City of Richmond

Youth Strategy 2022–2032

Richmond

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The City of Richmond has a long history of responding to the needs and aspirations of youth in Richmond. The actions outlined in the *2022–2032 Richmond Youth Strategy (Youth Strategy)* demonstrate the City's strong commitment to youth and recognition that the well-being of youth is best supported through community collaboration.

The *Youth Strategy* outlines strategic priorities and key actions to guide and inform the City's initiatives related to youth, including those provided by Community Associations and Societies from City facilities and other youth-serving organizations in Richmond. The *Youth Strategy* is the result of a multi-phased process that included best practice research, engagement with youth, their families and key individuals, and the development of a demographic profile of youth in Richmond.

Building on the progress made on the previous plans for youth in Richmond, including the *2015–2020 Youth Service Plan*, the new Strategy will help to guide the City and those who work with youth while also furthering the City's aspiration for *"Richmond to be the best place in North America to raise children and youth."*

Framing the new *Youth Strategy*, the vision that *"all youth in Richmond are safe, valued, respected and have the supports, opportunities, and resources to live rich and fulfilling lives"* will inform the work over the next ten years.

The Strategy is organized into five strategic priorities:

- **Strategic Priority 1: Foundation**
  Youth have access to services and resources in the community that provide a foundation for wellness.

- **Strategic Priority 2: Voice**
  Youth are heard, valued and engaged as members of the community and their opinions and perspectives inform plans, programs and services that are important to them and impact their lives.

- **Strategic Priority 3: Collaboration**
  Youth are supported by an integrated and collaborative network of youth-serving agencies, non-profit organizations, public partners and local government that work together to promote positive youth development.

- **Strategic Priority 4: Opportunity**
  Youth have equitable access to a wide-range of programs, services and initiatives that address their needs and support them to learn, develop and successfully navigate the various stages and transitions from early adolescence to young adulthood.

- **Strategic Priority 5: Awareness**
  Youth, their families and the broader community have access to information and resources and are aware of the services and supports available to youth in Richmond.

The City is committed to playing a leadership role to achieve its vision for youth and the community. The *Youth Strategy* proposes 36 actions to address these priorities. The actions focus on the City's role in each of these areas and are divided into short, medium, long-term and ongoing timelines. The Strategy also identifies the importance of inter-agency collaboration as a component for successful implementation and key partners are identified with each action.

Introduction

The *2022–2032 Richmond Youth Strategy (Youth Strategy)* outlines the City's priority actions related to youth over the next ten years and advances the progress made through the previous Council adopted plans for youth in Richmond, including the *2015–2020 Youth Service Plan*. The intent of the new Strategy is to guide the City and those working with youth and further the vision that all youth in Richmond are safe, valued, respected and have the supports, opportunities, and resources to live rich and fulfilling lives. Given this context, the development of the Strategy was comprised of:

- Analysis of demographic data and trends related to youth in Richmond;
- Research regarding best practices and innovative approaches to meet the needs of youth;
- Input and advice from a *Youth Strategy* Advisory Committee; and
- A variety of public engagement activities, including an online survey through the City's Let's Talk Richmond platform, focus groups and interviews held with a range of individuals including youth themselves.

When considered alongside other City strategies and plans, the *Youth Strategy* informs the City's actions to ensure the needs of youth in Richmond are met. The Strategy also outlines the importance of collaboration with community partners to achieve the City's vision to be the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada.

Background

The City of Richmond has a long history of responding to the needs and aspirations of youth. In 1995, the City developed its first *Youth Service Plan*. This plan proved to be an important framework to meet the emerging needs of diverse Richmond youth. In 2005, Richmond City Council adopted an asset-based approach to the delivery of youth services, which continues to be used today as the philosophical foundation for the implementation of programs and services. The City's most recent *2015–2020 Youth Service Plan* built on the successes of the *2008–2012 Youth Service Plan* and has acted as an important guide for the City and those who work with youth in Richmond. The new *Youth Strategy* takes into consideration and expands upon previous plans that support youth and provides a broader, collaborative and community-integrated strategy to guide the next ten years of planning and program and service delivery for youth in Richmond. This new Strategy also expands the age range for youth from 13 to 18 years to 13 to 24 years, to further support youth in developing as young adults.

Figure 1: History of Strategic Planning for Youth in Richmond

1995
City of Richmond developed its first Youth Strategy

2005
Richmond City Council adopted an 'Assets Based Approach' to serve youth and endorsed the vision for "Richmond to be the best place in North America to raise children and youth."

2008–2012
City of Richmond's First Youth Service Plan was implemented

2013
City of Richmond's Social Development Strategy was adopted which included the 40 Developmental Assets-based approach

2015–2020
City of Richmond's 2015–2020 Youth Service Plan was implemented

2021
Engagement on City of Richmond's new *Youth Strategy* commenced

In addition to the specific documents mentioned here, there are a number of aligned strategies that pertain to youth in Richmond. Please see Appendix B for additional details on these.

Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to developing strong connections with youth, the City recognizes the importance of building strong partnerships with key individuals, including senior levels of government, community organizations and public partners, to effectively respond to the needs of youth in Richmond. There is a wealth of expertise and strong collaboration within Richmond which helped to serve as a foundation on which the *Youth Strategy* was developed. There are also a number of essential groups whose input and collaboration contribute to the development of youth in Richmond. These essential groups are summarized below.

The Government of Canada and the Province of BC

All levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal) are responsible for a range of programs or services that youth may use. The federal government is responsible for youth justice services and the rights of all Canadian residents, including children and youth. The provincial government is responsible for health, social services and income assistance for all citizens, including youth.

Positive Youth Development and the 40 Developmental Assets

The City of Richmond and Community Associations and Societies employ a Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach to working with youth, through the lens of the 40 Developmental Assets. Asset development is accomplished by building relationships with youth that are grounded in mentoring, role modelling, engagement and creating meaningful experiences for youth and supportive adults. The 40 Developmental Asset Framework provides a shared vision and language to guide the practice and approach for youth-serving organizations to support all youth in Richmond.

Research shows that the 40 Developmental Assets, developed by the Search Institute of Minnesota, act as essential building blocks for youth to make wise decisions, choose positive paths and grow into competent, caring and responsible adults. These assets are internal and external to the individual and include positive experiences, skills, relationships and personal attributes. Internal Assets are assets that youth can work on independently. External Assets focus on positive experiences that young people receive from the people and institutions in their lives. Additional information on this philosophical approach is outlined in Appendix A.

The City of Richmond

Municipal governments provide community facilities and recreational, cultural and social programs for youth. In some municipalities including Richmond, the City works with Community Associations and Societies to deliver many of these services.

In its role as a local government, the City of Richmond undertakes the following:

- Develops policy related to youth (including within the City's Official Community Plan);
- Creates actions within a range of strategies and plans to address the needs of youth;
- Works with public partners including the Richmond School District, Richmond Public Library, Vancouver Coastal Health and the Ministry for Children and Family Development;
- Directly provides programs and services to support youth development, well-being and success;
- Partners and collaborates with Community Associations and Societies that provide youth-focused opportunities at City facilities such as community centres, arenas, parks and heritage sites; and
- Partners and collaborates with local community-based organizations to provide programs and services to support youth development, well-being and success.

The *Youth Strategy* outlines key roles the City can play in furthering the strategic priorities. These include leading, supporting, advocating and collaborating roles. All are key to the successful delivery of youth services in Richmond. The City is committed to remaining a local leader that works with community partners to ensure that youth in Richmond are supported and thriving.

Youth

The City values Richmond youth as contributing members of the community and recognizes the importance of youth being involved in decisions that affect them. The meaningful participation and authentic engagement of youth is important to ensure that policy, programs and practices directed at or intended for youth are reflective of their needs, desires and experiences. Providing youth with the opportunity and responsibility to influence issues that affect them ensures programs and services are reflective of and responsive to youth needs. Involving youth supports the priorities and actions identified in the *Youth Strategy*, enhances youth development and participation, and fosters connection and a sense of belonging within the community.

Community Associations and Societies

In addition to the direct provision of programs and services for youth, the City of Richmond works with Community Associations and Societies that deliver a wide variety of programs and services at City facilities such as community centres, arenas, parks, museums and cultural sites. Through these non-profit organizations, youth have opportunities to participate and volunteer in a variety of social events, physical activities, health and wellness programs, leadership opportunities and cultural activities. Youth Development Coordinators, specifically trained and employed by the various Community Associations and Societies, as well as other public-facing facility staff, also work with youth in neighbourhoods in Richmond to promote youth engagement, establish positive relationships, and connect youth to their community. These Associations and Societies include:

- Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society;
- City Centre Community Association;
- East Richmond Community Association;
- Hamilton Community Association;
- London Heritage Farm Society;
- Minoru Seniors Society;
- Richmond Arenas Community Association;

- Richmond Art Gallery Association;
- Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association;
- Richmond Museum Society;
- Richmond Nature Park Society;
- Sea Island Community Association;
- South Arm Community Association;
- Steveston Community Society;
- Steveston Historical Society;
- Thompson Community Association; and
- West Richmond Community Association.

Youth-Serving Community Organizations

Richmond has a strong network of youth-serving community organizations who demonstrate expertise and are well-positioned to identify existing strengths and successes, gaps in service, barriers impacting youth participation and, plan and collaborate with others in the community. These organizations deliver a wide range of services to support Richmond youth. These currently include agencies such as:

- Aspire Richmond (formerly Richmond Society for Community Living);
- Chimo Community Services;
- Connections Community Services Society;
- Foundry Richmond;
- Pathways Clubhouse;
- Richmond Addiction Services Society;
- Richmond Centre for Disability;
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S.;
- Touchstone Family Association;
- Community sport, arts and cultural organizations; and
- Faith-based organizations.

Public Partners and Government Agencies

The City has strong working relationships with public partners, including the Richmond School District (SD38), Richmond Public Library, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), and the Richmond RCMP. These government agencies work to develop assets in youth, support youth safety and well-being, and improve and enrich the lives of youth in Richmond through a variety of services and supports. The City is committed to ongoing collaboration and partnerships with these government agencies to ensure positive youth development in Richmond.

Alignment with Other City Policies & Strategies

The *Youth Strategy* aligns with and is supported by a range of City Council adopted plans and strategies that have one or more strategic actions or outcomes focused on supporting the needs of youth in Richmond. The *Youth Strategy* builds upon these documents and is not intended to duplicate the direction of other City strategies.

Key examples of supporting strategies and plans include:
- Richmond 2041 Official Community Plan (OCP);
- Parks and Open Space Strategy (2012–2022);
- Richmond Social Development Strategy: Building our Social Future (2013–2022);
- Sustainability Framework (2015–2020);
- 2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy;
- City of Richmond Affordable Housing Strategy (2017–2027);
- Volunteer Management Strategy (2018–2021);
- City of Richmond Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023);
- Recreation and Sports Strategy (2019–2024);
- Richmond Arts Strategy (2019–2024);
- City of Richmond Homelessness Strategy (2019–2029);
- City of Richmond Cultural Harmony Plan (2019–2029);
- Richmond Detachment Strategic Plan (2021-2025) (RCMP);
- Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond (2021–2031);
- City of Richmond Seniors Strategy (2022–2032).

Additional information on these City strategies and plans can be found in Appendix B.

Developing the Strategy

The development of the *Youth Strategy* involved gathering information from a range of sources including reviewing the annual updates on progress towards the implementation of the *2015–2020 Richmond Youth Service Plan*, an environmental scan of other municipal and regional youth-related strategies and a literature review. To gain insight into the perspectives, opinions and priorities of youth and young adults in Richmond, a number of methods were used including surveys, focus groups and interviews. Public feedback was sought from youth, their families, service providers and staff who work with youth in Richmond. All of the information collected provided meaningful insight to inform the development of the Strategy.

Vision

The vision for the *Youth Strategy* establishes a foundation for the Strategy itself. It will be used to guide and inspire the implementation of the priorities and actions within. The *Youth Strategy* envisions that:

> *All youth in Richmond are safe, valued, respected and have the supports, opportunities, and resources to live rich and fulfilling lives.*

Youth Strategy Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee was formed to guide and support the development of the *Youth Strategy*. This included facilitating the engagement process, gathering experiences and perspectives of youth, their families and community organizations, and providing guidance to the project. Committee members included staff representatives from the following eight youth-serving organizations as well as one youth (aged 13 to 18 years) and one young adult (aged 19 to 24 years):

- City of Richmond;
- Cambie Community Centre;
- Foundry Richmond;
- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD);
- Richmond Public Library;
- Richmond School District;
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S.;
- Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH); and
- Youth (two members).

In addition to the two youth members, representatives were selected based on their relationships with youth and the Richmond community, as well as their specific expertise related to youth. This diverse group ensured the needs of youth and youth-serving organizations were reflected in the development of the new Strategy.

Guiding Principles

The Advisory Committee identified a set of Guiding Principles to direct the development of the Strategy. Adopted by City Council on January 21, 2021, the Guiding Principles for the *Youth Strategy* include:

- Maximize meaningful participation and engagement of a diverse community of youth;
- Identify and prioritize engagement activities that encourage genuine participation that are free of stigma and discrimination;
- Collaborate with Community Associations and Societies and organizations serving youth to promote innovation, improve accessibility and avoid duplication of community efforts;
- Ensure that planning is intentional, considers the impacts of notable and emerging trends and addresses gaps in the continuum of services and supports for youth;
- Adopt an approach that integrates and complements relevant policies, strategies and resources to support youth in Richmond; and
- Manage resources effectively and maximize the full potential of individuals and organizations to achieve measurable outcomes.

These principles guided the City and Advisory Committee when making decisions, planning engagement activities and developing the actions outlined in the Strategy.

Needs Analysis

Development of a Youth Profile

A Richmond Youth Profile was developed using a range of local, provincial and national data sources representing data collected between 2016 and 2021. Some of these data sources are only available for specific age categories and, as such, may represent only a portion of youth between the ages of 13 and 24 years. These specific age ranges covered are noted where relevant. Key data sources used to inform the youth profile included:

- Annual Report, BC Vital Statistics Agency;
- BC Adolescent Health Survey, McCreary Centre Society;
- Census of Population, Statistics Canada;
- Incident-Based Crime Statistics, Government of Canada;
- Middle Years Development Instrument Grade 8 report, Human Early Learning Partnership, UBC;
- Richmond *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey; and
- Student Statistics, BC Ministry of Education.

