

# COMMUNITY PRACTICES

---

**Promoting Safe, Cohesive Communities  
for Children and Youth Conference 2007**

  
INSTITUTE FOR SAFE SCHOOLS  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



## **Introduction**

---

The following community practices have been collected from practitioners across the province of British Columbia to reflect ways in which child and youth safety, and the creation of more cohesive social environments is currently happening. We sincerely wish to thank all those who have been willing to share their experience and knowledge in this way.

Each community practice briefly outlines a general or specific problem that the featured initiative is seeking to address, and the context in which the initiative arose. Each practice may also include how success is being determined, and lessons learned. The reader will find contact information for each listed practice in the event that further information is desired, and to assist innovation and best practices.

The information contained here was forwarded by the contributor. The BC Institute for Safe Schools and Communities has not directly assessed these practices.

---

**Community Practices**
**TABLE OF CONTENTS**
*School Based*

Building Skills for Success @ Schools	4
Community/School All-Inclusive Playground	5
Directed Supervision	6
Peer Support Program/Course	7
POSSE	8
Restorative Resolutions	9
STAR Behaviour Program	10
Students Taking on Athletic Roles Successfully (STARS) Program	11
The Gathering	12
The Violence Intervention and Prevention Team	13
Threat Assessment Training and the Implementation of a District Protocol	14
Two Roads Program	15

*Police Based*

Positive Ticketing	16
Student Work Experience Team/Youth Police Advisory Committee/ CSI Summer Camp	17
ZAMOOF Magazine	18

*Community Based*

PrideSpeaks	19
Responding to Racism through Visual Arts	20
West Coast Alternate Program	21

---

**BUILDING SKILLS FOR SUCCESS @ SCHOOLS**

## Burnaby

This program was developed in response to research findings that draw a link between out-of-school suspensions, increases in students' alienation from school, and decreases in academic performance and internal feelings of self worth.

The primary goals of the Building Skills for Success @ School are to promote resiliency and connectedness with students who have been involved in drug use; to develop a referral process for integrated case management with wraparound support, counseling and restorative conferencing; and, to develop re-integration strategies for students returning to school after a suspension. This is in effort to minimize disruptions in learning and providing increased support.

The program runs from 2:45 to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday. The project involves a blend of individual time dedicated to self-assessment, goal setting and group process. On Friday, time is provided for staff to follow up with youth who have attended the program. However, every second Friday staff gather to review the goals of the project. Schools refer students when they are caught using substances at school. However, there have also been several self-referrals. A referral package, information sheets (for students/parents/and school staff), self-assessment, re-entry plan and a program report card/feedback form were created. Further consultation with community agencies continue as we determined how we can best work together.

Challenges to program success rely to a great extent on location and staffing (initially). The program is targeted toward those who have been suspended for using drugs, but also for those who are demonstrating retention issues.

For those considering implementing the program: be flexible and consultative when starting up; enlist ongoing feedback from the target group and be willing to make changes to meet their needs; be realistic and clear about your goals; be prepared to work with recidivism; and think outside the box.

Sue Dorey, Manager Youth Services  
Sue.dorey@sd41.bc.ca  
604-664-8233

---

**COMMUNITY/SCHOOL ALL-INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND**

## Sooke

This project was started because of the need to replace old playground structures that were deemed to be unsafe. The project began two years ago, and while we were successful in raising funds for a conventional playground, we decided to change our focus and developed a vision of an all-inclusive playground.

The playground is viewed as a ‘social community’ where students of varying needs can play together in a common area. The goal of this project is to provide a safe all-inclusive playground area with many special features to accommodate all students and children in the community, including children with special needs (e.g. wheelchair, blindness, deafness, etc)

As our idea began to take root, various prominent charities came aboard. This included organizations such as RMHC, Success by Six, Rich Hansen Foundation, Santa Anonymous, District of Sooke, and Queen Alexander. To date, we have raised \$165,000, with the potential to receive another \$62,000.

