



COMMUNITY SERVICES

see what's possible...

Tri-Cities 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 (12-19 years of age) and family referred.

These services are provided to youth and their families residing in the Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody), Anmore and Belcarra. We have been providing these services, funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) since 2004.

Although this report is organized to reflect the variety of services we offer, it is important to recognize that our staff team delivers services in a fully integrated manner.

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

Who we served...

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases ¹	372	466	441	445	366	364	343
# of youth served	320	384	325	331	270	278	269
% young women	51	46	47	48	47	54	52
% young men	43	51	49	49	48	44	46
% self-identified as transgender	6	4	4	3	5	5	2
% self-identified as Indigenous	24	26	17	19	20	19	19
Average age when cases were opened	15	16	15	15	15	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	338 (N= 210)	237 (N=246)	234 (N=262)	206 (N=195)	233 (N=205)	228 (N=241)	209 (N=209)
Average monthly caseload	158	247	183	160	153	147	142
Average # of days on the waitlist by	43	50	24	48	38	48	31

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

www.plea.ca

opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	(N= 183)	(N=228)	(N=274)	(N=231)	(N=244)	(N=230)	(N=228)
--------------------------------------	----------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------	---------

The number of youth we served was less this year than last, but we continued to have several youth participate in multiple programs at once. It is not uncommon for our participants to receive support from our youth workers and counsellors as well as, where applicable, additional supports offered through our residential and school programs. One bonus of having had decreased referral numbers, is it enabled us to accommodate a longer service period for many of our participants. The average time spent in our programming was up from 8 to 11 months this past year.

The youth we serve continue to have a variety of needs at intake, including issues relating to youth justice involvement, mental health issues (i.e., anxiety, depression and/or suicidal ideation) and diagnoses such as FASD and ADHD. Youth may also access our programs with a history of trauma, learning difficulties and family dysfunction. Many youth do not have stable home environments and may be 'in care' and/or on Youth Agreements. Most youth are struggling with school and some don't attend at all. They usually have few, if any, job skills and have difficulty finding or maintaining employment. Historically, youth 'in care' have also faced the challenge of aging out in a system that offers them limited resources once they have turned 19. Fortunately, the government recently approved MCFD's proposal to improve supports for youth transitioning out of government care. The Ministry has now begun to implement new programs and services, with legislative changes to be introduced in 2024.

Wait times for our programs remained consistent with previous years and this is due in part to the longer service duration times. Certain files, such as Youth Agreement and Youth Justice files, continue to be prioritized regardless of intake date and this in accordance with MCFD directives.

How we did...service delivery

Youth Development

Our **Youth Development Services** are provided one-to-one on an outreach basis in the community. Our workers support youth to reconnect to educational programs, to be successful in school, and to graduate. They assist youth to access employment programs and/or secure jobs. They encourage youth to participate in social and recreational activities in the community and create opportunities for youth to participate in events that provide positive and mutual peer support, and that address their issues of concern.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	95	113	119	127	128	111	101
# of youth served	94	109	113	125	128	110	96
% young women	45	52	57	48	44	49	45
% young men	42	42	38	49	50	45	50
% self-identified as transgender	13	6	5	3	6	5	2
% self-identified as Indigenous	24	19	11	17	25	20	20
Average age when cases were opened	15	16	15	15	14	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	311 (N=60)	184 (N=71)	189 (N=79)	197 (N=82)	232 (N=74)	168 (N=76)	168 (N=66)
Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	33 (N=53)	33 (N=72)	21 (N=74)	37 (N=85)	54 (N=93)	51 (N=76)	37 (N=77)

Youth Agreements

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

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	12	11	13	18	7	9	14
# of youth served	12	11	13	18	13	9	14
% young women	67	82	77	61	54	67	86
% young men	25	18	15	28	31	33	14
% self-identified as transgender	8	0	8	11	15	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	42	36	46	22	23	44	50
Average age when cases were opened	17	17	17	17	17	18	18
Average # of days in the program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	522 (N=6)	235 (N=5)	344 (N=8)	261 (N=11)	195 (N=5)	126 (N=7)	286 (N=12)
Average # of cases per month	7	5	7	10	1	2	6

North Fraser Youth Outreach Services

The North Fraser Youth Outreach Program (NFYO) was implemented in 2017 and is intended to meet the needs of high-risk youth across the entire North Fraser Service Delivery area. It is a collaborative effort between PLEA, Purpose Society and St. Leonard's to provide a coordinated response in reaching out to these youth in their communities. One innovative component with this Program is the increased flexibility for agency staff to work together and share resources across geographic areas. Youth Workers can travel across the North Fraser Region and into other Metro Vancouver communities to connect with youth on their caseloads and/or to attend relevant case management meetings in order to provide comprehensive and uninterrupted services to youth.

