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SERVICES

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# Tri-Cities Youth Services Annual Program Report 2025-2026

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## 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 teams deliver 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 and life skills, accessing stable housing, finding employment, engaging in school and connecting with other community resources and supports.

## Who we served...

| Profile                                                                          | 2025-26        | 2024-25        | 2023-24        | 2022-23        | 2021-22        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| # of cases <sup>1</sup>                                                          | 351            | 359            | 356            | 332            | 372            |
| # of youth served                                                                | 294            | 286            | 309            | 274            | 320            |
| % young women                                                                    | 54%            | 52%            | 53%            | 54%            | 51%            |
| % young men                                                                      | 43%            | 43%            | 41%            | 39%            | 43%            |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                 | 3%             | 5%             | 6%             | 7%             | 6%             |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                  | 25%            | 20%            | 26%            | 24%            | 24%            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                               | 16             | 16             | 15             | 16             | 15             |
| Average # of days in program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 268<br>(N=204) | 276<br>(N=211) | 222<br>(N=197) | 272<br>(N=187) | 338<br>(N=210) |
| Average monthly caseload                                                         | 168            | 158            | 164            | 151            | 158            |

<sup>1</sup> Numbers are based on combined data from Tri-Cities Youth Services and Tri-Cities Clinical Counselling.

|                                                                               |               |               |               |               |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases.<br>(N = # of opened cases) | 54<br>(N=202) | 45<br>(N=208) | 57<br>(N=219) | 55<br>(N=207) | 43<br>(N= 183) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|

The number of participants we served this past fiscal year remained consistent with previous years, and we continued to see participants engaging in multiple programs simultaneously. It is not uncommon for participants to receive support from Youth Workers and Clinical Counsellors alongside additional services offered through the school (GOAL), ONYX or the U-Turn programs. While overall service demand has remained stable, average caseloads have increased, suggesting that a certain population of participants may be presenting with more complex or ongoing needs that require sustained engagement across multiple services, even if individual support does not always extend beyond the initial six months. This is reflective of the decreased length of time participants spent in programming compared to the previous year and highlights that although complex files need longer and more intensive support, the program does receive a high number of referrals that are more recreation focused, where participants often have fewer goals to work on and need support for a shorter period of time. Wait times have grown, indicating challenges in balancing a steady number of intakes with available capacity of Youth Workers.

The participants we serve continue to present with a wide range of needs at intake, including youth justice involvement and mental health concerns. We are also seeing a continued rise in the proportion of Indigenous youth accessing our services, highlighting both the importance of culturally responsive programming and the need for ongoing relationship-building with community based Indigenous resources. At the same time, the overall demographic profile of participants, including age and gender distribution, has remained relatively stable.

## How we did...service delivery

### Youth Development

Our **Youth Development Services** are delivered one-on-one through community-based outreach. Our staff work closely with youth to help them re-engage with education, succeed in school, and achieve graduation. They also support youth in accessing employment programs and finding meaningful job opportunities. In addition, our team encourages participation in social and recreational activities, creating opportunities for youth to connect with peers, build supportive relationships, and engage in events that address their needs and concerns.

| Profile                                                                          | 2025-26       | 2024-25       | 2023-24       | 2022-23       | 2021-22       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| # of cases                                                                       | 99            | 112           | 118           | 108           | 95            |
| # of youth served                                                                | 98            | 110           | 115           | 105           | 94            |
| % young women                                                                    | 50            | 54            | 54            | 49            | 45            |
| % young men                                                                      | 44            | 37            | 37            | 35            | 42            |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                 | 6             | 9             | 9             | 16            | 13            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                  | 27            | 22            | 25            | 27            | 24            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                               | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            |
| Average # of days in program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 307<br>(N=59) | 260<br>(N=64) | 169<br>(N=73) | 202<br>(N=55) | 311<br>(N=60) |
| Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases.<br>(N = # of opened cases)    | 45<br>(N=55)  | 29<br>(N=69)  | 26<br>(N=79)  | 30<br>(N=73)  | 33<br>(N=53)  |

In 2025–26, the program saw an overall decrease in service volume, though the overall profile of participants served remained relatively consistent. Gender representation continued to be balanced, with only minor shifts compared to the previous year, and participants self-identifying as transgender remained a small but important part of the population. There was a noticeable increase in the proportion of Indigenous participants accessing services, suggesting either strengthened engagement or evolving community need. The average age at intake remained steady, indicating continued consistency in the stage of development at which participants are entering the program. Overall, while fewer participants were served, trends suggest those accessing services may be presenting with more complex or sustained needs, reflected in longer engagement and increased wait times.

