

Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	2 (N=3)	27 (N=5)	11 (N=9)	10 (N=15)	7.50 (N=2)
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The number of participants in the NFYO Program decreased slightly again but this led to youth participating in the program for longer periods of time and the waitlist is minimal.

### NFO Indigenous

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases <sup>2</sup>	7	5.5	5	5	1
# of youth served	6	5.5	5	5	1
% young women	50	36	40	50	-
% young men	50	64	60	50	100
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	100	100	100	100	100
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	16	17
Average # of cases per month	5	7	3	4	0.58
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	248 (N=3)	141 (N=7)	202 (N=5)	166 (N=6)	45 (N=45)
Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	21 (N=10)	17 (N=6)	16 (N=6)	8 (N=9)	0 (N=2)

All indicators of the NFO Indigenous Program remained consistent, except for the average days in program which increased.

## Counselling

We provide **Counselling** services to youth, families and caregivers in their own homes except where their needs require a more neutral venue. The goal is to reduce the multiple risk factors that contribute to antisocial behaviour, family breakdown and out-of-home placements. These services are designed to address family functioning and sessions are inclusive of youth and the family members who are willing to engage. We work collaboratively with other services to ensure that youth and their families can access the additional supports they require and that these are coordinated and timely. These services are intended to be short term, generally no more than 6 months.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	43	34	35	31	32	22
# of youth served	41	33	34	31	32	20

<sup>2</sup> The data for # of cases and # of youth served are split in half with TC and RM

% young women	65	59	54	68	66	73
% young men	26	32	43	29	31	27
% self-identified as transgender	9	9	3	3	3	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	26	15	20	16	25	27
Average age when cases were opened	17	16	17	17	16	16
Average # of cases per month	15	14	14	10	14	9
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	170 (N=33)	207 (N=20)	139 (N=23)	181 (N=23)	181 (N=21)	159 (N=17)

The PLEA counselling program numbers increased while the number of days in program decreased from the previous year.

## Safe Care Supports

**Onyx** provides voluntary support services to young people who are, or are at risk of being sexually exploited, with the objective of assisting them to leave sexually exploitive situations and relationships. We provide an immediate response to the youth who contact us and work with them to access the practical support and resources they need including: health services, a safe place to live, detox or treatment for substance misuse, and one-to-one support. Youth may access our services through self-referral, MCFD, the police or any other youth serving agencies. We have been providing these services since 2006.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	14	14	14	9	7	8
# of youth served	13	13	14	9	7	8
% young women	86	93	93	100	100	87
% young men	7	-	-	-	-	13
% self-identified as transgender	7	7	7	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	29	36	43	56	29	-
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	15	15	14
Average # of cases per month	8	8	9	5	5	4
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	600 (N=4)	488 (N=7)	134 (N=3)	471 (N=6)	129 (N=3)	488 (N=5)

Overall, most indicators for the Onyx Program has remained the same. The most significant change in the increased number of days in program which reflects the need for longer term support.

## Mentoring

**KidStart** is a one-to-one volunteer mentoring program for youth aged 13 – 18 facing challenges at home, at school, in the community or with transitioning to independence. It is funded by MCFD. We recruit, screen, and support adult volunteers to mentor these young people, all of whom are referred to us by a social worker or probation officer.

At its heart, KidStart is a prevention and diversion program. Its aim is to help youth who are at-risk make good choices under challenging circumstances. Our volunteer mentors developing supportive relationships with the young person they are assigned to, serve as a consistent and positive role model in their lives and provide them with opportunities to connect to the community, and experience success and achievement. We believe the best way for these important relationships to develop is for the participants and their mentors to spend time together regularly (about once a week for about 3 hours), and for this time to be spent simply having fun. KidStart relationships last at least one year, with many remaining active for much longer.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	26	20	25	22	21	26
# of youth served	23	20	23	21	21	25
% young women	50	55	52	45	67	58
% young men	31	25	36	50	33	38
% self-identified as transgender	19	20	12	5	-	4
% self-identified as Indigenous	27	45	40	45	48	38
Average age when cases were opened	15	14	14	14	14	14
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = number of discharged cases)	669 (N=11)	372 (N=9)	479 (N=13)	533 (N=9)	720 (N=8)	196 (N=11)
# of total volunteer hours	1039.50 (N=21)	459.75 (N=15)	740.75 (N=19)	748 (N=17)	995 (N=21)	850 (N=12)
Average # of days wait for a mentor (N = # of opened cases)	120 (N=15)	71 (N=8)	80 (N=12)	336 (N=9)	137 (N=6)	188 (N=12)
Average monthly active caseload	15	15	15	13	16	16
% of relationships lasting for more than 1 year	38	55	44	55	67	72

The number of participants in the KidStart Mentoring Program has increased. The average number of days in program has also increased as mentors recognized the need to support youth throughout the pandemic.