Literature and Best Practice Review

The literature and best practice review included a systematic analysis of current literature in the area of youth development and well-being. An environmental scan was also completed and involved detailed analysis of 22 municipal and regional youth-oriented strategies and plans and six national and international strategies. Learnings and observations from these have informed the structure, framework and priorities in the *Youth Strategy*.

Consultation with Key Individuals

An online *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey was delivered using the City of Richmond's public engagement platform, Let's Talk Richmond. The survey was advertised to the public through the Community Services E-newsletter, the City's social media channels, a Media Release and sent directly to all registered users of the Let's Talk Richmond platform. The survey link was widely circulated to youth-serving organizations in Richmond including the Richmond School District, Richmond Public Library, community centres, faith-based organizations, sports groups, arts programs, private schools and multi-service organizations. These organizations were also asked to circulate the survey link and information to youth in their programs, families of youth, and to program staff. Due to the ongoing health restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, widespread, in-person community engagement was not possible in the development of the Strategy. The data collected, however, represents a broad range of diverse perspectives and experiences, which was critical in identifying themes and areas of focus for the *Youth Strategy*.

Questions focused on:
- Overall well-being for youth in Richmond;
- How youth currently spend their time;
- Awareness, usage and perceptions of programs and services for youth;
- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects of life for youth in Richmond; and
- Potential strategic priorities and actions to include in the *Youth Strategy*.

A total of 279 surveys were completed with 164 youth and 73 family members participating. Of the youth who completed the survey, 123 were between the ages of 13 and 18 years and 41 were between the ages of 19 and 24 years. Support was also offered in Cantonese and Mandarin to complete the survey. The survey asked for input, opinions and feedback on current factors impacting youth. Focus groups also took place involving 79 youth participants from community-based leadership and advisory tables.

Key community partners and service providers were included in the engagement process. The online survey was completed by 33 service provider representatives. Individual interviews and focus groups took place with nine Advisory Committee members as well as a series of focus groups involving 37 individuals representing youth-service organizations. The focus groups included Youth Development Coordinators at community centres, community service providers, members of the Richmond RCMP and school counsellors working in Richmond public schools. This input provided a rich variety of perspectives and expertise to inform the strategic priorities and actions within the *Youth Strategy*.

Youth Profile

Youth in Richmond represent a diverse and unique demographic influenced in part by the wide range of developmental, social and life changes that encompass the period of adolescence and young adulthood and in part due to the prominent ethnic, cultural and linguistic variations across the community. These demographic details, combined with an analysis of the factors that contribute to healthy development and the risk factors that can negatively impact development have informed the priorities and actions outlined in the *Youth Strategy*. The Richmond Youth Profile provides an overview of the demographics and experiences of Richmond youth between the ages of 13 and 24 years. The profile has been compiled using data collected through a variety of sources including the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey, specific to the development of the *Youth Strategy*.

The purpose of the Youth Profile is to:

- Provide information about Richmond youth (aged 13 to 24 years) based on available demographic, socio-economic, health, youth development and community characteristics;
- Build awareness of the strengths and needs of Richmond youth;
- Support evidence-based decision making to identify priorities for the *Youth Strategy*; and
- Inform the further development, implementation and investment in the continuum of services available to Richmond youth.

The Youth Profile is divided into the following sections:

- Richmond Youth Demographics and Data;
- Indicators of Healthy Development; and
- Risk Factors Impacting Development.

While the *Youth Strategy* addresses the needs of youth aged 13 to 24 years, it is important to note that different data sets define the ages of youth differently. All data reported in the Youth Profile falls within the range of youth 13 to 24 years except where otherwise noted. The BC Adolescent Health Survey, one of the primary data sources for the youth profile, collects information from individuals 13 to 19 years. The Middle Years Development Instrument collects data from individuals 12 to 13 years. The Middle Years Developmental Instrument was completed by 82% of all Grade 8 students in Richmond and is representative of youth at the earlier end of the relevant age span.[1] The BC Adolescent Health Survey and Middle Years Developmental Instrument together provide an overview of health and wellness indicators across Richmond youth, 13 to 19 years. There is not a comparable data source for information related to youth 20 to 24 years at this time.

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1   Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

Demographics and Youth Experiences

A strong understanding of the strengths, needs and concerns of youth is critical to the development and implementation of the *Youth Strategy*. The following section summarizes information related to current demographics and indicators of health and well-being for youth in Richmond. Demographic data is used to describe the youth in Richmond and inform priorities and actions in the *Youth Strategy*. In addition, it summarizes data related to how youth spend their time and their perceptions of various indicators of positive development. These factors influence and guide the development of the strategic priorities and actions outlined in the *Youth Strategy*. The full data and demographic information used to inform the profile can be found in Appendix C.

Demographics of Youth in Richmond

- There are approximately 29,000 youth aged 13 to 24 years in Richmond and they are almost equally represented amongst males (51%) and females (49%).

Figure 2: Total Richmond Youth by Age and Gender[2]

■ *Male   ■ *Female   **Total number of youths: 29,175
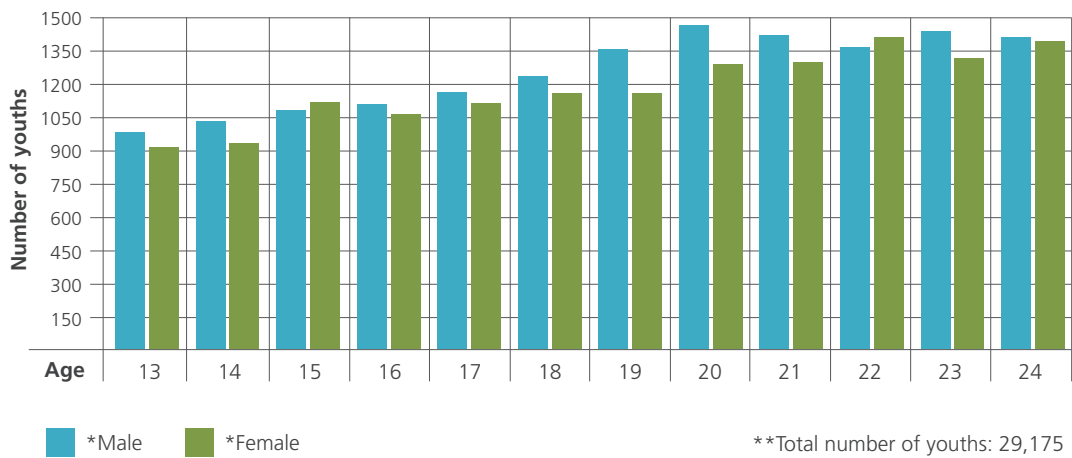
*Non-binary was not an option

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2   Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

- A small portion of youth identify as non-binary and a slightly higher number describe their sexual orientation as other than straight.

Figure 3: Sexual Orientation of Richmond Youth[3]
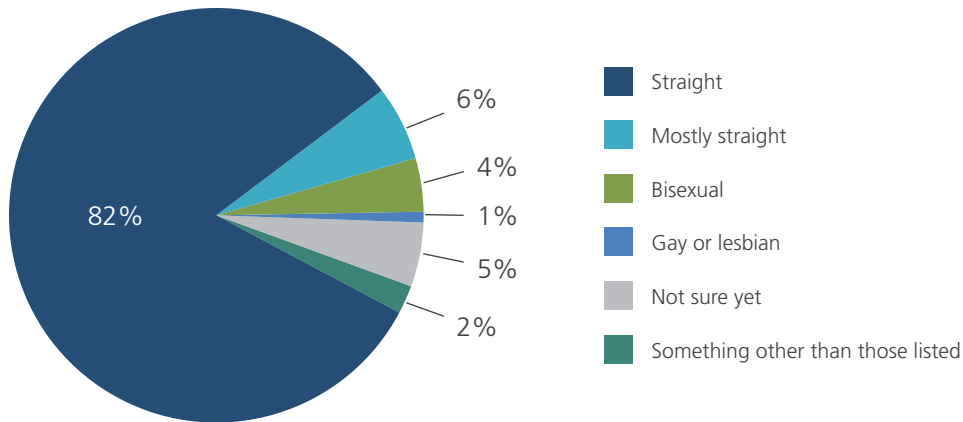
- Straight
- Mostly straight
- Bisexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Not sure yet
- Something other than those listed

82%
6%
4%
1%
5%
2%

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3   McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

- The majority of youth in Richmond identify as racialized or as a visible ethnicity with a small proportion (approximately 1-2%) of youth identifying as being of Indigenous, First Nations or Métis heritage.
- Over 1/3 of Richmond youth were born outside Canada and 1/2 of this group have been in Canada less than 5 years.
- 78% speak a language other than English at home at least part of the time.

Figure 4: Top 10 Languages Spoken by Youth Other Than English[4]

Language	Percentage
Mandarin	24%
Cantonese	17%
Tagalog	6%
Punjabi	4%
Japanese	2%
French	2%
Hindi	2%
Vietnamese	1%
Korean	1%
Spanish	1%

Youth Health and Well-being

- Youth in Richmond describe a high degree of access to basic necessities; however, a small portion of youth are not getting their basic needs met and require support with housing and food security, dealing with a crisis and having sufficient income or employment.
- 80% of Richmond youth describe their health as good or excellent.

"I am happy with my life."

High 33%
Medium 38%
Low 29%

Source: Middle Years Development Instrument

Figure 5: Health Ratings of Richmond Youth[5]

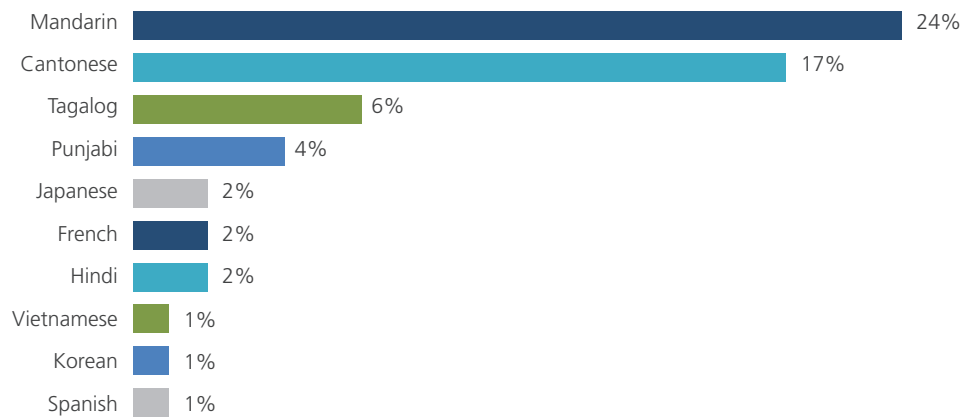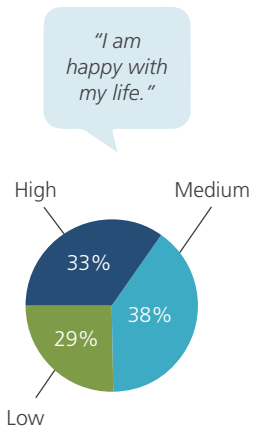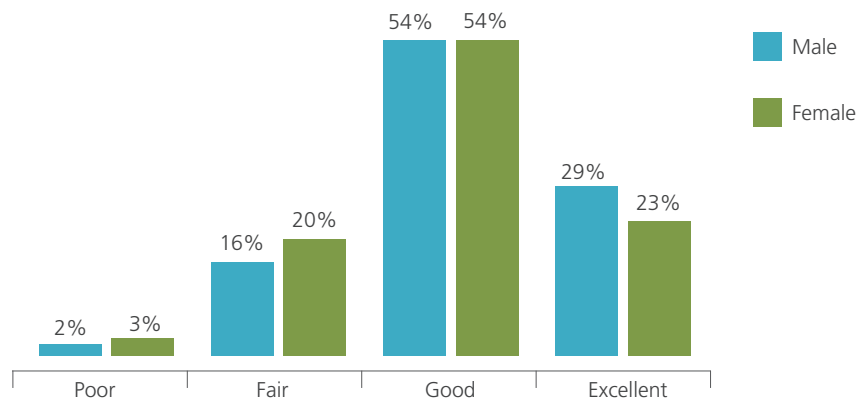|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Male	2%	16%	54%	29%
Female	3%	20%	54%	23%

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4   McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
5   McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

- Richmond youth aged 13 to 18 years who completed the BC Adolescent Health Survey were less likely (14%) than those across the province (18%) to meet Canadian physical activity guidelines.
- Among individuals aged 18 years or older, 43% reported meeting physical activity guidelines for their age category.
- There are marked increases in mental health diagnosis or symptoms such as anxiety and depression; 19% of youth 13 to19 years had not accessed needed mental health services.
- 19% indicated they previously had or were currently receiving support for mental health issues and 32% indicated that they had or were using counselling services.

Youth Engagement, Activities and Behaviours

- Youth are engaged in a wide variety of structured and unstructured activities.

