

## Youth Let's Talk Survey Summary Report 2018

**Executive Summary:** Over the summer of 2018, community agencies and youth allies conducted a survey with youth community members. The purpose of the Youth Let's Talk survey was to seek input from youth in Leeds Grenville to gain a better understanding of how communities could plan and deliver programs that support youth.

A total of 408 hard copy surveys were submitted. Due to the fluid nature of youth events, the total number of possible respondents is not known, therefore, no response rate can be calculated for this survey summary and the results may not be generalizable. All of the results have been compiled and are presented below.

Youth ages 12-18 were asked to respond to the survey. The mean age with respondents was 14.3 and the mode is 13.

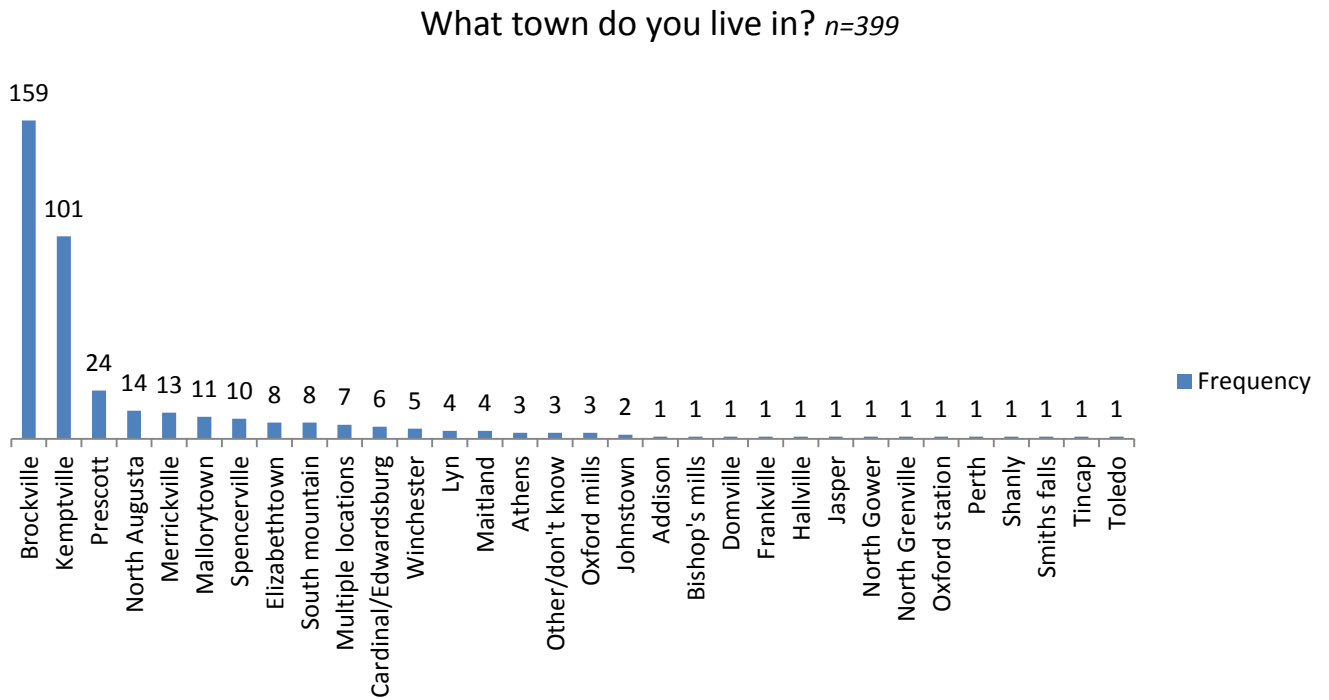
The youth involved in the survey reported the following:

- The majority reported living in Brockville or Kemptville.
- When in the community most prefer to hang out with their friends in parks, malls/stores, schools and at sporting events. Many provided additional places where they like to hang out with their friends. By far the most common response was at their house or their friends' houses/homes.
- The top three things that local businesses and organization can do to make youth feel welcome are:
  - Offer student discounts or group deals
  - Hire youth
  - Greet them and be non-judgemental
- The top three responses to what does a youth friendly environment look like to youth were:
  - Fun activities
  - Respectful/non-judgemental
  - Access to services (e.g. Wi-Fi, washrooms)

- Youth would like to be involved in making decisions in their communities in the following ways:
  - Be invited to participate
  - Survey/poll on community decisions
  - Be on a student group within their school
- Forty five percent of respondents would be interested in participating in a project that would make the community better. Followed by forty six percent that might be interested.
- Project ideas for what would make their community better were provided and responses were varied with few common themes.
- The top three activities they would like to see in their community are:
  - Escape rooms
  - Laser tag
  - Movies in the community
- The suggestions related to what opportunities they would like the community to provide also varied. Some would like more sports and physical activity based opportunities, more venues for youth, clubs and groups and jobs and volunteer opportunities. They also mentioned things to be mindful of such as, that spaces/venues/opportunities need to be welcoming, provide food/snacks, and be free or low cost. Finally it was noted that transportation can be a barrier for some.
- Many participants provided feedback about where they would like to volunteer. Many would like to work with animals, food related venues and services, children and youth, medical facilities, the elderly, and community agencies.
- Barriers to volunteering and employment were identified. Commonly reported barriers included, age (being too young), a lack of transportation, a lack of time and a lack of job related opportunities.
- When asked how the community can tell them about programs and services being offered the top three responses were:
  - School announcements
  - Social Media
  - Signs on store fronts
- If/when using social media consider using Instagram, Snap Chat and Facebook as these are the three most used social media platforms as reported by respondents. If using radio advertising consider the use of 96.7 FM as this was the most frequently reported station listened to by respondents.
- These results should be reviewed and taken into consideration when drafting recommendations, a next steps action plan, and for future planning.
- A full results summary is presented below.