## Youth Agreements

A Youth Agreement is a legal arrangement between a young person and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for youth who are unable to live with their family or in Ministry care. Through this agreement, staff support youth in achieving their goals, such as finding safe and stable housing, engaging in education or meaningful employment, managing daily responsibilities, and connecting with relevant resources and supports.

| Profile                                                                              | 2025-26      | 2024-25      | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                           | 7            | 8            | 12           | 13           | 12           |
| # of youth served                                                                    | 6            | 8            | 12           | 13           | 12           |
| % young women                                                                        | 29%          | 37%          | 67%          | 62%          | 67%          |
| % young men                                                                          | 71%          | 50%          | 33%          | 31%          | 25%          |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                     | -            | 13%          | -            | 8%           | 8%           |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                      | 14%          | 13%          | 42%          | 62%          | 42%          |
| Average age when cases were opened                                                   | 17           | 17           | 17           | 17           | 17           |
| Average # of days in the program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 396<br>(N=3) | 407<br>(N=5) | 381<br>(N=7) | 355<br>(N=4) | 522<br>(N=6) |
| Average # of cases per month                                                         | 4            | 4            | 6            | 7            | 7            |

The program served slightly fewer cases in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25, and there has been a notable decline in the number of participants served since 2021–2024. While the reasons for the decrease in Youth Agreement numbers are not fully clear, contributing factors may include the lack of affordable housing and a lower number of MCFD approvals for Youth Agreements. Demographically, there was a shift toward more male participants and fewer female participants, with no transgender participants served this year compared to the previous year, while Indigenous representation stayed steady.

## North Fraser Youth Outreach Services

The North Fraser Youth Outreach Program (NFYO), established in 2017, is designed to support high-risk youth across the North Fraser Service Delivery area. It is a collaborative initiative between PLEA, Purpose Society, and St. Leonard's, providing a coordinated approach to engaging youth within their communities. A key feature of the program is its flexibility, allowing staff to collaborate and share resources across geographic boundaries. Youth workers are able to travel throughout the North Fraser region and into other Metro Vancouver communities to maintain contact with youth on their caseloads and participate in relevant case management meetings, ensuring consistent and uninterrupted support.

### NFO Tri-Cities

| Profile                                                                          | 2025-26      | 2024-25      | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                       | 2            | 4            | 6            | 4            | 6            |
| # of youth served                                                                | 2            | 4            | 6            | 4            | 6            |
| % young women                                                                    | 100%         | 75%          | 83%          | 50%          | 33%          |
| % young men                                                                      | -            | 25           | 17           | 50           | 67           |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                 | -            | -            | -            | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                  | -            | 75%          | 50%          | 50%          | -            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                               | 15           | 16           | 16           | 16           | 16           |
| Average # of cases per month                                                     | 1            | 2            | 2            | 2            | 5            |
| Average # of days in program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 154<br>(N=1) | 259<br>(N=3) | 115<br>(N=3) | 907<br>(N=3) | 388<br>(N=3) |
| Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases.<br>(N = # of opened cases)    | 6<br>(N=2)   | 22<br>(N=1)  | 4<br>(N=5)   | 28<br>(N=1)  | 26<br>(N=2)  |

### NFO Aboriginal<sup>2</sup>

| Profile                                                                          | 2025-26      | 2024-25      | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                       | 2            | 6            | 4            | 4            | 6            |
| # of youth served                                                                | 2            | 6            | 4            | 4            | 6            |
| % young women                                                                    | 100%         | 17%          | 14%          | 50%          | 33%          |
| % young men                                                                      | -            | 83%          | 72%          | 50%          | 67%          |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                 | -            | -            | 14%          | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                  | 100%         | 100%         | 100%         | 50%          | -            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                               | 16           | 15           | 14           | 16           | 16           |
| Average # of cases per month                                                     | 2            | 2            | 3            | 2            | 5            |
| Average # of days in program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 201<br>(N=3) | 204<br>(N=5) | 169<br>(N=3) | 907<br>(N=3) | 388<br>(N=3) |
| Average # of days on the waitlist by opened cases.<br>(N = # of opened cases)    | 11<br>(N=3)  | 60<br>(N=2)  | 42<br>(N=6)  | 28<br>(N=1)  | 26<br>(N=2)  |

