

Volunteering as a Stepping Stone For Marginalized Youth

Prepared for Volunteer Victoria
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Executive Summary

Introduction

The main purpose of this study is to explore how volunteering can play a role in job acquisition for “marginalized youth”, defined as people aged 15-29 who face barriers to employment. Within this population, the study primarily focuses on young people who are marginalized but who have access to basic needs such as adequate housing and clothing and are not currently street-involved. The intent is to use the research results in creating a new work experience program and/or enhancing existing pre-employment programs.

The ultimate goal is to increase youth employability in Greater Victoria.

Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Build an inventory of existing pre-employment programs for youth and identify service gaps;
2. Analyze target population attitudes toward volunteering, including motivations, barriers, incentives and perceived benefits;
3. Identify employer perspectives on the value of volunteer work experience and on desirable skills and attributes for young, entry-level employees;
4. Explore ways to expand opportunities for marginalized youth to use volunteering as a stepping-stone toward employment.

How We Did The Research

Data gathering activities included assembly of information on existing pre-employment programs and other services for youth in Greater Victoria and collection and review of literature on youth and community engagement. In addition, 136 people participated in focus groups and interviews:

- 20 youth-serving professionals;
- 86 young people;
- 30 employers.

Youth Volunteerism

Youth volunteering is on the rise. There is a widespread belief that involvement of young people in community service can produce many positive benefits, and a growing body of research supports this belief. Surprisingly, research evidence suggests that marginalized youth may be equally as inclined to volunteer as youth who do not face barriers to employment (Johnson et al 1998, da Silva et al 2004).

It is widely believed that there can be a strong connection between volunteering and increased employability. For young people, this connection can be particularly important. Published research confirms that youth volunteering can contribute to the qualities needed for success in employment and career development (Johnson et al 1998). Such outcomes may be especially important for young people who are marginalized (Szymanski 1997).

Existing Pre-Employment Services for Youth

An inventory of youth pre-employment programs in the Greater Victoria area (as of May 2004) identified 10 programs. These programs typically serve people aged 15-30, and typically are targeted to those who are “at risk” (not in school and facing one or more barriers to employment) and are not eligible for services available for Employment Insurance clients.

The complete inventory is attached as Appendix D.

Service Gaps

Analysis of interview comments by service providers and youth regarding gaps in youth pre-employment service revealed five main themes:

1. Lack of programs that deal with pre-employment barriers and do not necessarily lead directly to employment;
2. Lack of programs that use volunteering in the non-profit sector as a form of work experience (with supports for both youth and host agencies);
3. Lack of information about what programs exist;
4. Inadequate number of spaces in existing programs;
5. Absence of casual labour programs geared to marginalized youth.

Motivation to Volunteer

Asked about the inclination of marginalized youth to volunteer, youth-serving professionals typically suggested that they tend not to unless it is mandatory or there are practical incentives. However, the majority of youth (approximately 59%) indicated they had volunteered. Among those who had, the most commonly mentioned motivations were to contribute to the community, to participate in environmental and social action, to gain employability, to gain skills and knowledge, and for personal development and fulfillment.

Barriers, Incentives, and Meeting Youth Needs

As shown in the following table, there were some differences in views and some common themes with respect to barriers, incentives, and how volunteering could meet youth needs.

	Service Provider Views	Youth Views	Common Themes
What are the barriers to volunteering?	Negative perception of volunteering; lack of confidence and self-esteem; lack of self awareness; lack of positive role models; lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities; substance misuse; lack of transportation; basic needs issues; disabilities.	Lack of pay; lack of time; transportation issues; substance misuse, lack of awareness about volunteer opportunities.	Transportation issues; substance misuse; lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities.
What incentives might help?	Bus tickets and other material incentives; food; cash/ honorarium; recognition and respect; skill building and mentorship; and potential employment.	Food; work experience; recognition and respect; potential employment; bus tickets and other material incentives; cash/honorarium; social activities; a friendly environment.	Food; cash/ honorarium; recognition and respect; bus tickets and other practical incentives; potential employment.
How could volunteering meet youth needs?	Gain skills; strengthen confidence and self-esteem; develop social connections; increase employment readiness; explore career options.	Increase employment readiness; gain skills; achieve personal development and fulfillment; contribute to the community; build social connections; explore career options.	Increase employment readiness; skill building; personal development; social connection; career exploration.