NFO Tri-Cities

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases	6	8	10	16	15
# of youth served	6	8	10	15	15
% young women	33	38	40	44	53
% young men	67	63	60	44	33
% self-identified as transgender	0	0	0	13	13
% self-identified as Indigenous	0	0	0	13	13
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	15	15	14
Average # of cases per month	5	5	4	7	3
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	388 (N=3)	285 (N=4)	298 (N=5)	174 (N=12)	56 (N=3)
Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases (N = # of opened cases)	26 (N=2)	18 (N=3)	5 (N=6)	5 (N=4)	9 (N=15)

NFO Aboriginal

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases	7	5.5	5	5	1
# of youth served	7	5.5	5	5	1
% young women	50	36	40	50	-
% young men	50	64	60	50	100
% self-identified as transgender	0	0	0	0	0

% 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=13)	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)

*numbers are based on combined data from TC and RM - the number for "# of cases and # of youth served" is split in half with Ridge Meadows

Youth Justice

Our **Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP)** is a community-based one-to-one service for youth who are medium to high risk and 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 probation officer. In some cases Extrajudicial Sanctions (EJS) are recommended for youth instead of the Intensive Support and Supervision Program. The EJS Program is a means to divert young persons charged, away from formal criminal proceedings and into a program of rehabilitation. The EJS Program is a community based intervention intended to reduce and/or eliminate the associated labelling of young people involved with the legal system. It is also a means through which these youth are given an opportunity to make appropriate amends for their illegal conduct. Probation Officers can refer these youth to our Voluntary ISSP Program.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	16	11	23	21	22	16	12
# of youth served	16	10	20	20	22	15	12
% young women	47	18	17	14	18	33	42
% young men	53	82	83	76	68	60	58
% self-identified as transgender	0	0	0	10	14	7	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	13	55	30	19	36	33	50
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	15	16	16	16	17
Average # of days in the program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	402 (N=9)	199 (N=5)	287 (N=15)	296 (N=9)	183 (N=14)	77 (N=6)	236 (N=11)

The number of ISSP referrals has held steady the past couple years. As a rule, police are not laying charges as often and Crown is considering alternative measures (such as extrajudicial sanctions) more often. Furthermore, legislative changes have resulted in a move towards implementing the least restrictive sentence and conditions necessary to hold the youth accountable. Another contributing factor is presenting youth who have addictions and or mental health as the primary issue (as opposed to serious criminal offending). It is clearly indicated in the Youth Criminal Justice Act that youth shouldn't be criminalized for social issues, so in these cases Probation Officers will access resources other than ISSP.

Our **Community Work Service Program** 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 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 their service hours. Community Work Service Referrals continued to see a slight decrease this past year but that is understandable considering the trends in Youth Justice noted above.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	17	22	30	26	15	32	28
# of youth served	14	21	28	22	15	29	27
% young women	27	18	13	8	7	34	21

% young men	73	82	87	88	73	62	79
% self-identified as transgender	0	0	0	4	20	3	0
% self-identified as Indigenous	7	9	7	12	13	24	11
Average age when cases were opened	17	16	16	16	16	16	17
Average # of days in the program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	84 (N=12)	127 (N=20)	110 (N=22)	104 (N=20)	95 (N=9)	130 (N=28)	152 (N=20)
Average # of cases per month	5	7	8	8	3	11	9
Community Work Service hours completed	184	228.25	336.25	325.5	100.5	558	585

School Program

GOAL (Goal Orientated Alternative Learning) is an alternate school program provided through a partnership between School District #43, MCFD and PLEA. Our staff members work alongside School District #43 staff to provide support services to youth who are referred to the program by various stakeholders. The program includes academic curriculum, life skills, recreational activities and work experience through our Yardworks Program.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	33	40	48	53	33	23	25
# of youth served	32	40	47	52	33	23	25
% young women	33	28	33	43	30	26	36
% young men	64	70	63	57	70	74	64
% self-identified as transgender	3	3	4	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	27	15	23	23	42	35	40
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	15	15	16
Average # of days in the program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	484 (N=12)	471 (N=22)	295 (N=23)	317 (N=29)	587 (N=12)	559 (N=7)	447 (N=8)
# of cases with probation officers attached	4/33	11/40	6/48	8/53	4/33	11/23	9/25

