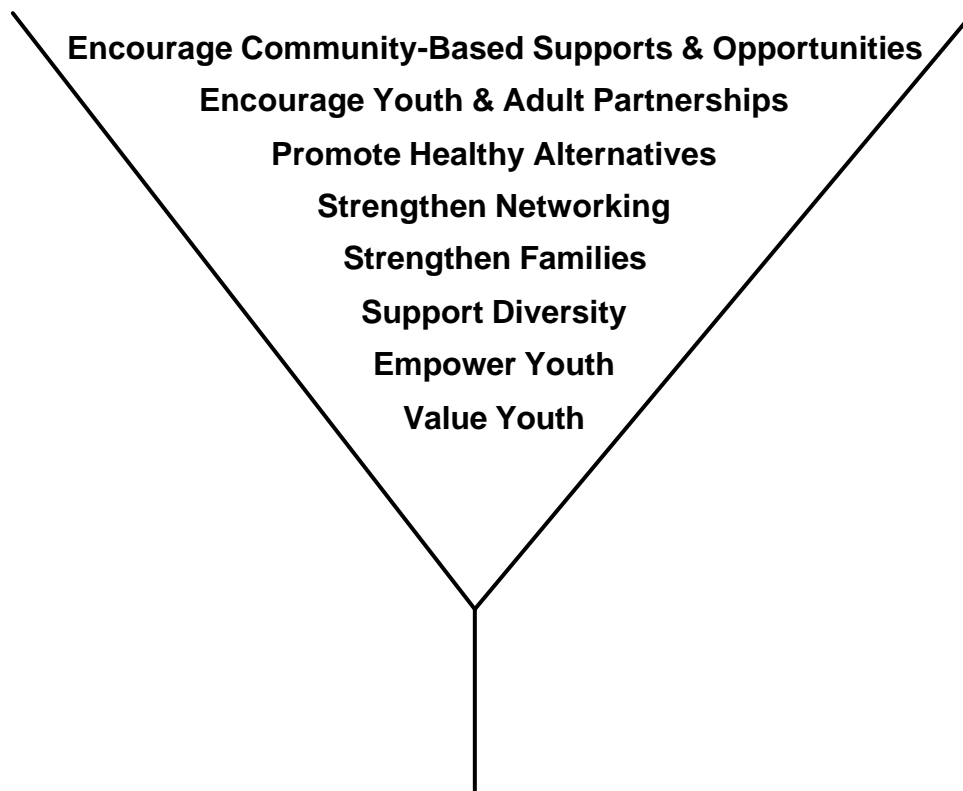


# ***Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services***

**For Regions responsible for Child, Youth and Family Development**



## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

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“*Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services*” contains information to assist regional authorities in the design and delivery of effective community-based interventions and supports for vulnerable youth that are appropriate to the needs of their local youth populations. For regions wishing to further explore best practices in youth services, a comprehensive review of evidence-based research has been developed as a companion document (“*Research Review of Best Practices for Provision of Youth Services*”).

This document supports a vision and mission for Youth Services developed through the Youth Services Steering Committee. The following is provided as it relates to the development of effective youth services at the individual, family-social, and community levels:

- Key influences for effective service delivery to youth.
- Target service outcomes at both the client and system level.
- Description of high-risk and at-risk youth populations.
- Description of the nature/type of supports that might be developed for youth.
- Service planning strategies for:
  - assessing community and regional needs,
  - assessing cost implications by type of service, and
  - making funding/resource allocation decisions.
- Appended background and statistical reference information.

### ***Acknowledgements:***

In developing these guidelines, the contributions of the following members of the Youth Services Steering Committee are acknowledged:

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## ***A Vision for Youth Services***

“Youth faced with significant challenges will move toward a safer and healthier lifestyle and becoming contributing members of their family and community.”

## ***Mission & Goals***

“In partnership with community and families, youth will be supported to be safe, healthy and contributing members of community by:

- Promoting and developing the capacity of youth to stay with family;
- Supporting communities in their responsibility to care for and protect vulnerable youth;
- Building the capacity of youth and their families to support the return of youth to their home;
- Monitoring trends in adolescent behaviour that includes a way of informing parents, peers, schools of the issues and approaches that emerge;
- Increasing protective factors and resiliency by reducing risk factors;
- Supporting youth to exit sexual exploitation;
- Supporting youth to address their mental health, addiction and justice issues;
- Supporting homeless youth to obtain stable and safe accommodation;
- Providing and assisting youth to access services that promote their transition to independence; and,
- Supporting youth to make connections with school and/or work”.

*~ Youth Services Steering Committee, 2002*

Youth Services are a component of the Ministry's role and mandate to "advance the safety and well-being of vulnerable children, youth and adults". The Ministry of Children and Family Development has historically provided a variety of programs that support children, youth and their families. Ministry services to youth include youth justice, mental health, protection (i.e. guardianship), family supports and interventions and supports to the high-risk youth population.

One focus of this document is on providing for the safety and well being of youth and by offering a "doorway" for youth to access required services and programs that are alternatives to child protection services. These "doorways" have typically included outreach programs, youth agreements, safe housing, parent-teen mediation, and services to pregnant and parenting teens.

Another focus of this document is to identify the key influences that have been demonstrated to support youth in achieving positive and lasting outcomes. These influences have been well documented and are grounded in research and best practices.

These guidelines are intended to be complementary to overarching Ministry documents including "System of Care", as well as other frameworks, plans or best practices that exist in specific areas of practice such as family development, special needs, mental health, and youth justice.

This document is also congruent with the current Ministry strategic shifts. It focuses on a comprehensive approach to strengthening the capacity of communities to ensure the safety and well being of those youth who experience significant challenges. Many youth experiencing these challenges tend to have diverse and multiple needs, yet they are not served by other ministry or community-based services.

## CONTEXT FOR YOUTH SERVICES

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Adolescence is a difficult time of transition, and in this transition from dependence to independence, youth make many choices. For some youth, these choices result in risk-taking behaviours that result in subsequent challenges for themselves, their families and their communities. Similarly, many youth live in environments that contain external risk factors that can negatively influence their development and wellbeing. To address presenting internal and external risks, it is essential to engage youth in developing protective factors within themselves. Such protective factors are called “resilience”. Accordingly, when addressing external risk factors that reside in a youth’s family or community, families and communities also have a key role to play alleviating risks to youth. These guidelines describe key influences that demonstrate effectiveness in developing protective factors that address risks to youth.

A range of services and support programs of varying levels of intensity are necessary to meet the differing and changing needs of youth as they develop. These programs and services should be sensitive and responsive to cultural differences and the special needs of youth with respect to age, stage of development, gender, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, spirituality and lifestyle.

There is a need for balance in our approach to adolescents. This requires us not to pass quick judgements but rather to understand that healthy youth development requires taking risks, making mistakes, and being given the chance to learn from experience. It takes us beyond focusing on ‘at risk’, negative labels, problems, blaming, and reacting in an ad hoc manner that focuses on fixing problems in isolation. It takes us toward an understanding that young people are partners, that adults act as supportive mentors, that planning is intentional and sets high goals, and towards achieving an inclusive economy/society where young people are innovative and energetic participants.

Ensuring a multi-sector response to developing integrated services for youth entails building formal and informal relationships between: social service agencies; education agencies; school districts; law enforcement; mental health; youth justice; addictions; labour attachment initiatives; community-based organizations; faith-based organizations; and, the private sector. A relationship building approach promotes a seamless system of effective services, and can be instrumental in both creating more resources and better utilizing existing ones.

Consistent with the Ministry’s vision to protect children and support family development, is the obligation to provide services to youth that are in danger and/or seriously at risk of negative outcomes/consequences. This includes providing the least disruptive intervention necessary to advance the safety and well being of the province’s most vulnerable youth. Through collaboration and utilization of an integrated approach to supporting positive youth outcomes, youth development is closely linked to healthy families, strong communities, healthy schools and supportive peers.

## **KEY INFLUENCES FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY TO YOUTH**

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Some key influences have been identified for service delivery to youth that support youth in achieving positive and lasting outcomes. From these influences specific goals, objectives, and outcomes can be derived that also form the foundation for evaluation.