Both the NFO Tri-Cities and Aboriginal programs served fewer participants and cases in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25. While utilization across both programs has historically been low over the past five years, there was a more pronounced decline in referrals this year. The reasons for this lower utilization are not fully clear; however, staffing turnover within both MCFD teams and PLEA Program Managers, as well as limited understanding of the program's

<sup>2</sup> 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

mandate and services, may be contributing factors. At the same time, wait times and average length of stay decreased significantly, indicating quicker access and shorter service episodes. There was also a notable demographic shift, with all participants served in 2025–26 identifying as female.

## Parent Support Program

Now in its second year of operation, the Parent Support Program was developed in response to a growing need identified by MCFD, which observed that many cases involved parents requiring additional support to navigate systems and access community-based resources. While the agency has long provided clinical counselling to youth and families, this program is distinct in its focus on supporting parents with practical, concrete tasks that strengthen their ability to care for their children and families.

| Profile <sup>3</sup>                                                                 | 2025-26      | 2024-25      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                           | 9            | 7            |
| # of youth served                                                                    | 9            | 7            |
| % young women                                                                        | 67%          | 86%          |
| % young men                                                                          | 33%          | 14%          |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                     | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                      | 22%          | -            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                                   | 21           | 16           |
| Average # of days in the program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 401<br>(N=4) | 238<br>(N=4) |

Over the past two years, the program has supported parents with a broad range of needs, including translation services, connections to newcomer support, access to food banks and legal aid, and assistance with completing applications for essential resources such as subsidized housing and CLBC services. The growing number of parents served highlights the continued need for the program and its important role in providing a key layer of support for families facing complex and varied challenges.

## Youth Justice

Our **Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP)** is a community-based, one-to-one service for youth assessed as medium to high risk who have received a court-ordered sentence. The program serves as an alternative to custody by providing intensive support and supervision that complements the case management and oversight provided by the referring Probation Officer. In some cases, participants may instead be referred to Extrajudicial Sanctions (EJS), which diverts young people away from formal court proceedings and into community-based rehabilitation supports. The EJS Program focuses on reducing the negative impacts of system involvement, including labelling, while providing youth with an opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and make appropriate amends. Probation Officers may also refer youth to the voluntary ISSP stream, which offers similar intensive support in a non-mandated context to help promote positive engagement and outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> Although this program supports parents of youth, referrals are made under the youths' names. As such, the statistics below reflect data connected to the youth rather than the parents.

The program experienced a significant decrease in cases and participants served in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25, with overall volume roughly halved. This may reflect fewer active youth justice files in the Tri-Cities or a tendency for Probation Officers to delay referrals until after sentencing to maintain lower levels of intervention during earlier stages of the court process. The demographic profile remained consistently male-dominated, with a slight increase in Indigenous participant representation, while the average age stayed stable at 16. A key change was the substantial reduction in average time spent in the program, which may suggest shorter sentencing orders, later-stage referrals within probation orders, or an increase in charges being withdrawn or resolved while youth are on bail.

| Profile                                                                              | 2025-26      | 2024-25       | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                           | 12           | 22            | 19           | 17           | 16           |
| # of youth served                                                                    | 12           | 21            | 19           | 16           | 16           |
| % young women                                                                        | 25%          | 29%           | 26%          | 34%          | 47%          |
| % young men                                                                          | 75%          | 71%           | 74%          | 76%          | 53%          |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                     | -            | -             | -            | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                      | 25%          | 14%           | 11%          | 6%           | 13%          |
| Average age when cases were opened                                                   | 16           | 16            | 16           | 16           | 16           |
| Average # of days in the program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 266<br>(N=6) | 477<br>(N=12) | 326<br>(N=7) | 334<br>(N=7) | 402<br>(N=9) |

Our **Community Work Service Program** involves developing, in consultation with Probation Officers, restorative placement opportunities for youth to complete their required service hours. A variety of placements with not-for-profit organizations is maintained to provide meaningful experiences that foster a sense of community contribution while also engaging the community in supporting youth. The program assesses the suitability of placements for each young person and provides ongoing support and monitoring to ensure successful completion of their service hours.