Our GOAL Youth Workers provide comprehensive support services to the youth by engaging them individually and in groups, where appropriate, to accomplish their goals. They help students in securing detox programs and safe houses, support students in attending their professional appointments (i.e. with probation officers, social workers, counsellors, doctors, dentists and to AA meetings), and offer support when youth struggle with a variety of issues. GOAL Youth Workers also support the students in doing volunteer hours and/or completing court-ordered community work service hours. They support youth in participating at the annual Enchantment Project, the bi-annual Clothing Drive, and they frequently take youth to the SHARE Food Bank. During the pandemic our GOAL Youth Workers worked hard to ensure students maintained a sense of connection to the school despite having to do their school work from home. Our workers dropped off homework packages and snacks, went for walks with them in their neighborhoods and were available to support them through phone calls and via Zoom.

GOALS's **Yardworks** initiative allows students to participate in a venture that provides them with valuable work experience and skills required to enter the workforce. Under the close supervision of our workers, the students provide customers with a variety of services, including junk removal, lawn care and garden maintenance. Students are paid an hourly wage and additional earned revenue is utilized to purchase and maintain equipment.

A large percentage of our GOAL youth struggle with extensive mental health and or capacity issues. This has frequently rendered them unable to take part in the Yardworks Program and is the predominant reason for the consistently low levels of participation.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of youth served	2	0	6	7	10	8	24
# of Yardwork hours completed by students	15	0	25	29.25	99.75	147.25	128

* Data not recorded prior to 2013/14.

Counselling

Our Tri Cities Clinical Counselling services have been the bedrock and inspiration for the larger Clinical Counselling service as it exists now. Counselling services have worked closely along-side MCFD and CYMH for over sixteen years providing progressive, adaptive services to the community. We have focused on therapies for those participants who have the largest barriers to accessing services and we accept all challenges that come our way. We have devoted the bulk of our focus on family systems therapies that scaffold the attachment bonds of the family system. Family systems and attachment principles underpin all family preservation therapies that we offer. We believe that when possible, a systems and attachment approach, regardless of living situation can serve to best support our youth and parents so that they might have sustainable and long-lasting positive outcomes. PLEA Clinical Counselling endeavours to create stable and healthy attachment bonds that strengthen the cohesion and resiliency of family systems in our communities. We are committed to making lasting relational changes that families can take with them throughout the life span.

Youth Counselling Services

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	30	55	55	45	44	61	58
# of youth	30	54	52	42	44	60	58
% young women	62	38	40	47	50	53	47
% young men	34	58	60	53	50	47	53
% self-identified as transgender	4	4	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	17	16	16	11	9	7	2
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	17	16	15	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	277 (N=23)	168 (N=43)	272 (N=24)	159 (N=28)	198 (N=30)	179 (N=44)	173 N=36

Parent Support Counselling Services

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	6	15	17	16	12	12	24
# of youth / families	6	14	17	14	12	12	24
% young women	33	40	47	44	25	50	58
% young men	50	47	47	38	58	50	37
% self-identified as transgender	17	13	6	19	17	5	5
% self-identified as Indigenous	17	7	-	-	8	17	17
Average age when cases were opened	14	14	15	17	14	16	17
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	468 (N=5)	262 (N=11)	282 (N=9)	206 (N=9)	134 (N=7)	146 (N=11)	133 (N=19)

discharged cases)							
-------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Parent-Teen Mediation Services

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	10	10	17	36	37	37	21
# of youth / families	10	10	17	35	37	36	21
% young women	70	70	47	56	49	56	52
% young men	20	30	53	44	51	42	48
% self-identified as transgender	10	-	-	-	-	3	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	50	40	29	22	22	17	19
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	15	15	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	211 (N=7)	360 (N=4)	288 (N=14)	139 (N=23)	120 (N=23)	148 (N=27)	223 (N=13)

Family Counselling Services

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases	61	64	58	39	10
# of youth	59	62	54	39	10
% young women	54	56	50	38	20
% young men	41	41	41	56	60
% self-identified as transgender	5	3	9	5	20
% self-identified as Indigenous	11	9	10	10	10
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = # of discharged cases)	275 (N=40)	229 (N=38)	161 (N=31)	115 (N=26)	NA