Recognizing the inherent stages of development that adolescents grapple with, and recognizing the unique characteristics of each community and the social and economic environment in which youth live, learn, play, and work, the key influences on the health and well-being of youth are taken into account from the following perspectives: 1) youth as individuals; 2) youth within a family/social context; and, 3) youth in a larger community context. Once this is done, the key influences are grouped and labelled as follows:

- i) Youth Empowerment and a Youth-Centred Approach;
- ii) Family and Social Connections
- iii) Community Collaboration in Supporting Positive Youth Outcomes

These influences are expanded upon below, and are summarized in Figure 1: “Key Influences on Youth Health and Development” on page 6.

### **i) Youth Empowerment and a Youth-Centred Approach**

- Value and respect young people and acknowledge that they are the experts in regards to their own life. This expertise is crucial to the process of facilitating the identification of supports and services leading to successful outcomes for youth.
- Service approaches are based on promoting development and enhancing resiliency within a context that focuses on the assets inherent in our youth.
- A youth centred approach is best served through quality relationships with people who are skilled and trained and able to maintain connections for the long term.
- Youth are supported to make choices and to deal with the consequences of their choices.
- The role of advocacy is supported.
- Youth are involved in designing, developing, delivering and evaluating policies, programs and practices affecting their lives and the lives of other young people.
- Given the multi-service needs of many youth, partnerships among youth, family and service providers are facilitated whenever possible.

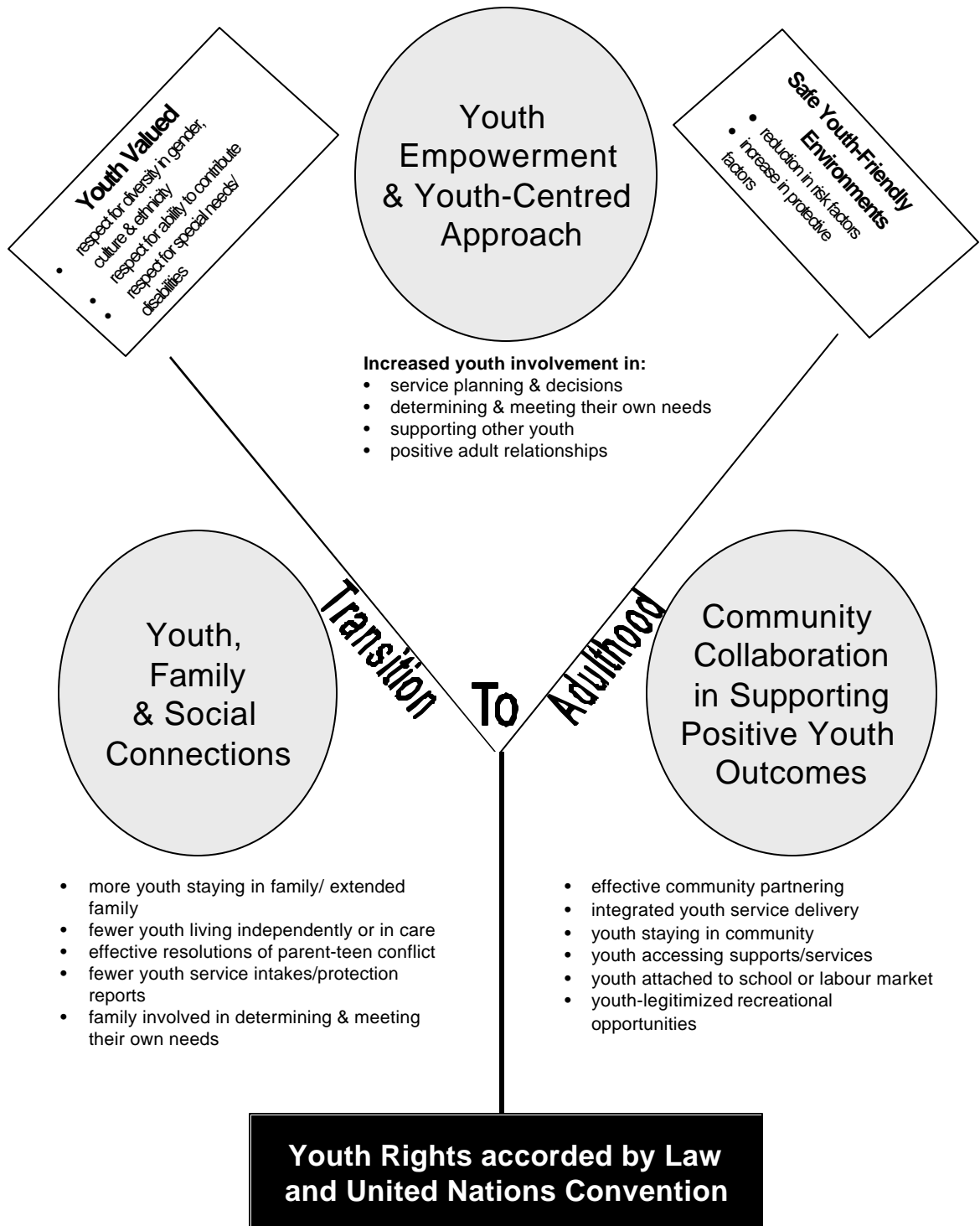
## **ii) Family and Social Connections**

- The family, in its diverse forms, is central in the provision of affection, care and support to youth.
- Throughout the entire span of involvement with a youth, the family is viewed as the preferred environment whenever possible. Where not possible, youth are supported in a plan that promotes their independence while maintaining family connections.
- If, with available support services, a family can provide a safe and nurturing environment for a youth, there is a shared responsibility between government, regional authorities, community and contracted agencies to strengthen the capacity of youth and families to provide for themselves.
- Youth and their families are informed of the range of services and options available to them.
- Whenever feasible, recognition is given to the capacity of the individual youth and/or their families to determine and meet their own needs.
- The influence of positive peer mentoring (i.e., teens helping teens) promotes healthy lifestyle choices.

## **iii) Community Collaboration in Supporting Positive Youth Outcomes**

- The community has a responsibility to support youth and to strengthen the capacity of youth and families to provide for themselves.
- Building formal and informal relationships with all youth-connected and youth-serving agencies promotes seamless services, effective supportive and follow-up services, and is instrumental in leveraging more resources.
- The development of community resources and capacity to address youth needs and issues are most effective through community partnerships involving both the public and private sectors.
- Providing opportunities for youth to contribute to their communities helps to demonstrate that youth are valued citizens who have something substantial to contribute to society while instilling respect for themselves, others, and the world around them.
- Integrating youth services on site (school, community centre or street) where youth are more likely to congregate assists in achieving positive youth-centered outcomes.
- Ensure that information about all existing programs/services for youth is readily available and understandable.

**Figure 1: Key Influences on Youth Health and Development**



## TARGET OUTCOMES

When key influences on youth’s health and development are incorporated into service planning and delivery, the following outcomes can be expected. For the purposes of these guidelines, outcomes are organized into “youth outcomes” and “system (organizational) outcomes”. The outcomes shown in Figure 2 below can also be used as a guide to evaluating the effectiveness of the services in supporting youth to build resiliency and protective factors.

**Figure 2: Youth and System Outcomes by Key Influence**

	<b>Outcomes for Youth</b>	<b>System Outcomes</b>
<b>Youth Empowerment and Youth-Centered Approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>empowered to make decisions and having a sense of control and competence</li> <li>positive relationship with an adult role model</li> <li>improved physical and mental health</li> <li>successful at learning and staying in school</li> <li>internalized ability to spring back from and successfully adapt to adversity (resiliency)</li> <li>improved sense of self-esteem and self-concept</li> <li>respect for self and others</li> <li>ability to define one's direction and goal orientation</li> <li>economic self-sufficiency</li> <li>higher levels of positive social behavior</li> <li>increased ability to identify, evaluate and implement options and understand the consequences of each</li> <li>recognition and acceptance of individual and cultural diversity</li> <li>increased ability to engage in positive adult roles</li> <li>development of leadership, communication, and social skills</li> <li>successful maintenance of friendships</li> <li>increased understanding of self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>system supports increased youth involvement in:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ service planning &amp; decisions</li> <li>⇒ determining &amp; meeting their own needs</li> <li>⇒ supporting other youth</li> <li>⇒ positive adult relationships</li> </ul> </li> <li>resources shift as result of fewer youth living independently or in care as responsibility for supports are assumed by youth and their informal supports.</li> <li>increased levels of proactive support &amp; monitoring per client</li> <li>staff development/training in the areas of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ motivational interviewing</li> <li>⇒ engagement and relationship building</li> <li>⇒ multicultural diversities</li> <li>⇒ issues relating to addictions, mental health and sexual exploitation</li> </ul> </li> <li>increased emphasis on an assets-based approach to youth issues</li> <li>increased emphasis on assessment - recognizing the developmental stage, coping style, and family style of the “client”</li> </ul>
<b>Youth, Family &amp; Social Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more families staying together</li> <li>communication with parents is positive and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s)</li> <li>increase in overall social competencies and self-esteem</li> <li>effective communication, social problem-solving and decision-making</li> <li>capacity to resolve issues and live together as a family</li> <li>capacity to determine and meet needs effectively</li> <li>utilization of required social supports.</li> <li>increased ability to initiate and maintain relationships</li> <li>able to distinguish between positive and negative peer influences.</li> <li>reducing negative peer influences and developing positive peer supports in and out of school.</li> <li>positive mentoring relationships with older persons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fewer youth service intakes/protection reports</li> <li>increased numbers of youth reunited/ repatriated with family/extended family</li> <li>system supports family involvement in determining &amp; meeting their own needs, and responsibility for family supports are transferred from the system to the family</li> <li>decrease in parent/teen crises requiring protection responses, and increase in parent/teen mediation activity</li> <li>decrease in runaway reports and increase in family support services and mediation services</li> <li>reduction in youth violence/crime</li> </ul>

