



COMMUNITY
SERVICES

see what's possible...

Vancouver Coastal Youth Justice Annual Program Report 2021-22

About us

Our Youth Justice Services are primarily community-based alternatives to custody for youth aged 13-19 who are sentenced. These services are complemented by the KidStart Mentoring Program, for youth diverted from court. These integrative programs provide each youth with an individualized service plan that is tailored to their strengths, needs, goals and circumstances.

Youth Justice Services are available in Vancouver, Richmond and on the North Shore. In addition to these communities, the Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP) is available on the Sunshine Coast and within the Sea to Sky communities. Our Q (Urban Employment) Program is also available to the Sea to Sky communities, Burnaby and New Westminster.

Our services are consistent with the requirements of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and support youth justice program principles including safety, rehabilitation and minimizing the use of custody. Our aim is to help youth develop the attitudes, skills, and relationships they need for a future that does not include involvement in the court system.

Our youth justice services are funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and we accept referrals from Probation Officers.

Who we served

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ¹	290	414	413	417	411
# of youth	212	219	308	294	315
% young women	31	34	23	32	31
% young men	67	65	76	67	69
% self-identified as transgender	2	1	1	1	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	37	35	47	35	34
Average age when cases were opened	16	15	16	16	16

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

How we did...service delivery

Turnaround...

... is a community-based, all-inclusive program (90 days in duration) that operates in a family care home setting.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ²	1	2	5	3	5
# of youth	1	2	5	3	5
% young women	100	100	40	33	20
% young men	-	0	60	67	80
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	100	50	60	33	40
Average age when cases were opened	15	16	16	15	17
Average # of days in program by discharged case (N= number of discharged cases)	108 (N=1)	47 (N=1)	57 (N=5)	154 (N=1)	52 (N=5)
% bed utilization	12%	10	26	33	42

One youth participated in the Turnaround Program, we have found that most referrals are for the shorter-term Bail and Respite Program. One youth was able to successfully stabilize in the program and was able to return to their family home.

Bail & Respite...

Our Bail & Respite services provide short-stay residential placements in a family care home setting for youth on a conditional court order, including a Bail Order or Sentencing Order. These 30-day beds are for youth who need a safe place to live while planning takes place to identify other appropriate residential placements.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ³	9	2	10	13	14
# of youth	9	2	10	11	12
% young women	33	50	30	8	42
% young men	67	50	70	92	58
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	56	100	50	62	75
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	17
Average # of days in program by discharged case (N= number of discharged cases)	44	21 (N=2)	35 (N=10)	29 (N=12)	42 (N=9)
% bed utilization	49%	6	26	28	40

We saw an increase in demand for the Bail and Respite Program this year, having 9 youth reside in the family caregiver home. Some youth were able to transition to independence from the home and some were able to return to their family home. These short term stays were helpful in providing a safe home for a plan to be established and for some families to have some time to work out conflict.

² # of cases can be greater than the # of youth because some youth received multiple services or were re-referred.

³ # of cases can be greater than the # of youth because some youth received multiple services or were re-referred.

Intensive Support & Supervision Program

ISSP is a community-based 1:1 service for youth who are medium-high risk, and who have been sentenced to a court order. The program is an alternative to custody. Participants can be referred either voluntarily while on bail or other diversion orders, or as a part of a court mandated order or condition of their order. ISSP Workers provide intensive support and supervision which complements the case management and supervision provided by the referring Probation Officer. There is daily capacity to support 95 youth.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ⁴	129	222	204	209	179
# of youth	124	118	117	112	114
% of youth who were extended	39	49	60	83	65
% young women	17	21	22	20	18
% young men	82	79	77	79	82
% self-identified as transgender	1	-	1	1	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	37	42	45	45	39
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	16
# of direct service hours	6200	6961	5964	6581	6743

We continued to see a consistent number of youth accessing our program this year, with a slight increase overall. A significant decline however did occur in the number of cases served as compared with previous years. This was namely attributed to a rise in short term files referred to our services. A trend that developed this year was referrals for youth looking for support solely with completing Community Work Services hours. Our ISSP workers were not tasked with other support services outside meeting this court mandated goal, and most files were three months or less. Covid-19 continued to play a large role in the decreased number of referrals, with delayed court proceedings, lengthy bail terms and other issues related to court orders and access to programming.