Solution-Focused Counselling Services

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
# of cases	2	1	5	2
# of youth	1	1	5	2
% young women	100	100	40	-
% young men	-	-	60	100
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	-	100	-	-
Average age when cases were opened	15	17	15	14

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 youth in leaving 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 March 2006.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	9	7	5	12	14	21	16
# of youth	9	7	5	12	14	20	16
% young women	100	86	80	100	100	100	100
% young men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as transgender	-	14	20	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	-	14	20	25	21	10	25
Average age when cases were opened	15	15	15	16	15	15	16
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = number of discharged cases)	276 (N=5)	248 (N=2)	387 (N=2)	493 (N=10)	480 (N=8)	562 (N=11)	167 (N=10)

Kidstart Mentoring Program and Kidstart Community

KidStart is an MCFD funded volunteer mentoring program for youth aged 13 – 18 facing challenges at home, school, in the community and or with transitioning to independence. 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.

Three years ago we saw the exciting reinstatement of our KidStart 6-12 Program (Kidstart Community). Services for kids aged 6-12 have long been lacking in the Tri Cities and bringing this program back to fruition has helped to fill an important gap in service.

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 develop supportive relationships with the young person they are assigned to, serve as consistent and positive role models 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 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.

KidStart Mentoring (ages 13-18)

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
# of cases	22	19	27	30	36	42	44
# of youth	20	19	27	28	36	42	42
% young women	73	68	78	70	69	74	77
% young men	27	26	19	30	31	26	23
% self-identified as transgender	-	5	4	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	27	26	22	20	17	10	12
Average age when cases were opened	14	14	14	14	14	14	15
Average # of days in program by discharged case (N = of discharged cases)	762 (N=13)	365 (N=6)	533 (N=13)	462 (N=13)	529 (N=18)	563 (N=24)	401 (N=18)
Total # of volunteer hours	399	999.5	822	931	1200	1067.25	1469
Average # of days wait for a mentor (N = number of opened cases)	214 (N=9)	267 (N=5)	38 (N=10)	55 (N=12)	79 (N=18)	214 (N=16)	90 (N=22)
Average monthly caseload	11	15	16	19	21	23	26
% of relationships lasting for more than 1 year	59	68	56	50	55	60	44

KidStart Community (ages 6-12)

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20
# of cases	13	8	8
# of youth	13	8	6
% young women	77	75	75
% young men	23	25	25
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	24	25	13
Average age when cases were opened	10	11	11
Average # of days in program by discharged case (N = of discharged cases)	468 (N=6)	274 (N=2)	96 (N=4)
Total # of volunteer hours	266.50	176.25	127
Average # of days wait for a mentor (N = number of opened cases)	231 (N=7)	273 (N=4)	132 (N=8)
Average monthly caseload	7	6	3
% of relationships lasting for more than 1 year	38	25	0

Community Capacity Development

Community Capacity Development includes initiatives that promote youth development interests among employers, other youth serving agencies and members of the community at large. We build and maintain relationships in the community to better serve the participants with whom we work. We foster relationships across the 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. Add new learning topics to our Lifeskills 101 Program and continue to deliver this programming to Youth.

With the support of our Case Management Assistant (who came to us from our PLEA Addictions programs), we were able to add two new Drug Awareness modules to our collection, as well as assemble a wealth of other resources for youth. We had scheduled delivery of our Lifeskills 101 Programming for October 2021, but continued Covid restrictions prohibited us from in person sessions and the designated youth were highly resistant to virtual participation. The plan is for the team to provide the next round of Lifeskills 101 in the summer of 2022

II. Ascertain learning needs for Tri Cities Service Providers and organize and present applicable Professional Development Workshop for PLEA staff and other service providers

In collaboration with SD43 Coordinator of Counselling, we were able to organize a virtual Community Panel for SD43 Administrators in October 2021. Representatives from PLEA, MCFD, SHARE and Child and Youth Mental Health all presented on their various programs inclusive of mandates, eligibility criteria and referral process. A comprehensive Q & A period rounded out the session and clarified any lingering confusion around various program logistics. An in-person Resource Fair for Community Agencies is also planned for early May 2022.

