

## MAYOR'S YOUTH FORUM - May 2011

### *Safety and Policing - Preliminary Report* *Submitted - June 14, 2011*

#### Overview and summary

The City of Kelowna Mayor's Youth Forum is a unique opportunity for local youth (grades nine through 12) in the City of Kelowna to share their thoughts, concerns and ideas about local social planning issues. The focus of this eleventh forum, held May 25th, 2011, was about public safety and policing.

#### Methodology in brief

- the Steering committee met between January and April, 2011 to choose a topic and to design the youth involvement processes.
- each of the eleven participating schools created a leadership team responsible for investigating safety and policing issues from either a: youth, parent and faculty, or business owner perspective.
- on-line surveys (over 990) were completed representing about 30% of all grades 9 and 8% of grades 10-12 students in the school district.
- over 60 youth took part in the full day forum May 25th, 2011 at the Hollywood Education Centre.
- preliminary report to Council June 14, 2011. Presentation to Council June 20, 2011, final report to Council June 30, 2011.

#### Findings

Safety and criminal threats are real issues affecting many students and will predictably worsen as Kelowna grows. Local youth are aware of both safety (63% of surveyed youth report that safety is an issue at their school) and criminal threats (35% of youth report that criminal activity at or near their school is either frequent or ongoing).

At the same local police are actively involved in most (all but one of the seven high schools) schools with education, response, and determent programs. And their presence is well received (91% of youth respect them and 85% believe that their presentations to youth and their actions will make a positive difference).

*"It's definitely a new and fun way to understand situations happening in our community and how to make it safer and better."* Youth participant

#### Preliminary conclusions

The challenge posed to the participants was to propose creative strategies that would augment current policing activities to reduce safety issues and criminal activities in the City.

Many suggestions were offered by the youth for creative ways to either educate the public on how to better respond to safety issues affecting them, communicate police services, or combat crime. Examples included:

- A campaign to educate parents on drug use awareness and management strategies.
- A central web site for the public to access information on police services.
- Improve the public image of police to help make them more accessible to the public.

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- Linking local businesses and police via a central listing of criminals that both the businesses and police could update in a joint effort to mitigate criminal behavior.

*"I was simply amazed by how much the members/people of this youth forum contributed in discussions."* Youth participant



**Question:**  
How do you rate the safety in this area?

Very safe: 31  
Somewhat Safe: 17  
Somewhat unsafe: 3  
Very unsafe: 0

**Question:**  
How do you think safety should be communicated throughout the community as a whole by police?

Common answers:  
Only notify the public about severe problems in their community. Don't notify them about minor incident's to avoid unnecessary panic.

Increased police presence in schools and the community.

**Question:**  
If you had a experience that resulted in the police, what would be the easiest way to contact them?

911: 42  
Regular phone call: 12  
In person: 9  
Text: 11  
Email: 4

Other: Social media, websites, meetings, public speeches, posters, police visits to class, newsletters

**Question:**  
If there were important messages that the RCMP wanted to communicate to the public what method would be best to reach you?

Other: 4  
Newspaper: 10  
Social Media: 21  
Focus group: 4  
Radio/TV: 37



## Kelowna RCMP Central Homepage

Mayor's Youth Forum

## Identifying the problem

- Communication
  - The RCMP's messages are not reaching enough people
- People are unaware of what they can do as individuals
  - People are waiting for the police to act
- Crimestoppers texting feature
  - Largely unknown, underutilized

## What the RCMP has now...

- A national webpage and Facebook
- A provincial webpage, Facebook and Twitter
- A partnership with Crime Stoppers for anonymous crime reports

The RCMP *already has* many services that could potentially enhance public safety

There are many sites that are of interest to the public

- Crimestoppers to report crimes
- Police homepage for feedback and policy decisions
- City homepage for the same purpose
- Various news outlets for latest news

It can be difficult and time consuming to find the information you need.

## Our Idea - A Central Homepage

- Links to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and RCMP homepage
- Email and text message alerts
- Frequently asked questions
- Form to submit questions and comments
- Ways to contact the RCMP and Crimestoppers
  - including the text messaging number

## Implementation

1. Set up the website
2. Raise awareness
  - Radio ads
    - people can listen to them while multitasking, and can't skip them with a PVR
    - should reach the demographic that doesn't use social media
  - Social media
    - Facebook
    - Twitter
    - YouTube
  - Other websites, such as Castanet

## T.A.S.K

Talk, Avoid problems, Seek help, Keep informed.