Q (Creative Urban Employment) Program

Q provides work experience, employment opportunities, and an employment and life-skills training curriculum for youth who are not in school. Typically, the program runs over a 6-month duration.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ⁵	47	49	49	45	47
# of youth	44	48	47	40	43
% young women	28	21	20	25	16
% young men	72	79	80	72	84
% self-identified as transgender	-	-	-	3	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	43	31	32	53	33
Average age when cases were opened	17	17	17	17	17
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N= number of cases discharged)	130 (N=37)	104 (N=36)	106 (N=38)	130 (N=32)	107 (N=34)
# who found employment	29	25	26	24	30
# of participating employers	28	23	36	28	31
# of new employers	22	10	23	20	15

The Q had a great year of forming new partnerships with the British Columbia Regional Council of Carpenters as well as the Vancouver Community College Introduction to Automotive Trades Program. These partnerships are enabling the Q to look at how we can support long term career opportunities and training for our participants. We

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saw an increase in jobs available since Covid-19 improved and were able to find a considerable amount of new employers for our youth.

KidStart Mentoring

KidStart is a volunteer-based mentoring program for youth on probation or diversion, including those who may be transitioning out of other services. Volunteer Mentors serve as positive adult role models who provide consistent support and engage their mentee in activities that will foster a sense of positive achievement and community connectedness; outcomes include some young people successfully disengaging from the youth justice system.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ⁶	50	75	77	76	85
# of youth	43	52	61	60	62
% young women	66	63	64	63	58
% young men	30	37	36	37	42
% self-identified as transgender	4	-	-	-	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	26	27	18	25	27
# of new referrals	44	41	41	48	55
% relationships lasting for more than 1 year	22	76	40	34	72
Average # of days in program by discharged cases (N = number of cases)	564 (N=24)	619 (N=29)	319 (N=27)	374 (N=29)	389 (N=36)
Average # of days wait for a mentor	131	156	133	257	86
Average monthly active caseload	28	33	37	32	36
Average age when cases were opened	13	14	14	14	14

This year, we started to ease restrictions on face-to-face contact and get back to normal operations in KidStart. We were happy to get back to a few in person group activities and trainings and look forward to doing more next year!

Genesis Schools

There are three Genesis School Programs, each staffed with a teacher from the Vancouver School Board (VSB) and a Youth Worker from PLEA. The programs operate in collaboration with the VSB and provide students who are 16 to 18 years old with a flexible, positive learning environment that encourages youth to identify and pursue their goals. The schools have been designated as vocational learning centres.

Profile	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of cases ⁷	54	64	68	71	81
# of youth	52	63	68	68	79
% young women	34	33	25	25	25
% young men	59	65	74	74	75
% self-identified as transgender	7	2	1	1	-
% self-identified as Indigenous	37	35	31	31	37
# who graduated from high school	19	15	9	11	9
# who found employment	18	16	8	12	15
Average age when cases were opened	16	16	16	16	16

The Genesis schools have continued to serve youth despite disruptions this year due to Covid-19. We did see a reduction of students referred to Genesis this year. A number of youth have thrived learning remotely, but the majority wanted to attend in person with a number of health and safety protocols in place. The Genesis team continue to keep youth engaged with learning life and vocational skills by engaging in Yardworks, woodworking,

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gardening, bike repairs, cooking and more.

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

1. To increase the number of Family Caregivers in the Turnaround and Bail & Respite programs to bring service up to 4 beds.

We continue to try and recruit one- or two more-Family Caregivers for the Youth Justice residential programs. The cost of living in Vancouver has been a challenge to find new families. The two-bed family home we currently have has been a great asset to the program's success this year. They have been able to be a home for a diverse group of youth with a variety of youth court orders.

2. To complete a Literature review of best practices of supporting Youth Justice participants in community-based programming.

This year we partnered with Simon Fraser University to create a literature review as well as an outcomes measurement tool for our Youth Justice Programs. The project started in September 2021 and will be completed by June 2022. We look forward to ensuring our programming is aligned with best practice and developing a tool that will examine outcomes for quality improvement and program development.