**Community Collaboration in Supporting Positive Youth Outcomes**

<b>Outcomes for Youth</b>	<b>System Outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• successful transition to school/work</li> <li>• higher levels of school retention</li> <li>• youth staying in own community</li> <li>• safety and security within home and community</li> <li>• youth experiences a caring community</li> <li>• a belief in the future of and involvement in their community</li> <li>• increased accessing of supports and services</li> <li>• involvement with community recreation, activities and events</li> <li>• knowledgeable about available supports and services</li> <li>• youth makes successful transitions to independence</li> <li>• youth experience a caring and encouraging environment in school</li> <li>• experience seamless service with long-term quality relationship/attachments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective community partnering increases</li> <li>• integrated youth service delivery increases</li> <li>• youth proactively accessing supports/services earlier results in service and resource shifts</li> <li>• more youth attaching themselves to school-based or labour market services as an alternative to MCFD youth services</li> <li>• more youth attaching themselves to youth-legitimized recreational opportunities instead of more formalized support services</li> <li>• reduction of youth violence and crime</li> <li>• decreased instances relating to substance misuse</li> <li>• decreased chronic use of emergency-based services by homeless youth</li> <li>• increased capacity to monitor trends in adolescent behavior that includes a way of informing parents, peers, schools of the issues and approaches that emerge</li> <li>• increased capability of serving all youth with a recognition of special sub-populations of adolescents with unique sets of needs (i.e., aboriginal, LGBTQ {Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning Youth})</li> <li>• increased availability of positive after-school activities</li> </ul>

Adolescence is a developmental phase with unique and specific biological, psychological, social and developmental needs. Adolescence begins with puberty and concludes with the achievement of successful transition to independence, family and work. A teenager's development can be divided into three stages -- early, middle, and late adolescence.

For the purposes of these guidelines “youth” includes all adolescents who present with at-risk and high-risk behaviours. Figure 3 on page 11, “*Identification of Risk Factors in Adolescents*” maps out the combined effects of environmental factors and youth vulnerability in identifying youth risk populations. Addressing youth risk factors requires the creation of a shared vision for youth and community that can address risk factors earlier in the life of the adolescent, and allows for increased opportunity to build on resiliency and effect change.

It should also be noted that aboriginal adolescents and LGBTQ (“Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning”) adolescents are disproportionately over represented within the high-risk youth and at-risk adolescent populations. Risk profiles can be further exacerbated by organic health conditions (e.g., FAS, ADD/ADHD, brain injury, and severe physical illness) as well as predispositions toward addiction and/or mental health issues.

### High-Risk Population



High-risk youth generally present with significant multiple challenges. These risk factors could include the experience of violence, misuse of alcohol and drugs, risk of suicide, or danger to themselves or others, living in relative or absolute homelessness, involvement in criminal activities, disconnection from family and/or other significant adults in their lives, family instability, and failure to remain in school, work, or day programs. The history of these youth may include child abuse, severe emotional trauma, sexual exploitation, and serious behavioural, mental, emotional and physical health issues.

Examples of high-risk youth are as follows:

- Youth who have left their family due to major abuse or neglect issues, and who are not likely to return;
- Homeless youth (relative or absolute) who have little or no active connection with family or kin (i.e., street youth);
- Youth with serious mental disorders whose condition can no longer be handled within the context of the family or kin (e.g., depression, schizophrenia);
- Youth with issues of sexual exploitation;
- Youth with severe addictions issues;
- Youth who have multiple risk issues (e.g., concurrent mental illness and addictions issues);

- Youth in care who are absent from their placement and exhibiting some of the above risk factors.

These high-risk youth may be involved with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, contracted services through Outreach workers, Safe House services, Youth Agreements, and other support services including Mental Health; Youth Addictions; Protective Intervention Orders/Restraining Orders; Parenting Support for Teens and/or the Youth Justice system.

Aboriginal youth are disproportionately represented among those youth with significant challenges. In consideration of this, it is important to invest in building the capacity of Aboriginal families and their communities to deliver a range of services to support their youth.

### **At-Risk Population**

“At-risk” youth experience difficulty with family, in school, and/or in the community and/or have high vulnerability for becoming “high risk” due to their personal history or current circumstances.

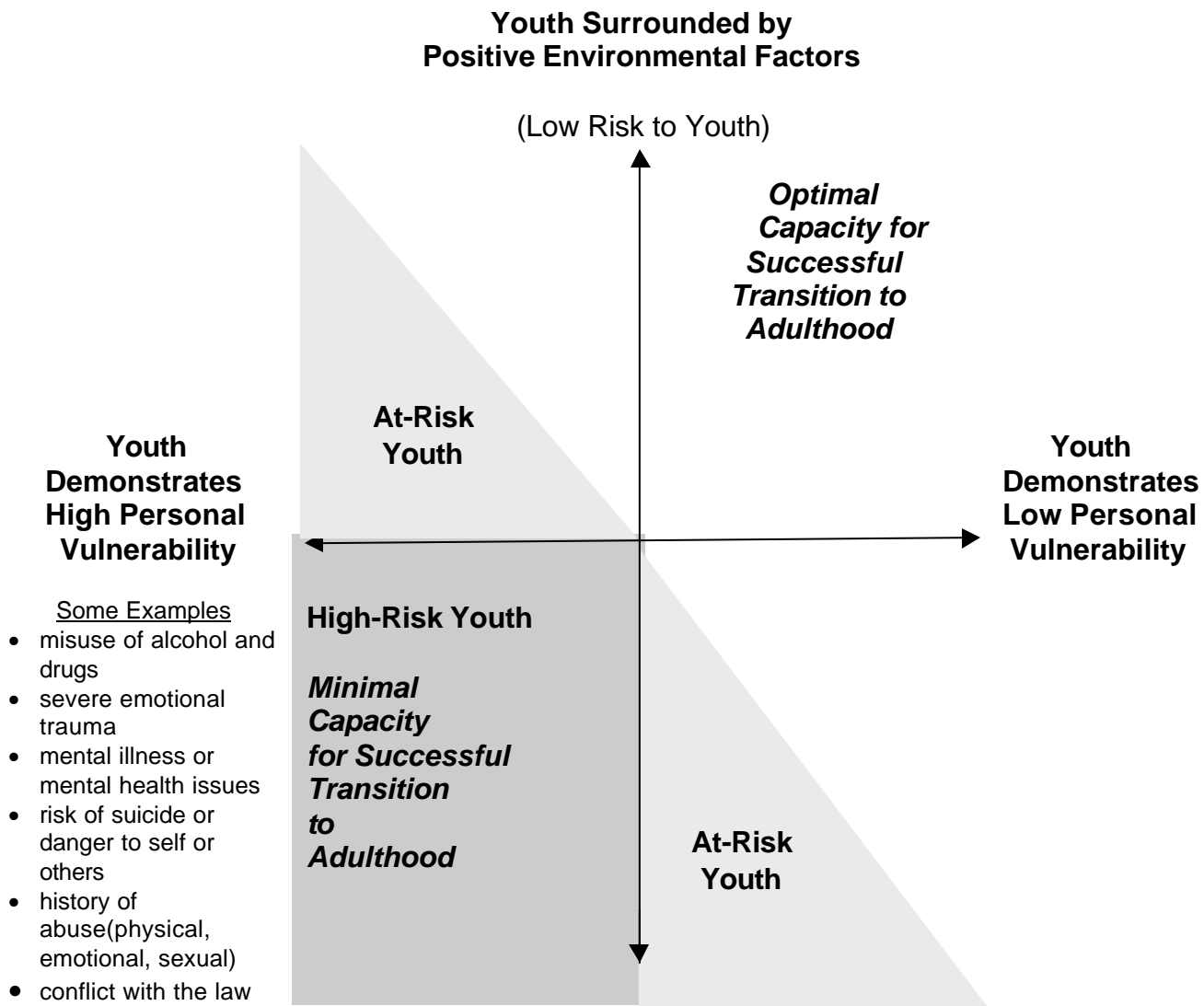
The young people in this group are often at a crossroads where one road leads to a successful transition to adulthood and the other to unhealthy dependency and negative long-term consequences. Youth typically considered at-risk are more likely to become pregnant, use drugs and/or alcohol, drop out of school, be unemployed, engage in violence, and face an increased likelihood of a host of physical and mental health problems.