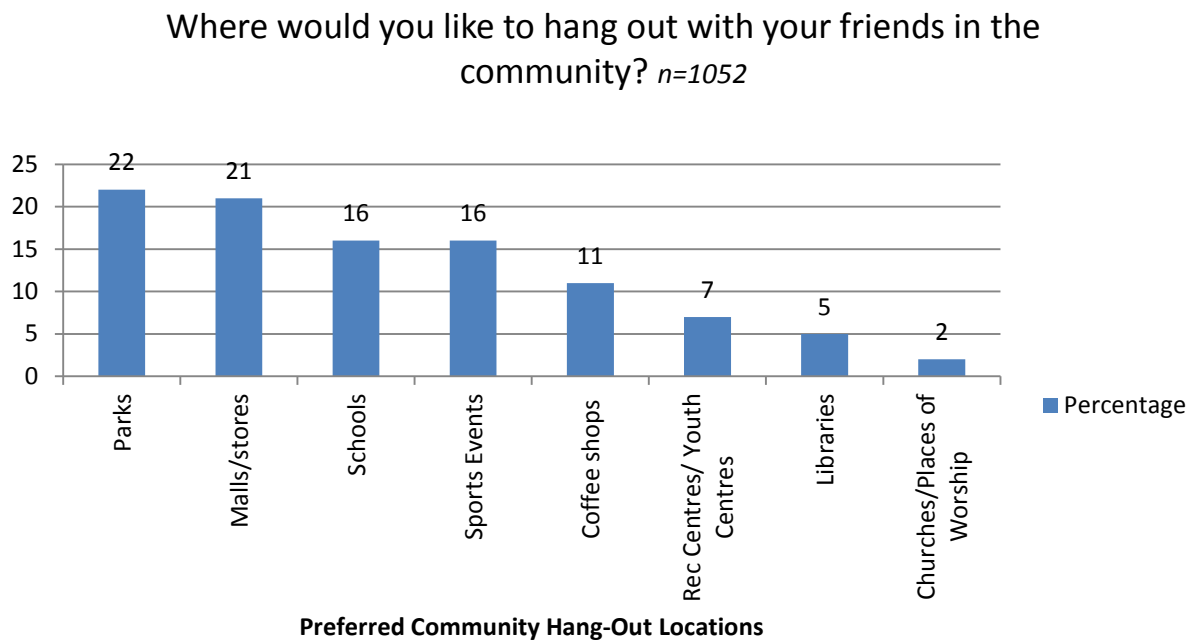
Results:

**Table one:** What town do you live in?



Youth reported Brockville and Kemptville most frequently.

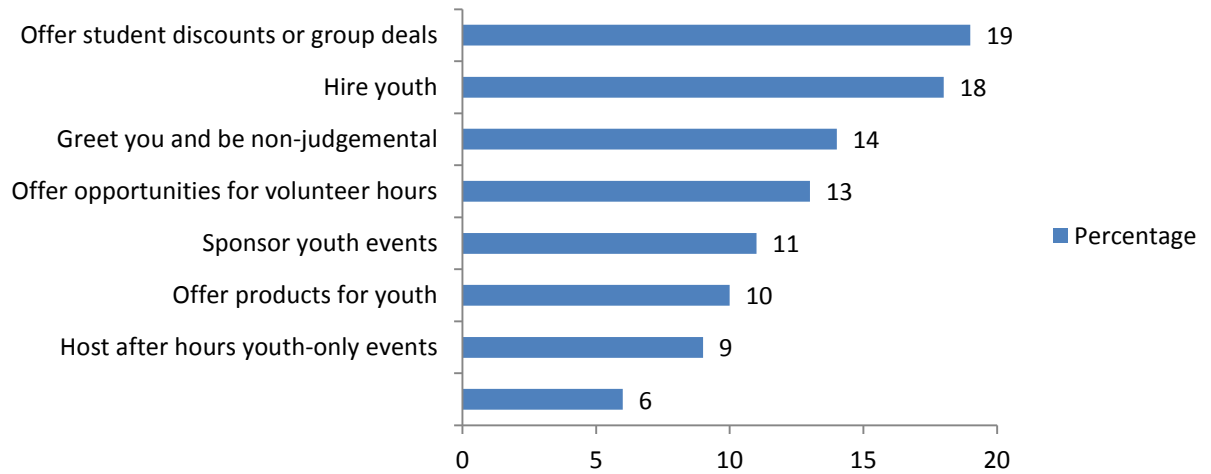
**Table two:** Where would you like to hang out with your friends in the community?