3. To undergo group training on the topic of Resisting Burnout and Vicarious Trauma.

In June 2021 all Youth Justice Program staff participated in a training with Vikki Reynolds, a Clinical Counselor specializing in trauma. The topic 'Resisting Burnout and Vicarious Trauma' looked at the trauma of the participants we work with and the impact that can have on person supporting them. Staff were able to develop self-care and boundaries to stay healthy in the work they do.

4. Improve assessments and transition/discharge plans as a part of Service Planning across programs.

This goal will be worked on in conjunction to the literature review and new outcomes measurement tool. We look forward to tackling this goal in the next fiscal year.

5. To continue to expand culturally relevant programming and learning in our service delivery to program participants and staff.

Staff undertook specific cultural training this year to continue to expand their knowledge and breadth of other cultures. Specific Indigenous training that we were involved with included: an Indigenous Canada course offered by the University of Alberta; Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health, offered by the BC Psychosocial Rehabilitation Advanced Practice; and an Aboriginal Views course. Staff also participated in the Vancouver Indigenous Justice Forum offered by the Native Courtworker Association.

Program staff have also supported youth to attend smudging ceremonies within the greater community. ISSP workers have collaborated with Cultural Wellness Workers and connected youth to cultural events and opportunities. Our ISSP Program has also worked closely with Suzette Amaya, who is an Indigenous Youth Justice Coordinator who runs the Qwum Qwum Xwii Xwaa Program offered by the Indian Residential School Survivors Society

The Genesis Team planted traditional tobacco for medicine. They worked closely with Chas Dejarlais the District Principal of Indigenous Education at VSB who led the group in a Harvesting Ceremony and educated the group on the purpose of the medicine in Indigenous culture and how it will be dried and used for gifting purposes.

PLEA now has an agency wide Knowledge Keeper, Chuck Lafferty, who will support all programs to meet the cultural needs of participants and ensure programs are aligned with best practice.

6. To work with Youth Probation to create a clear Community Work Service program where youth have options to complete their community work hours.

Due to ongoing barriers for Covid protocols, youth continued to find limited options to complete their court mandated Community Work Service Hours (CWS). In response to this gap, the ISSP team met with Youth Probation Officers who oversee the Community Work Service program to find out program parameters and regulations. We discussed community options that would meet the requirements of the court order, while also providing opportunities to give back to the community. Projects for PLEA included, creating Covid-19 kits prepared for and delivered to folks living in the Downtown East Side, making holiday deliveries to PLEA Board members and food hamper deliveries for youth. Participants also helped distribute PLEA branded clothing and made deliveries to various PLEA offices to support programming.

The placement where we made our best community connection and continues to be the most consistent source of hours for youth is Rabbitats, Rescue Society for Rabbits in Richmond. Youth are involved with cleaning rabbit cages, feeding, caring for and spending time nurturing abandoned and feral rabbits. Not only are youth completing their hours, but this time with the animals has also provided youth with opportunities for empathy building and creating therapeutic experiences.

Selected accomplishments

1. We continued to persevere through Covid-19 and have adapted our services multiple times to ensure the safety of participants and staff. We are proud that despite challenges, our service remained unerupted and all participants got the support they needed through this time.
2. Afro-Hair braiding course for youth was organized by one of the ISSP workers for youth to learn how to braid and care for their hair.
3. With the success of the music program this past year, our team recognized the importance of continuing this initiative. New funding was secured for additional sessions with Andrew Downton. Our session with Chin Injeti was delayed due to scheduling issues around Covid-19. Chin is committed to working with 1-2 youth in his studio and is also willing to having youth join that day via Zoom to watch the entire process. This will be a great first look for youth who are interested in either becoming an artist and/or be involved in music production. Chin will be spending a day working with these tow youth to assist them in completing a music project of their own. Additionally, Andrew supported our staff in acquiring some music equipment and will be teaching staff how to use it appropriately so that we can continue to record with youth outside the music studio and in the PLEA offices.

