



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No.
Community Planning and Economic Development
July 23, 2015

TO: Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic Development
Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original signed by:

Brad Anguish, Director, Parks & Recreation

DATE: July 15, 2015

SUBJECT: Youth Engagement Report

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion of Regional Council – May 14, 2013:

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Councillor Craig that Regional Council:

1. Dissolve the Youth Advisory Committee established in 2006 but no longer officially functioning, in order to adopt a more effective way of engaging with Youth across HRM.
2. Direct staff of Community Recreation Services to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across HRM; and further direct staff to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding trends and issues, best practices, and actions taken. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Charter, Section 79 (k) recreational programs; (m) ...the expansion of employment opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality; and (d) police services.

BACKGROUND

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) business unit to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax.

Staff was further directed to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming.

DISCUSSION

The attached semi-annual Youth Engagement Report outlines current youth activity for the period of Fall 2013 to Summer 2014 in relation to Recreation Programming, Halifax Public Libraries, Facility Lease Agreement buildings, Multi-district Facilities and Halifax Regional Police youth programs.

Staff acknowledges that the attached report is late in its delivery to the Committee. Steps will be taken to ensure future semi-annual reports will be provided to the Committee in October/November and April/May timeframes.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Staff engaged youth to complete this report. Staff gained feedback from youth on the trends and issues presented in the attached report by visiting existing youth programs and events across the municipality.

ATTACHMENTS

Youth Engagement Report

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Lee Moore, Community Developer, 902-490-4410

Report Approved by: Original Signed by:

John Henry, Acting Manager, Recreation Programming, 490-4734

Youth Engagement Report

(Fall 2013 to Summer 2014)

Prepared by:

Lee Moore, Community Developer
Parks & Recreation



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PURPOSE

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) business unit to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax. Staff was further directed to provide semi-annual reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming. This semi-annual Youth Engagement Report is an outcome of this request and this report outlines current youth activity for the period of Fall 2013 to Summer 2014 in relation to Recreation Programming, Halifax Public Libraries, Facility Lease Agreements, Multi-district Facilities and Halifax Regional Police youth programs.

The information presented in this report will aid in understanding youth needs within Halifax, how Parks and Recreation programming addresses these needs, as well as next steps toward optimal youth programming in our region.



METHODOLOGY

To provide significant context for the current trends and social outcomes affecting children and youth in Nova Scotia, two reports from the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia were consulted. This information has been compared with data pertaining to recreation programming including youth programs that run out of Halifax-operated recreation facilities, the Youth Live Program, the Youth Advocate and Soul Strong programs and Community Arts programming. In December 2014, Recreation hosted a meeting for internal departments (Halifax Police, RCMP, Fire & Library) in order to review what youth programs each department offered. Representatives from Halifax Fire and the RCMP were unable to attend, however, an important outcome of these sessions was the perceived need among stakeholders to coordinate the programs offered by each business unit to ensure HRM services are not gapped or duplicated.

In addition to the survey results from the Community Foundation of Nova Scotia, HRM staff undertook a qualitative research study engaging youth during the preparation and development of this report by attending youth programs and events. One of these events was the Teens Now Talk Youth XPO which takes place each November.

Participants

The youth who attended this XPO represented all districts in the Halifax Regional Municipality, from various schools in the Halifax Regional School Board area. They consisted of junior high and high school students ages 13-24 years old. In 2014, 3,174 students from 33 different schools attended. There was also a diverse representation of cultures and academic backgrounds.

Method

Youth were consulted in two manners. First, staff consulted youth at the XPO to determine the ranking of several key priority areas from health and well-being to the environment through a method called Dotmocracy¹. In 2014, 542 respondents were engaged.

During the summer of 2014, 243 youth were further surveyed and asked to identify how they defined each priority area. The youth were allowed to give more than one answer per theme. Staff then engaged youth to vote on their top priority for each theme.

¹ Dotmocracy is a method that enables the efficient transference and categorization and coding of qualitative information. A flip chart was set up with the 6 topics. The youth were then asked to place a sticky dot on the priority area they felt Halifax Staff should focus attention

Youth Engagement Staff Committee

On November 6, 2014, Recreation held its first Youth Engagement Staff Committee meeting at the Captain William Spry Community Centre. Fifteen internal staff and eight external organizations attended this meeting. Dr. Stephen Schneider, Department of Sociology and Criminology presented a summary report on the research and findings on Addressing Youth Crime and Violence in Halifax. Part of this meeting was spent discussing main trends and issues affecting youth in Halifax from the perspective of youth organizations. This Committee will strive to meet once per season, offering a chance for networking and learning from professionals in the youth engagement field.

CURRENT CLIMATE

Youth Trends in Halifax and Nova Scotia

The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia published their Youth Vital Signs® project report in October 2014 which examined the interconnected issues affecting children and youth within Nova Scotia, particularly at-risk, disadvantaged youth or those dealing with difficulties. The organization also conducted a project examining similar issues within Halifax in 2012 and administered a survey to youth between the ages of 15-24 titled the “youth report card on HRM”. Excerpts/data from reports findings are provided below as a benchmark of youth outcomes in Halifax/Nova Scotia to which programming within the municipal mandate could be better aligned to create stronger outcomes.