Figure 6: How Youth Spend Their Time - Structured Activities[6]
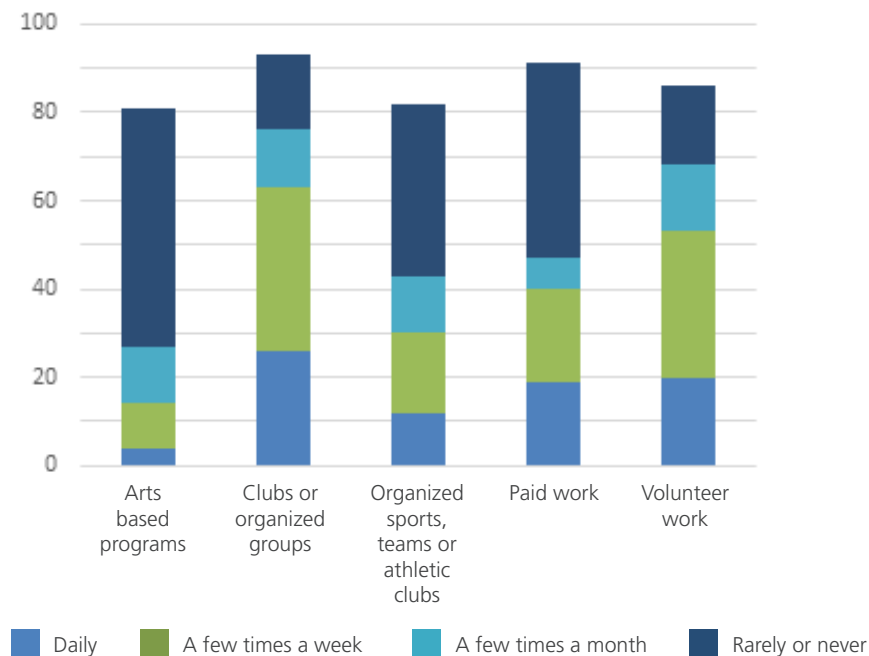
Figure 7: How Youth Spend Their Time - Unstructured Activities[7]
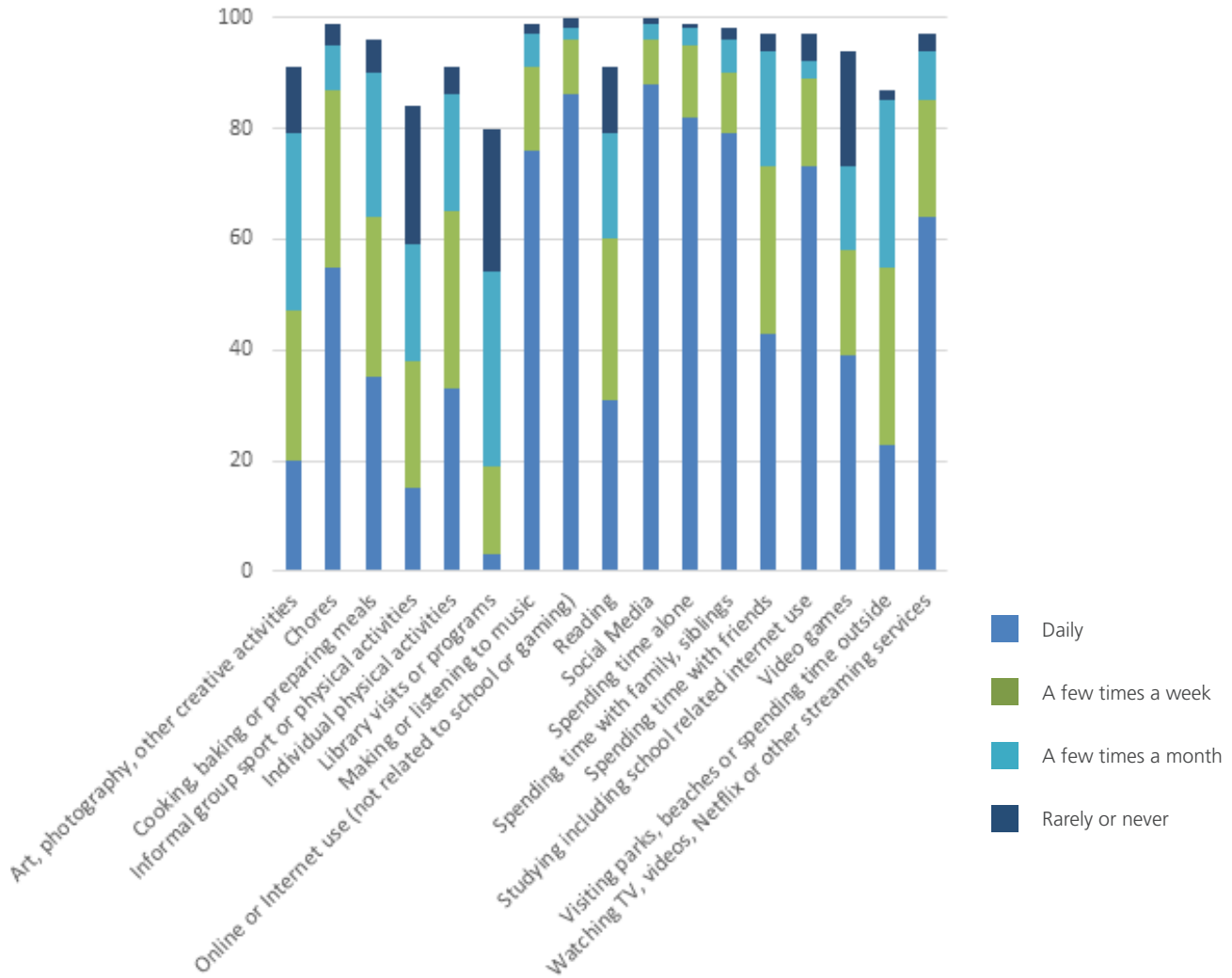
Youth in Richmond represent a culturally, linguistically, socially and developmentally diverse group of individuals. For the most part youth tend to be doing well, however there are youth in the community who struggle to meet their basic needs, express concern about their physical and mental health, and do not always feel safe in the community. Priorities and actions within the *Youth Strategy* are identified to respond to the needs of youth across this continuum.

7   Let's Talk Richmond *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey

Indicators of Healthy Youth Development and Well-being

Indicators that support healthy youth development include internal assets such as individual attitudes and beliefs; participation in activities and access to services related to physical, mental and emotional health and well-being; and connectedness to family, school, community and nature. All of these indicators can be intentionally developed in order to increasingly support healthy youth development in Richmond. The following section of the Youth Profile summarizes data collected through the BC Adolescent Health Survey, the Middle Years Developmental Instrument (MDI) and the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey that relate to healthy youth development.

Data collected through the MDI is used to create a well-being index for Richmond. Currently 18% of Richmond students in Grade 8 are considered to be thriving, in contrast to 25% across the province.[8] Grade 8 students are at the youngest end of the youth age continuum and as a result, this information forms a critical data set for the age range of the *Youth Strategy*.

The Well-Being Index combines MDI measures relating to youth physical health and social and emotional development that are of critical importance during the middle years. These are: Optimism, Happiness, Self-Esteem, Absence of Sadness and General Health.

Scores from these five measures are combined and reported by three categories of well-being, providing a holistic summary of youth's mental and physical health.

Figure 8: Well-being in Grade 8 Students[9]

Richmond

1398 Youths

18% High well-being - thriving

26% Medium well-being

56% Low well-being

All Participating Districts

8931 Youths

25% High well-being - thriving

26% Medium well-being

49% Low well-being

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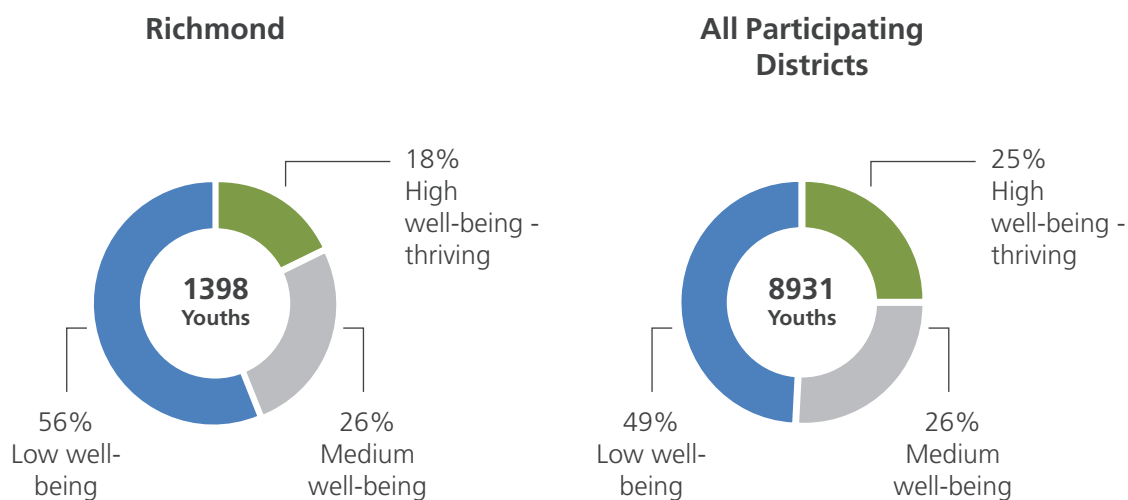
8   Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

9   Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

Happiness, Optimism and Perseverance

The following section provides an overview of some of the characteristics, perspectives and protective factors that promote positive youth development, impact resilience and can buffer against adverse experiences.

In general, Richmond youth that completed the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported having a good life (78%) and felt that their life was going well (71%).[10] Seventy-five percent of Richmond youth could identify something they were really good at and 58% reported feeling good about themselves.[11] Sixty-seven percent of youth indicated that they had the right amount of time to do what they wanted to do on their own.[12] Feeling hopeful and having the right amount of time to spend on one's own were linked to more positive reports of mental health and well-being. The Middle Years Development Instrument data indicated varying levels of happiness in Grade 8 students and reported a high level of optimism for the future.

Among youth who reported experiencing obstacles to reaching their goals, 45% reported pushing through these obstacles, whereas 4% indicated that they did not.[13] Twenty-eight percent of youth in Grade 8 reported a high level of perseverance and 35% reported a medium level of persistent effort to achieve goals, even in the face of setbacks.[14] Youth who reported pushing through challenging circumstances were more likely to report experiencing good or excellent mental health (83%), as well as plans to pursue academics beyond high school (92%).[15]

Connectedness

A sense of belonging and feelings of connectedness - with adults and peers in one's home, at school and in the community - can promote positive mental health and act as a protective factor against potential risks. In the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey, 72% of youth reported feeling connected to their community, school and neighbourhood while 13% felt neutral about this and 13% disagreed with this statement. Eighty-two percent of youth agreed that they had people they could rely on to give them advice and help if needed.

Percentage of youth who agree that:

"When I grow up, I have goals and plans for the future"
74%

"I feel I have important things to do in the future"
74%

Source: Middle Years Development Instrument

10 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

11 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

12 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

13 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

14 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

15 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Family

Overall, results from the BC Adolescent Health Survey suggested strong family connectedness across Richmond youth. Over 70% reported feeling respected by their family, that their family paid attention to them and that their family had fun together; and 60% reported feeling understood by their family. Twenty-one percent of Richmond youth did not feel as though they spent enough time with their family.[16] Consistent with results from 2013, 95% of Richmond youth in 2018 reported feeling safe at home, while 1% reported rarely or never feeling safe at home.[17]

In addition, over two thirds of Richmond youth (68%) indicated that they had an adult at home that they could confide in.[18] When needed, 75% of youth reported seeking help from a family member, an increase of 6% percent from 2013. Of those that did seek help from a family member, 92% reported this interaction to be helpful.[19] These results align with Middle Years Development Instrument data for students in Grade 8 with 66% of students indicating high levels of agreement that they have a parent or adult who listens to them when they have something to say.[20]

Peers

Feeling a sense of belonging to a social group is largely informed by connection to peers and having close friends. These factors also help assess the quality of relationships that youth have with their peers. A high or medium sense of belonging in a group of same age peers was reported by 83% of Grade 8 youth in Richmond who completed the Middle Years Development Instrument, and 87% reported that they have a friend they confide in and can tell everything to.[21] Ninety-six percent of Richmond youth reported having at least one close friend and 81% reported having three or more close friends. Males (84%) were more likely to report having three or more close friends, compared to female youth (78%).[22] Richmond youth were more likely than their BC peers to approach a close friend for help (80% vs. 76%), and many Richmond youth also reported having friends who promote prosocial behaviour[23], which includes actions such as helping, sharing, comforting and cooperating.

79% of youth spend time with their family daily

45% of youth spend 2 or more hours with their family per day

34% spend less than 2 hours per day with family

Source: Let's Talk Richmond *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey

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16 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
17 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
18 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
19 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
20 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.
21 Human Early Learning Partnership. Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.
22 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
23 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Number of important adults at school according to youth in 2020/2021

Two or more
26%

One
8%

None
66%

Source: Middle Years Development Instrument

School

Most youth (63%) in Richmond completing the Middle Years Development Instrument reported feeling happy to be at school. In general, youth reported having teachers at school who cared about them (68%), who treated them fairly (71%) and expected them to do well (80%). Data from the Middle Years Development Instrument collected in 2018/2019 indicated that 44% of students indicated they had two or more important adults at school. In 2020/2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic this number dropped to 26%, which is lower than the provincial average of 34%.[24]

Seventy-eight percent of Richmond youth reported feeling safe at school. Males were most likely to report feeling safe at school (81%) compared to their female (75%), and gender non-binary (47%) counterparts. Reports of safety at school among Richmond youth were consistent with those across the province.[25] The Middle Years Development Instrument asked youth how often they had been bullied by other students during the current school year. Eighty-five percent of youth indicated they had not been physically bullied and 68% indicated they had not been verbally bullied. Conversely, 2% indicated they were either socially or verbally bullied many times per week and 1% indicated they were subject to cyber bullying or physical bullying many times per week.[26]

24 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

25 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

26 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.
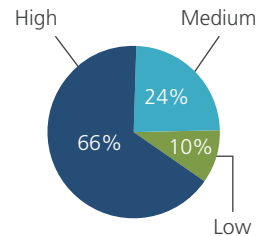
Community

The percentage of Richmond youth who reported on the BC Adolescent Health Survey having a caring adult in their community, outside family and school, increased from 51% in 2013 to 59% in 2018, slightly lower than the provincial average at 65%.[27] At the same time though, Richmond youth completing the survey reported a steady decline in having access to an adult outside their family who they could turn to for support from 52% in 2008 to 25% in 2018.[28] Female youth were more likely to report having access to an adult outside the home than their male peers. Under half (45%) of youth in Richmond and across the province, completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey, reported high rates of community connectedness.[29]

In terms of community safety, 93% percent of Richmond youth completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported feeling safe in their neighbourhood during the day, and 63% reported feeling safe at night. While there were no gender differences in ratings of safety during the day, male youth were more likely to report feeling safe in their community at nighttime (71%) compared to their female peers (56%). Among youth taking public transit, 21% reported always feeling safe, whereas 3% reported never feeling safe.[30] In 2021, 79% of Richmond youth in Grade 8 indicated that there were safe places in the community to spend time with their friends, a decrease from 84% in 2019.[31]

Nature

About half of Richmond youth (51%) completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported having the right amount of time to enjoy activities in nature. Those who reported having the right amount of time to spend in nature were also more likely to report feeling connected to land (44%), compared to those who did not (35%).[32]

"In my home there is a parent or other adult who listens to me when I have something to say."