**Table three:** “Other” locations where youth would like to hang out with their friends in the community?

**Table four:** What can local businesses and organizations do to make you feel welcome?

What can local businesses and organizations do to make you feel welcome? *n=1323*

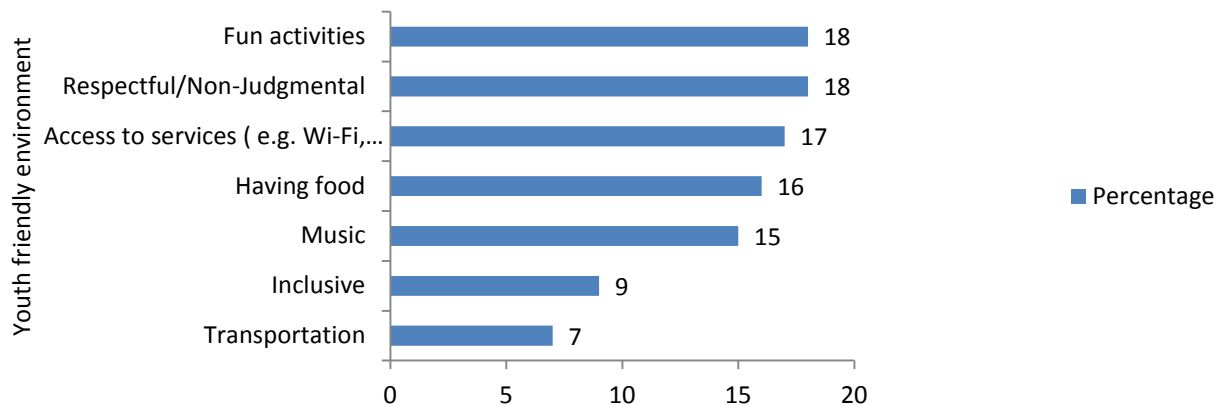


A few additional suggestions for what local business and organisations can do to make youth feel welcome were provided. Most of those comments were related to making them feel welcome by not treating them like potential shoplifters. Some would like to be welcomed, engaged in conversation and for business/organization to have competitive pricing.

- Don't classify all young kids as a problem*
- Not act like all teenagers are shoplifters*
- Make it a welcoming environment*
- Make conversation with us*
- Better prices than their competitors*

**Table five:** What does a youth friendly environment look like to you (a place where you feel comfortable, safe & welcome)?

What does a youth friendly environment look like to you (a place where you feel comfortable, safe & welcome)? *n=1601*

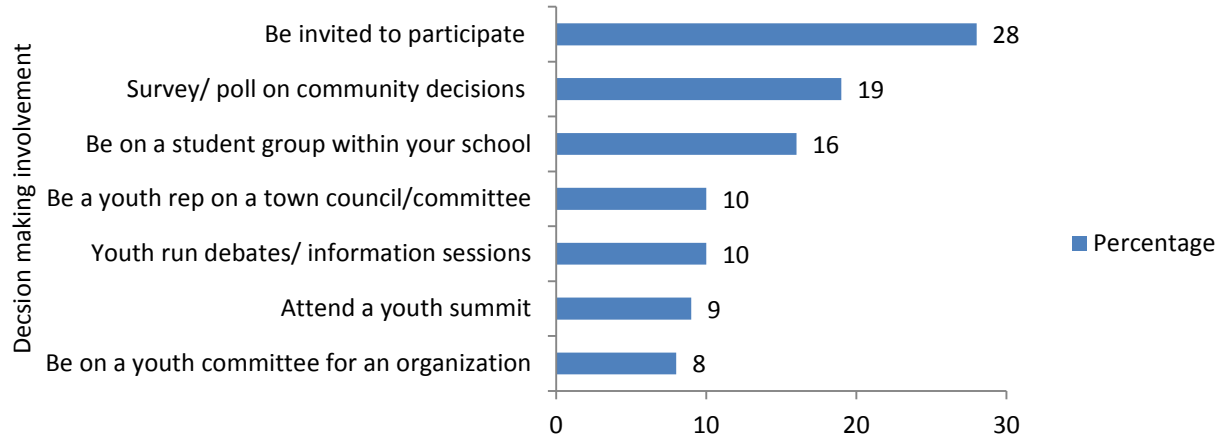


The following suggestions in addition to those reported above regarding what a youth friendly environment look like to youth (a place where you feel comfortable, safe & welcome) were provided:

- Comfortable seating
- Home
- Responsible supervision
- Mats to do flips
- Nice people
- Being around new people and learning new thing about people
- Alcohol and smoke free zone
- Vendors
- Can't describe, but a happy place!
- Minimize activities so kids with ASD don't feel overwhelmed
- Safe/security against drugs
- A place to be with friends
- Feel comfortable, safe & welcomed
- Confident people who just start convos.
- Accepting
- Games
- Sports

