

**Community Youth Initiative**  
**MEETING NOTES**

*March 6, 2020, 1:00-3:00*

*Family and Children's Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville*  
*438 Laurier Blvd. Brockville*

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**In attendance:** Sue Poldervaart (RNJ Youth Services; co-chair), Greg Francis (Brockville Police, co-chair), Margaret Fancy (EKIOC), Victoria Robertson (Connect Youth), Dan MacKinnon (Connect Youth), Tom Fournier (Brockville Police), Jennifer Labelle (Leeds Grenville Lanark District Health Unit), Emily Farrell (Brockville Public Library).

- 1.0 Review and Additions to Agenda – Additions – Youth Week, MDS in Gan, Resiliency Data. Agenda Approved.
- 2.0 Review of January 10 meeting notes – Approved, no discussion.
- 3.0 Review of Work plan:

**Youth Activities and Programming in the Community**

Emily – has not received any events from anyone about what to add to the calendar. A lot of agencies are still in the planning stages for spring and summer months. We should also look at adding activities now to cover this time period as the weather gets warmer.

Jennifer – is this calendar just for Brockville? Answer, yes for now. And it has to be free programs.

Brockville Tourism – Driftscape App. Emily is interested in pursuing this option, more info to follow. Feel free to check it out.

**ACTION** – invite or open up opportunities for other organizations that offer youth programming to advertise within the calendar i.e. Tallships, Aquatarium, etc.

Jennifer – what about other organizations looking to engage youth i.e. Cadets. This will make the calendar more wholesome albeit more difficult to manage, but more info is good. Maybe include an advertising “box” where some of these organizations can add their info. Emily - Idea is to have a google map overlay, but a lot of kids have reported they want a physical copy of the calendar.

**ACTION** – shout out for adult volunteers at Stingers After School Program as we are seeing an increase in usage. Please share as we will be advertising that we need adult volunteers who can engage with the youth on a consistent basis.

## **Advocacy and Transportation**

Marg received feedback from a chair of UCDSB that the messaging (about altering start times to better coincide with adolescent development) is a good idea and we should proceed with this plan. A draft letter was presented to the group for feedback – written by Marg Fancy and Erin-Lee Marcotte (thank you!)

**ACTION** – letter to be sent out for feedback. Question, does this letter come from this table?

**ACTION** – Emily to attach additional research. We should include all of the involved agencies specifically. Sign it from the CYI but include a list of the partners...we must get permission from our partners within this group to attach their name to the letter.

**Transportation** – Tom, met with Janette Loveys and Counselor Wales, discussed CYI and MDS, Cam has been in touch with Marg. Marg, after last meeting they talked about free access to transportation. There is a stigma amongst youth about taking the bus. YAC (Youth Advisory Committee) is looking at working with the community to educate and promote the transportation system. YAC is willing to take on that cause. Cam was at the meeting and took it to the budget committee which passed that round of budget talks. City agreed to pilot with a number of free passes issued to the community. Agencies will assist in distributing the pass. The idea is to give a pass to any youth that is going to use it. They are looking at running this pilot over a two year period. No idea yet when the pilot will start. There are numerous logistical items that need to be addressed. We are still waiting for final approval to see how we are going to proceed.

**ACTION** – use youth to promote the transportation system. Sue - idea, something similar to an Amazing Race to get youth and adults to explore the area and familiarize themselves with the transpo system. This has been done in other cities with great turnout. If a group comes together this would be a good idea to bring forward for consideration. The city is actively looking at ideas for new youth-friendly bus services and stops. The routes right now seem to target senior activities and not where the youth are, or need to go.

**ACTION** – Invite Matt Locke to one of our meetings to discuss the transportation barriers within Brockville.

**Advocacy** – Sue, we have mechanisms in place to bring the voice of the youth to the table, but we need to make it an action item to have the youth voice here. How do we go about doing this? **ACTION** – talk to Louise and Don about doing this.

MDS – Tom, community consultation at the Health Unit oversold, great turnout. Remember, we have had a ton of successes since we formed as a group. I.e. cleaning up of Hardy Park. The budget has been passed. The next step will be the formation of a steering committee. The Community Youth Initiative satisfies the Prevention pillar of the MDS. We need to focus on harm reduction now. I.e. Needle disposal boxes. Hoping they could be done very quickly in order to send the message “look at the good job you’ve done”.

Sue – with the warmer months coming, are there issues that we need to tackle and get ahead of before they become an issue. Connect Youth, out of 120 youth homelessness referrals 72 of them were from the city of Brockville.

**ACTION** - Tom, we should prioritize what we want to put in place for the summer.

1. Public Education (Tom, Jennifer), Social Media Education (Greg, VSLG)
2. Community Cleanup, with the coming of the melting snow to collect the discarded needles – Tom to work with Health Unit and City Works to organize when to do this
3. Local activity planning calendar in place, the sooner we get this done the quicker we can identify the gaps (Emily, Sue)
4. Summer activity sign-ups
5. Transportation – what are other communities doing? (Marg, Tom, etc.)

Sue – May 1-7 is Youth Week – **ACTION** – Victoria to explore this further. May/June is always a challenging time for youth due to exams, anticipated breakdown of routine, etc. This week might be a good opportunity to empower youth, find funding and see what we can do. Victoria to take the lead!

**Resiliency Data** – Marg, the survey is geared around resiliency and all the work that has been done. Surrounds connections to family, community, etc. We are seeing an increase in the connection to community for youth. There is still a breakdown in the perceived knowledge of where they can go for help. Principals report they are not aware of all the resources we can connect with in the community. There is a need to keep communicating that those doors are open. Anxiety and managing it...the fear of making mistakes was identified. Resiliency and coping mechanisms are down. Emily, the data validates what we have been experiencing, but is not necessarily comforting.

**ACTION** – are there others that should be invited to the group? I.e. youth, parents, etc. There is a need to have the youth voice here to answer those questions that we ask on how you want to be involved.

### **Education**

Substance Education – messaging needs to be shared again. Facebook Live is a good mechanism for delivering these messages to ensure broader coverage.

Jennifer, Health Unit has a lot of the work done already – use the Library. Looking at spring time to get info out. Powerpoints are already done. Facebook info is completed, just needs to be updated.

Tom, must decide who the audience is and tailor it to a specific group. We have two audiences. Adults/Community Members, and Youth.

If we can use some of the youth to create these messages it is double-win. The youth learn from the info they are teaching.

Jennifer , maybe Health Unit media people could help with this. Also the kids, they know social media better than we do!

**ACTION** – need someone to take the lead to pull this information together and start the conversation. If we come up with a plan we can then reach out to get the much-needed youth. Jennifer to talk to media “Susan” at health unit to come up with a plan – what info would be useful and how to go about doing this.

**Next meeting (due to Good Friday) is Friday April 17, 2020 from 13:00-15:00 at FCS.**