**Kinnections** provides volunteer mentors to young people who are transitioning to independence from MCFD guardianships, or are currently on a Youth Agreement. It is designed to provide ongoing support to these youth on a one-to-one basis to ease this difficult transition. This program is based on our very successful KidStart model and is funded by MCFD.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
# of cases	5	7	9	8	12	8
# of youth	5	7	9	8	12	7
% young women	20	29	44	50	50	50
% young men	80	71	56	50	50	50
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	20	14	22	25	17	-
Average age when cases were opened	19	18	19	18	19	19
# of total volunteer hours	110 (N=5)	136.25 (N=5)	266 (N=9)	216 (N=8)	336 (N=11)	269
Average # of days wait for a mentor (N = # of opened cases)	1 (N=1)	0 (N=0)	271 (N=2)	143 (N=1)	317 (N=6)	174 (N=4)
Average monthly active caseload	4	5	7	8	7	5
% of relationships lasting for more than 1 year	80	100	78	88	42	85

The number of participants in the Kinnections Program has decreased slightly.

## Community Capacity Development

**Community Capacity Development** includes initiatives that promote youth development interests among employers, landlords and other members of the community. We build and maintain relationships in the community to better serve the participants we work with. We foster a variety of relationships across the entire community including positive connections with schools, community agencies and resources, law enforcement, local businesses, municipal

officials, financial institutions, and event organizers. By attending various meetings, events, workshops, and gatherings; we stay connected to the community, respond to trends and shifts in demographics, and help promote the overall strengths-based work that PLEA provides across our service region.

## How we did...against last year's goals

- i. *Further develop a provincially approved life skills program which will prepare youth for transition to adulthood and independence. Build on existing resources for life skills curriculum, housing and financial stability.*

This remains a goal for the coming year as staffing shortages limited our ability to further this task. The Program Manager has already had positive preliminary discussions with MCFD representatives and the Manager of the Wayfinder Program. Life skills continue to be a strong focus of the RM Youth team and we are confident that this project will be successful.

- ii. *Reduce overall waitlists and "days in program" for all youth to provide more efficient services.*

We were not successful in reducing the waitlist and days in program numbers mainly due to the extended supports to youth until March 2022 by MCFD. Due to the pandemic, MCFD continued to support youth and our services adjusted accordingly. This resulted in a longer waitlist and more days in program for participants. With the extended care ending and staffing needs addressed, we expect this goal to be achieved in the coming year.

- iii. *Re-establish in person PLEA Ridge Meadows groups as gathering restrictions are lifted: Night Hoops, Gen Out, Trans Support and FLY Squad.*

The pandemic continued to be challenging for our groups mainly due to the restrictions on gatherings and meeting spaces. Night Hoops was put on hold as it was an in-person activity group. The other groups were able to continue meeting virtually but the online platform became tiresome for participants. The Gen Out group has now moved to the Foundry Ridge Meadows and has returned to in person meetings, allowing youth to become familiar with an important community resource. The FLY Squad has also returned to in person meetings, and they have participated in a variety of activities in the community; something the youth are extremely grateful for. Trans Support continues virtually as the logistics of meeting spaces and group sizes are still being monitored.

- iv. *Continue to increase the team's knowledge of Indigenous and cultural training through guest speakers, workshops, and courses.*

All RM staff have completed San'yas Core Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) Justice training as required by PLEA. Additionally, the Program Manager has completed additional cultural safety training through the local Community Action Team. The RM team also participated in local Indigenous events including Truth & Reconciliation Day and Orange Shirt Day held by the Katzie First Nation and other community resources.