FINDINGS

Youth Profile

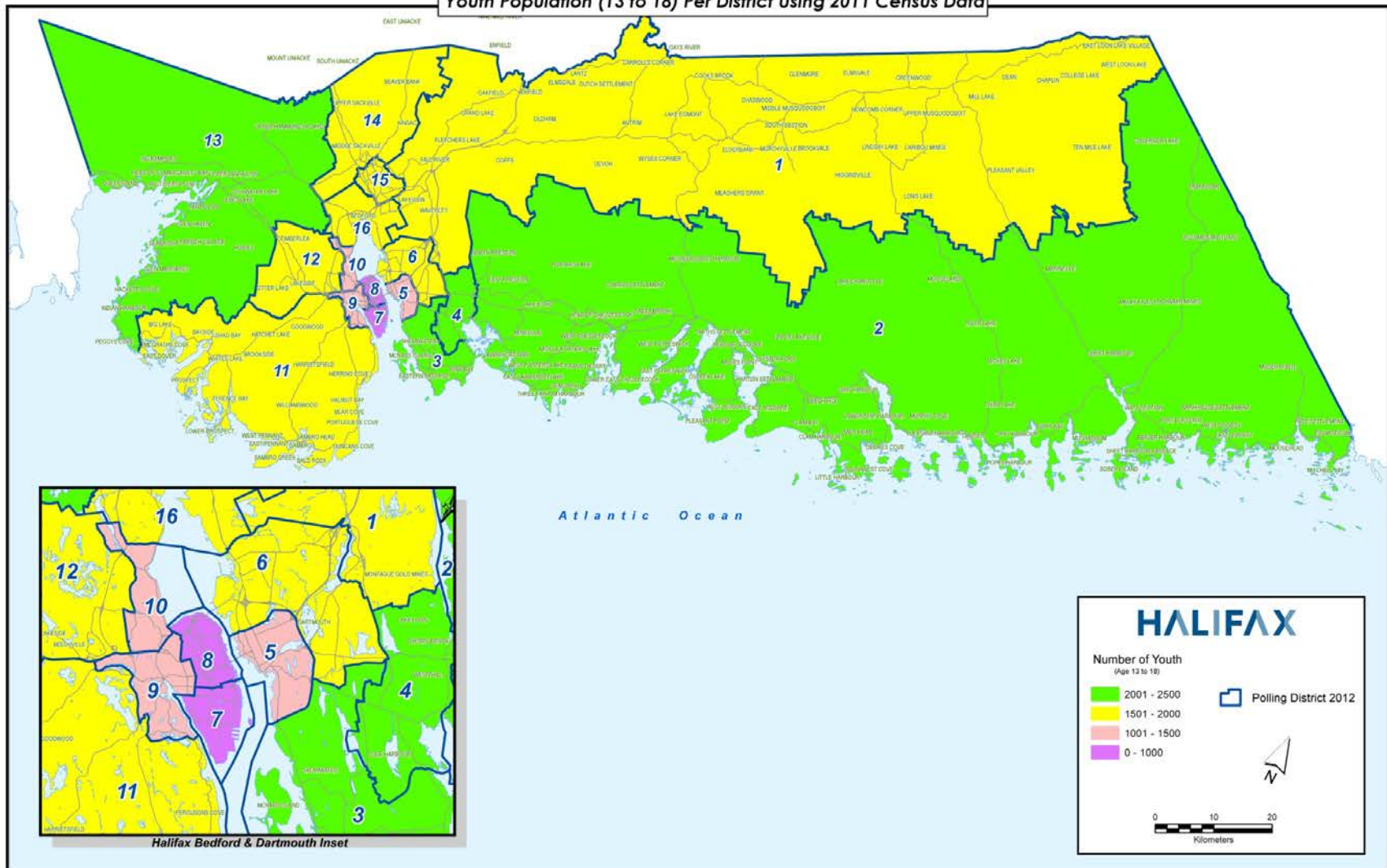
Like many parts of Atlantic Canada, Halifax’s youth population is on the decline falling 9.7% from 66,010 to 59,608 from 2001-2011. The number of youth under 15 fell 2.1% nationally and 16.2% in NS during the same time period. Youth comprised 18.4% of the share of Halifax’s population in 2001, but only 15.3% in 2011. This is comparable to NS levels (15%), but below the national level (16.7%).

Youth Demographics by Council District

The following two maps show the population ranges broken down by Council Districts. The first map is for youth aged 13 to 18 and the second map is for the age range of 19 to 24. This data was collected through the 2011 Canada Census Information.