**Table six:** How would you like to be involved in making decisions in your community?

## How would you like to be involved in making decisions in your community? *n=870*

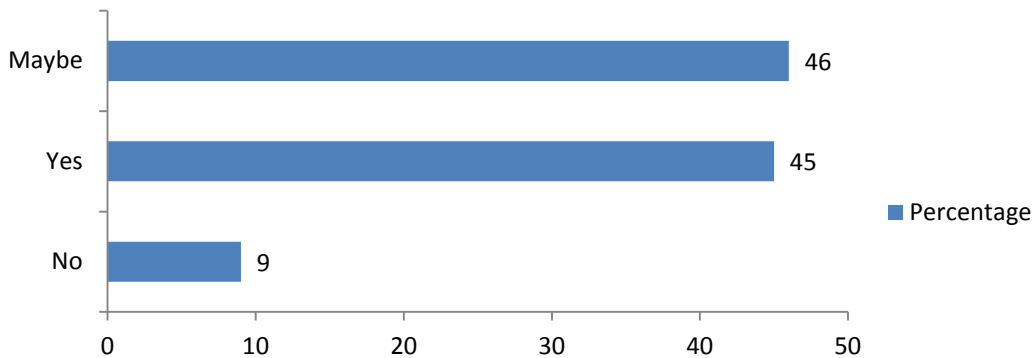


The following additional suggestions for how would you like to be involved in making decisions in your community were provided:

- Be allowed to vote x2
- Attending a youth summit - Big one more of these thing
- Sports Team/sports
- Getting an aquarium
- Youth make decisions
- Walk around
- Make a gaming center in the middle of Brockville
- Not really good at being involved
- Sports
- Don't want to participate

**Table seven:** Would you be interested in participating in a project that would make your community better?

## Would you be interested in participating in a project that would make your community better? *n=399*



## **Do you have project ideas that would make your community better?**

Though almost all respondents were interested or potentially interested in participating in a project to make their community better, many were unsure what that project would be exactly. A few respondents noted that a project was not needed or that they liked their community as it was presently.

Many of the responses provided were less project ideas and more focused on places/venues they would like to see established in their communities. Suggested places/venues included: more stores in local malls, water park, outdoor pool, splash pads, movie venues, art galleries, laser tag, a community centre, museums, skate parks, bike paths, BMX bike spaces, Go-Kart tracks, more parks, mini putt, an airport, gaming centre and arcade.

Several respondents requested new and/or fun places to hangout in general and more community sports. Some respondents indicated they would like to see more youth friendly events offered, food, air conditioning and free Wi-Fi offered more widely. A few respondents request Pride Parades or LGBTQT events. A small number of respondents noted they would like 'all events' to include everyone.

*Get more places where kids can go and have fun activities, food and more parks  
A sports day for all kids, free of charge. Music lessons available for children for free. Sports (i.e. Hockey, skating) assistance (financial)  
Wi-Fi and snacks everywhere.  
LGBTQT Pride parade*

Some mentioned the need for more volunteer and employment opportunities, the need for low and no cost activities, and accessible transportation. Additionally, general mental health supports and the need for those with mental illness was noted by a few respondents.

*You know one of these circles where you talk about your feelings  
Create a place for youth & people with mental illness to feel comfortably safe and welcome*

Some requested being more involved in decision making as a whole and specific involvement in council and who gets to run were specifically mentioned. It was suggested that surveys/polls could be distributed to everyone for input.

*Have a youth council run in our town for events  
Surveys and poles that go out to everyone  
Have a say in who's running*

Several project suggestions related to cleaning up their communities in general and some mentioned the collection of garbage and recycling specifically.

*Community Clean-up  
Maybe more park cleaning (like you pick up trash in the park)  
We could have a competition for who gets more litter from off the ground*

Some reported possible art projects to improve their communities. A day focusing on making and sharing art was also suggested.

*Urban art in downtown Kemptville; if murals were painted on the sides of the buildings by students, then people wouldn't do inappropriate graffiti*  
*Painting murals in the parks*

Several suggested helping to support rinks, outdoor rinks, and ice pads in their communities as a potential project.

*Helping maintain an outdoor rink*

The following suggestions were provided and focused on food or feeding those in need:

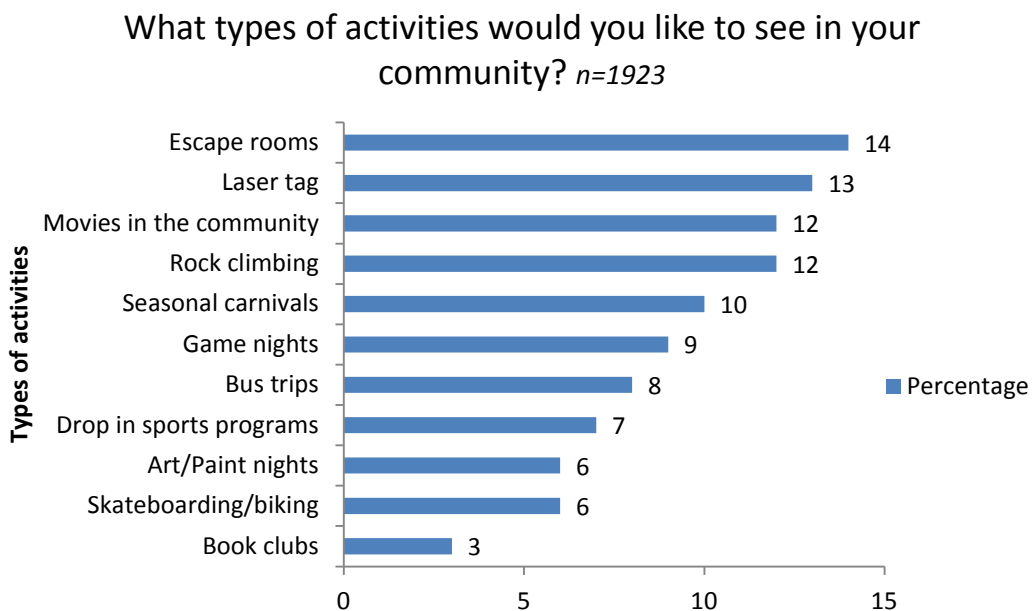
*Make it illegal for youth to buy energy drinks*  
*Making the world's biggest cookie*  
*One of my projects would be that there were less hungry people and more people with a home cooked meal in front of them.*  
*At school you could have snack bins.*