The degree to which youth are still connected to family, community and school and the degree to which they are able to maintain a positive relationship with an adult role model often determines the road to be travelled. Involvement in “high risk” activities is still limited and specific risk factors can often be reduced or eliminated if addressed early within the context of family and/or kin. Youth supports for at-risk adolescents will likely be shorter-term in nature and may be supplemented in the longer term by supports to help keep the family together.

Adolescents who are “at-risk” may show evidence of one or more of the following:

- Engagement in “street culture” and are sporadically or occasionally homeless, but still have an active or part-time connection with family and/or kin (i.e., Curb Kids);
- Have voluntarily and recently left their family (e.g., within the last 2 to 3 weeks) due to parent-teen conflict or neglect issues, and who research shows are more likely to return (i.e., Runaways);
- Have been asked to leave their family home recently (e.g., within last 2 to 3 weeks) and where there is some likelihood of return with mediated support (i.e., Throwaways);
- Dropped out of school, and have no connection with any other education or skills training.
- Exhibit signs of mental illness or have combined mental illness and addictions issues that can be addressed within the context of family and/or kin;
- Are or have been in care by the Ministry and require treatment/ counselling for abuses;
- Have parents who have a mental illness.

Figure 3: Identification of Risk Factors in Adolescence



**Youth Surrounded by Negative Environmental Factors**

Some Examples

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• living in a high crime rate area</li> <li>• dysfunctional family</li> <li>• parental mental illness</li> <li>• cultural conflict</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• negative peer influence</li> <li>• poverty (long term)</li> <li>• homelessness</li> <li>• unhealthy/unsafe/unsupportive school environment</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## **IDENTIFICATION OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY YOUTH SERVICES**

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The purpose of this section is to guide regional authorities and communities in the identification of youth services that will lead to positive youth outcomes for resident youth.

Figure 4, “*Support Pathway for Youth*” on page 14 identifies the overall model and service/support pathway that an at-risk – high-risk youth typically follows when they access youth services.

Figure 5, “*Differences in Support Orientation Based on Age and Risk*” on page 15 identifies the nature and extent of services typically provided based on their developmental level and the nature of presenting risk.

In addition to the above, the following is intended to assist regional authorities with the factors used in the assessment of needed services for youth.

**At the regional level**, considerations for the allocation of youth services might include:

- Inventory of current youth services in communities and dollars spent in each area of the continuum of service (i.e. prevention, intervention, exiting)
- Location and size of macro resources (i.e. safe housing)
- Numbers of high risk youth in the communities
- Movement of youth from smaller communities to larger communities
- Number of aboriginal youth
- Types of high risk activities
- Youth “hot-spots” in the region
- Proximity of communities to one another and travel barriers
- Identification of communities that require youth services

**For communities**, involvement is required in the evaluation of youth services currently provided, gaps in service, and identification of supports and services specific to their community. Participation and leadership of teens and family produce better outcomes when promoted and facilitated either through:

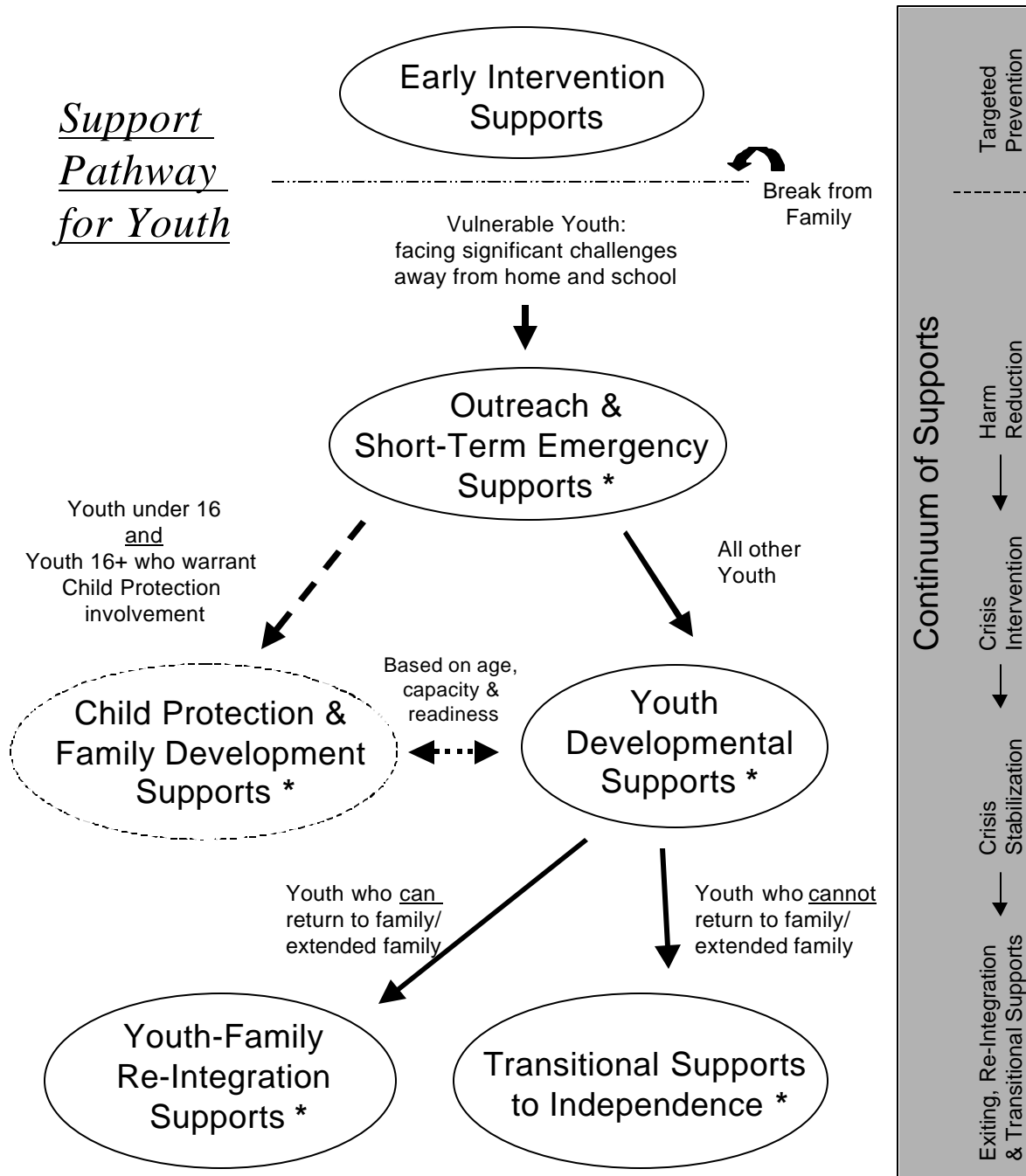
- Advisory Groups
- Round Table discussions
- Focus Groups
- Touring Panels

**For individuals** it is important to consider the opinions of and to build on formal and informal relationships from a broad range of interests such as:

- Youth (i.e. Youth in Care Network, Youth Quest)
- Families
- Youth serving agencies
- School districts
- Health services (street clinic, community nurses, addictions staff)
- Mental Health practitioners
- Municipal governments
- Federal Government (i.e. Human Resources Development Canada)
- Other youth serving ministries (i.e. Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Education)
- Police
- Youth Probation
- Social Workers
- Aboriginal agencies and communities

**Figure 4: Support Pathway for Youth**

The following matrix indicates the differing areas of supports and what type of service could be included within that area. A detailed description of how the areas of support are defined, is available in [Appendix B](#) on page 23.