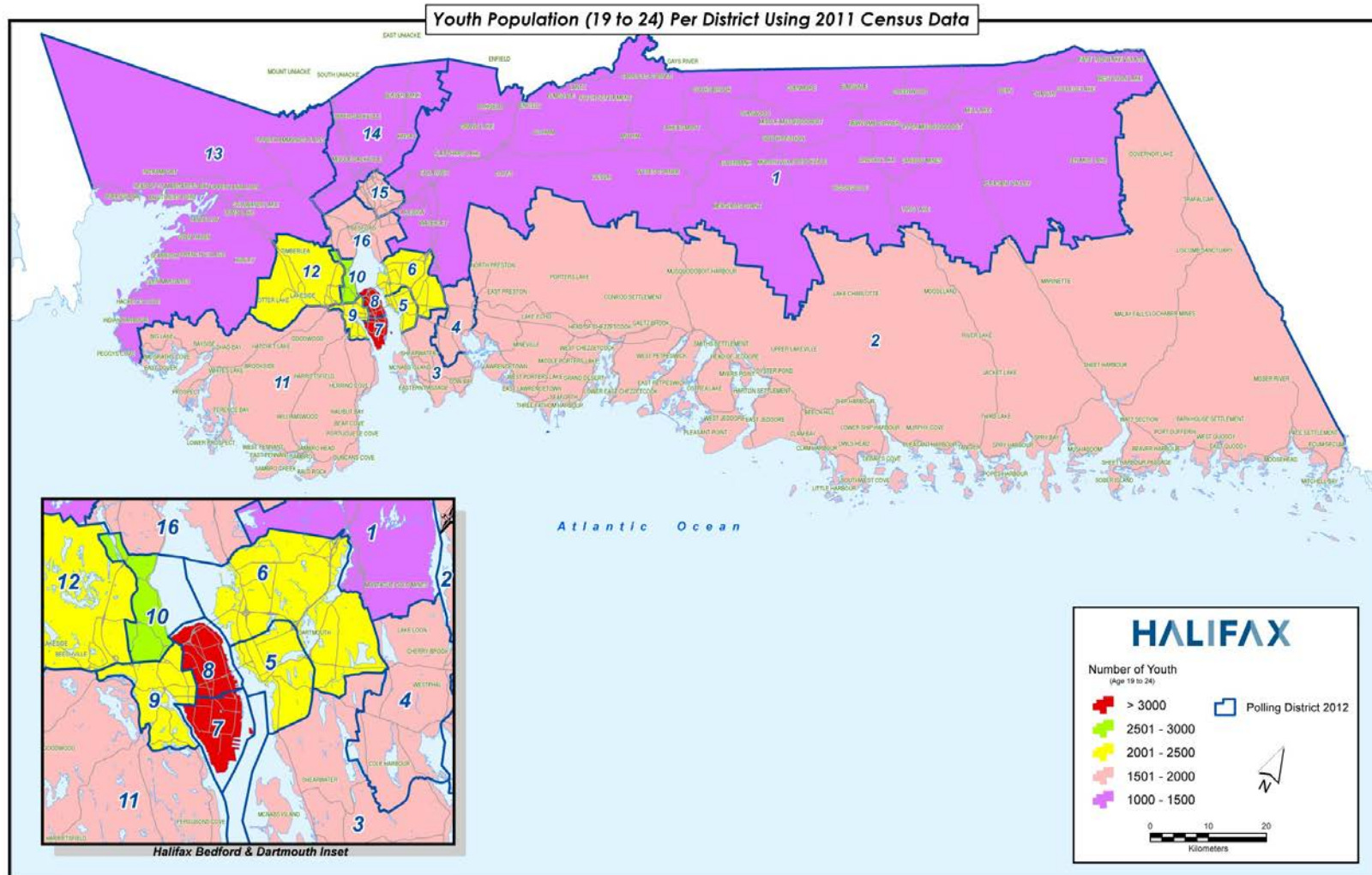
YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

Youth Population (13 to 18) Per District Using 2011 Census Data



The HRM does not warranty any information shown on this map. Prepared: October 2014

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS



The HRM does not warrant any information shown on this map. Prepared: October 2014

Child/Youth Public Transit fares:

In 2014, the public transit fare for a child or youth in Halifax was \$1.75 – the third lowest among 13 major Canadian cities (only Ottawa at \$1.50 and Toronto at \$0.75 were lower).

Survey—Getting Around:

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like cost, convenience and reliability of the bus/ferry, bike routes, pedestrian walkways, the reliance on cars, and accessibility of Halifax for youth with disabilities. Two themes dominated the comment section: the need for improved public transit (e.g., more frequent buses, more late night buses and extended routes into suburban and rural areas) and for improved bike lanes.

Housing, Rent, and Homelessness:

- In 2013, 77.5% of full-time students in NS lived off-campus. This trend is primarily seen within Halifax, whereas their rural counterparts were more likely to live on campus.
- In 2012, Halifax had 4,184 public housing units and 1,268 people were on the waiting list for public housing. From 2009 to 2011, 237 new public housing units were created in Halifax. None were added in 2012.
- In 2014, the average rent for a 2 bedroom Halifax apartment was \$1,010 per month, 5.3% (\$51) higher than the provincial average (\$959), and 11.7 (\$106) higher than the national average (\$904). From 2008 to 2014, the average monthly rent for a 2 bedroom apartment rose 22.1% (\$183) in Halifax, 21.5% (\$170) in Nova Scotia and 15.6% (\$122) nationally.
- In 2012, the proportion of individuals who stayed in a homeless shelter in Halifax was 86% adults, 8% youth (16-19) and 6.2% were children under the age of 16. In 2012, 263 were children under the age of 19, 144 were females under the age of 19, and 119 were males under the age of 19. In 2011, 41% of homeless youth 16 to 25 years in Halifax had been homeless for less than a year, while 29% had been homeless for 1 to 3 years or more than 3 years.
- Interviews with Halifax homeless individuals revealed that half (50%) were living on less than \$200 a month. 69% cited a lack of affordable housing² as their primary reason for using a shelter. 48% had a mental illness diagnosed by a health professional.

Survey – Youth Housing:

Survey respondents commented about the need for safe, affordable housing. The report cited that expensive rents are “contributing to student debt-loads and substandard housing adds stress and worry”.