## Other selected accomplishments...

- i. With approval from MCFD we were able to purchase and build 25 'care kits' for youth moving to independent living. These kits comprised of essential household items such as towels, bedding, and kitchenware, all stored within two sturdy suitcases. In addition to providing youth with basic start up items, the suitcases were an important inclusion since youth are often seen transporting items in garbage bags and small boxes. These care kits are being distributed and reserved for youth moving out on their own and aging out of care.
- ii. In previous years, PLEA RM has hosted a holiday dinner for youth at the Greg Moore Youth Centre. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we were unable to facilitate the same gathering; however, we created a Holiday Hand Out for Youth at the same location. We collaborated with the Maple Ridge Secondary School Culinary Program who prepared, cooked, and arranged the holiday food into take home containers. With financial support from the Federation of BC Youth in Care Network, we were able to have youth and their families come to the Youth Centre to pick up items and take them home for consumption. Over 40 individual dinners were handed out and the feedback was extremely positive, especially since most people were not expecting us to be able to host a food event due to the pandemic restrictions.
- iii. This years' Putting on the Glitz was again held with limited access, but we were still able to provide graduation attire to over 30 youth. Working in conjunction with the Thomas Haney Secondary School principal and the SD42 Superintendent, we were able to still hold a modified, and COVID-friendly version of the Putting on the Glitz grad program but without vendors such as photographers, makeup artists or hairdressers. The success of this event continues with the dedication and support of the Coordinator and community volunteers.
- iv. Fundraising/Donations - PLEA received several donations throughout the year that were put directly towards supporting youth. The Maple Ridge Community Foundation contributed another \$1692.03 for the Gen Out Youth Drop In Group and a private donor raised \$1750 through a hockey tournament and silent auction. The Holiday Hamper campaign also received a \$500 donation from a local realtor. RBC contributed \$5000 to the PLEA RM Program and is eager to partner on future projects such as Orange Shirt Day and Pride in the Park.
- v. The Trans Support Groups continued to see an increase in participants predominantly on the parent/caregiver side. The youth group facilitator has decided not to renew his contract so we will be looking to fill that position quickly. The virtual platform has been convenient for attendees to join; however, we expect that some people are looking forward to returning to in person meetings soon.
- vi. The Generation Out Drop In Group for LGTBQ2+ youth has established a working relationship with Bras, Binders, & Breast Forms (BBB) Program through QMunity in Vancouver. The BBB program provides trans and gender diverse youth in British Columbia access to free gender affirming garments and information on accessing other resources. A handful of Gen Out youth have already accessed binders from this program and we will continue to support those in need.

## Selected stories<sup>3</sup>...

The youth we work with experience both large and small successes. The following stories illustrate the kind of growth and development that can occur for youth with the support and guidance of our teams. Names and certain details have been changed to protect the privacy and confidentiality of our clients.

### i. **Milo's Story**

Milo has been with the RM Youth Development Program for three and half years and in that time, Milo has matured from a timid youth to a young person that is empowered to take on great challenges. Milo was referred to the YDW Program to try new activities in the community and to have someone support him through the process of being in care. He was very withdrawn when he first came into MCFD care, and he did not know how to have his needs met. Milo had a hard time trusting and believing his caregivers but is now able to do so after they have stuck with him through difficult times. Milo's self-esteem and confidence has improved, and he is able to express his thoughts and feelings honestly about any situation he is in through role playing exercises with YDW. Milo will be graduating from high school this year, he will be moving out on his own to Independent Living, and he is already very involved in numerous extracurricular activities through school and in the community. Milo is involved with badminton club, choir, ultimate frisbee and the volleyball team. He has played at Volleyball Provincial games, and he is set to play at the Volleyball Canada Nationals in Edmonton. YDW also assisted Milo with preparation for acquiring his driver's license; he has "aced" his Knowledge Exam and he has saved a portion of the money required to be able to start driving lessons this summer. Milo has adopted a healthy lifestyle by making the daily choice to exercise which has been encouraged and supported by YDW's efforts to secure funding to purchase an annual gym membership. Furthermore, it is anticipated that Milo will have graduated, ideally be attending post-secondary, be living independently, have reliable financial support, and be aware of other resources available to him. Milo is well on his way to achieving his transition discharge plan well ahead of his 19th birthday thanks in large part to the consistent efforts made by his YDW.