The program experienced a slight decrease in cases and participants served in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25, while overall monthly activity and total community service hours remained stable. There was a notable shift in demographics, with increased representation of both young women and Indigenous youth. The average age remained consistent at 16; however, time spent in the program increased, suggesting longer completion timelines or potentially higher hours required to complete community works service. One longstanding community work service placement was maintained, with several participants completing their hours at this site. In addition, new placement opportunities were explored, with multiple organizations indicating interest in supporting future participant placements.

### Community Work Service

| Profile                            | 2025-26 | 2024-25 | 2023-24 | 2022-23 | 2021-22 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| # of cases                         | 17      | 20      | 13      | 16      | 17      |
| # of youth served                  | 17      | 19      | 13      | 15      | 14      |
| % young women                      | 35%     | 15%     | 23%     | 19%     | 27%     |
| % young men                        | 65%     | 85%     | 77%     | 81%     | 73%     |
| % self-identified as transgender   | -       | -       | -       | -       | -       |
| % self-identified as Indigenous    | 18%     | 5%      | -       | -       | 7%      |
| Average age when cases were opened | 16      | 16      | 16      | 16      | 17      |

|                                                                                      |               |              |             |               |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Average # of days in the program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 126<br>(N=15) | 92<br>(N=15) | 61<br>(N=9) | 138<br>(N=13) | 84<br>(N=12) |
| Average # of cases per month                                                         | 5             | 5            | 2           | 5             | 5            |
| Community Work Service hours completed                                               | 247           | 250          | 209         | 210.5         | 184          |

## GOAL School Program

GOAL is an alternative school program that supports youth aged 14–18 who are experiencing significant challenges with school attendance, mental health, substance use, peer relationships, and community conduct. The program provides a highly individualized and responsive level of support, with staff working in collaboration with School District #43 personnel to assist students referred from schools across the district. The GOAL program offers a combination of academic instruction, life skills development, substance use support, and recreational activities to promote student engagement and overall well-being.

| Profile                                                                              | 2025-26       | 2024-25       | 2023-24       | 2022-23       | 2021-22       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| # of cases                                                                           | 34            | 30            | 31            | 30            | 33            |
| # of youth served                                                                    | 34            | 29            | 29            | 30            | 32            |
| % young women                                                                        | 44%           | 40%           | 39%           | 33%           | 33%           |
| % young men                                                                          | 53%           | 60%           | 61%           | 63%           | 64%           |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                     | 3%            | -             | -             | 3%            | 3%            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                      | 47%           | 33%           | 42%           | 27%           | 27%           |
| Average age when cases were opened                                                   | 16            | 16            | 16            | 15            | 16            |
| Average # of days in the program by discharged cases.<br>(N = # of discharged cases) | 336<br>(N=16) | 315<br>(N=13) | 295<br>(N=17) | 448<br>(N=13) | 484<br>(N=12) |
| # of cases with probation officers attached                                          | 8/32          | 13/30         | 12/31         | 7/30          | 4/33          |

The GOAL program saw a moderate increase in cases and participants served in 2025–26 compared to 2024–25, along with a more diverse participant profile. There was a notable rise in Indigenous and trans youth representation and a slight shift toward a higher proportion of female youth attending GOAL. The average age remained stable at 16, while time in the program increased slightly, suggesting longer or more involved support needs. At the same time, fewer cases involved probation officers, indicating a shift toward more school-based or community referrals.

## Safe Care Supports

**Onyx** provides voluntary support services for young people who are, or are at risk of, sexual exploitation, with the goal of helping them exit exploitative situations and relationships. The program offers an immediate response to young people who reach out and work alongside them to access practical support and resources, including health care, safe housing, substance use detox or treatment, and one-to-one support. Youth can be referred to through self-referral, MCFD, police, or other youth-serving agencies. Onyx has been providing these services since March 2006.