The following projects related to community fundraising and charities were reported:

*Community fundraising, raffles for charity*  
*Charity for endangered species*  
*Make & plant flower baskets and give them to the poor*

**Community Activities:**

**Table eight:** What types of activities would you like to see in your community?





Other responses:

- Sports x3
- More festivals and events (i.e. Ribfest) x2
- Gymnastics / cheer participation programs x2
- Swimming x2
- Maybe something for smaller children 3-10 years
- Open Dungeons and Dragons Night
- Dirt bike track.
- Dances
- Music nights
- Go kart racing
- Mountain bike
- Paintball/Gun range
- Open mic nights
- Parties
- Bike share
- Field trip
- Gaming center

### **Community Opportunities:**

Participants were asked *what other opportunities would you like the community to provide and were asked to provide some examples*. Several common themes emerged from the responses provided. A common request was for more opportunities to be provided related to physical activity and specifically, sports. Some would like youth only or youth focused dances be held on a regular basis.

*Sports a lot of sports  
Activity nights like a kid's fitness league  
Off-road biking*

Another common response was for communities to add more venues for youth. Some of the venues listed included, movie theatres, skate parks, gaming centres, waterparks, parks in general, escape room, laser tag and paintball venues, pools, malls and shopping venues, and community centres.

Many requested having youth focused events, or specific youth only times. Being mindful of youth availability was noted by some (i.e. weekends and not during school hours). Some preferred clubs where youth who share common interests could gather. Some of the clubs noted were focused on gaming, both electronic and board games, and books. Having an opportunity to hang out with their friends or gather together at youth only spaces was important to some. A few mentioned wanting the opportunity to display or express their talents and having talent shows was offered as potential ways of meeting this need for a few respondents. In addition to spaces that welcome youth, a few respondents noted that they would like more spaces that were welcoming to LGBTQ+ youth or those with mental health challenges. Having inclusive safe spaces in general was mentioned by some.

*Parks just to hang out with friends and family's  
More places for youth to go where we are welcomed  
Opportunity to get involved politically  
Clubs and stuff for the LGBTQT community.  
More inclusive opportunities  
Many clubs / support groups for kids that need it e.g. Lgbtq+, mental health / people to talk to about anything*

Many respondents spoke of the need for events, venues and opportunities to be low cost or free. In addition to cost considerations, some suggested that free WI-FI should be more widely available. For some providing transportation would be a benefit. The need to offer free food and at events/venues was common. Some would like more events and opportunities related to food; suggestions provided included, food festivals, cooking and baking classes. Cook-outs or barbeques were also noted by a few respondents.

It was noted by some that there is a need for both job and volunteer opportunities. Though jobs as a broad category was mentioned more frequently, a few respondents noted the need for jobs and/or work experience for those who are younger; some noting less than 16 years and others noting under the age of 13.

*More places for youth to work / volunteer*

*More small jobs for children under 16 for a chance to have job experience.*

A few respondents noted that they would like the opportunity to be more politically involved.

*Let teenagers vote; if you're old enough to drive a car, then you're old enough to vote*

Lastly, a small number of respondents requested the opportunity to go on trips and/or camping.

### **Volunteering:**

Respondents were asked *where they would like to volunteer and were asked to give examples*. Several noted that they would be willing to volunteer anywhere. Some noted they have all of their volunteer hours already and do not need to volunteer anywhere, some were unsure and a small number were not interested in volunteering.

For the remaining responses, several common themes were identified. By far the most common responses related to volunteering with animal related charities, businesses, locations and events. Many would like to work with veterinary clinics and animal hospitals, shelters, rescue organizations, and barns that offer riding and other events and to a lesser extent, the aquarium and pet stores.

Many would be interested in volunteering at food related venues and services. Food related venues were listed including, food banks, bake sales, food festivals, restaurants, grocery stores, and bakeries but more often specific restaurants were named such as, Tim Hortons, Subway, McDonalds, and Pizza Hut.

Many reported a willingness to give their time to other youth and/or youth serving/focused organizations. Also commonly reported were volunteer opportunities related to children, daycares and agencies that support children.

Frequently respondents noted that they would like to volunteer at places that have a medical focus. Those places included: doctors' offices, labs, physio therapy facilities, and hospitals.

Some were interested in carnivals, fairs and festivals. Others would like to volunteer in parks. A few specifically noted that they would like to help with movies in the park. A small number listed that they just wanted to be outside in general.

