

Youth Development Strategy Report Year One - 2016

Saanich

The first year of implementation of the Youth Development Strategy (YDS) was a great start to this five year plan for Saanich Parks and Recreation. Over the course of the year, we made progress in all six of the strategic priorities identified within the YDS.



Increase Participation



New programs and services are offered for beginners and marginalized groups of youth in our communities.

Highlights from 2016

- **FREE Weightroom Orientations for teens**
- New co-created LGBTQ2+ parent education/support group and youth dinner club at SCP
- New affordable programs at the Recreation Centres (e.g. late night teen swim at SCP, cooking program at GHRC, pop up art gallery in conjunction with CHRC)
- New streamlined procedures to increase access for youth to the Leisure Involvement for Everyone (LIFE) program

Collaboration



We have enhanced relationships with our community partners, most notably School Districts 61 & 63.

Highlights from 2016

- **200+ youth engaged through new introductory programs offered at schools as a result of enhanced partnerships with our School Districts**
- One day career explorations for Gr. 8's in collaboration with School District 61
- Hosted a cross departmental youth think tank which brought together numerous Saanich departments including: Legislative Services, Emergency Management, and Planning

Risk and Outdoor Play



Youth in our community continue to express a desire and a need for more youth friendly elements in our parks system.

Highlights from 2016

- **Parks adopts new youth engagement practice in their park planning process (e.g. Tolmie Park, McMinn Park)**
- Saanich Parks & Recreation officially endorses the ParticipAction Position Statement on Outdoor Active Play
- Successfully piloted a new low cost outdoor focused adventure program for youth 11-14 at Copley Park. This program was the first to adopt our new risk benefit assessment process
- Began work with Arbutus Middle School towards a new School-Park Stewardship Program



"CAN YOU TELL MY PARENTS I'M O-K?"

This is a common question we hear from the youth we work with who identify as queer and/ or trans. Lack of family support puts youth at incredible risk. In response to this growing need, and the youths' requests, we have partnered with TransCareBC to offer a monthly family support group. This recent school year, we have seen about 20 families attend these meetings every month supporting their youth and creating a community of support for one another.

— **A. GODDARD** Youth Programmer
Upside Teen Centre (SCP)





Social Wellbeing



Youth Services plays a much needed preventative role in the overarching goal of improving the health and wellbeing of youth.

Highlights from 2016

- **150+ students reached by new wellness programs**
- New peer anxiety program with Lambrick Park Secondary School
- 'Girls on Fire' career planning program at Shoreline Middle School
- Hosted showing of *Screenagers* for families with youth to help them navigate the digital landscape
- New noon hour support program for girls at Royal Oak Middle School

Youth Spaces



The three teen centres (Flipside @ Pearkes, Upside @ SCP, Backdoor @ GHRC) continue to provide a

much needed service, acting as a resource hub and a safe accessible space for youth to gather, stay connected, and be informed. Ongoing programming reflects the needs of each community and their success has remained strong throughout 2016.

With new supports we were able to devote more time to community development and an increase in collaboration with neighbourhood partners.

Highlights from 2016

- **As a result of funding for new Youth Leader II positions we saw an increase in participation through additional program offerings, as well as improved community connections**
- Enhanced community partnership between Saanich Neighbourhood Place and the Flipside Teen Centre
- Began outreach to the Cedar Hill neighbourhood
- New stove and venting approved for Upside Teen Centre at SCP
- Further investment in the Youth Program Quality Initiative in our teen centres

Communication



Is our message getting through? We continue to assess the complexities of communicating with youth as we engage youth in discussing what methods of communication work best.

Highlight from 2016

- **Four engagements with youth towards developing our Youth Communication Advisory Team**



Looking Ahead To 2017

Year 2 of our YDS will provide opportunity to enhance our existing initiatives while developing new relationships and community partnerships to strengthen our service to youth in Saanich.