² Affordable housing is defined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as adequate shelter that does not exceed 30% of gross household income.

Youth Quality of Life:

- A number of factors fall under this category, however, no statistics were specifically identified for children and youth within the Nova Scotia Vital Signs® report.
- In 2008, the municipal government spent an average of \$457 per household on culture and recreation which represented 11% of total municipal spending that year, placing Halifax above spending levels in Montreal (10.7%), London (7.9%), but below Kingston (12.7%), Kitchener (19.3%), and Victoria (24.3%). Interestingly in 2011, Halifax spent less than 1\$ per person (\$0.55) on arts and culture grants, below eight other Canadian cities.
- In 2011, the average consumer household in Halifax spent \$3,615 on recreation, higher than the provincial average by 14.6% and comparable to the national average. Consumer spending in these areas was higher than Montreal and Toronto but lower than Calgary, suggesting we live in a relatively active city. No specific data for youth spending could be extrapolated at this time.

Survey**Identify and belonging:**

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like connection to one's community, discrimination, homophobia, class and gender issues, welcoming immigrant youth, culture, etc. Respondents commonly shared concerns about attitudinal barriers in Halifax that they face on a daily basis and encouraged education and awareness as a means to foster greater tolerance.

Youth Engagement:

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like volunteering, participation in town hall meetings, voting, youth activism, and other opportunities to be involved in Halifax. Nearly 80% of survey respondents volunteer in their communities, and of that 80%, about half volunteer one-two hours per week and another 45% volunteer more than three hours per week. Respondents suggested a preference to be involved in decision making and to be made aware of opportunities to do so. Vital Signs suggests engaging youth in topics and conversations that are of interest to them, as well as integrating demographic considerations in community planning.

Youth Spaces:

Suggestions about public facilities like libraries, community centres and recreation centres dominated the comments. While youth were generally positive about these facilities, their concerns focussed on limited programming for older teens and general accessibility (e.g., costs, transportation, lack of programming information and closing hours).

Recreation and Sports

The need to reduce barriers for youth participation in sport and recreation activities by, for example, more broadly advertising existing offerings that are free or inexpensive dominated the comment section on the survey with respect to recreation and sport.

Arts & Culture

Two main themes dominated the comments about arts and culture: the need for increased investment in this sector to make it more accessible for youth, and the need for more widespread advertising (preferably through social media) so that youth are more aware of local offerings.

Environment:

Environmental awareness was high among Halifax's youth and Youth Vital Signs® indicated that there was a sense of collective responsibility for maintaining the beauty of our city. Some even suggested fines for littering, fines for smoking in no-smoking areas like bus terminals, restrictions on household garbage pickup, and caps on corporate emissions.



Health

- The NS Department of Health and Wellness recommends that children get at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. In 2009/10, 80.3% of Grade 3 girls and 81.6% of boys in NS met the target whereas only 13.2% of Grade 7 girls and 28.4% of Grade 7 boys met the standard. Importantly, at the grade 11 level only 1% of girls and 4.5% of boys met the standard. 68% of youth 20-34 years in NS reported being moderately active compared to 60.1% (an increase of 20.4% since 2007).
- In 2012, one in three youth (32%) in NS between ages 12-17 reported being overweight or obese, compared to one in five nationally. In the same year, 51% (an increase of 8.1% since 2007) between 20-34 years of age reported being overweight or obese, compared to 41.1% nationally.
- Mental health findings for NS were lower than the national average with 91.4% of youth 20-34 years reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with their lives compared to 94.7% nationally. NS's rate was the lowest among all provinces. Despite the 2012 Halifax survey findings below, the 2014 Vital Signs report indicates that at a DHA level, satisfaction ranged from 85% in the Annapolis Valley to 93% in the CDHA (including HRM).

Survey – Halifax-Specific Findings

Mental Health

84% of males and 70% of females age 12-19 reported their mental health as very good or excellent. For those ages 20-34, the rate for males is about the same (81%), while the rate for females is 82%.

General Health

76% of males and 70% of females age 12-19 reported their general health as very good or excellent. Ages 20-34 were consistent with these findings.

Healthy Eating

Less than half (40%) of youth age 12-19 and about 36% of youth age 20-34 reported eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times a day – the amount recommended by Health Canada. The rate for 20-34 year olds was statistically lower than the national average for that age group (44%).

Physical Activity Rate

85% of males and 76% of youth age 12-19 and about one third (36%) of youth age 20-34 reported eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times a day – the amount recommended by Health Canada. The rate for 20-34 year olds was statistically lower than the national average for that age group (44%).

Smoking and Heavy Drinking

Approximately 18% of males and 3% of females age 20-34 report smoking daily or occasionally. The rate for males was statistically lower than the national average for males in this age group (31%), while the rate for females was statistically higher (23%). With heavy drinking defined as 5 plus drinks at one time at least once a month in the past year, 23% of females and 53% of males reported drinking heavily. The rate for males was statistically higher than the national average.

Contacting a Medical Doctor

66% of males and 81% of females age 12-19 reported visiting a medical doctor at least once within the past 12 months.