High — Medium

66% / 24% / 10% — Low

Source:
Middle Years
Development
Instrument

"In my neighbourhood/ community there is an adult who really cares about me."

High — Medium

37% / 32% / 30% — Low
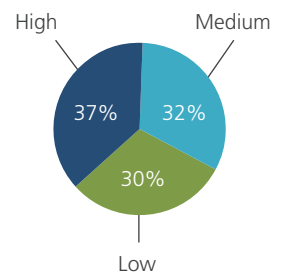
Source:
Middle Years
Development
Instrument

27 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

28 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

29 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

30 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

31 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

32 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Risk Factors Impacting Development

While there are identifiable assets, attitudes and beliefs that foster healthy youth development, there are also internal and external factors that pose a risk to healthy development. In some cases, adverse experiences may act as a barrier to participation in positive activities or they may influence or limit an individual's choices, putting them at increased risk of negative health and development outcomes. The following section provides an overview of risk factors and barriers to healthy development; these include low income and poverty, discrimination, criminal activity and substance use.

Poverty and Low Income

Youth living in poverty are at increased risk of the intergenerational effects of poverty, with adverse childhood experiences frequently contributing to ongoing vulnerability. Findings from the BC Adolescent Health Survey identified a correlation between youth who went to bed hungry and reported higher levels of deprivation which, in turn, was correlated with poorer reported mental health and well-being scores.[33]

In order to capture the experiences and impacts of poverty among youth, the BC Adolescent Health Survey included an 'Index of Deprivation' that listed items youth wished they had but did not (Table 1). Among Richmond youth, 22% reported feeling deprived of at least one item on the list, 2% lacked three items and 1% lacked four or more items.[34] Eight percent of Richmond youth who felt deprived of two or more items, compared to 10% of youth provincially.

Table 1: BC Adolescent Health Survey Deprivation Index[35]

Richmond youth who did not have but wished they had…	
Space of their own to hang out in	7%
Money to spend on themselves	7%
Smartphone	5%
Money for school supplies, school trips	3%
Lunch for school/money to buy lunch	3%
Equipment/clothes for extracurricular activities	3%
Access to transportation	3%
A quiet place to sleep	2%
Clothes to fit in	2%

33 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

34 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

35 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination, racism and bias negatively impact individuals' feelings of belonging and connection to others and their community, and contribute to the risks to youth development. Similar to others across BC, 37% of youth in Richmond experienced at least one form of discrimination in the prior year. Youth in Richmond were more likely to report experiences of racial discrimination (17%) compared to their peers across the province (14%). In the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey, the majority of youth responding agreed that individual racial, cultural and ethnic diversity is respected in Richmond (77%) while 9% disagreed with this statement.

Community engagement findings from the development of the City of Richmond's *2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond*, noted that some LGBTQ2S+ youth experienced housing insecurity, or being kicked out of their homes, as a result of lack of acceptance from their family.

Transitions to Adulthood

Youth and organizations that support youth in Richmond reported that youth face challenges navigating the transition to adult support services once they age out of programs specifically designed and targeted to their age range.[36] Specific barriers included rigid eligibility requirements, lack of knowledge around available resources, hours of service and being unable to access documents needed to apply for services. Job readiness skills such as resume writing and interview skills, and opportunities for meaningful volunteer experiences were identified as barriers to finding employment. Additionally, the lack of employment opportunities at above minimum wage were reported to be a challenge for youth who are starting to build their financial futures.[37]

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36 City of Richmond, *2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond*, 2021.
37 City of Richmond, *2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond*, 2021.

Substance Use

The use of illicit or illegal substances can lead to poor health outcomes and negatively impact youth development. Richmond youth who completed the BC Adolescent Health Survey, compared to their peers across the province, were less likely to have engaged in substance use. Among those who did use substances, Richmond youth tended to wait longer before first trying tobacco or marijuana and were less likely to engage in binge drinking compared to their peers. In particular, Richmond youth were half as likely to have ever smoked (9%), compared to youth across BC (18%). Fewer Richmond youth reported ever drinking alcohol (29%) compared to the provincial average (44%).[38] Forty-five percent of youth in Richmond reported waiting until they were 15 years or older before having their first drink, compared to their peers across BC (37%). In terms of binge drinking, 24% of Richmond youth reported consuming five or more drinks within the span of a couple of hours at least once in the past month (compared to 30% in 2013) and 3% reported engaging in heavy drinking on six or more days in the past month.[39]

Criminal Activity

The consequences of youth involvement in criminal activity include negative and long-term implications for current and future individual well-being and success. According to Statistics Canada Incident Based Crime Statistics, the number of youth (aged 12 to 17 years) charged with a criminal offence in Richmond increased from 37 in 2015 to 56 in 2019. The number of youth involved in a criminal offence that did not result in a charge or conviction dropped from 271 in 2015 to 158 in 2019.[40]

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically impacted the lives of Canadian youth, their families and communities. Many individuals, including youth faced changes to, or loss of, employment. Closures of schools and significant reductions in interpersonal interactions and in-person activities resulted in isolation and reports of decreased mental health. The pandemic and resulting public health guidelines and restrictions impacted youth at a critical time in their development, their education and during their transition to adulthood.

38 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

39 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

40 Statistics Canada (2019). *Incident-based Crime Statistics* (2021 October 29). Available from: https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/a26fbd28-6fe1-4e00-b1d1-6f547dd93744

Table 2: Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Richmond Youth[41]

Area	Percentage reporting negative impact
Physical Health and Well-being	54%
Mental Health and Well-being	74%
Social Relationships	68%
Employment	67%
Education	60%
Housing Stability	29%
Food Security	21%
Sense of Safety in Community	46%

The mental health impacts of COVID-19 on young people were a significant concern and of relevance during the development of the *Youth Strategy*. These impacts relate to the trauma of the pandemic itself, as well as the diminished access to several protective factors, such as structured extra-curricular activities, the social support of key family members and friends, access to school-based activities and resources and loss of valued adult mentors and role models.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted most of the world, it has also provided an opportunity to learn how such global events affect youth and what measures can build resilience for facing the possibility of future challenges of this kind. The ongoing monitoring of the short and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth in Richmond will be required.
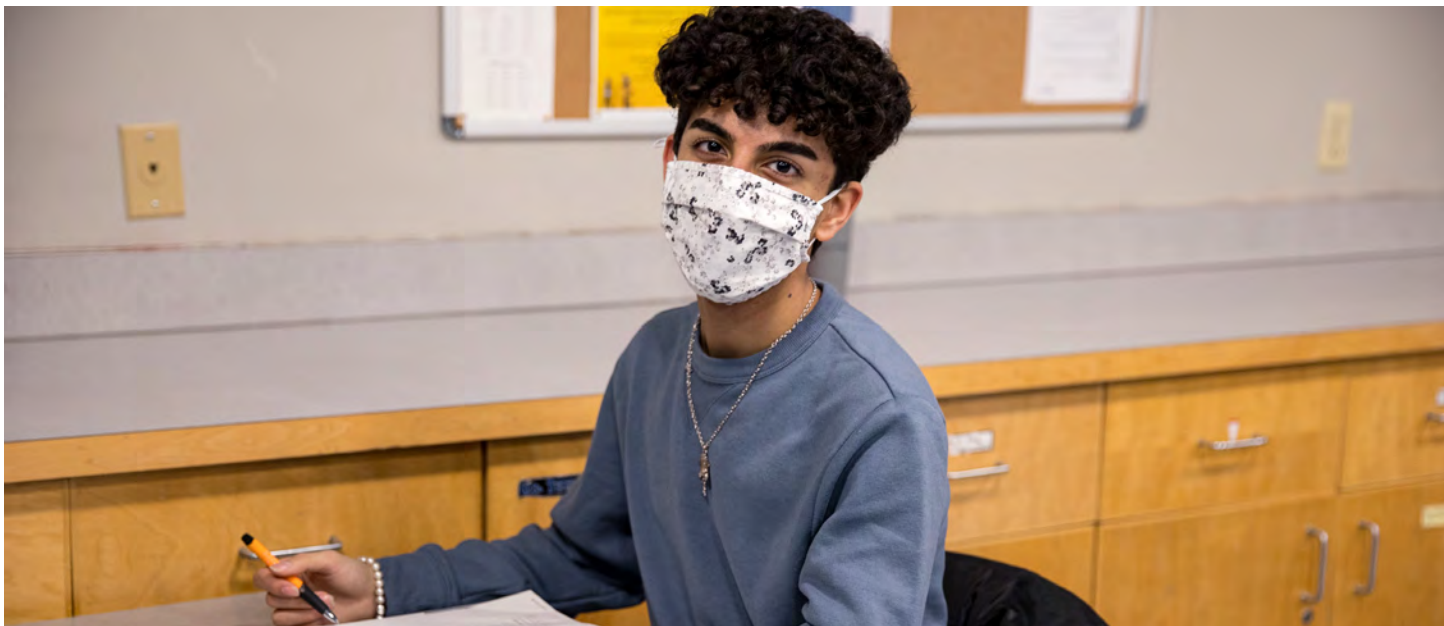
41 Let's Talk Richmond *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey

Best Practices and Key Findings

The City is committed to evidenced-based decision making through statistical analysis and through an awareness and understanding of current best practices and innovative solutions. The input of youth and key individuals creates opportunities for engagement and ensures there is a strong understanding of the current strengths, needs and trends of youth in the community. In addition to this commitment, the City of Richmond has adopted a philosophical approach referred to as Positive Youth Development, which was identified by the Search Institute in 1990. This approach focuses on an identified range of specific experiences and qualities that influence the maturation, development and engagement of young people and is based on the asset-based framework called the 40 Developmental Assets. Additional Detail on this approach is described later in this section and in Appendix A.

As previously outlined, an analysis of literature and reference materials related to youth development, support, programming and intervention was conducted to validate current approaches and to identify innovative new solutions for consideration in the development of the *Youth Strategy*. The purpose of the analysis was to identify the principles and practices that promote the best possible outcomes for development, transitions and life satisfaction among Richmond youth. The literature and best practice review included an environmental scan and detailed analysis of 22 municipal and regional youth-oriented strategies and plans and six national and international strategies. These included materials from the following cities, regions and countries:

- Abbotsford, Burnaby, Maple Ridge, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Saanich, Squamish, Surrey and Vancouver, British Columbia
- Airdrie, Alberta
- Guelph, Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario
- Halifax, Nova Scotia
- Auckland, New Zealand
- Province of Ontario
- Province of Quebec
- Canada
- New Zealand
- Australia

Significant input from youth, their families and youth-serving organizations in

Richmond has influenced and informed the development of the *Youth Strategy's* five strategic priorities. Engagement during the development of the Strategy highlighted an overarching need to include youth in planning and evaluating services and providing resources for youth. It is also important to note that as key partners in the implementation of the *Youth Strategy*, youth need to be given opportunities to take ownership and responsibility for engaging in matters that impact them. This input was consistent with practices and approaches outlined from the best practice and literature review.

The following section highlights some of the research and philosophical approaches to youth development and community input that have influenced the *Youth Strategy*. This includes the importance of a 'youth voice' in all aspects of program and service delivery, Positive Youth Development as an approach, meeting the basic needs of youth, supporting life transitions, building on Richmond's strong network of youth serving organizations and promoting increased awareness of services and resources available to youth.

The Importance of Youth Voices

The inclusion of 'youth voice,' a term used to describe the integration of ideas, perspectives, experiences and feedback of youth, is critical to ensure meaningful youth engagement and participation. This approach is situated in the belief that youth have a deep understanding of their own needs, experiences and challenges, and hold critical knowledge and insight into the solutions and types of community supports that best meet those needs. The decision-making, design and implementation of interventions and opportunities for youth will best respond to their needs and interests if done *with* youth, not *for* youth.

There are many reasons to engage youth and include youth voices in the development and implementation of strategies, plans, programs and services that impact youth, beyond finding better solutions. The inclusion of youth voices provides positive personal growth and development, builds capacity and skills, increases civic engagement and creates a feeling of community connection.[42] Youth involvement also benefits and enhances experiences for adult allies while overcoming stereotypes or negatives myths about youth. This understanding helps create services that are more responsive to youth needs, have improved efficiency, and an enhanced focus on diversity and innovation.[43] Youth engagement and the inclusion of youth voices can be a critical strategy for increasing the success and sustainability of programs and initiatives for youth.[44]

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42 A Way Home. National Youth Collaboration Toolkit: A Practical Resource for Organizations and Community Groups; n.d.
43 A Way Home. National Youth Collaboration Toolkit: A Practical Resource for Organizations and Community Groups; n.d.
44 Shakesprere J, Brien MO, Harrison E. Youth Engagement in Collective Impact Initiatives: Lessons from Promise Neighborhoods. Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center. December 2020.

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development encompasses an intentional, prosocial and strengths-based approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups and families. Positive Youth Development is a strategy, developed by the Search Institute, to enhance internal and external developmental assets and support a healthy transition to adulthood. Programs based on a philosophy of Positive Youth Development are designed to promote positive expectations, enduring and positive relationships with caring adults, and diverse, active engagement opportunities across a range of settings.[45]

The City of Richmond adopted the Search Institute's 40 Development Assets Framework (Appendix A), a Positive Youth Development approach, as its key guiding philosophy for youth services in 2013. This approach looks beyond singular challenges or issues, and involves the entire community's capacity to build, bridge and nurture positive relationships with young people. Asset-building focuses on youth's strengths or assets, rather than deficiencies. Youth assets can be internal or external and include personal values, skills and competencies as well as the network of relationships and supports that youth have in their lives. Research conducted by the Search Institute continues to support the belief that youth are more successful when they have a strong foundation of these assets or attributes in their lives.