| Profile    | 2025-26 | 2024-25 | 2023-24 | 2022-23 | 2021-22 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| # of cases | 13      | 12      | 9       | 10      | 9       |

|                                                                                       |              |              |             |              |              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of youth                                                                            | 13           | 12           | 8           | 10           | 9            |
| % young women                                                                         | 92%          | 92%          | 89%         | 90%          | 100%         |
| % young men                                                                           | -            | -            | 11%         | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as transgender                                                      | 8%           | 8%           | -           | 10%          | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                                       | 31%          | 25%          | 22%         | 20%          | -            |
| Average age when cases were opened                                                    | 15           | 14           | 14          | 15           | 15           |
| Average # of days in program by discharged cases.<br>(N = number of discharged cases) | 231<br>(N=9) | 420<br>(N=4) | 86<br>(N=6) | 379<br>(N=7) | 276<br>(N=5) |

We saw a slight increase in cases and participants served in 2025–26, while overall demographic patterns remained largely consistent. The program continues to serve a predominantly young female population, with no male-identifying youth referred and small proportion of transgender youth. There was a notable increase in Indigenous youth representation from the previous year and the average age at intake increased slightly from 14 to 15, indicating a marginal shift toward older participants. A significant change was seen in program duration, which decreased sharply from 420 days to 231 days. This suggests a growing need for crisis intervention supports, as well as the program's effectiveness in stabilizing and supporting participants engaged with Youth Workers.

## KidStart Mentoring Program and KidStart Community

**KidStart** is an MCFD-funded volunteer mentoring program supporting youth aged 13–18 who face challenges at home, school, in the community, or while transitioning to independence. Youth are referred to by social workers or probation officers and matched with trained adult mentors. The program also includes **KidStart Community** for children aged 6–12, helping address a longstanding service gap in the Tri-Cities which is in its fifth year of successful reinstatement.

As a prevention and diversion program, KidStart helps at-risk youth make positive choices through supportive mentor relationships. Mentors meet with youth weekly for a few hours, building connection, confidence, and community. KidStart relationships last at least one year, with many remaining actives for much longer engagement, with matches lasting at least one year.

### KidStart Mentoring (ages 13-18)

| Profile                                                                       | 2025-26      | 2024-25      | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| # of cases                                                                    | 11           | 13           | 13           | 14           | 22            |
| # of youth                                                                    | 11           | 13           | 13           | 14           | 20            |
| % young women                                                                 | 64%          | 62%          | 69%          | 79%          | 73%           |
| % young men                                                                   | 36%          | 38%          | 31%          | 21%          | 27%           |
| % self-identified as transgender                                              | -            | -            | -            | -            | -             |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                               | 45%          | 23%          | 31%          | 29%          | 27%           |
| Average age when cases were opened                                            | 14           | 14           | 14           | 14           | 14            |
| Average # of days in program by discharged case.<br>(N = of discharged cases) | 663<br>(N=4) | 473<br>(N=8) | 558<br>(N=5) | 509<br>(N=5) | 762<br>(N=13) |

|                                                                      |              |              |              |              |              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total # of volunteer hours                                           | 228.5        | 122.75       | 300.5        | 239.5        | 399          |
| Average # of days wait for a mentor.<br>(N = number of opened cases) | 245<br>(N=6) | 424<br>(N=5) | 516<br>(N=4) | 198<br>(N=5) | 214<br>(N=9) |
| Average monthly caseload                                             | 7            | 7            | 9            | 8            | 11           |
| % of relationships lasting for more than 1 year                      | 36           | 38           | 80           | 66           | 59           |

### **KidStart Community (ages 6-12)**

| Profile                                                                       | 2025-26       | 2024-25      | 2023-24      | 2022-23      | 2021-22      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| # of cases                                                                    | 20            | 11           | 16           | 13           | 13           |
| # of youth                                                                    | 18            | 11           | 14           | 13           | 13           |
| % young women                                                                 | 65%           | 64%          | 75%          | 77%          | 77%          |
| % young men                                                                   | 35%           | 36%          | 25%          | 23%          | 23%          |
| % self-identified as transgender                                              | -             | -            | -            | -            | -            |
| % self-identified as Indigenous                                               | 15            | 9            | 25           | 31           | 24           |
| Average age when cases were opened                                            | 10            | 11           | 11           | 10           | 10           |
| Average # of days in program by discharged case.<br>(N = of discharged cases) | 554<br>(N=4)  | 334<br>(N=6) | 318<br>(N=9) | 359<br>(N=5) | 468<br>(N=6) |
| Total # of volunteer hours                                                    | 172           | 201.75       | 317.75       | 480.75       | 266.50       |
| Average # of days wait for a mentor.<br>(N = number of opened cases)          | 156<br>(N=15) | 173<br>(N=4) | 238<br>(N=8) | 164<br>(N=6) | 231<br>(N=7) |
| Average monthly caseload                                                      | 12            | 6            | 9            | 9            | 7            |
| % of relationships lasting for more than 1 year                               | 20            | 45           | 78           | 80           | 38           |