It took a lot of energy, drive, many presentations, and an on-going commitment to our goals in order to get this project on its way. One of the positive effects of the project resulted in a number of donors coming together for a common purpose. Some of the challenges that were faced were characterized by major commitments of time, living with uncertainty (as we waited for incoming funds to meet our budget goal), coordinating donor timelines, and at times, even doubting our own vision.

Overall, we would suggest that if your community’s dream is important, stay with it, keep knocking on doors. It will all come together with a clear, unified vision, hard work, and a belief system in the importance of the goal.

Dave Balchin  
dbalchin@sd62.bc.ca  
mprice@sd62.bc.ca  
ssherman@sd62.bc.ca  
250-642-5261

## **DIRECTED SUSPENSION**

### **Kamloops/Thompson School District**

Students who were being suspended from school for five days or more were appearing to enjoy a holiday from school. Furthermore, of those students, those who were deemed to be extremely at-risk students were becoming further alienated. Directed Suspension was introduced in the Kamloops/Thompson School District in September 2005 as a response to this issue.

Directed suspension requires students to remain engaged in the educational process in various ways. Students attend three hours a day at a storefront classroom where they complete work assigned by their regular teachers. They contribute an additional two hours a day performing community service work. They also complete a questionnaire regarding their drug/alcohol use and are given an appointment to meet with a drug/alcohol counselor weekly. Not only must students agree to these expectations from the outset, the success of the program depends on the support of their families. Together, the directed suspension team (the teacher, the home school administrator, and the addictions counselor) makes both restorative and therapeutic recommendations, and supports the student and their family in accessing appropriate resources and services. If the team decides that further assessment and on-going monitoring is required, then this provision of services is supported further.

This program was presented by the Alternate Program Administration to District Administration who agreed to rent downtown office space for a classroom and to provide a part time teacher. As of February 2007, the staff has been increased to full time so that an afternoon classroom component can be added to the morning one. Morning students do their community service in the afternoons while afternoon students do their community service in the mornings. The District has found two beneficial community service organizations that provide good placement opportunities. These involve both the Food Bank and the New Life Mission.

While the program is young, there is a less than 5% student repeat rate for those who have gone through the Directed Suspension. Students report receiving assistance with their schoolwork, and many say they are very satisfied with what they accomplish. A survey of secondary school administration revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the program, and requested to continue with the program. The benefits of this program allow student to be accountable for their time spent away from regular classes, and provide a way for students to contribute to community service.

Flexibility and accessibility make this program work. Location is very important - it must be away from regular schools, close to community service opportunities, and near a bus route. As well, there must be support and buy-in from schools. Obtaining the 'right' teacher is critical.

Evelyn Hoffman, Vice Principal  
ehoffman@sd73.bc.ca  
250-554-3438

---

**PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM/COURSE**

## Campbell River

This course was developed because it was found that when problems arise in their lives, students first talk to peers as they have similar attitudes, interests, and languages.

Peer Support is designed to provide training to students in communication, interpersonal and specific intervention skills. These skills enable students to help their peers with the problem-solving process, and take an active role in helping create and deliver prevention programs in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Students learn to identify problems, help others understand the essence of a problem and help others with the solution process by seeking information and problem-solving strategies. Self-awareness activities are included in this course, as well as an examination of non-verbal communication, empathy, tolerance, acceptance and respect.

The goals of this program are to provide students with the opportunity to establish meaningful and caring relationships among peers; to train students in listening, communication, problem-solving, and conflict management skills; to provide peer resources to the school community; to develop and enhance student leadership, self-esteem and interpersonal skills; to extend the guidance and counseling services of the school; and, to create a caring school climate.

Some of the positive activities and behaviors include: the removal of negative graffiti from the school; increased communication with isolated students; touring new students, including those who are isolated; intervening into a group if negative language is heard; and, reporting any suspected bullying, racism, negative comments, or concerns. In addition, this group contributes to school wide events by supporting activities such as drug and alcohol information day; a big sister type group with at-risk girls; an anti-bullying campaign; a grade ten girls sleepover to empower girls to make healthy choices in life; the showing of "An Inconvenient Truth" to the school; and health awareness week.