\* Service plans developed at any point along the above pathway could be supported by referrals to **Specialized Treatment/Supports**, as well as **School-Based & Labour-Attachment Supports**.

**Figure 5: Differences in Support Orientation Based on Age and Risk**

<b>Support by Youth Age &amp; Risk</b>	<b>Interim/Short-term Supports</b>	<b>Longer Term Supports<sup>1</sup></b>
At-Risk & High-Risk Youth - early to mid adolescence (Under Age 16)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate involvement of parents and/or likely Child Protection</li> <li>• Emphasis on reconnection with family when possible through Child Protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection assessment, investigation &amp; service plan as required:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Youth returned to family/extended family with family development supports as required, or</li> <li>⇒ Youth brought into care</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
At-Risk Youth – mid to late adolescence (Age 16 to 18)	<p>Where immediate assessment indicates youth might be returned to family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually involvement of parents</li> <li>• Possible Child Protection and police involvement if serious allegation made of caregivers</li> <li>• If no serious allegations made, emphasis placed on reconnection with family <u>without</u> Child Protection involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection assessment, investigation &amp; service plan as required <sup>2</sup>:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Youth returned to family/extended family with family development supports or youth-focused supports as required, or</li> <li>⇒ Only in exceptional circumstances, youth brought into care <sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If cannot be reconnected with family or extended family, emphasis is placed on supporting youth to apply for Income Assistance to live out of family home with youth-focused supports.</li> </ul>
High-Risk Youth – mid to late adolescence (Age 16 to 18)	<p>Where immediate assessment indicates youth <u>cannot</u> be returned to family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible involvement of parents as appropriate.</li> <li>• Possible Child Protection and police involvement if serious allegation made of caregivers</li> <li>• Emphasis placed on connecting youth with longer term transitional supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection assessment, investigation and involvement as required through Youth Services assessment for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Youth’s child(ren)</li> <li>⇒ Concerns about youth’s siblings</li> <li>⇒ Protective Intervention Orders</li> <li>⇒ Only in exceptional circumstances, youth brought into care <sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Emphasis placed establishing comprehensive/intensive transitional supports towards independence:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ independent living supports (e.g., Income Assistance and/or Youth Agreements)</li> <li>⇒ ongoing support through Outreach or contracted youth support workers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Notes:**

- 1) “Specialized treatment/supports” and “School-based and Labour Attachment Supports” could occur with any longer term service plan.
- 2) For youth aged 16 to 18, Child Protection social workers will investigate when the youth is in need of protection as defined under Section 13 of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, and:
  - is sexually exploited, or
  - is developmentally delayed, or
  - where the severity of the reported circumstances suggest this is necessary, or
  - in the worker’s professional judgement a full investigation is needed.
- 3) In the vast majority of cases, a removal is not done and alternative measures used. For example, a voluntary plan to support youth to be safe within the context of their own family or extended family through family development or youth-focused supports (e.g., parent-teen conflict /youth-family mediation services) and referral to specialized services.

## OUTCOMES AND COST IMPLICATIONS

The section outlines the relative cost implications as they relate to the following longer-term outcomes of service to vulnerable youth:

- Youth living with family/extended family
- Youth in supported independent living
- Youth living in care

Cost implications below are estimated relative to more costly interventions, but exclude institutional interventions through youth justice and mental health. The following examples are based on current service costs and pre-suppose that the individual interventions are effective in achieving their target outcomes in a given year.

<b>Type of Support</b>	<b>Costing Implications Related to Outcomes</b>
Early Intervention Supports <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the outcome of maintaining the youth in family is achieved, costs are estimated at 1/20 of supported independent living and 1/40 of youth-in-care costs per given youth in a given year (assumes 1.5 month intervention of professional therapist with a fulltime caseload of 110 families per year).</li> </ul>
Outreach and Short-Term Emergency Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to their short-term nature, these services do not in themselves produce a long-term outcome, but rather support an array of possible service outcomes in areas of improved health and wellbeing as well as fiscal savings.</li> </ul>
Child Protection and Family Development Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of service outcomes are possible within these supports.</li> <li>• Living with family/extended family achieved through these supports has similar cost implications as Early Intervention and Youth-Family Re-integration Supports, depending on the intensity of supports required.</li> <li>• Bringing youth into the care of the Ministry is potentially the most costly intervention outside of providing institutional care or incarceration.</li> </ul>
Youth-Family Re-Integration Supports <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the outcome of re-integrating the youth into family is achieved, costs are estimated at 1/10 of supported independent living and 1/20 of youth-in-care costs per given youth in a given year (assumes three month intervention of professional therapist with a fulltime caseload of 55 families per year).</li> </ul>
Transitional Supports to Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the outcome of successful supported independent living is achieved, costs are estimated at 1/2 of youth-in-care costs per given youth in a given year (assumes supported independent living or Youth Agreement involves an ongoing support worker with a caseload of 10 youth at any given time)</li> </ul>

Type of Support	Costing Implications Related to Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service ratio for intensive individual supports is usually costed out at 10 to 15 youth to one youth support worker.</li> </ul>
School-Based and/or Labour-Attachment Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These services are auxiliary and supportive of longer-term outcomes.</li> <li>The availability of school-based and/or labour-attachment supports needs to be proportionate to the entire identified vulnerable youth population (5% plus or minus) in order to support positive alternative outcomes for youth.</li> <li>Although the population of youth requiring support in this area is greater, the intensity and duration per youth for such support is less (similar to Early Intervention. Supports).</li> </ul>
Specialized Treatment/Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These services are auxiliary and supportive of longer-term outcomes.</li> <li>The availability of specialized treatment/supports needs to be proportional to the identified need of youth based on their risk factors (e.g., addictions or mental health issues).</li> <li>These supports are usually more intensively required by high-risk youth and more proportional to this population (1% plus or minus).</li> </ul>

**Notes:**

1) These cost implications are based on intervention of a professional therapist. Cost implications in the long term could be significantly less if social work and youth agency staff were trained with mediation skills and provided mediation directly to youth and their families. Although there are additional, initial mediation training costs, given the same outcome effectiveness and time spent with clients, there are potential long term savings though lower ongoing wage costs of approximately 25%. This arrangement for mediation is currently employed in Saskatchewan Social Services.

When a region or community is grappling with allocation of funds for services to vulnerable youth, the following general aspects might be considered:

- Research indicates that a rough figure to estimate average incidence of risk among the youth population for a community at any given time is 5% for youth who are at-risk and 1% for youth who are high-risk.
- Identifying the profiles of vulnerable youth with the greatest presenting needs according to individual community and regional assessments (e.g., youth with issues of sexual exploitation)
- Whether additional funds could be established from other sources (e.g., community-based funding partners including private funders and public fundraising, local government funding, other provincial funding sources, federal government funding sources).
- Best practices as it relates to the continuum of supports (Refer to *Research Review of Best Practices for Provision of Youth Services*).
- Aboriginal and cultural influences.
- The cost implications connected to different supports as they relate to longer-term outcomes (i.e., where is the greatest return on investment of funds).

Note that the provision of any services to youth beyond basic needs is most effective when based on youth readiness to want or accept such supports. Workers who have the most significant contact and experience with the youth are best able to determine readiness. For example, for youth who present on the street, outreach workers are often in the best situation to determine readiness of youth, and which supports would be most appropriate for youth based on the length of their break with family. Integrated case management supports making readiness determinations through contact with outreach workers.

### **Examples**

Without consideration of the unique features of each community, the following examples offer possible areas of emphasis for youth services according to three different community youth need profiles. Descriptions/definitions of each of the types of services (i.e. youth-family reintegration supports) are available in [Appendix B](#) on page 23.

### ***Example #1: Communities with Predominantly At-Risk Youth***

These communities have low populations of youth actually living on the street (less than 1%), but may have high incidence of parent-teen conflict with visible issues of curbed kids and throwaway youth that may lead to runaway youth (5% or higher). In these communities, *Early Intervention Supports* may be more appropriate prior to a major break from family. This could help prevent longer-term runaway sessions, street entrenchment, and youth in care or in a supported independent living situation.