The **KidStart Mentoring Program** remained stable in terms of how many participants were served and the general age and gender mix of participants. One notable shift was a decrease in the proportion of participants identifying as Indigenous. At the same time, there are signs of increasing pressure on program capacity. Participants are waiting a little less to be matched with a mentor still with a delay, and volunteer involvement appears to have declined, resulting in fewer total hours of support. There are also indications that relationships may not last as long as in past years, although the share of matches that continued beyond one year has remained fairly steady.

The **KidStart Community Program** demonstrated growth, with more participants served and a higher caseload, while demographics remain stable and youth entering are slightly younger. Total number of volunteer hours, however, was lower due to 4 volunteers who retired, a shift in support from a new Volunteer Coordinator who transitioned into the program, and the onboarding of new volunteers not familiar with case management system. These changes have slowed our ability to maintain consistent case note submissions when documenting volunteer hours for both current and new volunteers. Since January the visibility within the community and folks referring to the program improved, with shorter wait times for mentors. Similar to the KidStart Mentor Program, volunteer capacity appears to be under pressure, with total hours declining despite increased demand. There is also a trend toward shorter-term matches, with fewer relationships lasting beyond one year, even though discharged youth are spending more time in the program overall. The program's growth is a positive development, but it's important to remain mindful of sustaining long-term mentorships and maintaining strong volunteer support.

Trends in both programs show that while demand and participation remain steady, challenges with volunteer recruitment and retention persist. In response, we are taking steps to strengthen recruitment, improve retention, and

better support existing mentors to help ensure more timely and sustained matches for youth. The KidStart program continues to focus its efforts on the recruitment of volunteers in the Tri-Cities. The KidStart Coordinator for the Tri-Cities continues to liaise with community partners to raise awareness of both programs. This year, they attended several community events—including the Burnaby Resource Fair, Surrey Resource Fair, Douglas College Fair, and Pinetree Community Centre—to promote KidStart and support mentor recruitment.

## Our team...relationships, committees and community capacity development

Tri-Cities staff participated in several PLEA and Community Committees this past year:

- Tri-Cities Community Youth Table
- Middle Childhood Matters Committee
- Enchantment Planning Committee
- Putting on the Glitz Planning Committee
- PLEA Culture, Diversity and Accessibility Committee
- PLEA Indigenous Matters Committee

## Community Relationships and Partnerships

- MCFD Youth Teams
- MCFD Youth First
- MCFD North Fraser Youth Justice
- MCFD North Fraser Indigenous
- MCFD - Tri-Cities CYMH Service
- City of Coquitlam
- City of Port Moody
- Port Coquitlam Parks and Recreation
- Bea's Kloset
- Soroptimist International of Tri-Cities
- SHARE Family and Community Services
- Access Youth
- Spirit of the Children Society
- Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks
- Foundry Tri-Cities
- School District #43
- Douglas College
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University

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

1. **Support team in their learning and assimilation of outcome measurement so they understand how measuring our impact leads to an improvement in the quality of service we provide to our participants.**

**ACHIEVED-** The team has actively participated in developing and understanding the Theory of Change over the past year. They have also contributed to several planning meetings to establish the outcome measurement questions and determine which Likert scales will be used to capture responses. This work has been done both within the team and in collaboration with the Ridge Meadows program to ensure alignment across programs. Team members have taken ownership of the data they want to collect to enhance service

delivery and better understand the impact of their work. The rollout of outcomes measurement will go live on April 1, 2026, at which point staff will begin using the tool to actively measure participant satisfaction within the program.