For those considering replicating the practice, it is recommended that the program run year-long, supported ideally by two teachers. Patience is important due to the time it takes to establish a core group. Make connections with feeder schools and outside organizations early, and work with corresponding staff to understand how the peer support group can benefit different student groups.

Jane Kolmatycki  
Jane.kolmatycki@sd72.bc.ca  
250-286-6282

## POSSE

### Coquitlam

In 1995, two members of the SHARE Youth Alcohol and Drug Service Team were asked to develop an anger management group for volatile and high-risk girls aged 14-16 in a Coquitlam junior high school. The initial response was to create a psycho-educational, Skill-based group, but it was quickly realized that the students needed an avenue to talk about what was relevant in their lives. This experience of human connection in a safe, respectful environment was, and continues to be a potent antidote to acting out and risk taking behaviour.

POSSE is founded on the conviction that connectedness and belongingness are critical to psychological health. It is a process for young people where the participants decide what to talk about, with two trained adults who facilitate the group. The participants are provided the opportunity to explore their respective individual cultural and social realities, allowing them to address the cycle of connection, disconnection and reconnection in relationships as well as give voice to their own internal processes. The facilitators look beyond the concrete facts of each youth's stories to find the common themes that emerge, linking the group members together. The questions posed by the facilitators invite the group to look at a wider picture than the individual story alone, looking at themes such as bullying, relationships, violence, injustice, sexual safety, school, family, the future, drugs and alcohol.

A safe sense of community is established by ensuring the space for the group that is private, that rules of confidentiality are set by group members and facilitators provide healthy, nutritious snacks, creating an inviting atmosphere. Eating together is a powerful community builder.

The largest roadblock for POSSE has been securing the initial support of teachers and administrators. This results from a legitimate concern about these youth who may not be succeeding academically and missing class for a group session. However, allowing students to attend a group during school hours suggests to students that school personnel are willing to provide an alternate opportunity for connection and belonging in addition to the more traditional academic, service and sport streams offered through the education system. Allowing youth to miss a class signals an important message to students that they are valued and cared for within their school community - a community which may present students with significant challenges.

Since 1995 this program has expanded from a single group of girls within a school, to its current twenty-two groups operating in 06/07. Group demographics also include male and co-ed groups, and are being offered in a variety of community settings, such as recreation centers, middle and secondary schools. Participants have reported an increase in their sense of belonging; connection to their community; feelings of hope; sense of control regarding their future; healthier life choices, and life skills.

Karen O'Brian, Community and School Based Prevention Worker  
kobrian@sd43.bc.ca  
604-941-6053 ext. 255

---

## RESTORATIVE RESOLUTIONS

### Mission Restorative Resolutions

This program was developed because of the growing concern about how to effectively resolve issues and reintegrate youth involved in conflict and wrong-doing. Discussion and the formation of an interagency committee that included broad representation from the community as well as the School District, the municipality, the R.C.M.P. detachment and the Ministry of Children and Families developed. From these discussions formal agreements for referrals and case processing from all contributing agencies and the community at large were established and joint contributions were made to hire a coordinator and fund the operation of Mission Restorative Resolutions as well as train community volunteer facilitators.

The main goal of the practice is to help the offender resolve their problem while also allowing them to maintain an active and productive role in their community. These students are able to minimize the shaming they often face. Should one of the parties opt out of the process, traditional consequences would then be established for the offender. The second goal is to develop a healthier way for students to process conflict. This is carried out through the implementation of educational initiatives such as dialogue circles and elective courses in restorative justice that students take part in.

There continues to be some resistance to restorative practices because of the time they take to implement. However, the many positive outcomes include: numerous volunteers; the successful diversion of several cases from the R.C.M.P. and Crown Counsel away from the criminal court system; the growing number of active referrals and case files from all partner groups; the rewording of School District policy with regard to looking at restorative practice as first option when dealing with student offenders; and the reduced number of suspensions and the retention of students in the school system. The single biggest outcome has been the cooperation of the various community agencies in a meaningful way to enhance the lives marginalized people in the community.