Keystones of early intervention support are services that provide parent-teen conflict resolution and youth-family mediation and other required family supports.. These key services are greatly enhanced through early intervention outreach, school-based supports and specialized treatment/ supports (e.g., access to mental health services either for youth or parent).

Often the key to early intervention is early identification. This could be achieved through close linkages to schools to identify youth dropping out since significant breaks from family are often associated with significant breaks from school. Once youth have left school, it is vitally important to track these youth through regular community integrated case management meetings. Regular outreach service follow-ups with youth and family may also be warranted so that interventions are early enough to prevent major damage within family relations. In addition, it is important to ensure responsive services such as school based support, mental health and or addiction services are available at this stage.

This same service array could also be used in a more intensive manner for ‘youth-family re-integration supports’ if a runaway or homeless/street youth were repatriated to their home community.

<b>Type of Support</b>	<b>Possible Emphasis</b>
Early Intervention Supports	Major
Street Outreach and short-term emergency Supports	Medium
Community Based Outreach	Medium
One-on-one support workers	Medium
Youth-Family Re-Integration Supports	Minor
Transitional Supports to Independence	Minor
School-Based and/or Labour-Attachment Supports	Emphasis on school attachment
Specialized Treatment/Supports	Proportionate to identified need

## ***Example #2: Communities with Predominantly High-Risk Youth***

These communities have a visibly high incidence of youth actually living on the street or engaged in street life (1% or greater) compared to the at-risk youth population who are still somewhat attached to family (less than 5%). These communities may also be recipients of runaway youth from other communities. With this sort of profile, a greater emphasis is required on *Outreach and Short-Term Emergency Supports* to address immediate harm reduction and *Transitional Supports to Independence* (including one-to-one youth support workers) for the proportion of disenfranchised youth who are unable to return to their family and home communities. The provision of *Youth-Family Early Intervention and Re-integration Supports* will likely be proportionately smaller in this profile, and be based on the needs of local youth who could be kept with or returned to family.

<b>Type of Support</b>	<b>Possible Emphasis</b>
Early Intervention Supports	Medium
Street Outreach and short-term emergency Supports	Major
Community Based Outreach	Minor
One-on-one support workers	Medium
Youth-Family Re-Integration Supports	Minor
Transitional Supports to Independence	Major
School-Based and/or Labour-Attachment Supports	Major
Specialized Treatment/Supports	Proportionate to identified need

### ***Example #3: Communities with Competing Priorities***

These communities have both a high incidence of street youth, as well as a high incidence of parent-teen conflict with visible issues of curbed kids and runaway youth. Both the at-risk and high-risk populations have high need. Unless additional alternative funding sources can be secured to expand the community's funding capacity, tough decisions are likely required.

The best investment still involves a strong emphasis on *Youth-Family Early Intervention and Re-integration Supports*. This provides longer-term investment returns through building youth, family and community capacity to care for one another and less dependency on government services. However, this might need to be balanced with some basic provisions for higher risk youth. Priorities for provision of service supports to high-risk youth are as follows:

- Ensure that access to the basic needs of food, clothing, safe shelter and medical treatment are readily available. These basic needs are aimed at keeping youth alive, regardless of youth readiness and choice.
- Basic exiting and transitional supports are available and provided for those youth that show greatest need and readiness (see discussion above). These supports entail movement toward a more stable housing situation and food source. An identified support person for the youth provides some ongoing stability and supports youth to deal with their risk issues (e.g., homelessness, mental health).
- The supports identified above are not necessarily provided through MCFD funding in the community, but through the entire youth service system. Integrated case management is important in maximizing these resources.

<b>Type of Support</b>	<b>Emphasis</b>
Early Intervention Supports	Major
Street Outreach and short-term emergency Supports	Major
Community Based Outreach	Medium
One-on-one support workers	Medium
Youth-Family Re-Integration Supports	Major
Transitional Supports to Independence	Medium
School-Based and/or Labour-Attachment Supports	Major
Specialized Treatment/Supports	Proportionate to identified need

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF YOUTH BY TYPE OF SERVICE

Service Area	Description	Youth
Integrated Youth Service Offices	Integrate probation, mental health, delegated youth service workers, protection, resources and in some cases contracted agencies providing youth services (i.e. outreach workers) in one office for convenience of youth and integrated planning.	12 – 18 years old
Outreach Services	Under 19, with emphasis on children under the age of 16 years who are new to the streets. Outreach services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street-based outreach</li> <li>• Community-based outreach (i.e. drop-in centre)</li> </ul>	Under 19 years of age
Safe Housing	Provision of short-term immediate safe accommodation	Under 19 years of age
Sexually Exploited Youth	Average age of entry for those who are sexually exploited is 14.5 years with children as young as 9 being recruited	Under 19 years of age
Pregnant Teens	Early Parenting and Pregnancy Support: providing counselling and support for young mothers and pregnant teens	Under 19 years of age
Youth Agreements	Youth Agreements are permitted through Section 12.1 of the <i>Child, Family and Community Service Act</i> and is a legal agreement between youth and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The purpose of the agreement is to help those youth who are unable to return home to gain independence, return to school, and/or gain work experience and life skills.	For the purposes of a Youth Agreement the youth must be 16 years of age or over, but under 19 years of age, or if the youth is younger than 16 years of age, then the youth must be married (but living with spouse), a parent and/or expecting to be a parent.

Service Area	Description	Youth
Youth In Care	Residential services provided under the <i>CF&amp;CS Act</i> to youth in care, including foster homes and specialized resources	16 – 18 years old
Independent Living Program	Is a program which provides financial and emotional support to a temporary or continuing custody child in care 17 years of age and over while the child lives independently with preparation beginning at age 15. Youth under 17 may be approved with additional supports when all other options have been explored. The objective is to support the child and further enhance the child's independent living skills. (Ref: MCFD Policy Manual)	Under 19 years of age
Federation of British Columbia Youth in Care Networks	Is dedicated to assisting the promotion of local groups run by and for youth in government care. These local groups' primary functions are giving support, friendship, self-help, advocacy, information and representation of youth to and from care	14–24 years old
Mental Health Services	The primary obligation of Child and Youth Mental Health services is to serve those with serious social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.	Under 19 years of age
Youth Justice	<p>Services are provided through the Youth Justice Act and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative measures (diversion)</li> <li>• supervision and case management of youth who are subject to a bail or probation order</li> <li>• preparation of reports for court and Crown Counsel</li> <li>• community-based residential and non-residential programs, and</li> <li>• custody of youth awaiting trial or serving a custody disposition.</li> </ul>	12 - 17 years old

\*\* Note: For those under 16, services are provided through involvement of parent/guardian and in their absence, an MCFD Social Worker.

## APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTIONS OF YOUTH SUPPORTS

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The following descriptions provide supplementary information for:

- the continuum of supports as indicated in Diagram III - Support Matrix;
- the section entitled “Resource Decisions”

### **Early Intervention Supports**

- Attempts to maintain youth under 19 years of age to stay within their families and prevent them from disconnecting from family (i.e., leaving home).
- Could include early intervention with family development supports, youth-focussed supports, specialized treatment/supports, and/or school-based supports.

### **Outreach and Short-Term Emergency Supports**

Outreach Services (Includes outreach services funded through MCFD providing one on one and group support to youth, as well as those services through other ministries (e.g., street clinics and youth addictions detox through Ministry of Health Services)

- Street-based Outreach: defined as working in the street where high-risk youth are located and attempting to make a connection with these youth to help them leave the street.
- Community-based Outreach: defined as working in a physical community setting where high-risk youths are located and attempting to make a connection with these youth to help them leave the street, for example, working in a youth drop-in centre or in a school.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Stage Emergency Housing

- Makes short-term emergency shelter and safe housing available to youth under 19 years of age

### **Child Protection and Family Development Supports**

- Offer comprehensive assessment, investigation, interventions, planning, and/or family/guardianship supports to all youth under 19 in or out of their family home who warrant such involvement under Section 13 of the *CF&CSA*.
- For youth under 16 years of age:
  - returns youth to family or extended family with necessary family development and specialized treatment supports,
  - or
  - brings the youth into care and provides guardianship/custodial supports.
- For youth aged 16 to 18:
  - investigates only when youth are need of protection as defined under Section 13 of the *CF&CSA*, and:
    - is sexually exploited, or

- is developmentally delayed, or
  - where the severity of the reported circumstances suggest this is necessary, or
  - in the worker's professional judgement a full investigation is needed.
- in the vast majority of cases services do not remove youth and bring them into care, but rather provide alternative measures, namely voluntary plans to support youth to be safe within the context of their own family or extended family (e.g., with either family development or youth-family re-integration supports and/or referral to specialized treatment/support services).
- Youth in long-term Ministry care, who are 16 and older and have the independence readiness and capacity, may be best served through youth-focussed transitional supports to independence.