III. *Connect more Indigenous Youth to existing cultural resources, events, and programs as well as to Cultural Advisors in the community.*

Our Team participated in several Indigenous cultural events and activities this past fiscal year:

- Tri cities and Maple Ridge Coordinators jointly facilitated a session whereby an Indigenous Elder shared his residential school lived experience with the Kidstart Mentors
- We held a drum making session with a local Indigenous Artist for 3 of our Indigenous Youth.
- Tri Cities Program Director and Manager met with Councillor Peters from the Kwikwetlem Territory and were able to take him on a tour of our new building. Councillor Peters toured the new building and discussed ideas around holding an Opening Ceremony at some point as well as possibly consulting with us on an ongoing basis regarding culturally sensitive service delivery
- One worker assisted in set up for the Sept 30th National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Event that was held on the Katzie Nation. Two other workers attended this event with their Indigenous Youth
- Indigenous Artist Rosalie Dipcsu Williams was commissioned to do a large mural in the new Tri Cities Warehouse. This massive endeavor, planned in consultation with Chief Ed Hall and members of the Kwikwetlem Council, has an anticipated completion date of April 2022
- Several Workers took an online University of Alberta Indigenous training as well as the Core Indigenous Cultural Safety training
- One worker organized a cultural art activity run by an Indigenous Artist. This activity focused on personal empowerment and was attended by five indigenous youth.
- Three youth were supported by workers to participate in smudge ceremonies

IV. Initiate and reinvigorate community partnerships so that comprehensive programming can be delivered in Tri Cities

Many community connections were initiated and nurtured this past year:

- Our TC Coordinator continues to attend Childhood Matters Committee Meetings
- Our Program Manager connected virtually with City of Port Coquitlam Youth Coordinator regarding partnership ideas and is meeting with him in person in early May 2022
- In Sept 2021 our TC Coordinator connected with a Douglas College Academic Advisor about her potential participation in a life skills workshop to teach youth about post-secondary applications and deadlines. The Academic Advisor was incredibly receptive to this and when the October sessions were ultimately cancelled, she encouraged us to reach back out at a future date. When our Lifeskills 101 dates for Summer 2022 have been confirmed, we will once again initiate contact with her
- In Sept 2021 TC Coordinator connected with “The People’s Food Pantry” in Port Coquitlam. This Port Coquitlam based organization now offers Community Work Service Placement opportunities for our youth with court mandated hours to complete.

- In Sept 2021 TC Coordinator connected with “Backpack Buddies”. The Backpack Buddies Program is coordinated through teachers, administrators and social workers who advise the Program on the needs of their students and help identify the children who could benefit most from receiving a bag of food for the weekend. This Program is also willing to provide Community Work Service Placement options to our youth
- TC Program Manager met twice with Tri Cities Transitions to brainstorm programming ideas. The plan was for the PLEA Youth Worker Team to receive a training on Intimate Partner Violence and then for the youth to receive a similar one, but the Transitions staff had moved on from the agency before the 2nd training could happen
- In Feb 2022 TC Program Manager and Clinical Counselling Manger joined the SD43 Mental Health Task Force. This task force is comprised of various TC stakeholders who will work collaboratively with SD43 as partners, to advocate for enhanced mental health supports and access to services for students.

Other selected accomplishments...

- The most exciting accomplishment from this past year was moving into our very own Tri Cities building! Three adjacent units in a Port Coquitlam business complex were secured with renovations and move-in completed by June 2021. This space is utilized by the Tri Cities Youth Team, the Counselling Program, Children of the Street and part of the U Turn Program. Due to its expansive layout and centralized location, the Tri Cities building has also become a coveted meeting spot for other PLEA Programs and Committees!
- Our TC Coordinator, often in conjunction with the Maple Ridge Coordinator, organized several well attended events throughout the year: Halloween and Holiday parties; succulent plant making; bingo night; cook nights; a summer afternoon in the park and Movie Day at the Pitt Meadow Cinemas
- We reinstated our Monday night Gen Out LGBT Group. Co facilitated by two of our Youth Workers, this group has enjoyed bowling, cooking, movie nights, craft and games nights, a Bob Ross paint night and a couple of neighbourhood walks. We also continued facilitating our Transsupport groups for Caregivers and Youth on a virtual platform this past year, but the plan is to soon move back towards an in-person or hybrid delivery system.
- One of our Gen Out facilitators created and now maintains a Tri Cities Gen Out Instagram Account. This account is consistently updated with relevant information for LGBT youth as well as opportunities and resources for them in the community.