Randy Huth, District Principal  
Randy.huth@mpsd.bc.ca  
604-826-6286

Stan Weir, Principal  
Stan.weir@sd75.mission.bc.ca  
604-814-0446

---

## STAR BEHAVIOUR PROGRAM

### Mission

The STAR Program is a vehicle for teaching, tracking, and responding to student behaviour. Over the years the original school rules at Ecole Christine Morrison Elementary School have evolved from a simple list of 'dos and don'ts' into the current code of conduct which is embedded in the STAR behaviour program.

The STAR Program includes a code of conduct, student lessons, regular communication via the school PA system and assemblies, data collection and analysis, and ongoing review by staff and parents. The five word matrix (safe, trustworthy, accountable, respectful and responsible) is posted in chart format on the school walls to reinforce these concepts.

Students are taught the STAR matrix in class at the beginning of each school year. Skits are performed to reinforce concepts at assemblies, and daily announcements on the PA include attention to STAR behaviour. Primary students complete a STAR definition recall test each year, and intermediate students take part in an annual STAR matrix example test. We also track citations for misbehaviour using a computer program which allows for the analysis of misbehaviour according to the type of behaviour, location, time of day, etc.

The STAR program is communicated to parents via our school handbook and calendar. It is revised and refined each year by staff and parents as part of our annual cycle of reviewing school goals.

Those wishing to replicate this practice are advised to include the entire school community in developing an appropriate acronym, to consider the importance of regular reinforcement of its concepts, communicating, and assessing behavioural concepts, and to plan for long term professional development and review for program sustainability.

Brian Tucker, Principal  
brian.tucker@mission.bc.ca  
604-826-6528

---

## STUDENTS TAKING ON ATHELETIC ROLES SUCCESSFULLY (STARS) PROGRAM

SE Kootenay

The STARS Program was developed as a way to respond to violent and risky behaviour at the elementary school level. School data suggested that behavioural trends were growing toward unsatisfactory levels, and that our school and/or community-based services were unable to reverse these trends by simply 'doing more of the same'. The goal of STARS is to reduce school-based violence/aggression and the high number of behavioural problems being committed by a disproportionately small number of students.

A group of approximately eight to twelve high-risk students are given the opportunity to physically 'work out' with an athletic trainer (who is also a drug/alcohol counselor) and a youth care worker. Students are able to do this once or twice a week throughout the school year, taking place in the school gym or the outdoors. Through physical exercise and subsequent group work, students are given the opportunity to release pent up frustration, anger, and stresses that often present themselves in negative ways at school. More specifically, as student re-group following physical exercise; they are invited to join a circle for snacks/drinks, and then share personal struggles, conflicts, and family issues.

It is crucial to have a committed school team willing to venture into this program. On-going team action-planning is required to continually identify the vision, goals, and strategies (re-assess and modify when necessary). There is no question that there were bumps in the road, such as student time-tabling, defiant behaviours due to external matters, etc.

The most positive outcome includes seeing happier children. Not only have some of them found new success in their lives, for some, it is the first time they feel accepted. Students are able to maintain their connections to their schools in a full time capacity. At the school level, office referrals and negative behaviors are reduced significantly for those children involved in the program over the course of the school year. The biggest challenge involves sustaining the level of intervention due to the support team's full plate of job demands.

Tom Piros, SD #5  
Tom.piros@sd5.bc.ca  
250-426-0813

## THE GATHERING

Nanaimo/Ladysmith School District

The Gathering began as an opening routine at a small school slated for closure in the Spring of 2004. It continued on at Bayview School the following year. The idea of singing together as a community was brought up at a Social Responsibility workshop.

It was felt that each school day needed to begin by bringing all staff and students together in the library (and later the gym) for morning announcements, and to sing some songs. As part of this, a student is asked to read the morning messages with the expectation that all grades 6 and 7 students participate at least once during the school year. Part of the announcements includes the sharing of the social responsibility message for the week. The entire meeting may take eight to fifteen minutes.

As this new way of meeting was being planned certain criteria were established. Songs were chosen to reinforce respect, responsibility, kindness, ownership, safety, and cooperation. A staff member agreed to become responsible for the announcement book as well as lining up the students speakers. It was also decided that students needed to be close together; they needed to be able to see the words to the songs; adults needed to be interspersed for extra supervision; and, everyone either had to sit on the floor or stand – no benches or chairs were permitted.