### **Youth Development Supports**

- For youth 16 and older, service begins with addressing immediate needs and assessing youth ability to return to family/extended family.
- If youth cannot return home and do not have ability to live independently, referrals to Child Protection Supports are made.

### **Youth-Family Re-Integration Supports**

- Provides youth 16 years and older who can return home and live with family or extended family with the required supports to re-integrate successfully.
- Includes any services with goals of mediation, parent-teen conflict resolution, reconciliation, re-integration, re-unification, reconnection or repatriation. Child in the Home of a Relative Program, provided out of the Ministry of Human Resources can also provide youth-family re-integration support.

### **Transitional Supports to Independence**

- Are offered to youth 16 years and older who are unable or highly unlikely to return to family or extended family at the present time. These youth could be high-risk or in long term Ministry care.

### **Youth Housing/Residential Supports**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage Transitional Housing
  - Provide high-risk youth 16 years and older with support in transitioning to more permanent, longer-term housing.
  - This could involve staffed-support semi-independent living housing and/or placement in staffed residential resources.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Stage Permanent Housing
  - Provides stable safe and affordable accommodation to youth 16 years and older through their latter transition to independence and adulthood.

- Could include long-term housing for youth with significant mental health issues.

#### Longer-Term Individualized Youth Supports

- Provides youth 16 years and older intermediate and longer-term supports to exit the street, transition to independence/adulthood, and/or eventual return to family.

#### Independent Living Supports

- Provide supports and/or financial assistance to youth under 19 years of age and generally 16 years and older who are living independently while transitioning to independence and adulthood.
- Currently include such supports as Independent Living Services for youth in care, Youth Supported Independent Living for youth with mental health issues (Fraser and Vancouver Coastal Regions), and Youth Agreements for high-risk youth through MCFD, as well as Income Assistance for Minors (i.e., BC Benefits) through the Ministry of Human Resources.

#### **Specialized Treatment/Supports**

- Includes specialized treatment services, such as medical health services, mental health services, addictions services, and youth justice, as well as specialized supports for at-risk and high-risk youth.

#### **Youth School-Based and/or Labour-Attachment Supports**

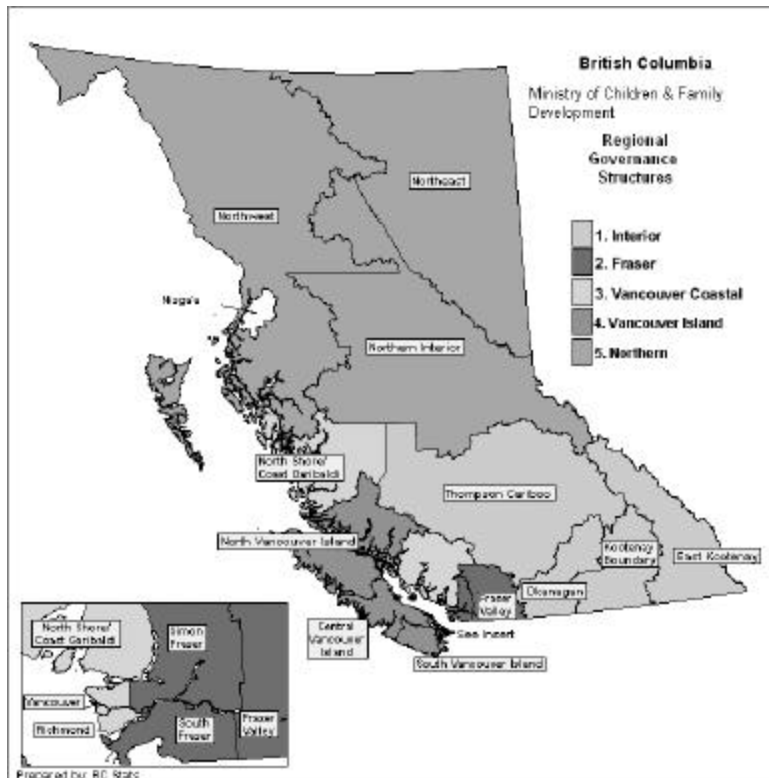
##### School-Based Supports

- Are for at-risk and high-risk youth under 19 years of age who may require ongoing supports within the context of the school environment to achieve successful educational and social outcomes.
- Includes school-based MCFD social support programs, as well as Ministry of Education programs that provide additional support and alternates for at-risk and high-risk youth through various educational settings/supports.

##### Youth Labour-Attachment Supports

- For youth under 19 years of age not in formal schooling programs to support them in preparing, seeking and obtaining employment that supports their transition to independence.
- Currently provided through Ministry of Human Resources and Ministry of Advanced Education.

## APPENDIX C - DEMOGRAPHICS



2002 MCFD VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION			
	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
Capital	38,962	14,919	11,422
Central Vancouver Island	32,485	13,666	10,296
Upper Island/Central Coast	17,367	7,297	5,537
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88,814</b>	<b>35,882</b>	<b>27,255</b>

2002 MCFD VANCOUVER COASTAL REGION			
	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
Coast Garibaldi	10,872	4,155	3,262
North Shore	21,837	8,649	6,557
Richmond	20,444	7,738	6,496
Vancouver	62,520	20,629	17,515
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>115,673</b>	<b>41,171</b>	<b>33,830</b>

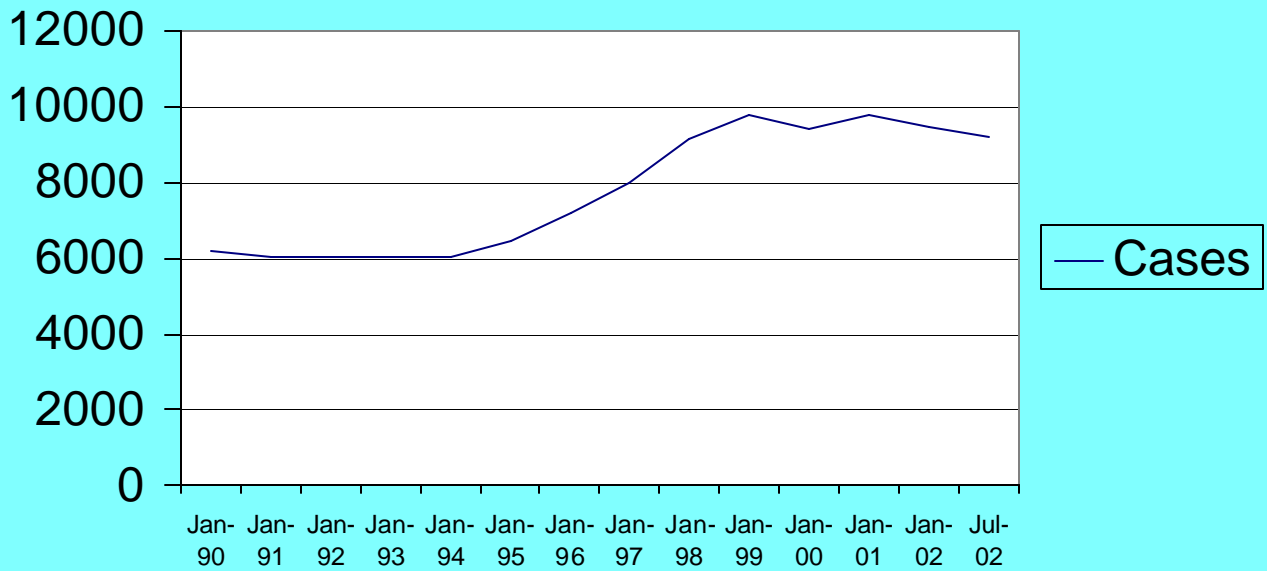
2002 MCFD FRASER REGION			
	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
Fraser Valley	40,728	14,891	11,105
South Fraser Valley	94,513	32,713	24,032
Simon Fraser	48,576	17,347	13,011
Burnaby	24,273	8,171	6,773
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>208,090</b>	<b>73,122</b>	<b>54,921</b>