Education:

Outcomes

- The HRSB had the highest proportions of all NS school boards with students who met expectations for grade 8 reading (74%).
- In 2014, 73% of Grade 6 students in NS met the expectation for math. Of the HRSB, 76% did so. In 2013, only 53% of NS students met the math expectation for grade 8 and in HRSB, only 56% did so. The Straight Regional School board had the highest proportion (72%). In 2012, 64% of students in 2008-09 and 69% in 2011-12 passed the advanced math provincial exam. In HRSB, 67% passed in 2008-09 and 71% in 2011-12.
- In 2011, Grade 4 students in NS had a Progress in international reading literacy (PIRLS) score of 549 which was at par with the national average (548). The HRSB had the highest score (566), while Conseil Scolaire Acadien had the lowest (501).

Survey – Education & Learning:

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like quality, relevance, and rigor of teaching and of the curriculum, adequate preparation for and cost of post-secondary education, testing and grading, class sizes, ELS supports, and opportunities for special student's needs. Three main themes dominated the survey comment section: the need for smaller class sizes, and more discipline and rigour in the classroom (with the assumption that higher expectations of students leads to higher performance).

Economic Development:

- In 2013, NS's GDP per capita was the third lowest in Canada at \$35,185. Specifically, Halifax's GDP per capita was \$44,311, 25.9% higher than the provincial average and only 2.0% lower than the national average (\$45,222). At the same time, GDP is an overall indicator of prosperity and does not account for the variations and income gaps present in NS and relative to the other provinces or municipalities.
- In 2013 national unemployment was 13.7% for youth aged 15-24 (up from 11.2% in 2007)³. In some of the larger Ontario cities like Windsor, Oshawa, Brantford, and London, the youth unemployment rate is above 20%. The unemployment rate for NS's youth 15-24 years of age was the highest among the Canadian provinces at 18.3% (with young males hit hardest) while the Capital District Health Authority⁴ (including Halifax Regional Municipality and parts of Hants County) had the lowest unemployment rate of all District Health Authorities (DHAs) in 2013 at 15.6%. As expected, Halifax youth fare slightly better, however, improvements at all levels could be seen.

Survey – Employment:

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like the availability of work, the age when you can start working, average wages, training needed for certain jobs, career planning, etc. According to the report “three themes dominated the survey comment section: the difficulty in getting a job either because of a lack experience or training, the desire to have more job options that pay above minimum wage, and the need for more job opportunities for recent university graduates, the need to reduce attitudinal age barriers and stereotypes surrounding young professionals”.

³ 9. See: <http://o.canada.com/business/ontario-facing-chronic-youth-unemployment>.

⁴ 10. Capital District Health Authority (CDHA) includes HRM and a few parts of Hants County. The population of HRM was 408,718 (43.3% of NS) as of July 2013 (Statistics Canada) whereas the CDHA represents approximately 395,000 according to recent DHA statistics. In 2011, HRM comprised 95% of the total population served by the CDHA. As such, using CDHA as a proxy for HRM data as the report has done, is statistically valid.

Youth Crime⁵:

- The crime rate for youth (12-17 years) per 10,000 youth within Halifax was 735 (-4.9% from 2008) with 197 (-18.3% from 2008) being violent crimes and 538 (+1.1% since 2008) non-violent crimes. These figures were well below most other cities/towns in NS with the exception of Antigonish (432 total; 129 violent; 303 non-violent). At the same time, the youth crime rate in Halifax is just below the provincial statistics with 882 (-10.5% from 2008) total crimes, 197 (-18.3% from 2008) violent crimes, and 538 (+1.1% since 2008) in non-violent crimes in NS.
- Nationally, NS does not fare so well compared to the 435 total youth crime rate. NS is the third highest province in crime severity, the violent crime rate and the fourth highest in youth sexual assault rate, the youth drug violation rate, and the youth incarceration rate. Municipal comparisons were not available at this time.

Child and Youth Abuse:

- In 2012, the rate of police-reported sexual offenses against children and youth 0-17 years of age in NS was 24.1 offenses per 10,000 children and youth. This was 17.6% higher than the national rate (20.5).
- From December 2012 to August 2014, 326 child and youth abuse cases in Halifax were referred to the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (CYAC) Program⁶. More than half (54%) of these cases involved sexual assault and 40% involved physical assault. The majority (92%) of cases referred for sexual assault were historical, while 8% of referrals involved acute sexual assaults which had taken place within the previous 72 hours. Children and youth age 10-15 years accounted for nearly half of all cases referred to the program, while children 5-9 years were the second most commonly referred victims (37% or 119 cases). 15% of victims were 0-4 years of age.
- Female children and youth were more likely than male children and youth to be the victims of abuse regardless of the age of the alleged offender. Only 6% of cases referred to the Program involved an accused offender that was not known to the child or youth.

Survey - Safety

Survey respondents were asked to think about things like bullying, feeling safe in public areas or at night, crime rate (violent and non-violent), internet exploitation, relationship between police and youth, emergency preparedness (flood, fire...) and sexual exploitation of youth. Respondents indicated that they don't feel safe walking at night and that bullying was a concern for them. It was suggested that schools do not address bullying in adequate ways and that there is a role to play for the municipality in this regard.