Certain challenges became evident. Staff became concerned with time (so we switched from two songs to one song), and late students (purposely skipping the gathering) so they are now being given a late slip for the day.

The sense of community that the Gathering has created allows us to share and discuss things with the entire school in a way that is quite unique. Students can witness the staff laughing and crying together. They know that when they are with us in the Gathering that we are there as part of a larger family. The Gathering also acts as an instant barometer as to the needs of our inner-city school population – we can tell what kind of day it will be by the overall tone of the Gathering.

In order to implement the Gathering at your school, consider the following questions: Do you have a strong belief in social responsibility? Does your staff believe that building a sense of community is important enough to dedicate 60 minutes of teaching time a week to this practice? Do you have someone who can lead singing? Is there a natural meeting place where all the students and staff can gather in an informal way? Will staff agree to being at the Gathering every morning?

Diana Goodman, Principal  
dgoodman@sd68.bc.ca  
250-754-3231

---

## THE VIOLENCE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION TEAM (VIPT)

### Grand Forks

The Violence Intervention and Prevention Team has been in place for approximately 1.5 years and was adopted to support the districts' Social Responsibility goal. The VIPT is one of four pillars in the New Rural Partnerships. It involves grade 11 and 12 students working with two adult facilitators who then take their violence prevention message to grade 7 -12 students district wide.

The objectives of the program are to engage students in workshops designed to promote healthy and respectful relationships; to improve students skills in developing and maintaining healthy and respectful relationships, including problem solving and conflict resolution in the context of friendship and intimate relationships; to improve the understanding between interpersonal and systemic violence and the impact it has on their lives; to decrease violence and abusive behavior in school settings; to decrease violence in friendship and dating relationships; and, to involve youth in a meaningful way in program development and delivery.

Various key components are required to ensure program success. Funding is needed to support adult facilitators and to provide program training. Having both male and female adult facilitators is essential, along with male and female grade 11 and 12 students. Careful selection of these students is essential to ensure that students are not only committed to working within a cooperative team setting for program development, but then also to present the message to their grade 7 – 12 peers. A school/community network is also needed.

Time-tabling the elementary and secondary schools continues to be an on-going challenge. The evaluative tools include surveys completed by the facilitators, team members, and teachers following the VIPT sessions. The safe schools survey is also being used. Positive changes are being observed within the VIPT members who have been through the training. They are more confident, compassionate, and in tune with their own feelings as well as those of their peers.

Contacting SWOVA (Salt Spring's Respectful Relationships) group is a useful starting point to explore the implementation for such a program. Make use of all community members committed to violence prevention and increasing safety in the community in partnership with the youth program. Pay the facilitators and put time in at the beginning – be patient – to make sure the team is prepared to enter the classroom and mentor students.

Maxine Ruzika  
mazine.ruzika@sd51.bc.ca  
250-442-8258

Daryll deWynter  
daryll.dewynter@sd51.bc.ca  
250-442-8285

---

## **THREAT ASSEMENT TRAINING AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DISTRICT PROTOCOL**

Invermere

High profile school shootings and other high profile violent events in Canada and the United States have understandably led to increased anxiety among many students, staff and parents. School principals and district staff felt that training in threat assessment would assist in identifying whether a student may be at risk of violence. It was also felt that training would allow schools to identify effective intervention strategies to decrease the risk for others, as well as for the student.

Two days of intensive training with Kevin Cameron were followed by the development of a draft protocol. The district now has a threat assessment team which includes relevant agencies, such as the RCMP and Mental Health. The training included all principals, counselors, senior staff, support workers, as well as representatives from outside agencies, such as the RCMP, MCFD and Victim Support. Following the training, a draft protocol has been implemented for the remainder of the year. When the draft protocol was presented to the principals, they worked through it with specific students in mind and decided that the model was workable as a pilot. The protocol, as well as the effect of receiving training, will be reviewed in May and June of 2007.