By: Kajal, Sophie, Mackenzie, Sam, Lindsay, Angus, Jon, Kevin, Trenton, Martina, Jennica

## What is T.A.S.K?



T.A.S.K. is an organization that educates parents about substance abuse surrounding teens. By creating ads, a phone number, and a website, parents can get educated about the environment teens are exposed to. There would be frequent notices and reminders, a place to ask questions, and access to important knowledge. Parents can then communicate more openly and effectively towards their teens.

## Talk



Step 1 in the campaign T.A.S.K. is Talk. When parents communicate with their teens it helps create a bond that leads to a stronger relationship between them. Talking about problems is the key to helping resolve them. Not only will this campaign encourage the increase in communication between parents and teens but it will also help parents learn what they need to know.

## Avoid Problems



Step 2 in the campaign T.A.S.K is to Avoid Problems. Problems that are interfering with teens in this generation are becoming so viral it is causing more to arise each day. A good way to prevent a bad situation from happening is knowing how to avoid it before it is encountered. T.A.S.K will provide options and support to parents in need of assistance.

## Seek Help



Step 3 in T.A.S.K is Seek Help. Acknowledging the problem and seeking help before it escalates can be key to preventing a police related situation. The website, ads, and phone number would provide the comfort of knowing there is a place for parents to refine their knowledge about substance abuse in the community.

## Keep Informed



Step 4 in T.A.S.K is Keep Informed. Parents could subscribe to daily or weekly notices and reminders by email. Access to the frequently updated website and ads reminding them to communicate with their teens, can help keep them notified on important and recent topics going on in their teens lives. T.A.S.K. will teach parents how to talk about substance abuse.

## 1-250-215-TASK



Phone lines and text options are appealing to this generation. By having this option it will provide a quick and easy way for parents to get the help they need. Counselors would be available to talk confidentially.

## DRUGS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

By: Angelo, Amarit, Brittany, Ryley, Dylan, Noah  
Touraier, Brienne, Mitchell

### The problem:

- ⦿ *Drugs have become a very large issue for teens in our community today.*
- ⦿ *Parents' aren't informed about their kids' participation in drug related activities mainly because they are busy with their own jobs or needs, and aren't paying enough attention towards their kids.*

### Solution to problem

- ⦿ *Get parents involved/informed and take action*

### Parent Involvement

- ⦿ *Many parents aren't very informed with the drug activities that youth today are participating in.*
- ⦿ *Because of this, many youth keep using drugs without the pressure to stop that parents could potentially provide.*

*How can we involve them more?*

### Online

- ⦿ *Websites are easily accessed anywhere*
- ⦿ *Could potentially hold vast amounts of very useful information to parents*
- ⦿ *Website could have a live blog where parents can talk to each other about their situations*
- ⦿ *Pre-recorded messages posted by knowledgeable person with firsthand experience.*
- ⦿ *The website could be filtered by users; they could report unsuitable comments*



### **Brochures**

- ⦿ *Brochures could be placed in public places such as malls, where people could potentially pick them up as they go by.*
- ⦿ *The brochures could also refer back to the website.*

### **Informing the parents on how to use these new resources**

- ⦿ *Presentations could be presented in order to inform parents on how to use these potentially useful resources*
- ⦿ *Presentation could include speeches from past or present drug users. It's much more inspiring to hear the real life account from a person with firsthand experience.*

### **Summary of how this can be accomplished**

### **Step one: Creating a source of information**

- ⦿ *To have all of this information available for parents to use, a databank of information would have to be created.*
- ⦿ *Potentially, all of this information could be featured on the website that any parent could easily access.*

### **Step 2: Market/inform parents on how to use it.**

- ⦿ *Presentations at local schools could be used to inform parents about these new resources that are available*

### **Ideas for end result**

- ⦿ *Link to a website with lots of useful resources*
- ⦿ *Downloadable brochure*
- ⦿ *Paper brochure*
- ⦿ *Prerecorded message from knowledgeable person on website*
- ⦿ *Blog on website*
- ⦿ *Presentation that informs parents on how to use other resources*
- ⦿ *Events calendar*

### Survey's before and post program

- ⦿ We could use a benchmark survey to survey parents before and after the program to see how much of a difference that it has made. In this way, we could see if it is worth it to keep the program running.

### Best scenario end result

Now that parents are informed about not only the drug related activities that their child may be exposed to, but they will be better equipped to deal with it.