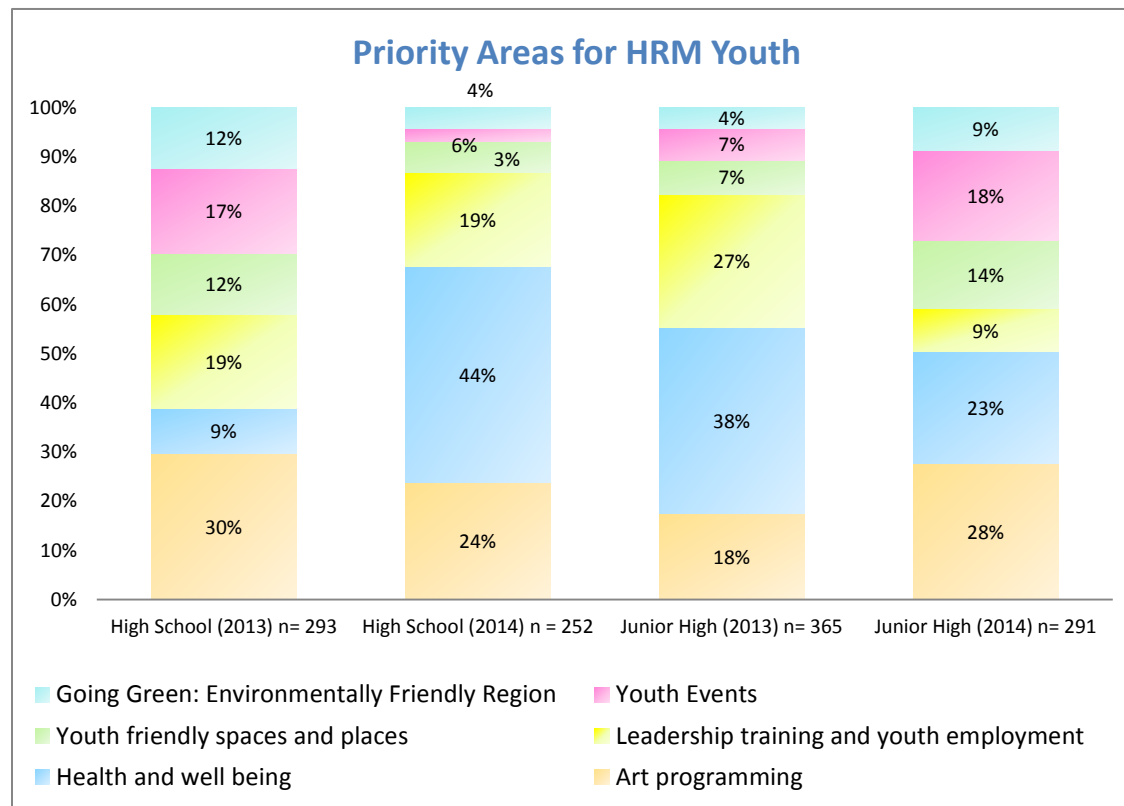
⁵ All youth crime that was referenced was based on the number of youth accused of crimes including youth charged with a Criminal Code offence and those diverted through extrajudicial measures.

⁶ Not every case is referred to the CYAC (Department of community services and/or law enforcement) so the data represents only a partial sample of certain types of abuse within Halifax and is not representative of investigations in NS.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

During the summer of 2014, 243 youth were surveyed and asked to identify how they defined each priority area. The youth were allowed to give more than one answer per theme. Staff then engaged youth to vote on their top priority for each theme. The feedback gained from the summer engagement aids in determining public policy and planning priorities for youth programming. This information will be shared at the Youth Engagement Staff Committee.

Results from the *Teens Now Talk Youth XPO* :



YOUTH PROGRAMMING

The following showcases several youth programs run by the Halifax Regional Municipality. It should be noted that not all youth programs work in every community. What works in one area does not work in another. In all cases, staff engage youth in their communities and attempt to offer programs / events that are specific to the needs of the youth in the local area.



Arts Programming

Engagement Results

When asked to give at least one example of “Art Programming”, 452 answers were received. The top four most common art programs youth are interested in are the following:

- Music programs
- Dance Programs
- Painting & Drawing Classes
- Drama Classes

Actions

Music programs were offered in the following communities: Dartmouth, Eastern Passage, Halifax & Lakeside.

Dance Programs were offered in the following communities: North Preston, Lakeside, Spryfield, Eastern Passage, Halifax, & Dartmouth.

Painting & Drawing Classes were offered in the following communities: Bedford, Fall River, Halifax, Dartmouth.

Drama Classes were offered at the Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre.

Halifax also offered the following successful **Art Programs, Photography, Cooking Classes & Pottery**.

How are we doing?

Music Programs

Guitar Programs offered at the Lakeside Community Centre are the highest registered music program (76 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Dance Programs

The highest registered dance program was offered at the North Preston Community Centre. (698 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Painting & Drawing Classes

The highest registered General Arts program was offered at Chocolate Lake. (350 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Special Projects

HRM also held several special art related projects such as the Art Boat. This project had 18 youth working with volunteer mentors of all ages to help construct and paint the Art Boat from December 2013 to May 2014. The Art Boat is now used as an art space for artists & the community.

Health and Well Being: Physical Activity & Active Transportation

Health and Well Being: Physical Activity & Active Transportation

When asked to give at least one example of “Health & Well Being: Physical Activity and Active Transportation”, 526 answers were received. The top five most common ways youth stay healthy are the following:

- Sports/Physical Activity Programs
- Healthy Eating
- Gym (cheap or free memberships for youth in the summer)
- Biking
- Walking

Actions

Physical Activity Programs & Open Gyms were offered in all communities in HRM.

Healthy Eating Programs were offered in the following communities: Cole Harbour, Hammonds Plains and Dartmouth.