Skill Development

Analysis of service providers' comments about the common skill gaps faced by marginalized youth revealed five main areas: literacy and ability with numbers; general employment skills; communication skills; life skills; and ability to focus. Service providers identified two general areas of skill youth can develop through volunteering: employment skills and life skills such as how to do a phone call, how to meet someone for the first time, and how to manage personal finances. Notably, both of these skill sets are transferable from non-profit to business settings.

The most commonly cited types of skills young people said they gain through volunteering were general employment skills (such as teamwork, ability to multi-task, and organizational skills), people skills, leadership skills, and life skills (such as those listed above). Interestingly, these are all skill sets that were identified by service providers as being generally lacking among marginalized youth.

Analysis of employer comments on what skills they look for in young, entry-level applicants revealed four themes: ability to be punctual and reliable; other general employment skills; people skills; and computer skills. Other qualities employers said they typically look for in entry-level applicants were: positive attitude; friendliness and assertiveness; enthusiasm; eagerness to learn; work ethic (i.e. willingness to work hard); and appropriate personal appearance. The most frequently mentioned qualities felt to be lacking were work ethic and appropriateness of clothing for the job.

Meeting the Needs of Employers

Analysis of comments by employers reveals that they generally recognized volunteer work experience as valuable, especially when it was related to their business and/or was sustained over a significant period. Asked what value they place on volunteer work on a resume, most employers (67%) indicated that they value it highly.

According to service providers, the main way that youth volunteering in the non-profit sector benefits future employers is that the youth will have experienced work environments and will have developed skills. Similarly, youth saw work experience and skill development as by far the most significant benefit to future employers. Other benefits frequently mentioned by youth included establishment of work references, increased self-confidence, and an opportunity to move beyond stereotypes.

Asked whether they think it is helpful for entry-level staff to have had previous volunteer experience, a large majority of participating employers (80%) indicated yes. All three groups (service providers, youth, and employers) saw community volunteering as being beneficial to future employers, particularly as a form of workplace experience and related skill building, a source of references, and a demonstration of personal interest and commitment. Employers indicated three additional ways they would benefit: youth having developed their sense of community involvement, having strengthened their work ethic, and having done more exploration of what types of work they find fulfilling.

Prospects for Program Development

Youth, service providers and employers all spoke about how volunteer work experience in the non-profit sector could be a positive complement to youth pre-

employment training. This suggests widespread recognition that volunteering can be a valuable type of work experience, building skills that can be used in future employment.

Asked about whether they feel a volunteer placement program would complement existing services and programs, youth consistently indicated yes. Several comments indicated that youth participants in local pre-employment programs would be interested in having a volunteering component built in, or at least more information available about volunteering opportunities. Some youth commented on the value in trying out different types of work, and how this would ultimately result in greater job satisfaction. Several youth commented on the value of a volunteer placement program that would reach out to and assist people who are marginalized due to factors such as substance issues and/or being unattached to school, work, or community programs. Youth offered suggestions about advertising and posters and about how peer-based outreach could occur as an element of a youth-focused volunteer program.

Service providers expressed enthusiasm about inclusion of volunteering in pre-employment programs. Several suggested there would be value in adding a volunteering component to their programs as a chance for participants to apply and develop their new knowledge and skills, and to connect with community members who share their interests. Asked about how volunteering could help meet the needs of employment programs, staff with one program that had experimented with inclusion of a volunteer placement component reported that it produced significant benefits for participants and for facilitators.

A large majority of employers indicated enthusiasm about including volunteer placements in non-profit settings as an element in pre-employment training for young people. However, a few indicated a neutral or sceptical view of the idea. Several employers said they had experienced success with hiring youth who had started in work experience placements.

Conclusion

Both the published research and the findings of this study show that volunteering can be a powerful way for youth to develop skills and explore career options (Szymanski 1997, Yates and Youniss 1998, Pancer 2001). While there are a number of pre-employment programs for youth in Greater Victoria, there is a lack of opportunities for marginalized young people to gain work experience through supported volunteer placements.

The study suggests that youth are motivated to volunteer as a way to contribute to the community and participate in positive change as well as for personal benefits such as increased skills, employability, and personal fulfillment. Their desire to volunteer is impeded by several barriers, however, including transportation issues, substance misuse, and lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities. Incentives that may encourage them include: food and/or grocery

store gift certificates; cash or honorarium; recognition and respect; practical incentives such as bus tickets; and the prospect of subsequent employment.