2. **In conjunction with PLEA Leadership team, implement strategies aimed at recruitment and retention of quality staff as well as strategies designed to nurture a positive workplace culture.**

**ACHIEVED-** The Tri-Cities team has remained largely stable over the past year, with over half of team members in their roles for more than five years. Staff are encouraged to take on stretching projects that are personally fulfilling and help maintain engagement in meaningful and unique ways. Career growth is supported through training opportunities for those interested in advancement. At the program level, conscious efforts continue to prioritize staff satisfaction through open communication, integration of feedback, and fostering collaborative practices across departments. Tri-Cities staff report high levels of satisfaction with their immediate teams and managers, reflecting these ongoing efforts. Recruitment initiatives focus on building a strong talent pipeline by attending career fairs, engaging with post-secondary institutions to encourage volunteering or casual positions for meaningful pre-graduation experience, and welcoming practicum placements.

3. **Participate on the planning committee tables for the Tri-Cities Foundry and seek opportunities for partnership and collaboration.**

**ACHIEVED-** The Foundry Tri-Cities officially opened its doors on March 1, 2026. Our Program Director participated on the planning committee meetings. The Tri-Cities team participated in a facility tour to learn about the programs and services being offered. Since opening, several youths have accessed services with support from their Youth Worker. Additionally, the Tri-Cities team is working to secure a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Foundry to run the Gen Out group twice a month from their space. In partnership with Foundry, the aim is to expand promotion of the group throughout the community and reach more youth beyond those on PLEA caseloads.

4. **Determine current gaps in service and expand on programming in Tri Cities to address those gaps.**

**IN PROGRESS-** Several opportunities have been identified to expand programming and reach more community members. Work is currently underway to restructure Gen Out, alongside exploring ways to extend the Parent Support program into additional communities, particularly Ridge Meadows. There is also a focus on securing formal Community Work Service placements to better support youth in completing their required hours. The new Gen Out group is expected to launch in May 2026. In the meantime, the Community Work Service Coordinator has connected with various community partners and is actively working to confirm future placement opportunities. Expanding Parent Support will be a key priority for the 2025–2026 fiscal year.

## Other selected accomplishments...

There were many great accomplishments this past year in Tri Cities! Some of the activities and events our Youth Workers engaged youth in this past year were:

1. Our weekly **Gen Out group** provided a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ2S+ youth and their allies to connect, build community, and participate in engaging activities. The group focused on fostering belonging and support while offering fun, low-barrier activities such as arts and crafts, board games, and other recreational and social opportunities designed to promote positive peer connection.
2. Our weekly **Oasis Youth Group** saw 41 youth in attendance and offered a range of engaging activities for participants, including:
  - Weekly board games and video games
  - Playland

- Pottery painting
  - BC Youth in Care MCFD event
  - Lafarge Lake walk
  - Indoor climbing at The Hive
  - Hike at Admiral Point Trail followed by Rocky Point Ice Cream
  - The Outdoor Experience water park and BBQ
  - Activate Coquitlam
  - Haunted House visit
  - Central City Fun Park
3. At the **GOAL School program** students participated in the following activities:
    - Painted flowerpots and planted flowers in them
    - Walked community members dogs for work experience
    - Weekly yoga sessions where the teacher would read a passage from an Indigenous Author and play the drum prior to the start of the session (ended with teacher transition in November)
    - Weekly foods labs with YW
    - Monthly glass/window painting using online inspiration and tutorials
    - Continued use of visual boards
  4. In partnership with School District 43 (SD43), the Tri-Cities Team once again participated in **the Annual Enchantment event** in April 2025. This event aims to support financially disadvantaged youth by providing graduation attire, including gowns and suits, helping ensure that young people are able to attend their graduation with appropriate formal wear.
  5. The Tri-Cities team supported another successful **Putting on the Glitz** event in Maple Ridge where many of the Youth Workers were able to bring participants to volunteer and several participants completed Community Work Service hours.
  6. Over spring break 2026, several participants attended a **self-defense workshop** at True North Jiu Jitsu Academy.
  7. This year, GOAL had **seven graduates**, along with an additional **five participants** on Youth Worker caseloads who also graduated with a total of **twelve participants**. Six participants were accepted into a **post-secondary program**.
  8. Eight participants gained **meaningful employment**, two started **volunteering**, three participants **secured housing** upon aging out, two participants got their **L license**, and one got their Class 7N license.
  9. We were also able to support one participant who signed up and attend **acting school** and one participant was able to receive financial support from Crime Victim Assistance Program.