Many noted that they would like to volunteer with community organization, agencies and/or groups. Some groups listed included, faith based organizations and youth groups, police services and to a lesser extend the Salvation Army. Many specifically referenced “Stingers” in Brockville.

Respondents were asked to describe any *barriers they face to volunteering or getting a job*. By far the most common response was that there were no barriers to volunteering or getting a job. For those that did express challenges and/or barriers, age was the most frequently reported response. Most noted that they were too young. Many indicated that transportation was an issue and they were unable to get to opportunities. A lack of time caused by other commitments was cited, with school and sports obligations being the most common response listed.

*Age is a barrier for us  
People not letting me because they think I'm incapable and too young or immature  
Barriers for me to volunteer or get a job would be how much free time I have.*

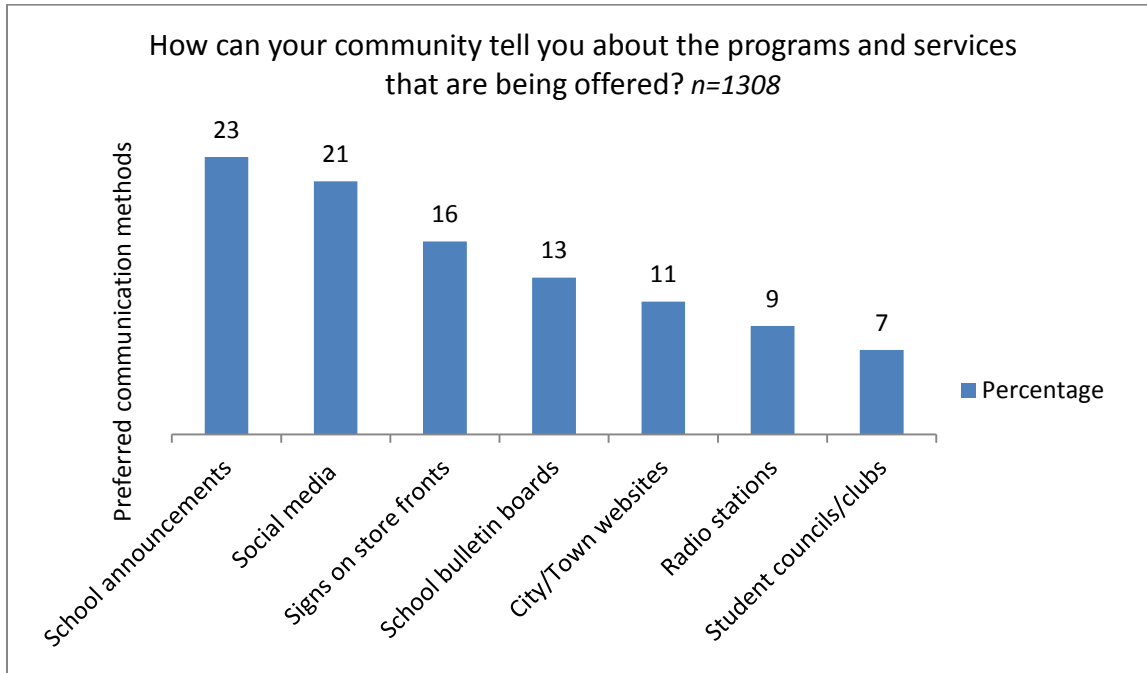
A number of respondents reported a lack of jobs in the community. A few respondents noted that health issues, anxiety and physical challenges were a barrier for them. A small number reported a lack of support from family, friends or parents.

*There are barriers because there are not a lot of jobs available for teens  
I'm nervous about going in  
Anxiety*

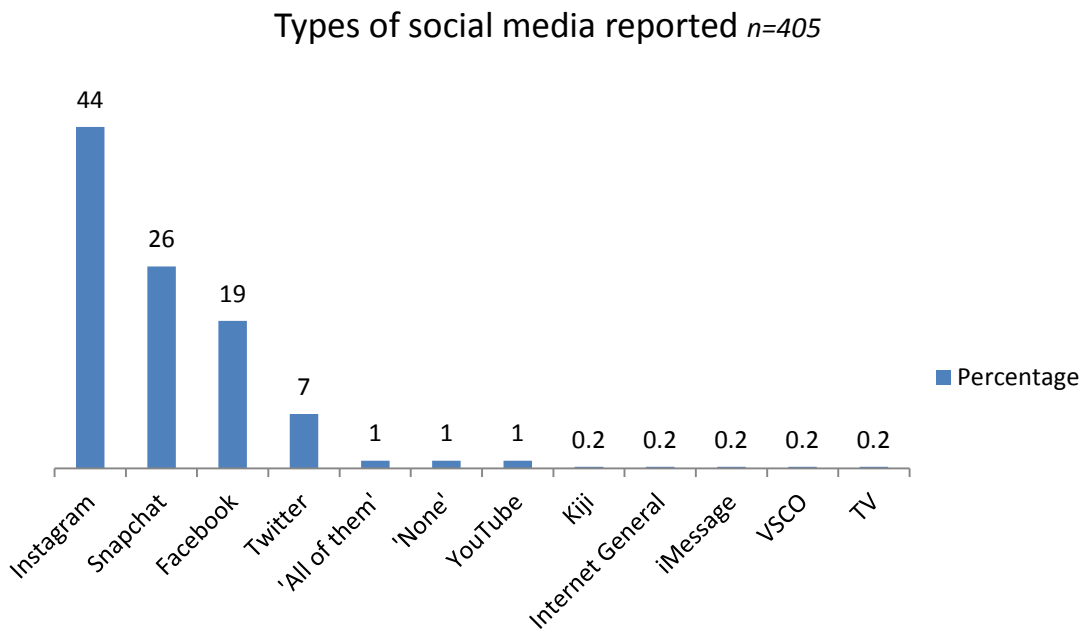
A few respondents noted that they lacked experience in general. A small number of respondents specially reported concerns about their resume or lack of resume. It was noted that without experience they were unsure what to add to their resumes.