Selected stories²...

At the time of her referral to our Youth Development Program, Melanie was misusing substances, putting herself in dangerous situations, struggling to attend school and not open to looking for employment. Initially, Melanie was reluctant to engage in the Program and frequently cancelled or did not show up for scheduled meetings with her Youth Worker. Over the course of the past year, however, Melanie has not only managed to graduate high school, she has also held down a part time job for several months. Melanie has lessened her substance use and is more mindful about keeping herself safe.

Olivia came to Canada as a refugee and was referred to our Youth Agreement Program for support to live independently. Her Youth Worker assisted her in securing housing and acquiring the life skills necessary to successful independence. When Olivia expressed interest in attending University, her Youth Worker supported her

² ² Names have been changed to protect client privacy and confidentiality.

throughout the entire application process and helped prepare her for the move out of province once she was accepted into her chosen University.

Biggest challenges...

One of our biggest challenges remains the highly complex needs of our participants. Youth and families are frequently referred to our programs with a multitude of presenting issues such as substance misuse, mental health and domestic violence. While service providers in Tri Cities have made great strides towards more integrated service delivery, mostly due to the implementation of a referral screening committee, there is still room for improvement. Another major challenge and concern is the ongoing opioid crisis. This is exacerbated by the apparent inclination of some youth to knowingly use the drugs most frequently tainted with fentanyl/carfentanyl.

Our team...staffing³



Our team...learning undertaken

Extensive training was undertaken by staff members this past year:

- All Tri Cities Youth Workers complete the Renting it Right certificate, immediately upon starting in Tri Cities
- All workers participated in an Intimate Partner Violence workshop
- One worker took the Youth Probation course at the Justice Institute
- One worker completed the Counselling and Psychotherapy course at Douglas College

³ # of human beings as opposed to FTEs as per March 31st, 2020

- Our TC Coordinator completed a one-day training “Family Mediation and Multiculturalism” at Justice Institute of BC
- Several workers attended the Youth Justice Webinar on Gang Violence
- Several workers completed online courses on Suicide, Violent Behavior and Substance Abuse
- Several Workers took an online University of Alberta Indigenous training
- 5 workers completed the Core Indigenous Cultural Safety training
- All workers completed the Living Works Training (suicide intervention), Mantd recertification and First Aid
- 3 Workers completed an Online training initiative to address human trafficking
- 2 workers completed the online courses Positive Youth Development 101 and Access to Lethal Means
- All Workers completed Gender Pronoun Training
- All Workers completed in-person Harm Reduction & Substance Use Training
- 2 Workers completed the Qmmunity – LGBTQ+ Forum Training

Our team...relationships, committees and community engagement

Tri-Cities staff participate in several PLEA Committees including: Culture, Diversity and Accessibility; Joint Health and Safety; Indigenous Culture Matters, and Risk Management. Staff also participate in the following community committees: the Enchantment Committee, Tri-Cities Best Practice Committee, Tri-Cities Planning Committee and the Indigenous Network Committee. In addition, our Coordinator of Volunteers and Community Development is a member of the Middle Childhood Matters Committee

Our involvement on community committees assists in maintaining an active and positive presence at tables where youth issues are discussed. PLEA is seen as a knowledgeable contributor and has built valuable community relationships with partnering community agencies including SHARE Family and Community Services, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., Act II Child and Family Services, Port Coquitlam Parks and Recreation, Tri-Cities East Neighbourhood Centre, West Coast Family Resources Society, School District #43, Tri-City Transitions Society, Tri-Cities Child and Youth Mental Health and Access Alliance. In addition to that, PLEA is a member of the Tri Cities Co-operative.

Next year's goals...

- I. Continue to initiate and reinvigorate community partnerships so that comprehensive programming can be delivered in Tri Cities
- II. Connect Indigenous Youth to existing cultural resources, events and programs and continue to build staff cultural competence through trainings and enhanced relationships with Indigenous agencies and our own PLEA Knowledge Keeper
- III. Adapt service planning and delivery to complement changing transitional planning initiatives recently put forth by MCFD and continue to strengthen transitional planning with youth
- IV. Identify gaps in service and secure sufficient funding for program growth and expansion opportunities
- V. Expand service delivery components through additional group programming initiatives, inclusive of but not limited to Lifeskills 101

- 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...

Contact Jodi Mason, Program Manager at 604-306-2738 or email jmason@plea.bc.ca