## Selected story<sup>4</sup>...

Kylie entered the GOAL program in January 2024. At intake, she was 16 years old, experiencing fentanyl addiction, had not attended school for two years, and had unmet mental health needs. Currently, Kylie is 18 years old and has officially graduated from the program. She has been accepted into a trades program and is living independently in a rental suite. Kylie receives financial support from Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefits, enabling her to focus on her future goals. She has maintained 2.5 years of abstinence from fentanyl and attends weekly appointments to support her mental health and coping skills. Kylie attributes her progress over the past 2.5 years to the distinctive

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<sup>4</sup> Names have been changed to protect client privacy and confidentiality.

features of the GOAL program and the comprehensive support provided by PLEA Youth Workers (YW), particularly for attendees who cannot access PLEA services through other means.

## Feedback from Participants & Partners

Participants report feeling supported in the following areas:

- Helping me get my L license
- Feeling better
- Getting back into school
- Allow me to share my feelings.

Partners also report positive experiences with our services, highlighting strong documentation and communication, as well as the range of supports provided to youth while connected to PLEA.

## Biggest challenges...

1. Youth Workers have navigated a number of evolving challenges this year while continuing to support participants effectively. Opportunities for strengthened collaboration have emerged, particularly around improving responsiveness and communication with referring Social Workers, as well as ensuring consistent inclusion in integrated case management meetings. Occasional staff transitions among Social Workers and PLEA program leadership have created periods of adjustment, highlighting the importance of clear communication to maintain continuity of care.
2. Timely initial engagement with participants can sometimes be impacted by scheduling and availability, especially as many youths attend school full-time. Additionally, referrals that lean more toward recreational activities present an opportunity to further emphasize life skills development to support deeper, longer-term engagement. Increasing social isolation and a preference for online interaction among youth have also shaped how services are delivered, encouraging creative approaches to in-person engagement.
3. There have been a lower number of Youth Agreement referrals this year, which may reflect broader challenges related to limited affordable housing and barriers for youth seeking to live independently. The North Fraser Outreach Program has also experienced lower overall referral numbers this year, alongside challenges engaging youth who are often in highly transient or unstable situations. While referrals from CYMH have created valuable opportunities to support youth who are not connected to an MCFD Social Worker, varying levels of engagement and differing reporting structures can at times result in less clearly defined case management. This highlights an opportunity to strengthen coordination and enhance wraparound support within the care team to promote a more consistent and collaborative approach.

## Our team...staffing<sup>5</sup>



## Our team...learning undertaken

The Tri-Cities team completed the following training this year:

- Reclaiming Justice for Indigenous Youth Symposium
- Beyond the Dark Highway Film Screening and Discussion
- Two Katzie Workshops (Opioid Crisis and Youth Empowerment)
- Response Based Practice Youth Worker Training
- CLBC Workshop on ASD
- Sexual Exploitation Workshop
- Navigating Challenging Conversations Youth Worker Training

The Tri-Cities team continues to maintain up-to-date annual training and certifications, including Mandt, LivingWorks, and First Aid recertification. The team actively participated in the development of outcome measures, working with the Ridge Meadows team to create outcome statements that will be implemented into Youth Worker intake practices

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<sup>5</sup> # of human beings as opposed to FTEs as per March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020

in the new fiscal year. The Tri-Cities team also co-hosted a third-year practicum student from the Douglas College Social Worker Program, providing valuable hands-on learning experience while supporting the student's professional development in the field.

## Next year's goals...

1. Implement outcome measurement tools and collect a full year of data at intake, 6 months, and discharge to more effectively evaluate service impact and identify strengths and areas for improvement.
2. Strengthen succession planning strategies to support continuity, leadership development, and long-term organizational stability.
3. Develop 2-4 community work service placements and partnerships that provide meaningful, skill-building opportunities for youth.
4. Continue offering the Gen Out youth group in partnership with Foundry Tri-Cities, noting its success as demonstrated by consistent attendance and positive participant feedback (e.g., high retention rates and strong engagement levels).
5. Expand the Parent Support program into Maple Ridge to enhance accessibility, engagement, and impact for families in an additional community.
6. Increase referrals to North Fraser Outreach, Youth Agreement and ISSP by strengthening partnerships, improving outreach efforts, and enhancing awareness of available services.

## For more information...

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