Selected stories⁸

1. Carmen* was involved in Genesis, Q, Bail & Respite and ISSP this year. Providing wrap around services within our Youth Justice Programs is a significant benefit to our youth. Carmen was able to get a job at a local dollar store, participate in Yardworks, have weekly support from her ISSP Worker, stabilize in a Bail bed due to family conflict and is on track to graduate in 2022. Carmen has shown a great deal of maturity, growth and we are so proud to see her complete her order and high school to go on to one day soon living independently.
2. Tanner* was able to successfully record two songs through the music program at PLEA. He was able to record his music at a professional recording studio and the final product came out great!
3. Cooper* graduated from Genesis last summer and got into the music program at Langara College. He will also be taking classes at Vancouver Film School for Animation. We are excited to see what projects Cooper goes on to do in the future.

* Names and certain details have been altered to protect the privacy of the people we serve

Challenges

1. This year we saw especially low referrals in the Sea to Sky and Sunshine Coast regions. Across all programs broadly Q/ISSP/genesis there was some reduction in referrals as well.
2. Vaccine mandates restricted some youth to do community-based activities. Staff endeavoured to be creative to meet the needs of youth who were unable to participate in some community-based programming.



Our team...learning

Youth Justice Staff were provided with several training opportunities this past year. All Youth Justice Staff participated in the following learning opportunities: Psychological First Aid; Indigenous Canada; Aboriginal Views Course; Living Works Suicide Awareness and Prevention training; MANDT training; Aboriginal Awareness training; Vancouver Indigenous Justice Forum; Resisting Burnout (Vikki Reynolds); Pronoun Training; Cyber Safety Training; Naloxone Training and the Motivational Interviewing Course at the JIBC.

Our team...new relationships

1. Thanks to a wonderful personal connection made by our ISSP staff, the Youth Justice Music Program was created this past year and participants were able to work with local Canadian musical talent. Audio engineer and producer, Chin Injeti, is a 3-time Grammy winner who has worked with artists like Eminem, Dr. Dre and Drake. He is very well known in the music industry and was willing to work with our youth for 1-1 recording sessions. Jamie Kuse is an award-winning mix engineer from Nova Studios in Vancouver. He offered a 1-day workshop for 5 youth. Each youth received 1.5-2 hours with Jamie and his assistant. During that time, youth either recorded their own song (if they were an artist) or learned the basics of recording and what they would need to make music from home (if they were more focused on producing). Andrew Downton is a 2x Juno Award Nominee and owner of Railtown Mastering in Gastown. He currently works mainly as a mastering engineer but also continues to work as a recording engineer for the Vancouver Film Orchestra. Andrew offered flexible and individualized mentoring experiences for our youth, catering each session to what that youth would like to learn. Andrew connected us with both Chin Injeti and Jamie Kuse. He also has many more connections who may be interested in future projects, and we look forward to these opportunities.

2. The Genesis team worked closely with the Vancouver School Board's District Principal of Indigenous Education to learn about growing, harvesting and hosting a ceremony over the traditional tobacco grown at Genesis North East.

3. We made a new connection with Vancouver Community College who offered participants in the Q and Gensis to participate in an Introduction to Automotive Trades. This course allowed our youth to try different trades and assess their skills and interests for their post secondary plans. Three youth successfully graduated from the program.

4. We have partnered with Simon Fraser University this year. A Criminology Professor and Graduate student will be creating a literature review on best practices in community-based programs for young offenders as well as an outcomes measurement tool to track our impact on participants as well as provide more meaningful quality assurance and program improvement.

Next year's goals...

1. Improve assessments and transition/discharge plans as a part of Service Planning across programs.

2. To continue to provide opportunities for youth to create their own music with the support of industry professionals as well as for staff to be trained on music equipment housed at AR Lord to help youth continue with their projects.

3. We work hard to support youth, save space, and take the lead from them as to how they wish to celebrate, learn, inquire, and live their culture within their daily lives. A focus for the coming year will be to collaboratively work with Youth Justice professionals, as well as our in-house Knowledge Keeper, to adapt our programming to include specific Indigenous culturally appropriate and relevant services. This may include cultural events, 1-1 experiences for participants or cultural experiences for the Youth Justice team and their youth.

4. To work closely with PLEA's Communications Team to try and secure a second home, which ideally would include a bed for those youth have sexual related offending.

5. To create an outcomes measurement tool for youth justice program participants.

For more information...

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