Analysis of input from study participants suggests that volunteering can meet the needs of marginalized youth in several ways. They can build skills that are transferable from non-profit to business settings: general employment skills, people skills, and life skills. They can become more ready for employment, more confident, more socially connected, and more aware of their work interests and aptitudes.

These outcomes also benefit their future employers. In addition, employers may benefit by having a source of work references.

Analysis of employer input shows they look primarily for personal qualities, such as attitude, eagerness to learn and work ethic, in young entry-level applicants. They also typically look for soft skills, such as people skills and the ability to show up consistently. Few focus on hard skills. Typically, they place a high value on volunteer experience and view it as an indication of youth having developed both their ability to function in a workplace and of their sense of community involvement.

One of the most significant findings of this study is that marginalized youth participating in focus groups and interviews consistently support the idea that a volunteer placement program would positively complement existing services. They spoke enthusiastically about the value of supporting young people in finding suitable volunteer work. In addition, many suggested that volunteering should be more strongly promoted to youth, including through advertising and peer presentations in schools.

Employers and service providers also expressed enthusiasm about the idea of a volunteer program for this population. Assisting marginalized youth to engage in volunteering that fits their interests will help pre-employment programs and youth-serving agencies achieve their goals, will help provide employers with well-prepared entry-level workers, and will help the youth find stepping stones toward becoming gainfully employed and recognized as valued members of the community.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend the following actions:

RECOMMENDATION 1: That Volunteer Victoria continue to engage multiple stakeholders in exploring how to move forward and develop a youth volunteer program based on this report.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That Volunteer Victoria work with suitable funding partners to carry out the necessary program development activities in collaboration with community partners.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

The main purpose of this study is to explore how volunteering can play a role in job acquisition for “marginalized youth”, defined as people aged 15-29 who face barriers to employment. Within this population, the study primarily focuses on young people who are marginalized but who have access to basic needs such as adequate housing and clothing and are not currently street-involved. The intent is to use the research results in creating a new work experience program and/or enhancing existing pre-employment programs.

The ultimate goal is to increase youth employability and reduce the rate of youth unemployment.

Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Build an inventory of existing pre-employment programs for youth and identify service gaps;
2. Analyze target population attitudes toward volunteering, including motivations, barriers, incentives and perceived benefits;
3. Identify employer perspectives on the value of volunteer work experience and on desirable skills and attributes for young, entry-level employees;
4. Explore ways to expand opportunities for marginalized youth to use volunteering as a stepping-stone toward employment.

1.2 Background and Rationale

Unemployment of youth in Greater Victoria is significantly higher than that of other age groups. Young adults, having no work experience, face unique challenges in obtaining their first job. They also have difficulty in finding meaningful employment, and a harder time in finding full-time employment. In addition, youth are more likely to cycle in and out of work than other groups. Marginalized youth, who may have left school early, are particularly vulnerable.

This situation speaks to the need for work experience opportunities for this population. Volunteering can be a valuable means of gaining this experience, as well as developing employability skills, confidence, and motivation. Volunteer placements with community agencies can provide a supportive environment for this learning process.

The value of volunteering to develop job skills was highlighted through the Youth Community Action Program that Volunteer Victoria delivered for four years, ending in March 2002. This program assisted youth in gaining work experience through volunteering with community agencies in return for tuition credits. Some of those who participated in the program were marginalized or at-risk youth. The feedback from both these youth and the agencies they volunteered with indicated

that this program made a difference in both how youth felt about themselves and their perspective on work. Further enthusiasm for this project came through consultations Volunteer Victoria did in 2003 with youth service providers, who indicated that there were significant reductions in pre-employment programs for youth. These, coupled with the loss of the Youth Community Action Program, may have created a lack of programs and services that support job acquisition for marginalized youth.

Exploratory work with service providers indicated that volunteering was seen as a valuable resource in helping to build employability capacity for this population. From these conversations, Volunteer Victoria determined that more information was needed about the motivations, barriers, and needs of youth in relation to volunteering and employment, as well as more knowledge about the needs of employers.

1.3 Scope and Definitions

The geographic scope of this project is Greater Victoria, including Sooke and the Saanich Peninsula.

This study focuses on “marginalized youth”: people aged 15 through 29 who face barriers to employment. For various combinations of reasons, people in this population typically have not thrived in school or work.

Part of the marginalized youth population is “street involved”, meaning without a fixed address and/or reliant on street activities such as panhandling to meet their basic needs. This study focuses primarily on marginalized youth who are not street-involved, recognizing that substantial volunteering is not a realistic option for people who lack access to adequate housing, clothing, and/or other basic needs.