Our new awareness has already resulted in change of practices for some schools, particularly around setting up support structures for vulnerable students. The importance of sense of belonging has influenced the approach taken for students “on the fringe”. Staff are optimistic that a deeper understanding for the variables which lead to violent incidents will assist them in earlier identification of at-risk students and in implementation of pro-active measures. In instances where the protocol has been used, it has been reassuring to have a detailed guideline to follow. We would emphasize the importance of including personnel from local outside agencies in the initial training.

Barbara Morris  
342-9243  
bmorris@sd6.bc.ca

## TWO ROADS PROGRAM

### Kamloops

A class was established at Twin Rivers Education Centre in February 2006 for grade 8 students who were no longer attending regular school.

This program involves a group of ten to twelve students who meet at the Boys and Girls Club. Here they are engaged in morning classes and a recreational/life skills program in the afternoon. One teacher and school support worker are dedicated to this group. In February, 2007 it became apparent that another class needed to be established. Due to some students having 'no contact' orders from being in trouble with the law, a downtown location was chosen where students could receive the classroom portion of this program.

The most immediate goal of this program is focused on social responsibility; academics become an outgrowth. All students are on Individual Education Programs. Each day a different student meets with the youth care worker to prepare lunch. The teacher is present over lunch and eats with the students. Afternoons vary from among activities involving such things as painting a boathouse, watching movies, going on park visits or attending the gym.

This program supports one of the school district goals of retaining as many students as possible. Positive effects include the development of supportive relationships between students and specific school staff members, as well as staff from the Boys and Girls Club. All students in this program have severe behavioural challenges. As such, these students appear to benefit from 'extreme structure' even if they complain about it. Staff have learned that listening to students is vital. As well, a facility such as the Boys and Girls Club forms an ideal partnership for schools working with youth in terms of providing a venue for students to practice interacting with other people in the community.

Evelyn Hoffman, Vice Principal  
ehoffman@sd73.bc.ca  
250-554-3438

---

## POSITIVE TICKETING

### Oak Bay

Based loosely on a positive ticket approach started by the Richmond RCMP in 2003, the Oak Bay Police Department began their own program in July of 2006.

As a strengths and preventions-based initiative which fits in perfectly with the philosophies of “Asset Building”, positive ticketing is a way to bridge the gap between police and young community members. This represents a shift from the traditional “enforcement” model of policing. ‘Armed’ with these tickets, police are in a position to reward youth for being caught ‘doing the right thing’. This may include wearing a bike helmet, playing safely and considerately, acting responsibly, or generally staying out of trouble. Instead of targeting youth based on poor decision-making, positive ticketing allows the Oak Bay Police to encourage positive actions through positive interactions and enables police to build relationships with community members at the same time.

For example, picture two 12-year-old boys cycling to school together. One is wearing a helmet, one is not. The police could write the boy without the helmet a \$29.00 ticket or, alternately reward the other boy with a positive ticket. Both actions would encourage the boy without a helmet to get one, however, one of the responses is more likely to foster a positive relationship between the boys and the police member.

Finding community support for this project was not difficult. In fact, the project does not cost the police department a dime. The local recreation center was quick to offer its support and every positive ticket includes one free admission to any number of activities such as swimming, skating, weights, table tennis or badminton. The entire cost of printing the business card-like tickets were borne by Coast Capital Savings who, with no hesitation, not only printed the tickets but helped to design them as well. In fact, Coast Capital was so excited by the project that they offered to do up similar tickets for any local police department that wanted them. Currently, they are assisting Sidney RCMP and Vancouver PD on identical initiatives.

In short, positive ticketing is simply an incredibly easy way for police officers to interact positively with youth and to encourage responsible activities at the same time.

Rob Smith, Oak Bay Police Department  
rsmith@oakbaypolice.org  
250-592-2424

---

**STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE TEAM/YOUTH POLICE ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE/CSI SUMMER CAMP**

West Vancouver Police Department

*Student Work Experience Team (SWET)*

SWET was created in 2004 when a high school counsellor inquired whether the West Vancouver police department would offer work experience positions for high school students so that schools could link students to opportunities for completing community volunteer service hours.