Engaging youth in structured and meaningful cooperative, adult-led activities are effective for promoting Positive Youth Development, developing assets and is associated with positive outcomes, including improved academic achievement, self-concept and life satisfaction across youth of diverse backgrounds.[46;47] Youth that have more assets are seen as more likely to embody positive, resilient characteristics while youth with fewer assets are at greater risk of being vulnerable to negative outcomes. The promotion of Positive Youth Development for youth who have fewer assets and are at risk of, or experiencing vulnerability is of particular importance.

45 Bonell C, Hinds K, Dickson K, Thomas J, Fletcher A, Murphy S, et al. *What is positive youth development and how might it reduce substance use and violence? A systematic review and synthesis of theoretical literature Health behavior, health promotion and society. BMC Public Health*. 2016;16(1). Available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s12889-016-2817-3

46 Fredricks, Jennifer A.; Eccles, Jacquelynne S.; (2005). "*Developmental Benefits of Extracurricular Involvement: Do Peer Characteristics Mediate the Link Between Activities and Youth Outcomes?*" Journal of Youth and Adolescence 34(6): 507-520. http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/45300

47 Eccles, Jacquelynne & Barber, Bonnie & Stone, Margaret & Hunt, James. (2003). *Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development*. Journal of Social Issues. 59. 865 - 889. 10.1046/j.0022-4537.2003.00095.x.

Meeting Youth's Basic Needs

The importance of meeting youth's basic needs as a critical and foundational step to promoting youth success and well-being was outlined in the engagement process by youth and youth-serving organizations. The Youth Profile within the *Youth Strategy* also highlights the importance of access to necessities including: basic income, food security, housing stability, supports to respond to mental health needs and substance use, employment and child care.

Mental wellness is a key component of meeting basic needs and was of such significance in the feedback from youth and youth service providers that additional attention in this area is warranted. Youth cited positive mental health as a key requirement for them to thrive. Many youth in Richmond recognize the importance of developing skills and strategies to learn to cope with mental health concerns in a positive way and want opportunities to develop those skills. They also acknowledged the connection with opportunities for extracurricular activities, sports and social connects as a way to promote positive mental health. It is important to note that although the COVID-19 pandemic has created increased focus on youth mental health, mental health was a key issue for youth even prior to the pandemic. Existing mental health resources in Richmond were identified as a strength by youth when asked what is working well.

Service providers highlighted the issue of waitlists for long-term mental health support and the need for expanded substance use and addictions counselling as necessary considerations for the community. Youth-serving organizations identified the importance of integrated mental health services that recognize the impacts of mental health on other areas of daily life for youth. Another common theme amongst youth-serving organizations was the need to consider the role of families in service delivery planning. Services such as intergenerational dialogue amongst youth and their parents, adult education sessions and parent-peer support groups to support families whose youth are experiencing mental health concerns were identified as beneficial and necessary. Cultural understandings related to mental health and wellness were also noted as contributing to stigma and reduced engagement with mental health services.

In order to support the mental health and well-being of youth, it is important to enhance mental health literacy, understand the early signs of mental health concerns, address the stigma that can prevent help-seeking, and to facilitate access to effective interventions and resources. There is a role in this for primary care settings, youth-serving programs as well as schools.

Feeling Safe and Welcomed

The youth that were engaged in the development of the *Youth Strategy* highlighted the importance of diversity and inclusion, and the desire to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome in the community. Youth are interested in promoting inclusion broadly and noted specific aspects of inclusion that are important to focus on:

- A society that makes everyone feel included and welcomed;
- Safe spaces for specific user groups including youth who identify as LGBTQ2S+, Black or Indigenous, youth with disabilities, and those groups of youth who have been historically under represented;
- Improved access to services for youth with lower incomes; and
- Increased awareness related to respect, understanding differing perspectives and Indigenous histories.

Youth identified additional opportunities for the community to develop campaigns and programs to help end racism and to ensure efforts are made to create a more connected and inclusive community.

Supporting youth transitions to adulthood is important

68%
stated it was an essential or high priority

Source: Let's Talk Richmond *Youth Strategy Engagement Survey*

Supporting Youth Development and Life Transitions

Youth engagement and the best practices analysis highlighted the importance of ongoing opportunities for Positive Youth Development and support for successful life transitions. Examples of skills youth noted as important included:

- Budgeting and finances;
- Taxes;
- Leases and mortgages;
- Career preparation and seeking employment; and
- Post-secondary education, information and access.

Youth also identified a desire for additional opportunities to volunteer in the community and to participate in leadership or mentorship activities to develop their skills. Youth view volunteering, leadership programs, arts, sports, and recreation as ways to promote positive development, enhance their communication and social skills, learn about their interests, and to support them in their life transitions.

Engaging a Strong Network

Engagement with youth-serving organizations highlighted collaboration and cooperation amongst agencies as a significant strength within the youth sector in Richmond. Richmond is described as a highly collaborative community with a strong network of youth service providers who work well together. Examples of strengths included the network of Youth Development Coordinators at community centres and dedicated City of Richmond Youth Service staff, the broader youth service network including the Richmond School District and the evolution of Foundry Richmond. The continued investment in a strong youth-service network was also noted as critical to supporting youth in Richmond.

Promoting Awareness

An opportunity that was identified through the engagement process was the need for enhanced access to information and increased effectiveness of resources and opportunities available to youth in the community. Youth frequently expressed that they were are not aware of opportunities available to them and that they do not always know where to look for information. Youth suggested that having one central place for resources and opportunities would be helpful, while simultaneously expressing a desire for programs and services to be promoted through multiple platforms, with a preference for social media or other technological platforms.

Programs and organizations with a high level of youth awareness included the following:

Program/Organization	Percentage
Richmond Public Library	98%
Community centre gym/fitness centres	97%
Community centre programs	93%
Food bank	90%
Community or organized sports	90%
Arts programs	86%
Leadership programs councils, or groups	83%

From Themes to Actions

The themes that emerged from the key findings in the Youth Profile, literature and best practice review and engagement process informed the development of five strategic priorities to focus the City's and community partners work related to youth over the next ten years. The following section outlines how, through continued advancement of a Positive Youth Development approach, the City will continue to focus on promoting the best possible outcomes for youth development, transitions and life satisfaction among Richmond youth.

Strategic Priorities and Actions

The *2022–2032 Richmond Youth Strategy* consists of five strategic priorities and 36 recommended actions to be completed over a ten-year timeframe. The strategic priorities and accompanying actions were created in response to the themes identified during the analysis of community needs, best practices and various engagement activities. The strategic priorities clarify areas of focus and include actions that build on previous and ongoing work to achieve the described outcomes for youth. Specific targeted activities and initiatives will be identified in annual work plans to support the advancement of actions outlined in the Strategy.

The Strategy is organized into five strategic priorities:

- **Strategic Priority 1: Foundation**
  Youth have access to services and resources in the community that provide a foundation for wellness.

- **Strategic Priority 2: Voice**
  Youth are heard, valued and engaged as members of the community and their opinions and perspectives inform plans, programs and services that are important to them and impact their lives.

- **Strategic Priority 3: Collaboration**
  Youth are supported by an integrated and collaborative network of youth-serving agencies, non-profit organizations, public partners and local government that work together to promote positive youth development.

- **Strategic Priority 4: Opportunity**
  Youth have equitable access to a wide-range of programs, services and initiatives that address their needs and support them to learn, develop and successfully navigate the various stages and transitions from early adolescence to young adulthood.

- **Strategic Priority 5: Awareness**
  Youth, their families and the broader community have access to information and resources and are aware of the services and supports available to youth in Richmond.

Strategy Format

The *Youth Strategy* is intended to be delivered in collaboration and partnership with youth, youth-serving organizations and public partners in Richmond who share the common vision that *"all youth in Richmond are safe, valued, respected and have the supports, opportunities, and resources to live rich and fulfilling lives."* Each action in the Strategy includes:

- **Who's involved:** Those that have an interest and/or the expertise necessary to achieve the action including the City, Community Associations and Societies, youth-serving community organizations and public partners are identified. In addition, youth play a critical role in engagement, participation and in taking responsibility for matters that impact their lives.

- **City Roles:** *The 2022–2032 Richmond Youth Strategy* outlines key roles the City should play in implementing these actions. Specifically, these roles include:

  - **Lead:** The City acts as the primary organization to lead the action at hand.

  - **Support:** The City works with public partners, community organizations by facilitating collaboration, enabling capacity building, and providing support where appropriate.

  - **Collaborate:** The City collaborates with others to provide youth in Richmond with a range of services.

  - **Advocate:** The City advocates to senior levels of government to ensure the needs of Richmond youth are met.

- **Timeline:** The anticipated timeline for each action is categorized as short-term (1-2 years), medium-term (3-6 years), long-term (6-10 years) or ongoing.

Terminology in the Strategy

Terms used in the *Youth Strategy* that focus on certain individuals, groups or demographics are general in nature. This allows for flexibility to add, remove or modify terminology as it changes over the lifetime of the strategy. It allows for the ability to include new priorities should they arise over the next 10 years, for the strategy to remain relevant and to respond to the changing and fluid needs of youth in Richmond.

The terms below represent current accepted practice at the time the strategy was written. These will be monitored and reviewed for ongoing appropriateness and relevance and will be updated in future documents as needed. Future documents related to the *Youth Strategy* will use terms accepted at the time of development.

Terms relating to people:

- **Youth:** Individuals aged 13-24 years old.
- **Family:** Members of a family, for the purposes of the Strategy Actions and Priorities, include those people related by blood, marriage or adoption; those in a supportive or caregiving role and those who are bound together over time by mutual consent.
- **Equity — deserving groups or individuals:** People who identify as a member of an equity-deserving group include those who have historically been underrepresented in and denied equal access to employment, education, and other opportunities. This includes, without limitation, the following: Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, 2SLGBTQI+ individuals, immigrants, women, individuals with disabilities and others experiencing barriers to opportunities and participation.
- **Vulnerable groups or individuals**: People whose permanent or temporary personal circumstances and/or characteristics mean that they are less able to protect or represent their interests, and, as a result may have decreased access to necessities of daily living, opportunities and experiences.
- **Refugees, Immigrants and Newcomers**
  - **Immigrant:** A person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident.
  - **Newcomer (also sometimes known as recent immigrant):** Refers to landed immigrants who came to Canada in the last five years.
  - **Refugee:** Refugees are persons who are outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other.

Terms relating to the characteristics or qualities of materials, programs, services, spaces or opportunities:

- **Accessible:** Approachable, available, and usable by anyone, including individuals with disabilities or impairments. (Best practice source: Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion).

- **Culturally Relevant:** Recognizing, understanding and applying attitudes and practices that are sensitive to and appropriate for people with diverse cultural socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, and persons of all ages, genders, health status, sexual orientations and abilities. (Best practice source: Government of Canada. Glossary of Terms).

- **Equitable:** Considering people's unique experiences and differing situations, and ensuring they have access to the resources and opportunities that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.((Best practice source: Government of Canada–Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology).

- **Inclusive:** To create a culture that embraces, respects, accepts, and values diversity, where all members of a group feel respected, have a sense of belonging, and are able to achieve their potential. (Best practice source: Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion).

Strategic Priority 1: Foundation

The importance of meeting youth's basic needs is a critical and foundational step to promoting youth success and well-being. Access to necessities including basic income, food security, housing stability, supports to respond to mental health needs and substance use, employment and child care are crucial. It is a priority that youth have access to services and resources in the community that provide a foundation for wellness.

Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
1.1 Continue to foster positive and meaningful connections between youth and safe, supportive adults in the community.	Support	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, Youth Service Providers, Post-secondary Institutions	Ongoing
1.2 Increase opportunities for youth to connect with peers and develop supportive positive relationships and a sense of belonging including youth from equity-deserving groups.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, Youth Service Providers	Short-term
1.3 Align youth mental and physical health promotional tools and use common language to increase youth engagement, understanding and well-being.	Support	City, Community Associations and Societies, Richmond Public Library (RPL), Richmond School District (SD38), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), Youth Service Providers	Short-term
1.4 Promote community safety initiatives to increase youth feelings of safety at home, at school, online and in their neighbourhood.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, RCMP	Short-term
1.5 Ensure the provision of safe, welcoming and inclusive programming and services for youth in the community.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, Youth Service Providers	Short-term
1.6 Increase clarity of and access to resources for all youth and their families to meet their basic needs (e.g. food, housing, medical care, education, child care).	Support	City, SD38, VCH, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Youth Service Providers	Short-term
1.7 Raise awareness of the existing emergency and crisis services for youth in the community and how to access them.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Short-term
1.8 Share information and resources to support youth and their families who are navigating housing insecurity and require a shelter, safe house or transitional housing.	Support	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Short-term

Strategic Priority 2: Voice

Youth have a deep understanding of their own needs, experiences and challenges, and hold critical knowledge and insight into the solutions and types of community supports that best meet those needs. Including youth perspectives in the decision-making, design and implementation of interventions and opportunities for youth is essential. It is a priority that youth are heard, valued and engaged as members of the community and that their opinions and perspectives inform plans, programs and services that are important to them and impact their lives.

Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
2.1 Increase opportunities for youth to provide meaningful input into City-related matters that impact them including youth from equity-deserving groups.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL	Short-term
2.2 Promote and seek youth engagement in program, service and facility development and on topics in the community that impact youth.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
2.3 Increase public awareness and education of the positive contributions youth make in the community.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
2.4 Continue to provide and enhance formal opportunities for recognition and celebration of youth in Richmond (e.g. through events and communication campaigns) including specific youth identified from equity-deserving groups.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
2.5 Engage in further collaboration with Indigenous youth, their families and Elders regarding the *Youth Strategy* and its implementation.	Collaborate	City, Indigenous Elders, Leaders, Youth and Families	Ongoing
2.6 Include youth in the development of an implementation plan and promotion of the *Youth Strategy*.	Lead	City, Youth	Ongoing

Strategic Priority 3: Collaboration

Collaboration and cooperation amongst agencies is a significant strength within the youth sector in Richmond. Richmond is described as a highly collaborative community with a strong network of youth service providers who work well together. It continues to be a priority that youth in the community are supported by an integrated and collaborative network of agencies, non-profit organizations, public partners and local government that work together to promote positive youth development.

| Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
3.1 Develop tools and practices to support robust information sharing with front line youth service providers.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
3.2 Identify opportunities to collaborate with Post-secondary Institutions regarding the delivery of programs and services for young adults.	Lead	City, SD38, Youth Service Providers, Post-secondary institutions	Long-term
3.3 Utilize a systems-based approach to address the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals including: a) Reducing barriers to participation; and b) Avoiding duplication of youth services.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
3.4 Facilitate increased cross-agency information sharing regarding youth programs, supports and resources, especially those related to mental health.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers, Post-secondary Institutions	Ongoing
3.5 Identify and implement strategies to eliminate gaps and address the needs of youth across the developmental continuum and during transitions.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL	Medium-term
3.6 Dedicate appropriate staff resources to adequately plan for and meet the current and evolving needs of an increasingly complex population of youth in Richmond.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL	Ongoing
3.7 Advocate to senior levels of government to enhance funding for community-based services and supports for youth in Richmond.	Advocate	City, SD38, MCFD, VCH	Ongoing

Strategic Priority 4: Opportunity

Enabling youth to participate in meaningful activities that provide a range of opportunities to develop skills, engage with others and contribute to their community are effective for promoting Positive Youth Development. Acknowledging the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion and the desire to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome in the community are also key factors in providing opportunities for youth. It is a priority that youth have access to a wide-range of accessible, inclusive and culturally-relevant programs, services and initiatives that address their needs and support them to learn, develop and successfully navigate the various stages and transitions from early adolescence to young adulthood. This includes programs that address the opportunity gaps faced by equity-deserving groups and ensure that opportunity encompasses giving every individual access to the same resources and opportunities and also takes into account specific disadvantages and obstacles that certain groups or individuals may experience.

Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
4.1 Ensure a range of programs and services that prioritize wellness, learning and skill development are available for youth.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers	Ongoing
4.2 Align and promote community-wide youth services through a common framework (e.g. the 40 Developmental Assets Framework).	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Short-term
4.3 Expand provision of relevant programs, services and resources to include individuals aged 19-24 years in collaboration with young adults.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
4.4 Develop additional volunteer and paid opportunities for personal growth and development and for youth to gain job readiness skills, training and employment.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers	Medium-term
4.5 Continue to provide a range of programs and services that prioritize accessible and inclusive recreation and social connection for youth.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers, Post-secondary Institutions	Ongoing
4.6 Continue to provide youth with safe, welcoming and accessible places to gather, socialize and engage within new and existing indoor and outdoor spaces in the community.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, Youth Service Providers	Short-term

Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
4.7 Investigate funding opportunities to help facilitate the development of new or expanded youth spaces within the community.	Lead	City, SD38, VCH	Long-term
4.8 Expand initiatives that provide leadership and mentorship for youth including refugees, new immigrants and youth who are at risk of or experiencing vulnerability.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers, Social Service Agencies	Medium-term
4.9 Expand opportunities for youth to learn about and engage with local government.	Lead	City	Short-term
4.10 Involve youth in advancing City initiatives such as sustainability and climate-action projects.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, SD38	Medium-term
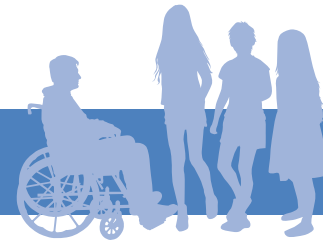
Strategic Priority 5: Awareness

Access to information enables youth and their families to utilize programs, services and opportunities within the community. Ensuring that information regarding programs and services is available in a range of formats and through multiple platforms is necessary. It is a priority for youth, their families and the broader community to have access to information and resources, and to be aware of the variety of services and supports available to youth in Richmond.

Themes and Actions	City Role	Partners	Timeline
5.1 Create youth-related content for City communication platforms that is culturally relevant, digitally equitable and meets the needs of youth, their families and the community.	Lead	City, RPL	Ongoing
5.2 Explore and implement safe, equitable and effective communication tools to increase knowledge of local youth resources for youth and their families..	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, Youth Service Providers	Short-term
5.3 Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the *Youth Strategy* and report out on progress on a biennial basis.	Lead	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Ongoing
5.4 Monitor the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging global or local exceptional events on Richmond youth including impacts to both mental and physical wellbeing.	Collaborate	City, Community Associations and Societies, RPL, SD38, VCH, MCFD, RCMP, Youth Service Providers	Ongoing
5.5 Research and analyze trends and innovative practices to understand and respond to the changing needs of youth and share findings with the community.	Lead	City	Ongoing

Next Steps

One of the greatest strengths of Richmond, is the strong network of youth-serving community organizations that work closely with the City, Community Associations and Societies, and other key agencies to provide programs, services and resources that support positive and healthy youth development. The *Youth Strategy* aims to continue to strengthen this network and relies on the collaboration and shared interest of this network in achieving the strategic priorities and actions outlined in the *Youth Strategy*. The identified actions, role of the City, potential partners and anticipated timelines will guide the development of work plans for the implementation of and ongoing collaboration within the network of youth-serving organizations and help to align resources and/or expertise in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for youth.

Youth also play a critical role in the implementation of the *Youth Strategy*. As a fundamental approach, it is essential that youth are engaged as vital members of the community and that their opinions and perspectives inform plans, programs and services that are important to them and impact their lives. Through increased engagement with youth and shared responsibility for youth-related initiatives between the City, community partners and youth themselves, youth in Richmond will have the foundational supports and opportunities available to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

Next steps for the City, Community Associations and Societies, youth serving organizations and youth in Richmond include the creation of promotional materials to share the *Youth Strategy* with the community, development of a detailed implementation work plan to support each action and ongoing engagement with youth and their families to ensure the *Youth Strategy* is fully enacted in the community.

Conclusion

The *2022–2032 Youth Strategy* outlines the City of Richmond's strong leadership and dedication to address the needs of youth and their families in Richmond. The Strategy aims to achieve a vision that *"all youth in Richmond are safe, valued, respected and have the supports, opportunities, and resources to live rich and fulfilling lives."* The City of Richmond is committed to working with youth, Community Associations and Societies, youth-serving community organizations and public partners including the Richmond Public Library, Richmond School District, the Richmond RCMP, Vancouver Coastal Health and the Ministry for Child and Family Development to promote positive development and well-being of youth in Richmond.

The *Youth Strategy* has been informed by a demographic analysis, best practice review, and engagement with key partners including youth, their families and youth-serving organizations. The Strategy will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure the current needs of Richmond youth continue to be addressed over the ten-year period. A formal progress report will be prepared for Council and members of the public every two years.

With involvement from multiple individuals and organizations, including youth themselves, all youth in Richmond can receive the supports and opportunities required to contribute and participate in their community and to live rich and fulfilling lives.

APPENDIX A: The 40 Developmental Assets of Positive Youth Development

The Search Institute (2006) has identified 40 Developmental Assets that promote healthy development. Youth with a higher number of assets are more likely to do well in school, value diversity, participate in civic engagement opportunities and are less likely to engage in risky behaviours, including substance use, violence, and sexual activity.[48] Building on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory[49], healthy youth development, including the accrual of internal and external assets, occurs within the school, home, and community environment in which youth are situated.[50]

Internal assets are defined as personal values, skills, and competencies that guide youth in making healthy decisions, taking accountability for themselves, and being independent and fulfilled.[51] In order to continue to develop their internal assets, youth need enduring and consistent learning opportunities, to believe in their own abilities to succeed, have positive guiding values that support healthy decision making, have effective interpersonal skills and social competencies that support healthy relationships, and a positive self-identity including a belief in one's own self-worth and efficacy.

External assets refer to the network of relationships and supports that youth require in all aspects of their lives.[52] For healthy development, youth need to experience support and have people in their lives who love and care for them, and to feel empowered as a result of being respected and valued by those in their networks. Youth also need to experience clear boundaries and expectations, along with encouragement to do their best. Youth need constructive opportunities, such as organized extracurricular activities, to develop skills and interests alongside their peers and caring adults outside the home.

48 Search Institute. *The Developmental Assets Framework* [Internet]. The 40 Developmental Assets. 2019 [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/
49 Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). *The bioecological model of human development*. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), Handbook of child psychology: Vol. I. Theoretical models of human development (6th ed., pp. 793–828). John Wiley & Sons.
50 Ettekal AV, Agans JP. *Positive youth development through leisure: Confronting the COVID-19 pandemic. J Youth Dev.* 2020;15(2):1–20.
51 Search Institute. *The Developmental Assets Framework* [Internet]. The 40 Developmental Assets. 2019 [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/
52 Search Institute. *The Developmental Assets Framework* [Internet]. The 40 Developmental Assets. 2019 [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/development-assets/developmental-assets-framework/

Figure 9: Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets

Asset Category	Asset Category	Description
Support	Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support.
	Positive family communication	Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s).
	Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.
	Caring neighbourhood	Young person experiences caring neighbours.
	Caring school climate	School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
	Parent involvement in schooling	Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
Empowerment	Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
	Youth as resources	Youth are given useful roles in the community.
	Service to others	Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
	Safety	Young person feels safe at home, at school and in the neighbourhood.
Boundaries and Expectations	Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
	School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.
	Neighbourhood boundaries	Neighbours take responsibility for monitoring youth's behaviour.
	Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behaviour.
	Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behaviour.
	High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
Constructive Use of Time	Creative activities	Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater or other arts.
	Youth programs	Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.
	Religious community	Young person spends one hour or more per week in activities in a religious institution.
	Time at home	Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

Asset Category	Asset Category	Description
Commitment to Learning	Achievement motivation	Young person is motivated to do well in school.
	School engagement	Young person is actively engaged in learning.
	Homework	Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
	Bonding to school	Young person cares about her or his school.
	Reading for pleasure	Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
Positive Values	Caring	Young person places high value on helping other people.
	Equality and social justice	Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
	Integrity	Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
	Honesty	Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."
	Responsibility	Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
	Restraint	Young person develops strong guiding values or principles to help them make healthy life choices.
Social Competencies	Planning and decision making	Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
	Interpersonal competence	Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
	Cultural competence	Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds.
	Resistance skills	Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
	Peaceful conflict resolution	Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
Positive Identity	Personal power	Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."
	Self-esteem	Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
	Sense of purpose	Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."
	Positive view of personal future	Young person is optimistic about her or his future.

Note: The 40 Assets provide a framework for action; to engage sectors that can affect positive youth development and is the expressed intent from the Search Institute. The list of assets should not be considered prescriptive in nature. The list represents a synthesis of exhaustive research as some, not all of, the determinants for youth health. It does not purport to prescribe one religion over another or one activity over another. The research indicates correlative reasoning, while having extreme limitations in causative determinants.

APPENDIX B: Alignment with other City Policies and Strategies

City Council has endorsed a range of strategies and plans that support the youth population in Richmond. The strategic priorities and associated actions in these strategies and plans, were considered in the development of the *2022–2032 Richmond Youth Strategy*, in an effort to ensure alignment and leverage opportunities where possible. The following City strategies and plans have strategic actions or focus areas that address youth.

Richmond 2041 Official Community Plan

Richmond's 2041 Official Community Plan (OCP) includes the youth population in the list of key issues to address when planning for the future. The following actions most relate to the *2022–2032 Youth Strategy*:

Connected Neighbourhoods with Special Places

- Continue to identify the unique needs and preferences of seniors, youth, families and workers so that they can use and enjoy outdoor spaces, buildings, and transportation infrastructure.

Vibrant Cities

- Continue to develop and position Richmond as a cultural destination both for residents and visitors through festivals, heritage sites, exhibitions and performances, arts education programming for children and youth and master art classes and workshops for adult artists.

- Continue to reach-out to 'hard to reach' populations (e.g. new immigrants, socially isolated individuals), people with disabilities, older adults and youth (especially low-asset youth).

- Ensure that children and youth have an opportunity to build healthy habits through physical activity—both through unstructured play and organized activities and programs.

Mobility and Access

- Continue to implement the Child- and Youth-Friendly Land Use and Transport Planning Guidelines for British Columbia.

Social Equity and Inclusion

- Continue to implement and update the Intercultural Strategic Plan, Youth Services Plan, and Older Adults Service Plan to ensure that they remain relevant and effective over time.

- Recognize children and youth as valuable, contributing members of the community, providing them with opportunities to participate, as appropriate, in plans, policies, and programs affecting them and the community.
- Continue to employ the developmental asset framework for the planning and delivery of youth services.

Parks and Open Space Strategy 2012–2022

The City of Richmond 2022 Parks and Open Space Strategy traces the evolution of the system from the first playground to the current interconnected system of parks, trails and greenways, natural areas, waterfronts and the urban realm. It outlines the trends and challenges affecting the delivery of parks and open space services and it defines the desired outcomes and the priorities for sustaining and expanding the system over the next decade.

- The rise of urban agriculture has resulted in several new partnerships and new program areas including the development of community gardens, the Sharing Farm at Terra Nova and the facilitation of Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Farm School initiative to help young farmers learn the art and science of farming.
- Increase the accommodation of youth through the development of targeted spaces and amenities (e.g. Thompson Youth Park).
- Plan for children and youth as pedestrians and cyclists by addressing their safety, increasing their mobility and encouraging physical fitness.

Social Development Strategy 2013–2022

The Social Development Strategy envisions the City of Richmond as an inclusive, engaged and caring community that considers the needs of the present and future generations, values and builds on its diversity, nurtures its social capital, and treats its citizens with fairness and respect. The actions that align with the *Youth Strategy* are noted below:

Enhance Social Equity and Inclusion

- Implement, monitor, and enhance the Richmond Affordable Housing Strategy, placing priority attention on developing a Housing Action Plan that incorporates ongoing monitoring, revisions and housing targets for people living on limited income (e.g. older adults, people on social assistance and youth-at-risk).
- Monitor and update the Youth Service Plan, striving to create an environment that generates opportunities for Richmond's youth to have a safe and healthy journey into adulthood, placing priority attention on:
    - Expanding services for youth in the City Centre.
    - Enhancing dedicated, safe, youth-friendly spaces in various facilities throughout Richmond.

- Engaging youth in City and community-based planning processes.
- Promoting and applying the 40 Developmental Assets based approaches to programming for youth.
- Supporting community-based initiatives to provide children and youth from diverse backgrounds with opportunities to receive common leadership training and volunteer to serve others in the community.