*Need help with resume  
It's difficult to get experience to help build a resume.  
... I don't have much for a resume*

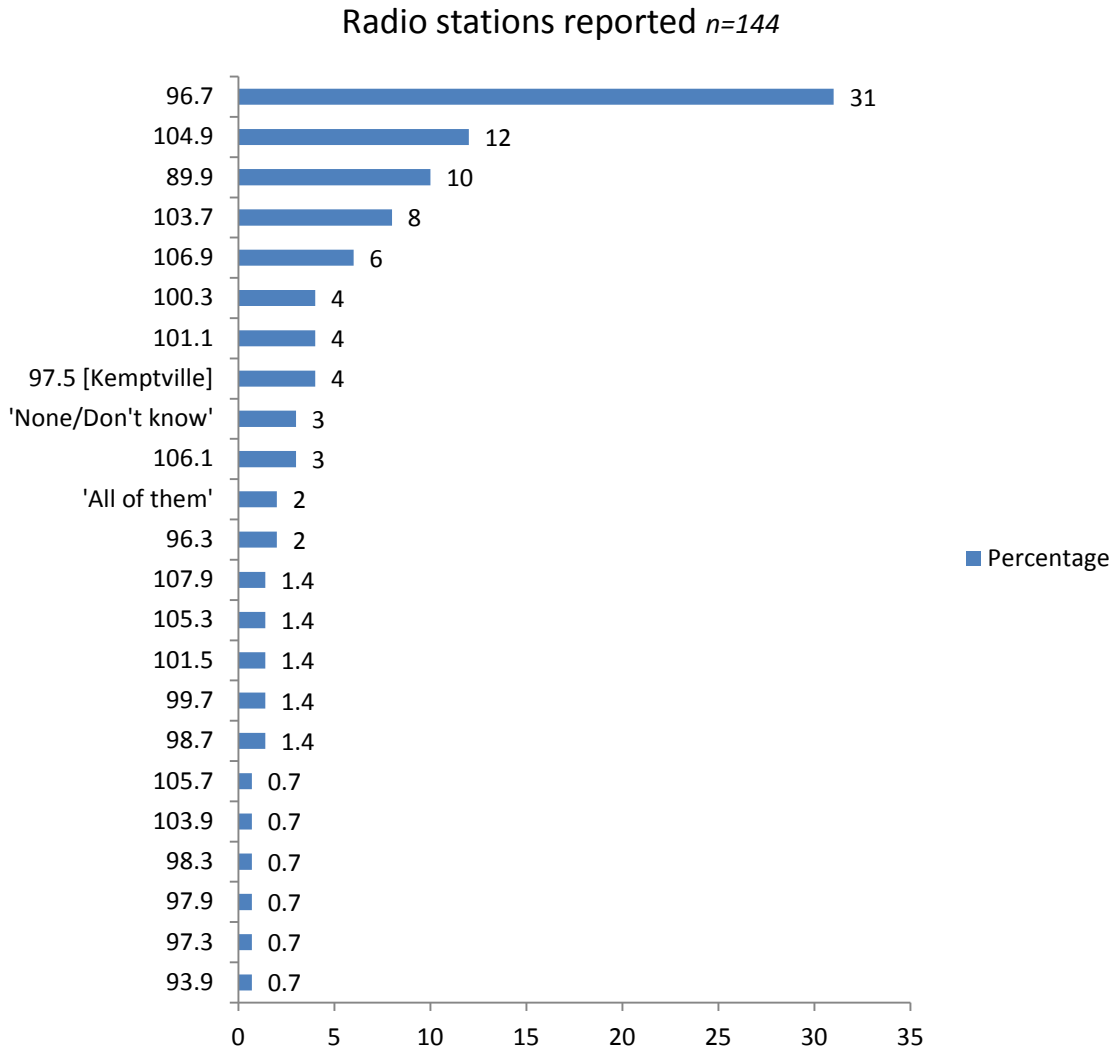
**Table nine:** How can your community tell you about the programs and services that are being offered?



**Table ten:** Types of social media most frequently used



**Table eleven:** Radio stations reported



The following ways the community can tell youth about the programs and services that are being offered were provided:

- Posters x3
- Newspapers
- Parents
- People come into schools to explain
- Word of mouth
- Emails
- Newsletters
- People
- Family
- Mail

Respondents were provided the opportunity to provide any additional comments or suggestions. By far the most common response was that they had nothing more to add or stated no specifically. A few specifically mentioned that the survey covered everything they wanted to say. Some expressed gratitude for the survey and some expressed their thanks for being consulted.