The students complete a number of volunteer community policing tasks, and participate in community events, such as the meth awareness campaign, Capilano Reserve clean-up, community day parade, and the lock out auto crime campaign.

*Youth Police Advisory Committee (YPAC)*

YPAC was implemented in response to a need to provide more youth-oriented activities for West Vancouver youth. This was identified at the 2002 Civic Youth Strategy. This committee strives to organize and host youth events in the community to strengthen the relationship between police and youth. Activities involve events such as battle of the bands, a graffiti competition, an open-air movie night, and an annual family carnival event.

*CSI Summer Camp*

The West Vancouver Police Department's Forensic Identification Section (FIS) hosted a summer crime scene investigators academy for a group of eleven local high school students who have an interest in this field. The course ran from August 22 to 25, 2006, from 10:00-2:00. Topics included crime scene examination, fingerprints, forensic entomology, footwear identification, blood stain pattern analysis, osteology, and DNA analysis.

In order for the above programs to succeed, it became important to commit sufficient resources and staffing, and importantly, to include the student in the planning/event organizing process.

Sgt. Paul Skelton

Paul.skelton@vancouverpolice.ca

604-925-7347

**ZAMOOF MAGAZINE**

Kelowna

ZAMOOF magazine is collaborative effort which includes submissions from students, school counselors, police, comic artists, and emerging young authors. It includes sections on Fun and Games, Features, Comics, Interviews, Stories, Special Features, and Reader Input. The project for the magazine was conceived and implemented by the Editor, TeLeni Koochin, who has a background in magazine editing. The distribution for this magazine is now international, including the United States.

As a School Liaison Officer, I was contacted by the editor and asked to contribute editorials to the magazine in an effort to impart important police and safety information to the readers. The first editorial was submitted in the fall of 2006 and appeared on the first edition in January 2007. The first submission explored the topic of ski and snowboard protection. The second submission, in two parts, talks about the work of R.C.M.P. police dogs and handlers. Future topics will include Stranger Danger, School Safety, Drug Awareness, and other safety related topics. The issues are published every two months, with the third edition due in May. The magazine is by subscription and subscriptions are made available to anyone.

The response among readers is excellent. When I go into schools I find that many children are familiar with the magazine as the schools receive copies. The students like the magazine and find the content interesting and appropriate.

My advice to other School Liaison Officers is to never pass up any opportunity to get the message of safety and drug awareness to as many children and youth as possible.

Cst. Steve Holmes  
250-762-3300  
steve.holmes@rcmp-grc.gc.ca  
TeLeni Koochin  
250-762-9624  
teleni@zamoofmag.com

## PRIDESPEAKS

Gab Youth Services, Vancouver

High school is often a place where youth may feel a lack of freedom to be themselves or positively explore things that might appear somewhat different from the norm. This presents tremendous pressure for certain youth to fit in. LGBTTIQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited, inter-sexed, queer) youth often feel like something is wrong with them. This may occur as a result of not being included in the school curriculum, creating increased risk for becoming marginalized and lessening the likelihood for succeeding in school.

In response to this issue, PrideSpeaks workshops have been introduced in schools and community centers. The interactive workshops provide education about sexual orientation, gender identity and discrimination. They teach participants that everyone needs to be respected regardless of one's sexual orientation, race, class, gender identity, age, size, level of ability, etc. A typical PrideSpeak presentation can include a variety of different activities such as examining the media, word association, definition, myth-busting games, coming-out stories, and ideas to make schools safer.

Historically, there has been a lack of awareness, knowledge, recognition or tolerance concerning the issues that affect LGBTTIQ youth and the harmful effects of homophobia/transphobia and bullying on this group. In 1998, there were 12 PrideSpeak workshops. In 1999 that number increased to 35 and in the years 2000 and 2001, over 90 workshops were presented. Last year, 205 workshops were presented with over 9,280 participants

What has been really powerful about PrideSpeaks is that while some presentations may start off with a few giggles and negative comments, most students become fully engaged as the workshops progress. Students begin to think about their own biases and judgments and come to recognize how hurtful bullying, name-calling and discrimination can be. Some advice would be to: contact Gab Youth Services as a starting point to learn more about PrideSpeaks and how they work, work with allied, queer or other organizations that are doing similar anti-oppression work. This will help in terms of mobilizing resources, in looking for funding options and in order to build awareness about the needs of LGBTTIQ youth and bullying, and get various community members in positions of power involved.