- Work with Police Services, the School District, youth serving agencies and youth groups on initiatives to:
  - Increase awareness and education in efforts to reduce the prevalence of bullying.
  - Improve information and referral amongst youth serving agencies in the City.
  - Reduce the lure for young people to join gangs.

Engage our Citizens

- Youth Now, one of four Richmond Volunteer programs, is designed to enhance leadership opportunities for young adults, who are high school graduates and under the age of 26, and trains them to serve as board members for local non-profit organizations.

Building on Social Assets and Community Capacity

- Strengthen the City's already strong collaborative relationship with Vancouver Coastal Health, consulting on emerging health care issues facing the community, advocating for needed services, partnering on priority community and social development initiatives, and soliciting input on the health implications of key City planning matters.

- The Richmond Public Agency Partners Group consisting of representatives of the five major public agencies in Richmond champions the wellness of children and youth in the community through leadership, partnership, advocacy and policy development. The membership consists of Vancouver Coastal Health, the City of Richmond, Richmond School District, Ministry of Children and Family Development and the RCMP.

- Strengthen the City's already strong collaborative relationship with the Richmond School District, consulting with the district on emerging child, youth and education issues facing the community, advocating for needed programs, and partnering on priority community and social development initiatives.

- Collaborate with Police Services and community partners to promote Richmond as a safe and livable community.

Sustainability Framework 2015–2020

This framework helps Richmond leave a legacy of a sustainable and resilient city, one that will support the needs of its diverse community for years to come. Richmond delivered a broad range of initiatives related to social and cultural dimensions of a sustainable community in addition to promoting environmental, economic growth and well-being. The City is committed to doing its part to continuing to make Richmond a more equitable, inclusive, accessible and safe community while reducing our environmental impact.

2017–2022 Richmond Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy

A key focus of the Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy is Collaboration and Partnership. Staff consult with representatives from senior levels of government, other municipalities, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Children First, United Way of the Lower Mainland, the UBC Human Early Learning Partnership and the First Call – BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition to ensure that the City is well informed about latest trends, research and advocacy efforts concerning youth matters. The City also participates in forums and focus groups to increase collaboration between the City and other levels of government and community agencies and organizations.

Affordable Housing Strategy 2017–2027

The City of Richmond Affordable Housing Strategy guides the City's involvement in addressing the affordable housing needs of Richmond residents. The Strategy focuses on supporting vulnerable populations through the development of increased transitional and supportive housing, non-market rental housing, and low-end market rental units. The Strategy cites families and vulnerable populations (i.e. children experiencing family violence) as priority groups most in need of affordable housing. The following policies outlined are most related to the *Youth Strategy* include:

- Use regulatory tools to encourage a diverse mix of housing types and tenures including family-friendly housing.
- Build capacity with non-profit housing and service providers.
- Facilitate and strengthen partnership opportunities through co-location of non-profit and community facilities.
- Incorporate Basic Universal Housing (accessible and affordable units for persons with mobility challenges).
- Encourage Accessible Housing.

Volunteer Management Strategy 2018–2021

The Volunteer Management Strategy 2018–2021: Engaging and Supporting Volunteers for a Vibrant, Connected City (VMS 2018–2021) is an update to the 2007–2012 Volunteer Management Strategy: Building the Volunteer Spirit! and focuses on engaging volunteers and enabling them to reach their goals. The Strategy also focuses on providing the supports for City, partner, and affiliate staff who work closely with volunteers. Actions relating specifically to youth include:

- Offer volunteer development opportunities for a wide range of ages, skill levels and interest areas.
- Create inclusive volunteer opportunities especially for students, families with children, corporations and groups, and people with special needs.

Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023

The City of Richmond Community Wellness Strategy 2018-2023 is a joint initiative between the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District No. 38. The Strategy's vision is for Richmond to be an active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving community. The Strategy provides a framework to support the City and stakeholders to identify innovative and collaborative approaches to most effectively impact wellness outcomes for Richmond residents, increase the awareness of the benefits of active community engagement, and increase healthy lifestyles for residents in all Richmond neighbourhoods. The objectives in Richmond's Community Wellness Strategy align with the *Youth Strategy* which strive to:

- Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.
- Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.
- Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.
- Facilitate supportive, safe and healthy natural and build environments.
- Promote wellness literacy for residents across all ages and stages of their lives.

Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019–2024

The Recreation and Sport Strategy's vision is for Richmond to be a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation and sport opportunities, inspiring individuals and communities to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime. The aim of the Strategy is to build on the strong and successful foundation already present in the City to address the new and diverse interests of stakeholders, and to encourage citizens of every age to enjoy the benefits of an active and involved lifestyle. The Strategy's focus areas are related to the *Youth Strategy* including:

- Richmond residents understand the opportunities and benefits of participation in recreation and sport.

- Recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the needs of a growing and diverse population in Richmond.
- Richmond residents have the fundamental movement skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.
- Natural and built environments within neighbourhoods in Richmond encourage connectedness and participation in recreation and sport.
- Richmond residents enjoy opportunities to connect with nature.
- Collaborations, partnerships and volunteerism are strengthened to expand the reach and impact of recreation and sport in Richmond.
- Technology and innovative ideas connect and inspire Richmond residents to participate in recreation and sport.

Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024

The Richmond Arts Strategy acts as a guide for residents, the City and its stakeholders to develop stronger connections in order to advance the policies, programs and services needed for the arts to thrive in Richmond.

- Continue to work across Community Services and Associations to connect youth to creative opportunities and resources.
- Continue to work with the School District 38 to link arts education resources to teachers.
- Continue to offer free access to media arts training, professional mentorship opportunities and equipment through the Richmond Youth Media Program.
- Encourage collaborations among under-represented community groups, such as youth, Chinese-speaking, Indigenous and LGBTQ2S people.
- Engage the imaginations of all generations through creative education and outreach.
- Provide a range of participatory programming for all age groups and inter-age groups at the community or neighbourhood scale.
- Include non-traditional creative activities and industries (e.g. video game design) in the development of events, creative programming and educational offerings.
- Establish and/or strengthen connections with School District 38 and community organizations to increase arts opportunities and experiences.

City of Richmond Homelessness Strategy (2019–2029)

The Homelessness Strategy aims to make homelessness in Richmond rare, brief and non-recurring. There is a housing gap for emergency housing options for youth. One action is to create shelter and transitional beds for youth experiencing homelessness in the community. The City is working with the Richmond School District and other key stakeholders, to develop an action plan on how to create youth shelter and transitional options. These services will help youth transition into stable longer-term housing options, while staying connected to their community.

Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029

The Cultural Harmony Plan guides the City's approach in enhancing cultural harmony among Richmond's diverse population and works to support increased inclusion in the community and increased opportunities for Indigenous peoples, newcomers and long-time residents to engage with each other in all areas of community life. A major direction is enhancing intercultural connections by providing opportunities for Richmond residents of diverse backgrounds to interact with and learn from each other through community-based dialogues, storytelling, and sharing of art, food and music and celebrating Richmond's diverse cultures through intercultural celebrations and events.

2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond

The 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond (the Collaborative Action Plan) is intended to guide the City of Richmond's work, in collaboration with stakeholder organizations, to reduce and prevent poverty in Richmond over the next ten years. The purpose of the Collaborative Action Plan is to gain a deeper and shared understanding of the experiences and circumstances of individuals and families at risk of or living in poverty in Richmond in an effort to identify actions to better meet their needs. This includes improved access to services and supports as well as the development and implementation of initiatives designed to promote a greater sense of belonging and inclusion in the community.

Richmond Detachment Strategic Plan 2021–2025 (RCMP)

This Strategic plan provides a framework for achieving the overall goal of making Richmond the safest city in Canada. One major priority is to promote public safety (education, partnership and prevention) and one important action is fostering relationships with youth through mentorship, while modelling healthy choices.

Seniors Strategy 2022-2032

The City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 (Seniors Strategy) is an action-oriented framework intended to guide the City and stakeholders in supporting seniors in Richmond over the next decade. The vision for this collaborative strategy is that, "seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities." Supporting seniors to age well requires the collaboration and commitment of the City and many organizations and groups, including Community Associations and Societies, community service organizations, health agencies and the private sector.

Actions within the Seniors Strategy that align with the *Youth Strategy* include:

- Promote meaningful volunteer and paid opportunities for seniors to share their experiential wisdom and skills through community-based programs and services that facilitate personal growth and development (e.g. intergenerational opportunities, instructor-led groups, tour guides, project facilitators, etc.).
- Explore a variety of opportunities to develop and maintain meaningful connections and increase knowledge exchange between seniors and younger populations (e.g. City Centre's Intergen Youth Leadership Team, Youth/Seniors Week collaborations).

APPENDIX C:
Youth Demographics

Youth Population

In 2016, there were 198,309 individuals residing in Richmond and 29,170 of these were youth aged 13 to 24 years (Table 3).[53] The distribution of youth who identified as either male or female at each age is outlined below. It is noted that only two gender options were available in the 2016 Census and, as such, this data does not capture demographics regarding youth who identify outside these binary options. Additional information related to youth self-identification of gender identity is outlined in the section on Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation.

Table 3: Total Richmond Youth by Age and Gender

Age	Total	*Male	*Female
13	1,890	980	910
14	1,960	1,030	930
15	2,195	1,080	1,115
16	2,165	1,105	1,060
17	2,270	1,160	1,110
18	2,390	1,235	1,155
19	2,510	1,355	1,155
20	2,750	1,465	1,285
21	2,715	1,420	1,295
22	2,775	1,365	1,410
23	2,750	1,435	1,315
24	2,800	1,410	1,390
**Total	29,175	15,040	14,130

*Non-binary was not an option
**Inconsistencies in adding are a result of rounding by Statistics

53 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Family Structure

In 2016, there were 37,940 families living in Richmond with children or youth at home, including 28,230 dual-parent families, and 9,710 lone-parent families.[54] Of the 37,940 families, 52.6% had one child, 37.5% had two children, and 10.6% had three or more children.[55]

Youth between the ages of 13 and 19 years were more likely to be living with at least one parent in 2018 (96%) compared to 2013 (94%).[56] Among Richmond youth who had been in non-parental, government care, 1% had been in a group home, 1% in a formal care arrangement with a relative, 1% in foster care, and 1% in an independent living situation with the support of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Seven percent of Richmond youth reported running away from home in the previous year and 4% were asked or required to leave their home (compared to 6% of youth across BC).[57]

Ethnic Background

Richmond is a culturally rich and diverse community. As of 2016, 76% of the Richmond population identified as belonging to a racialized group.[58] The percentages of youth reporting various ethnic backgrounds in the BC Adolescent Health Survey in Richmond and BC is outlined in Table 4.

Table 4: Ethnic Background, youth 13-19 years old[59]

Ethnic Background*	Richmond	BC
East Asian	53%	18%
European	20%	46%
Southeast Asian	16%	8%
South Asian	11%	11%
Latin/South/Central American	3%	5%
West Asian	3%	3%
African	2%	3%
Indigenous	2%	10%
Australian/Pacific Islander	1%	2%
Don't Know	2%	10%
Other	3%	4%

* Youth completing the survey could select multiple responses so totals may exceed 100%

54 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E
55 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E
56 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond*: The Health and Well-being of our Youth. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
57 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond*: The Health and Well-being of our Youth. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
58 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E
59 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Indigenous Heritage and Identity

Approximately 1% of the total Richmond population identified as having Indigenous or Aboriginal heritage in the 2016 Census[60], while 2% of Richmond youth self-identified as Indigenous in the BC Adolescent Health Survey in 2018.[61] In the 2020/2021 school year, 125 students enrolled in Grades 8 to 12 in the Richmond School District identified as Indigenous, representing 1.4% of the students in the District.[62]

Newcomers to Canada

In 2016, Richmond's population of newcomers to Canada totaled 118,305, or about 60% of the total population of Richmond, compared to 41% of the people living in the greater Vancouver area (as defined by Census Canada), and 28% living in BC.[63]

There was a decline in the number of Richmond youth who reported being born outside of Canada between 2008 (46%) and 2018 (38%); however, this rate is still higher than the reported 21% of youth across BC.[64] Among Richmond youth who were born outside of Canada, approximately half arrived within the past five years, including 34% who had lived in Canada between two to five years.[65] The top four countries newcomers immigrating to Richmond came from were: China, including Hong Kong, the Philippines, India and Taiwan[66] which aligns with the self-reported ethnicity data outlined in the BC Adolescent Health Survey as outlined in Table 4.

Language

Among Richmond youth participating in the BC Adolescent Health Survey, 78% reported speaking a language other than English at home at least some of the time (compared to 53% across BC), with 44% doing so most of the time (vs. 23% across the province).[67]

60 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

61 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

62 Government of British Columbia. *Richmond School District (38) Contextual Information* [Internet]. [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/school-district/038/report/contextual-information

63 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

64 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

65 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth.* Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

66 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

67 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth.* Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

Fifty-one percent of Richmond youth participating in the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported male on their birth certificates, and 49% female.[68] Ninety-eight percent reported that their current gender identity corresponds with their sex at birth, and 2% identified as non-binary.[69] Additionally, 3% of Grade 8 students completing the Middle Years Development Instrument in Richmond describe their gender as other than boy or girl.[70]

In addition to collecting information on gender identity, youth completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey were asked about their sexual orientation. A summary of responses is outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Sexual Orientation of Richmond Youth[71]

Sexual Orientation of Richmond Youth	
Straight	82%
Mostly straight	6%
Bisexual	4%
Gay or lesbian	1%
Not sure yet	5%
Something other than those listed above	2%

68 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

69 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

70 Human Early Learning Partnership. *Middle Years Development Instrument [MDI] Grade 8 Report. School District & Community Results, 2020-2021*. Richmond (SD38). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia, School of Population and Public Health; May 2021.