Fitness Classes were offered in the following communities: Cole Harbour, Musquodoboit Harbour, Dartmouth, Eastern Passage, Musquodoboit Valley, Fall River, Bedford, Halifax, Spryfield, and Lakeside.

Biking & Walking programs were offered in Sheet Harbour, Lakeside and Hammonds Plains.

Halifax also offered the following successful **Physical Activity Programs: Floor Hockey, Badminton, Youth Open Gym times.**

Physical Activity and Active Transportation (continued):

How are we doing?

Physical Activity Programs & Open Gyms

The highest attendance at an Open Gym was offered at the George Dixon Community Centre (860 youth attended Nigh Hoops Basketball per season from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Healthy Eating Programs

The highest registered Healthy Eating Program was offered in Hammonds Plains (16 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Fitness Classes

The highest registered Fitness program was offered in Musquodoboit Valley (171 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Biking & Walking

The highest registered Biking program was offered at Lakeside (14 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

The highest registered walking program was offered in Lakeside (10 youth registered from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014).

Leadership Training and Youth Employment

Leadership Training and Youth Employment

When asked to give at least one example of “Leadership Training and Youth Employment”, 387 answers were received. The top four most common places youth could work or get training for work are the following:

- Recreation Centre
- Recreation’s Youth Leadership Program
- Babysitting
- Youth Live Program

Actions

Youth Employment opportunities are offered at all Recreation Centres.

Youth Leadership Program is mainly offered during the summer. This program is offered at all Recreation Centres (except the St. Mary’s Boat Club and Emera Oval).

Babysitting Courses were offered in the following communities: Cole Harbour, Eastern Passage, Fall River, Bedford, Halifax and Lakeside.

The **Youth Live Program** offers youth at risk a chance to gain job experience and life skills by working in the various business operations and attending training modules.

How are we doing?

Parks & Recreation hired 1121 youth positions from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014.

456 Youth participated in the Youth Leadership Program from Fall 2013 to Summer 2014.

25 Babysitting Training Courses were offered with 230 youth being certified.

The Youth Live Program offers a 21 week training opportunity to 50 youth at risk each year.

Youth Events

When asked to give at least one example of “Youth Events”, 390 answers were received. The top four most common events youth are interested in are the following:

- Youth Dances
- Festivals & Events
- Coffee Houses (youth involved/free)
- Movie Nights (theatre/outdoor)



Actions

Youth Dances were held during the Summer 2014 at the Youth Leadership Residential Camp (YES Camp) and the Summer Youth Leadership Dances. Other dances were held in the following community: Tantallon.

Festivals & Events are offered in many communities in HRM. Some have a “youth theme” such as Natal Day’s Esso Youth Showcase. Other events offer youth an opportunity to volunteer at the event (Clam Harbour Sandcastle Competition).

HRM’s major Youth Event is Hopscotch. This three-day event is a festival of dance, art and music and is held on the waterfronts in Dartmouth and Halifax, with concerts featuring internationally recognized performers. This event is for youth ages 16-25.

Coffee Houses were offered in the following communities: Halifax, Lakeside and Dartmouth.

Movie Nights & Other Socials were offered in the following communities: Dartmouth, Eastern Passage, and Halifax.

Youth Events (continued)

How are we doing?

Youth Dances

The highest attendance at a Youth Dance was held at the Youth Leadership Residential Camp (53 youth attended this dance).

Festivals & Events

Hopscotch has over 50 youth help plan and organize this event and more than 100 local youth perform during the event. In 2014 over 5000 youth attended the three day festival and concerts.

Coffee Houses

The highest registered Coffee House was offered the Halifax Public Library (120 youth attended this event).

Movie Nights & Other Socials

The highest registered Coffee House was offered the Halifax Public Library (120 youth attended this event).

Youth Friendly Spaces and Places

When asked to give at least one example of “Youth Friendly Spaces and Places”, 478 answers were received. The top five most common places youth feel are safe places to hang out are the following:

- Parks
- Recreation Centres
- Malls
- Schools
- Pools

Actions

Halifax has taken the following steps to make our facilities Youth Friendly:

- Offering Teen Zones / Youth Drop in programs during lunch time / Evenings).
- Many of these drop in programs are offered in partnership with the Halifax Public Libraries.

The “After the Bell” program offers safe spaces for youth during the after school hours. This program is funded in partnership with the Province. The “After the Bell” program is offered in the following communities: Prospect, Musquodoboit Valley, Sheet Harbour, and Hubbards.

How are we doing?

Youth accessed drop in programs 11,308 times during the Fall 2013 to Summer 2014.

The After the Bell Program reached 361 youth during the Fall 2013 to Summer 2014



Going Green: Environmentally Friendly Region

When asked to give at least one example of “Going Green: Environmentally Friendly Region”, 401 answers were received. The top five most common suggestions on how youth can help keep the environment clean are the following:

- Community Clean Up (pick up garbage)
- The 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)
- Do Not Litter
- Community Gardens
- Active or Alternate Transportation



Actions

Adventure Earth Centre

Halifax's Adventure Earth Centre offers many environmentally themed programs such as Mysterious Encounters, Cycle Savers, SunShip Earth, Explorers, LEAD, MindShift, and the Earth Adventures Trails Book.

Appreciating, understanding, and caring for ourselves, each other, and the Earth are basic skills for moving into the future. The Adventure Earth Centre takes a positive, values-building approach to developing a rewarding and healthy lifestyle. More info about these programs can be found on halifax.ca/youth.