2002 MCFD NORTHERN REGIONAL AREA			
	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
North West	16,421	6,140	4,462
Peace Liard	12,835	4,485	3,350
Northern Interior	21,869	8,584	6,623
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51,125</b>	<b>19,209</b>	<b>14,435</b>

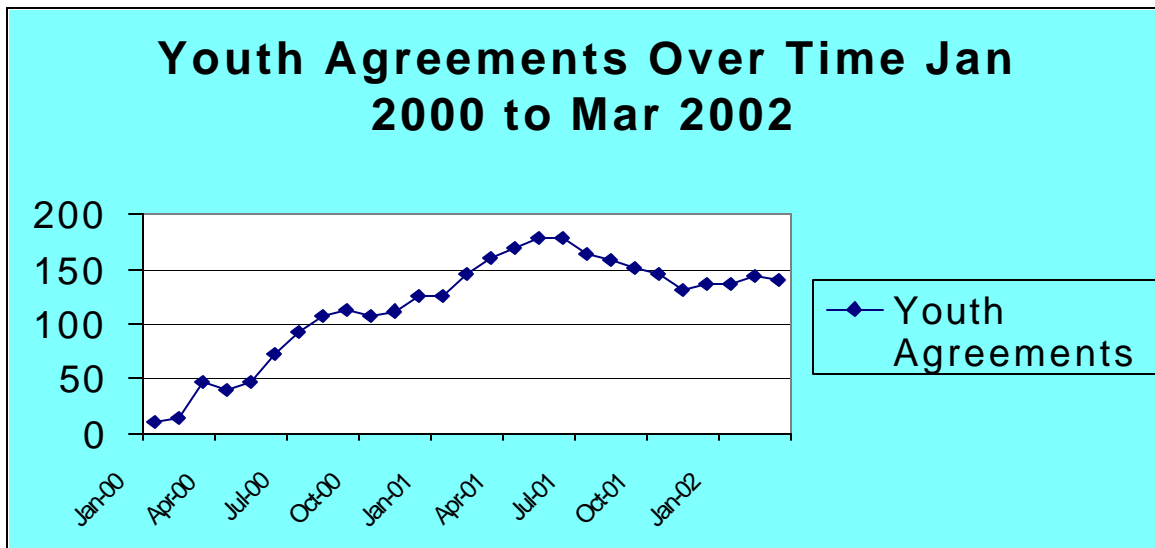
2002 MCFD INTERIOR REGION			
	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
East Kootenay	11,281	4,866	3,759
West Kootenay - Boundary	10,129	4,458	3,773
North Okanagan	15,857	6,923	5,457
Okanagan Similkameen	30,096	12,353	9,666
Thompson	19,358	8,062	6,249
Cariboo	11,939	4,931	3,819
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98,660</b>	<b>41,593</b>	<b>32,723</b>

Province of BC	0-11 yrs	12-15 yrs	16-18 yrs
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>562,362</b>	<b>210,977</b>	<b>163,164</b>

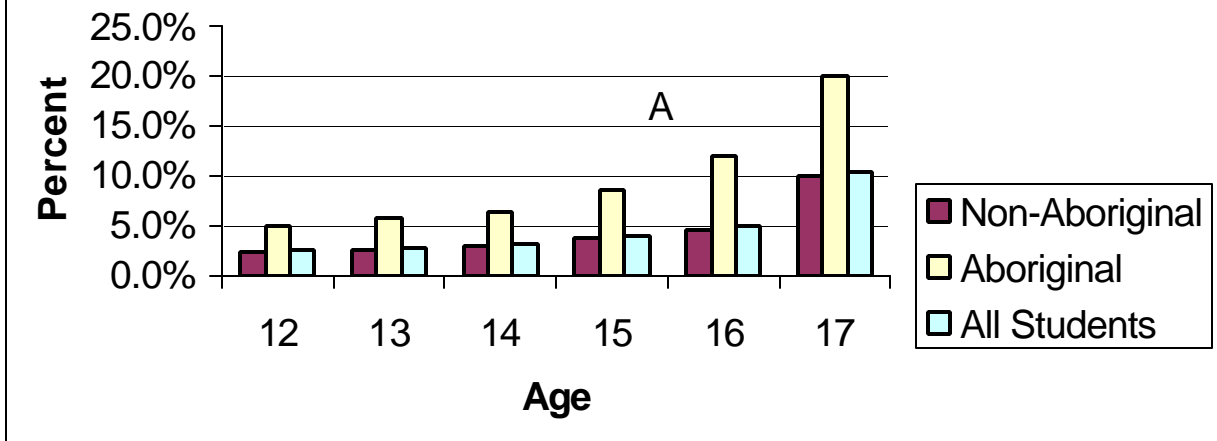
## Children in Care Over Time



## Youth Agreements Over Time Jan 2000 to Mar 2002

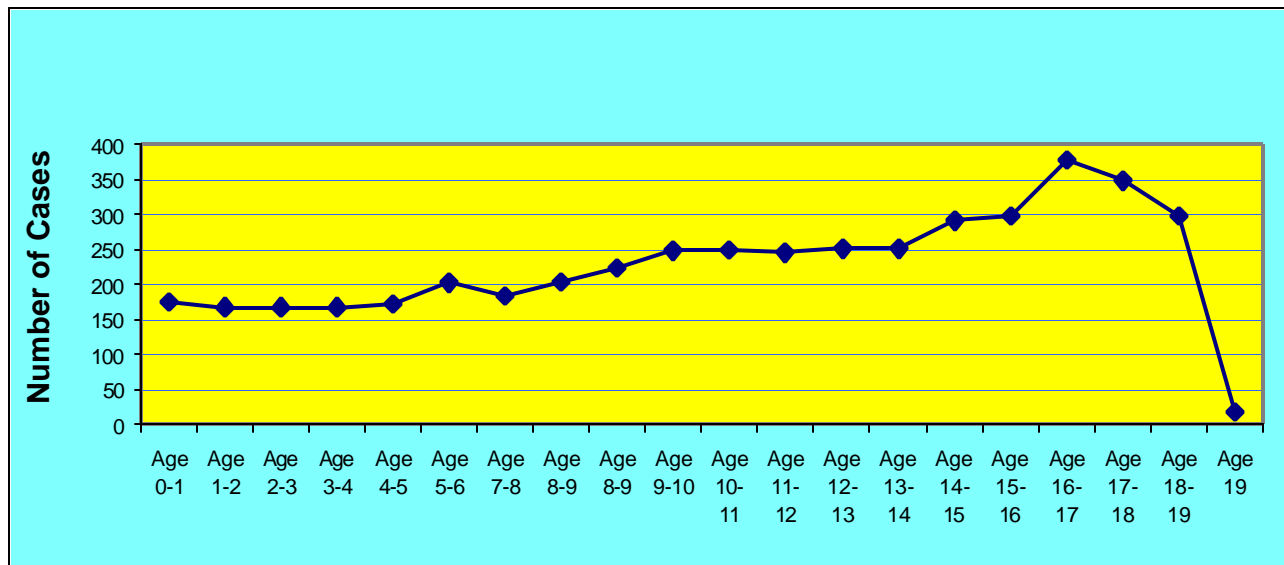


## Percentage of Students by Group Unaccounted for in BC School System



Based on school enrolment from Sept. 1997

## Child in Home of Relative – By Age, February 2002



### **United Nations - UNICEF**

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child  
<http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>

### **Ministry of Children & Family Development Links**

Know Your Rights Under The Child, Family and Community Service Act  
[http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child\\_family\\_service\\_act/index.html](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_family_service_act/index.html)

Sexual Exploitation of Youth In British Columbia  
[http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/youth/sex\\_exploit.pdf](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/youth/sex_exploit.pdf)

Integrated Case Management User's Guide  
[http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/icm/users\\_guide\\_1.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/icm/users_guide_1.htm)

Complaints Process for Youth - When you Disagree (English PDF)  
[http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/complaints/complaints\\_process\\_youth.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/complaints/complaints_process_youth.htm)

### **Other**

[The McCreary Centre Society](http://www.mcs.bc.ca/)  
[Http://Www.Mcs.Bc.Ca/](http://www.mcs.bc.ca/)

[Office For Children And Youth](http://www.gov.bc.ca/officeforchildrenandyouth/)  
[Http://Www.Gov.Bc.Ca/Officeforchildrenandyouth/](http://www.gov.bc.ca/officeforchildrenandyouth/)