71 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Family Socio-Economic Status

In Richmond the average family size of two-parent families with children was four, with a total median income of $95,173, compared to lone-parent economic families who had an average family size of 2.5 and a total median income of $49,493.[72] The total median income was lower in Richmond compared to families residing in the greater Vancouver area for both two-parent families ($112,167) and lone-parent families ($53,852).[73]

Access to Basic Necessities

Access to basic necessities is an important determinant of health and well-being. Youth who completed the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey reported high levels of access to basic necessities including stable housing, healthy food, medical or dental care and education and/or employment. A summary of the data is outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Access to Basic Necessities

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Access to stable or permanent housing	87%	9%	4%
Daily access to healthy food	95%	4%	1%
Access to medical/dental care as needed	93%	4%	3%
Access to school or education	98%	2%	0%
Access to a job if desired	78%	15%	7%

Within Richmond, it was reported that there are a proportion of youth who currently require support to meet their basic needs or have required it in the past. The percentage of youth accessing a range of social and economic supports include:

- Help to find a job (20%)
- Access to food (14%)
- Income assistance (13%)
- Support in a crisis (10%)
- Finding child care (6%)
- Support with substance use or addiction (2%)
- Support due to unstable housing or homelessness (2%)

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72 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E
73 Statistics Canada. *Census Profile, 2016 Census* [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E

Physical Health and Well-Being

Richmond youth reported a decrease in their overall health ratings, reporting either good or excellent health, between 2013 (86%) and 2018 (80%).[74] There is a correlation between youth who report eating healthy food, getting regular exercise and having sufficient sleep with those youth who also identified better physical and mental health than their peers.[75] Male youth reported higher ratings of their overall health, compared to their female counterparts.[76]

Approximately 23% of youth reported having a health condition or disability. Health conditions and disabilities reported by Richmond youth include: mental health or emotional (11%), long-term/chronic medical condition (7%), sensory disability (3%), severe allergy requiring an EpiPen (3%), learning disability (2%), physical disability (1%) and other condition (1%). Among those that reported a health condition or disability, 42% stated that their condition acted as a barrier to engaging in the same activities as their peers.[77]

74 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
75 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
76 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
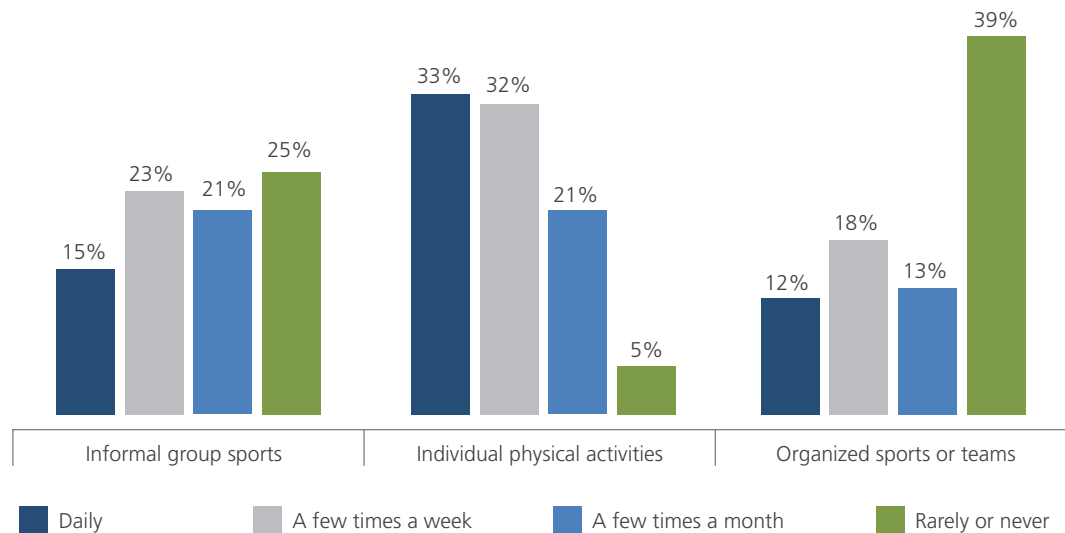77 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Physical Activity

Youth who completed the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey reported participating in a range of group and individual physical activities with individual activities being the most common. Richmond youth aged 13 to 18 years who completed the BC Adolescent Health Survey were less likely (14%) than those across the province (18%) to meet Canadian physical activity guidelines, which recommends at least 60 minutes of exercise every day among children and youth between five and 17 years, and 150 minutes each week for individuals aged 18 years or older.[78]

Among youth aged 13 to 17 years, male youth (19%) were more likely than their female peers (10%) to meet the physical activity guidelines.[79] Among individuals aged 18 years or older, 43% reported meeting physical activity guidelines for their age category. Of this 43%, male youth (50%) were more likely to report meeting these guidelines compared to female youth (34%).[80]

Figure 10: Physical Activity Participation Rates for Youth aged 13-24

78 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

79 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

80 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Sleep

Less than half of Richmond youth (43%) reported sleeping eight or more hours the night before completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey, a slightly lower rate than youth across the province (48%). Fifteen percent of youth reported sleeping for five hours or less. Female youth, as well as youth over the age of 16 years, were more likely to report getting fewer hours of sleep.[81]

Forty-two percent of youth reported turning off their phones before going to bed and these youth were more likely to wake up feeling rested compared to those who did not go offline before bed.[82]
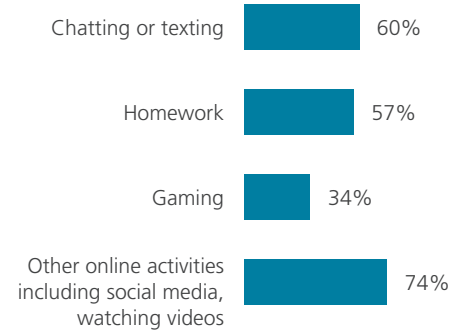
Access to Health Care

Access to health care is an important determinant of well-being. Of the youth who noted accessing health care for a specific health concern in the past year, 30% reported receiving the care they needed and 7% reported that they did not receive the care they needed. Similar to youth across the province, about 4% of Richmond youth reported needing access to health care however were not able to receive it. Richmond youth were less likely than youth across BC to access a walk-in clinic (27% vs. 35%), emergency room (12% vs. 16%), counsellor or psychologist (9% vs.11%), and school wellness centre (1% vs. 2%). With respect to dental care, 84% of Richmond youth reported seeing a dentist in the past year.[83]

Nutrition

Ninety-four percent of Richmond youth reported eating fruit and vegetables on the day before completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey, an increase from 91% from 2008. In 2018, youth were slightly more likely to report eating fast food (47%) compared to 2013 (43%).[84]

Fifty-seven percent of Richmond youth completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported always eating breakfast before starting their day, whereas 13% reported never eating breakfast. Richmond youth (43%) were more likely than youth across BC (37%) to report eating all three meals on school days.[85]

Youth reported engaging in the following activities, instead of going to sleep:

Activity	Percentage
Chatting or texting	60%
Homework	57%
Gaming	34%
Other online activities including social media, watching videos	74%

Source: McCreary Centre Society

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81 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

82 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

83 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

84 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

85 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

According to the BC Adolescent Health Survey, not all youth in Richmond receive adequate nutrition or have reliable and consistent access to food. Between 2016 and 2020, children and youth (0–17 years) accounted for 28.6% of Richmond Food Bank clients.[86]

School food programs provide important access to healthy food for youth in Richmond. In the 2019/2020 school year, there were 15 secondary schools with school food programs supported by the Richmond Food Bank and Urban Bounty.[87] Eight percent of Richmond youth completing the BC Adolescent Health Survey reported going to bed hungry at least some of the time due to lack of money for food, and 1% reported often or always going to bed hungry.[88] These results are consistent across the province, and have not changed since 2013.[89]

Mental and Emotional Health and Well-being

Mental and emotional well-being are foundational aspects of youth development. Of the youth who participated in the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey, collected after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, 19% indicated they previously had or were currently receiving support for mental health issues and 32% indicated that they had or were using counselling services. In addition, the percentage of Richmond youth participating in the BC Adolescent Health Survey who reported having depression increased from 7% in 2013 to 12% in 2018. Similarly, the percentage of Richmond youth who reported experiencing an anxiety disorder or panic attacks rose from 6% in 2013 to 12% in 2018, and the percentage of youth who reported suicidal ideation increased from 10% in 2013 to 15% in 2018. Richmond youth were less likely to have attempted suicide (3%) compared to the provincial average (5%). However, the percentage of Richmond youth who reported having a friend or family member attempt suicide rose from 23% in 2013 to 29% in 2018. Female youth were twice as likely to report depression (15%), compared to male youth (7%), and youth who identified as non-binary were most likely to report depression (50%) overall.[90] As the BC Adolescent Health Survey was completed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, results should be interpreted with caution in relation to the current mental health and well-being of Richmond youth. Additional monitoring and evaluation of data collected more recently that reflects the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth mental health and well-being will be important in the ongoing planning and implementation of actions contained in the *Youth Strategy*.

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86 Richmond Food Bank Society (2016–2019), 2020.
87 Richmond Food Bank Society, 2020. Urban Bounty, 2020.
88 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
89 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.
90 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

The percentage of Richmond youth who did not access needed mental health services increased from 10% in 2013 to 19% in 2018. Reasons for not accessing needed mental health supports include being fearful that their parents would find out and/or hoping that the problem would go away (Table 7).[91]

Table 7: Richmond youth's most commonly reported reasons for not accessing mental health services[92]

Reason for not accessing mental health services	%
Didn't want parents to know	68%
Thought or hoped the problem would go away	66%
Didn't know where to go	47%
Afraid of what I would be told	42%
Too busy to go	40%
Afraid someone I know might see me	39%
Didn't think I could afford it	21%
Parent / guardian would not take me	13%
Had prior negative experience	12%
Couldn't go when it was open	7%
Had no transportation	6%

Education and Employment

The Richmond School District is the fifth largest in the province with 48 schools, including 38 elementary schools and ten secondary schools. The School District reported 8,748 students enrolled in Grades 8 to 12 in the 2020/2021 school year.[93] In addition, there are eight private secondary schools in Richmond[94] and a number of organizations that provide post-secondary education, including British Columbia Institute of Technology Aeronautics Campus, Trinity Western University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

91 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

92 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

93 Government of British Columbia. *Richmond School District (38) Contextual Information* [Internet]. [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/school-district/038/report/contextual-information

94 City of Richmond. Richmond Schools: Private Schools [Internet]. 2017 [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://www.richmond.ca/cityhall/archives/exhibits/schools/private.htm

In the 2019/2020 school year, 93% of Grade 12 youth in Richmond graduated from secondary school. This number is slightly lower for students who identified as having Indigenous heritage (80%) and for students identified by the School District as having a range of special needs as defined by the Ministry of Education (78%). The five-year range for graduating in Richmond is 88 to 93%, which is higher than the typical range for BC of 77 to 88%.[95]

Richmond youth tend to have greater academic aspirations compared to youth across the province. Ninety percent of Richmond youth planned to finish secondary school (compared to 87% of BC youth) in 2018, and 87% intended to complete post-secondary school (compared to 83% of BC youth).[96]

Hours of employment vary with the majority of youth working five to 12 hours per week reported during completion of the BC Adolescent Health Survey and reflected in Figure 11. Of the youth that completed the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey, 19% reported participating in paid work daily, 21% a few times a week and 44% rarely or never. Seventy-eight percent indicated that they had access to a paid job if they desired one.

Figure 11: Hours Richmond Youth Spent Working at a Paid Job (of those who were employed)[97]
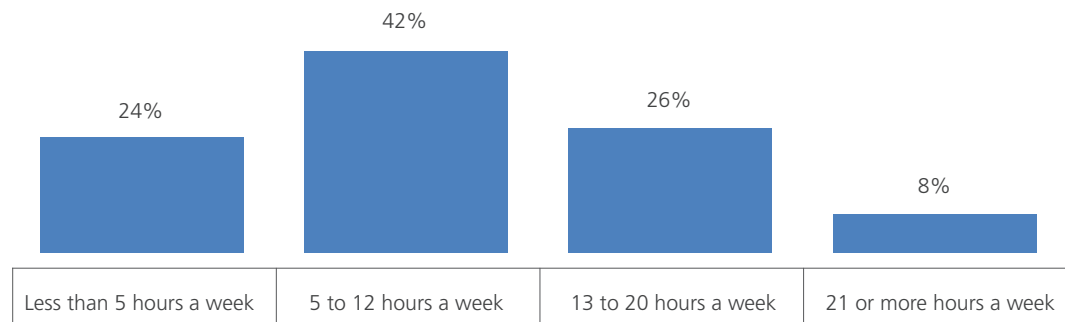
95 Government of British Columbia. *Richmond School District (38) Completion Rates* [Internet]. [cited 2021 Oct 29]. Available from: https://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/school-district/038/report/completion-rates

96 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

97 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

Youth Activities and Use of Time

Richmond youth who completed the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey reported engaging in a variety of extracurricular activities. The BC Adolescent Health Survey also provides additional demographic detail. Males were reported being more likely than females to participate in organized sports (54% vs. 49%), informal sports (51% vs. 30%), and extreme sports (6% vs. 2%), while female youth were more likely than males to report participating in arts-based classes (34% vs. 24%), volunteering (30% vs. 25%), and dance, yoga or other exercise classes (20% vs. 5%). Barriers to engaging in extracurricular activities, for both females and males, included being too busy (54%), affordability (12%), transportation (13%), and concerns about being bullied (5%).[98] Additional information on how Richmond youth spend their time was also collected in the *Youth Strategy* Engagement Survey. The survey found that clubs and organized groups, followed by volunteer work were the most common structured activities that youth engaged in. The survey also highlighted how youth in Richmond spend their unstructured time. The use of social media and online/internet had the highest daily use citations, followed by spending time alone and spending time with family.

Among Richmond youth who participated in the BC Adolescent Health Survey, 64% reported engaging in activities that were meaningful to them, and just under half (45%) reported feeling as though their ideas were listened to when participating in those activities. Richmond youth who reported engaging in activities that were meaningful to them also reported higher rates of mental health, and were more likely to report feeling connected to their community. Richmond youth also indicated having at least one adult outside their family and school who cared about them.[99]

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98 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.

99 McCreary Centre Society. *Balance and Connection in Richmond: The Health and Well-being of our Youth*. Vancouver, BC: McCreary Centre Society; 2019.