Anisha Abdulla, Program Coordinator at GAB Youth Services  
youthcoordinator@lgtbcentrevancouver.com  
604-684-4901

**RESPONDING TO RACISM THROUGH VISUAL ARTS**

## Abbotsford

The latest census data released on Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003 shows Abbotsford to have the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest visible minority population in Canada. Congruent with the census data, the school populations reflect this cultural diversity. In schools where there are large populations of South Asians, there are many reported incidents of racial tensions between groups based on ethnic lines. In schools where there are fewer numbers of visible minorities, there are issues of isolation and exclusion; and in schools of mixed populations there is grouping along ethnic lines.

For more than a decade Diversity Education and Resource Services, a program of Abbotsford Community Services, has facilitated anti-racism and anti-discrimination projects within local secondary schools. We hypothesized that discrimination and stereotyping amongst adolescents might be prevented or lessened if anti-racism workshops were delivered to younger populations.

The major goals of our racism project are to: develop an ant-racism arts-based workshop in collaboration with a children's art educator; increase students' awareness of racism through creative workshops; display students' artwork; facilitate a positive change in students' attitudes toward others; increase the students' knowledge of cultural diversity; and increase the students' confidence in responding to discrimination.

There were over 1600 participants involved in this project. Funding was provided to deliver 20 workshops, however we were able to stretch our budget to deliver 49. An art exhibit of the CD case artwork was featured on two occasions in Abbotsford for the public to view. The majority of student participants surveyed showed that they had a positive change in their attitude toward others, increased knowledge of cultural diversity, and increased confidence in responding to discrimination. A challenge that we faced was not being able to accommodate all of the requests for workshops from teachers.

Alison Wainwright, Abbotsford Community Services  
maccess@paralynx.com  
604-859-7681 ext. 270

---

**WEST COAST ALTERNATE PROGRAM****Vancouver**

The transition from elementary to high school is a crucial time in which we can have significant positive impact. Detachment from school leads to an increased risk of criminal involvement, substance abuse and secondary disabilities. Therefore, our approach has been to: create a small off-campus setting; ensure an effective wrap-around support system for participating FASD youth; establish a collaborative approach in working with family, school, employers and support staff; provide a less complex, supportive, nurturing environment, with individual and group guidance – highly structured and well supervised; and provide positive fun social activities during ‘free’ times that result in less opportunity to become entrenched in negative behaviours.

The West Coast Alternate Program provides support, education and community development services to youth 13-18 years old who live in Vancouver, have been diagnosed as having FASD, and who have an IQ above 70. The program goals include improving school attendance; increasing participation in academic, social/family, and employment activities; providing necessary support which will enable the youth to complete high school; and, identifying and sharing learning.

Given the opportunity in a supportive educational environment, FASD impacted youth remain interested and thrive. Provided with specific strategies and ongoing support, FASD impacted youth can more than succeed in the work environment. By providing after school programming in a protective environment, their ability to succeed at meeting expectations has improved. Understanding individual student functioning in the home enhances the ability to provide effective individual responses in school and other social settings.

Given the challenges experienced by youth affected by FASD, the ability to navigate within the highly stimulating, often overwhelming environments of high school are vast. An “off-site” setting for these students is the optimal setting to situate a program of this nature. When there are multiple agencies or partnerships involved in delivering a program of this nature, clear protocols and communication between all service streams is critical to an effective and seamless program delivery. Networking with other service providers in the specific field such as FASD is beneficial to avoid burnout and to share ideas.

John Gotowiec, Program Coordinator  
jgotowiec@pcrs.ca  
604-412-7964

David Delorme, Senior Teacher  
ddelorme@vsb.bc.ca  
604-412 -7961

BC Institute for Safe Schools and Communities  
Building A, Room 203  
33844 King Road  
Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada  
V2S 7M8  
1-888-224-7233