*Nope, hope I helped!*

*Thank you for doing this survey; youth aren't always listened to and it's nice to have someone asking what we want*

*Keep up the good work*

Some broad responses about the need to get youth more involved and invested in their communities were provided. Some made note of ways they would like to be more involved such as, having surveys and polls/surveys posted on the community/town website,

*Try harder to make the youth involved because they are ruling this city after the grown-ups pass. We might as well get involved and ready now.*

*Town Website polls for youth to vote online for community events.*

*Involve teens more in the community. Even have a teen city council or something.*

*Get youth more involved in decisions that are being made*

*Give kids my age a chance and have faith in us and then we won't disappoint you.*

In general some requested more places to gather, more activities in general and more activities that are youth friendly particularly. A gaming centre and improved/increased youth focused shopping stores were requested. Caution about the need for free and low cost activities/events, along with the need for spaces that are welcoming, open to everyone, and safe were provided by a small number of respondents.

*The community does do a lot to include youth, often there are fees, but if you can go somewhere free, it is much more welcoming and I'm more likely to go.*

A small number of respondents expressed gratitude for the youth events and groups they currently attend and some noted that others should attend their groups/events. A few participants also noted the need to hire youth and provide them with employment opportunities. It was suggested that having a youth focused job event would be helpful.

*Youth hiring is looked down upon since were seen as irresponsible teens.*

*They could have a day where all youth can try different jobs because a lot of kids would like to try jobs.*

## **Discussion & Recommendations:**

Youth in the community have provided detailed feedback as part of the Let's Talk surveys to help inform services and programs that support youth.

Based on the results of the survey, the following recommendations are provided for consideration:

- Review the ways youth prefer to be involved in decision making in their communities. Consider inviting youth to participate, the potential use of polls/surveys targeting youth when making decisions and potential ways to partner with student groups within schools.
- Review and consider potential community project ideas provided by respondents.
- Review and discuss the areas in which youth would be interested in volunteering and possible ways to overcome the barriers they report encountering.
- Consider the use of school announcements, social media, and information posted on sign front of stores. When using social media consider using Instagram, Snap Chat and Facebook as these were the three most used social media platforms reported by respondents. If using radio advertising, consider the use of 96.7 FM, as this was the most frequently reported station listened to by respondents.
- These results should be reviewed and taken into consideration when drafting recommendations, a next steps action plan, and for future planning.

**Respectfully submitted by,**

Julie Bolton, RN, BNSc  
Foundational Standard Coordinator

*This report may not be reproduced or disseminated externally without expressed written permission of the primary author.*

*Please contact:*

Julie Bolton, RN, BNSc. Foundational Standard Coordinator, Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit

## Youth Let's Talk Survey

---

**Are you 12-18 years old?** Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. This survey is anonymous, meaning you will not be personally identified. Your comments are very important to us, and will be used to plan and deliver community projects to support youth.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What town do you live in:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Where would you like to hang out with your friends in the community? Please check off your top 3**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Events              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rec Centres/ Youth Centres   | <input type="checkbox"/> Malls/stores               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Libraries                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Churches/Places of Worship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee shops               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe _____ |   |

**2. What can local businesses and organizations do to make you feel welcome? Please check all options that apply**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer student discounts or group deals  | <input type="checkbox"/> Host after hours youth-only events             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer products for youth                | <input type="checkbox"/> Greet you and be non-judgemental               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hire youth                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sticker or sign to show that youth are welcome |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offer opportunities for volunteer hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe _____                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor youth events                    |   |

**3. What does a youth friendly environment look like to you (a place where you feel comfortable, safe & welcome)? Please check all options that apply**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful/Non-Judgmental | <input type="checkbox"/> Fun activities                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to services ( e.g. Wi-Fi, washrooms) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe _____                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Having food               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation            |  |



4. **How would you like to be involved in making decisions in your community?** Please check all options that apply

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be a youth rep on a town council/committee  | <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/ poll on community decisions     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be on a student group within your school    | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth run debates/ information sessions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be on a youth committee for an organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Be invited to participate               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a youth summit                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please describe<br>_____         |

5. **a) Would you be interested in participating in a project that would make your community better?**

- Yes                                       No                                       Maybe

**b) Do you have project ideas that would make your community better?**

---

6. **What types of activities would you like to see in your community?** Please check off your top 5

- Movies in the community
- Skateboarding/biking
- Laser tag
- Escape rooms
- Rock climbing
- Drop in sports programs
- Seasonal carnivals
- Book clubs
- Game nights
- Bus trips
- Art/Paint nights
- Other. Please describe  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. **What other opportunities would you like the community to provide? Please give examples:**

---

---

8. **a) Where would you like to volunteer? Please give examples:**

---

---

**b) Are there barriers for you to volunteer or get a job? If yes, please describe:**

---

---

9. **How can your community tell you about the programs and services that are being offered? Please check all options that apply**

- School announcements
- School bulletin boards
- Signs on store fronts
- Student councils/clubs
- City/Town websites
- Social media. Which ones do you use?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Radio stations. Which ones?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Other. Please describe \_\_\_\_\_

10. **Do you have any other comments or suggestions?**

---

---

**Thank you for your time! 😊**