### ii. **Dena's Story**

Dena is a KidStart youth that was matched with her volunteer mentor about in the middle of 2021. She was previously involved in the Youth Development Worker Program but was discharged after a lack of proactive involvement. She was then assigned a KidStart Mentor in hopes to better support Dena who was struggling in school and having longer periods of not attending and not completing homework assignments. The mentor offered to assist Dena with homework assignments over a few months and eventually shared info about how she personally didn't graduate from high school and how that affected her life. The mentor shared what she learned from that experience and how she worked hard to eventually go back to school and graduate. The mentor and Dena had many discussions about her interests and what she likes about school and Dena stated she eventually wanted to write a graphic novel. The mentor helped Dena put that dream into action by suggesting that they write their own graphic novel together. This inspired Dena to visit libraries to expand their sources of information and they also have plan on visiting a museum exhibit to help with research for the novel. The mentee and mentor now spend half of their time together working on homework and the other half the time working on their graphic novel. Dena expressed to the mentor that she had been attending school more often and her grades were improving. Dena said she felt very inspired at the thought of writing the novel and has many great ideas on how to organize and brainstorm various ideas and storylines.

### iii. **Trae's Story**

Trae was referred to the Youth Development Program because of a strained relationship between her and her

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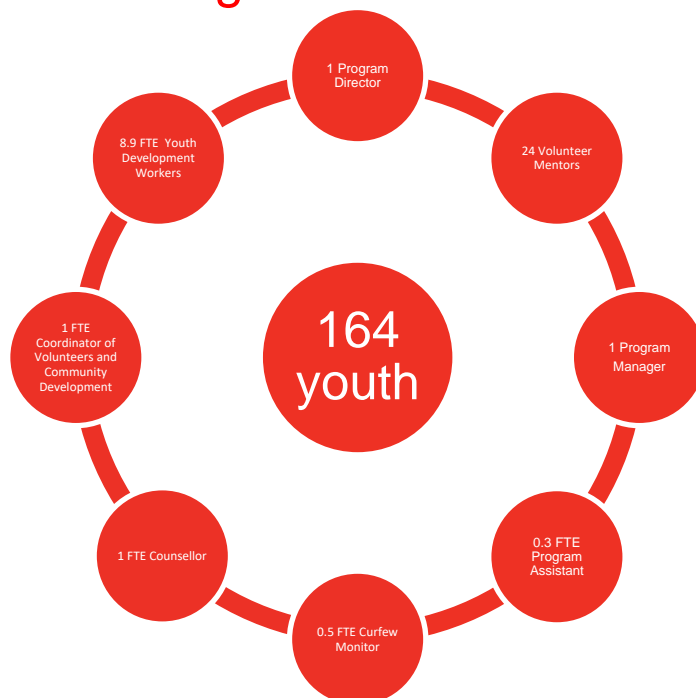
<sup>3</sup> Names have been changes to protect participant privacy and confidentiality

mother. Trae was kicked out of her mother's home and was left homeless and was in immediate need of housing, so she was put on a Youth Agreement by MCFD. Since there was a lack of affordable housing in Maple Ridge Trae expressed feeling defeated by this prospect, as many landlords did not want to rent to a young person. Trae worked extremely hard to represent herself well, secure viewings and meet with potential landlords, with some assistance from her YDW. After viewing many living spaces, Trae found a rental within the first month of searching and moved into her new home in mid-December 2021. Trae was very organized and spent time finding furnishings for her rental and made it feel like home. Trae had expressed that she was proud of herself for being able to find a place to live and be on her own at the age of 17. Trae showed determination and drive even when things were difficult by being committed to meeting with YDW multiple times per week and viewing rentals in the early mornings and late evenings. Trae now works part time at a yoga studio, attends high school and is flourishing in her new home. Trae has been able to acquire the skills needed to live independently and become a successful young woman as she continues to work with her YDW.

## Biggest challenges...

- i. Staffing challenges arose again this year as several team members took leaves of absences, one person moved to another program and two staff resigned to pursue other opportunities. While these positions were eventually filled, other staff worked hard to cover caseloads in the meantime.
- ii. Office space has become challenging as the RM team only has one communal room to complete computer work and meet with participants.
- iii. Caseload numbers, staffing challenges and demands for service pushed staff to capacity limits. The waitlist also grew as there were no caseload spaces available. Fortunately, with waitlist management and the return and hiring of staff, the environment has improved.