Community Gardens

Community Gardens are currently active in many communities in HRM. Most Community Gardens are located in Halifax and Dartmouth, with a few in surrounding communities.

Going Green: Environmentally Friendly Region (Continued)

How are we doing?

Community Clean Ups

During the Fall 2013 to Summer 2014, several Community Clean Ups were led by youth in Fall River, Halifax, and Spryfield. Approximately 40 youth participated in these events.

Halifax's Adventure Earth Centre (AEC)

The Adventure Earth Centre's environmental themed programs reached 751 youth during the Fall 2013 to Summer 2014.

Ongoing opportunities exist for youth to get involved in the AEC's youth action team (called HEAT).

Community Gardens

16 Community Gardens are currently operating on City-owned property with approximately 210 individual plots for youth and families to garden.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

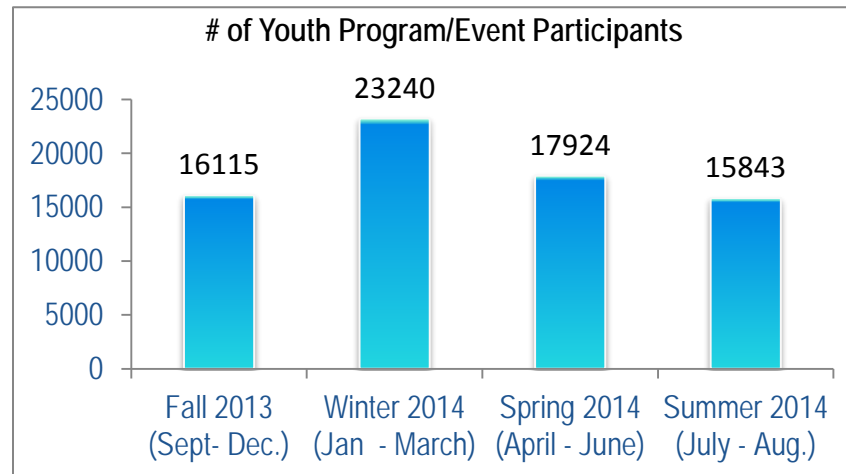
Throughout the engagement, the topic of “Mental Health” has been brought up several times. Staff realized that the theme “Health & Wellbeing: Physical Activity and Active Transportation” wasn’t truly reflecting how the youth viewed this theme. They see that theme as more of a Mental Health category and told staff that the Recreation & Sport side of it should be separated into its own category. Youth are growing more aware of the mental health issues facing many of their peers. As we move forward with future youth engagement, we are going to update the theme areas by separating Health & Wellbeing: Physical Activity & Active Transportation into two categories: Youth Mental Health and Recreation & Sports Programs.



YOUTH PROGRAMMING - Summary

73,122 youth participated in HRM-run programs/events from September 2013-August 2014.

The lowest participation period in youth events/programs in the reporting year was in the fall season. The highest was winter programming.



The data collected represents information from Parks and Recreation, Halifax Public Libraries, Facility Lease Agreement buildings, Multi-district Facilities and Halifax Regional Police youth programs. Attendance is taken at every program (drop-in or registered) and youth events.

Jump Start / Rec Kids Funding Program Summary

This program is a partnership between Canadian Tire Charities and Halifax Parks and Recreation which aims to provide assistance to financially disadvantaged children and youth 18 and younger so they can participate in recreational, sport, arts, cultural and physical activity programs. Jumpstart/RecKids currently provides up to \$200 per child per family per Halifax fiscal year towards registrations fees. This funding is accessed via application and based on the limits of the Jumpstart/RecKids Program.

Jump Start Program Stats (Youth 12-18)

# applications for 2014/15 budget year:	341
# applications for 2013/14 budget year:	259

YOUTH OUTREACH/SOCIAL MEDIA

www.hrmnyouth.ca was HRM's main webpage for youth. The content on this site is being transferred to the new website address www.halifax.ca/youth. Youth were engaged to determine optimal website and social media needs with respect to HRM outreach.

Feedback for a “good youth website”:

- When possible, less text, more images
- Pictures need to make sense in relation to the text
- Captions posted under each photo is needed
- Clean, easy to read text
- Should be viewable on mobile devices
- Having Facebook/Twitter inserted on the main landing page
- Use of vibrant, bold colours
-

In addition to creating a new website, staff also updated the social media programs. A new Twitter and Facebook account has been created ([@hfxyouth](https://twitter.com/hfxyouth) and www.facebook.com/hfxyouth). These new social media tools will be used to help promote youth programs and events in Halifax. Once the new youth website is completed, work will begin on populating the youth event and program calendar and using social media to promote it.

NEXT STEPS

- The Youth Engagement Committee will meet to discuss how HRM and external youth serving organizations can work collaboratively in order to provide programs and services to youth.
- Internal departments will continue to meet to review and discuss the youth programs offered. This will create increased coordination and collaboration between business units.
- A Youth Manager position will be established within the Parks & Recreation Business Unit to focus on delivering services that will provide better outcomes for youth.
- Further youth engagement and ongoing monitoring of youth trends, statistics, and best practices will be necessary to develop a Youth Plan, which will help guide the Halifax Regional Municipality in future years.
- Ongoing engagement of youth on the priority areas and identification of at-risk youth/communities will be necessary to ensure current youth programming is adequate and appropriate to meet the needs of youth.