## Our team...staffing



## Our team...learning undertaken

PLEA employees have completed the following training/workshops throughout the past year:

- Indigenous Cultural Safety Training
- MCFD Privacy Training
- Mandt ® De-escalation Training.
- First Aid Level 1
- Occupational Health & Safety – Basics & Fundamentals
- LivingWorks Start - Suicide Prevention
- Difficult Conversations certificate
- Building Your Leadership Skills
- Naloxone Administration training
- Gangs & Guns Training Symposium
- Cyber Security
- Gender Pronoun Training

Two staff also utilized training/education funds for their Bachelor of Child & Youth Care degree programs at Douglas College and another staff used funds for pre-requisite courses for a Masters program. The Program Manager was also asked to speak to the University of Fraser Valley – Child & Youth Care Degree Program cohort about PLEA and the type of work we do.

## Our team...new relationships

PLEA Ridge Meadows has been fortunate to have renewed relationships with the Katzie First Nation and Fraser River Indigenous Society as partnerships were formed to facilitate events for Truth & Reconciliation Day and Orange Shirt Day. The events were tremendous, and the lasting relationships make for exciting opportunities to collaborate in the future.

The RM team continues to build connections across the community, participating in many committee meetings including the Teen Resource Committee, Youth Planning Table, Fraser River Indigenous Society, Community Network, Maple Ridge Aboriginal Services Providers, Opioid Overdose Working Group, Ridge Meadows Housing First Innovation Lab, Trans Health Pathways, City of Maple Ridge – Accessibility & Inclusiveness, Maple Ridge Functional Assertive Situation Table (FAST), and the Maple Ridge Literacy Committee. The responsibility for attending these meetings has been shared across the team, as youth workers are involved in committees and community plans that pertain to youth.

The Gen Out Drop In Group for LGBTQ2+ youth once again received grant money from the Maple Ridge Community Foundation and also received donations from RBC and a private donor. This money has been put towards food and activities for the youth. A presentation to RBC resulted in a commitment to collaborate on future events such as Pride in the Park and access to Financial Literacy seminars.

At this year's team meetings, we welcomed presentations by Maple Ridge Community Services – Cornerstone Youth Housing, Ministry of Social Development – Persons with Disabilities Funding, and FoundryWorks.

## Next year's goals...

- i. Further develop a provincially approved life skills program which will prepare youth for transition to adulthood and independence. Build on existing resources for life skills curriculum, housing and financial stability. Create a program manual to guide services and establish action items.
- ii. Increase referrals for the Connex Alternate School Program, working closely with SD42 and Youth Probation.
- iii. For PLEA Ridge Meadows groups to return to in person meetings in a safe and appropriate manner: Night Hoops, Gen Out, Trans Support, Gardening, Photography and FLY Squad.
- iv. Explore new office space opportunities that would allow for activity space and sharing with programs such as UTurn/ULink and Lighthouse.
- v. Enhance cultural connections with the Katzie First Nation, Fraser River Indigenous Society (FRIS) and work in conjunction with PLEA's Cultural Connections Worker to build relationships and partner on community events.
- vi. Plea Counselling is endeavoring in an exciting new assessment and treatment modality, utilizing qEEG brain scanning and Neurofeedback. The Quantitative Electroencephalography (qEEG) measures the electrical patterns at the surface of the head which reports back to the clinician what the electrical brainwave activity is. A qEEG report is sometimes also called "Brain Mapping" and a client's scan is processed and then compared to a normative database of children/adults who are considered "neurotypical". Using the Brain Map, the clinician can then develop a treatment protocol for the client, and this is where Neurofeedback comes in. Included in a treatment plan, Neurofeedback can target specific regions of the cortex (outer layer of the brain) to either decrease overactive brainwaves or increase more sluggish brainwaves. At the same time, the client is also learning how to see, in real time on the computer screen, how their body is responding to relaxation techniques. It is a hope for the counselling team to continue training in this treatment modality and perhaps also acquire the certification of BCIA (Biofeedback Certification International Alliance).

## For more information...

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