We define “volunteering” as the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society that is undertaken freely and by choice, without expectation of financial gain. It does not include mandatory unpaid work (such as court-ordered community service hours). For Volunteer Victoria, the term refers to unpaid work in the non-profit sector only and does not include unpaid work with businesses.

We define “work experience” as any form of employment, volunteering, or other work outside of the home.

2.0 How We Did This Research

2.1 Design

Using the project proposal as a starting place, the principal researcher worked collaboratively with Volunteer Victoria and project partners to develop the approach and data gathering tools used in this project. Project partners participated in an initial focus group discussion and reviewed draft sets of interview and focus group questions.

Initial focus groups with each stakeholder group (service providers, youth, and employers) provided an opportunity to further review and revise the draft questions. Where appropriate, the sets of questions overlapped: this way, the perspectives of different stakeholder groups could be compared.

2.2 Data Gathering

Data gathering activities included the following:

- Collected and reviewed literature on youth and community engagement, with a particular focus on volunteering;
- Assembled information on existing pre-employment programs and other services for youth, using interviews with service providers, internet research, and other methods;
- Conducted focus groups and interviews with 20 professionals who provide pre-employment and other services to youth in the region;
- Conducted focus groups and interviews with 86 young people, including 11 Career Shop clients, 9 Downtown Youth Internship Program participants, 10 PATHWAY project participants, 16 SJ Willis Alternative School students, 11 Springboard to Success participants, 10 Western Opportunity Network students, 7 YouthSpeaks participants, 7 Youth Community Entrepreneurship Program participants and 5 Youth Empowerment Society clients;
- Conducted focus groups and interviews with 30 employers.

2.3 Analysis

Analysis methods included: review of focus group and interview responses to identify common themes, sorting of comments according to these themes, and counting the incidence of similar responses; interpretation and summarization, using quotations to illustrate; comparison of different stakeholder responses on the same issue, such as the role and value of volunteering; review of preliminary findings in a multi-stakeholder workshop; and review of the draft report by project partners and reference group members.

3.0 The Big Picture

3.1 Youth Volunteerism

Youth volunteering is on the rise. According to *Volunteering Works! Facilitators Guide*, there has been a trend toward increased volunteering among 15-24 year-olds. Over a 10-year period, the volunteering rate for this age group almost doubled from 18% to 33% (Volunteer Canada 1999). Canada's youth are the fastest growing segment of volunteers compared to any other age group, and those who do volunteer contribute an average of 125 hours per year (Volunteer Canada 2001).

There is a widespread belief that involvement of young people in volunteering can produce many positive benefits, and a growing body of research supports this belief. For example, Yates and Youniss (1998) cite various American studies showing that "activist experiences in youth can serve as landmark events or turning points that help define a sense of social responsibility and investment". A review of over 70 articles on youth involvement in the community concludes that it benefits young people's awareness, confidence, skills and resiliency in many ways (Pancer 2001). These articles show that the benefits include the following:

- Make youth more aware of those in society who are disadvantaged;
- Help youth cope with stress;
- Provide youth with supportive social networks;
- Enhance their social skills;
- Increase their sense of what kind of work or occupation they might enjoy;
- Increase their sense of competence;
- Increase their self-esteem;
- Give them a better sense of what is right and wrong;
- Decrease problem behaviours;
- Increase their academic performance and their likelihood of going on to higher education;
- Enhance their life skills in areas such as public speaking;
- Make them feel empowered, valued and important;
- Help them get along better with adults;
- Increase their leadership abilities;
- Increase their sense of social responsibility;
- Reduce drug use, teen pregnancy and aggression.

Surprisingly, research evidence suggests that marginalized youth may be equally as inclined to volunteer as mainstream youth. For example, one study found no

difference in volunteering rates based on socio-economic differences (Johnson et al 1998). Another study concluded that involvement in civic responsibility is not greatly influenced by problems such as depression, antisocial behaviour, or substance use (da Silva et al 2004).

3.2 Volunteering as a Stepping Stone to Employment

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there can be a strong connection between volunteering and subsequent employment. Many of us have developed skills, interests, and networks through our volunteer work that have created and/or enhanced our opportunities in the world of paid work.

For young people, this connection can be particularly important. Research suggests that community-based volunteerism can effectively support the transition from school to work (Szymanski 1997). School-based work experience programs, such as the work experience component of British Columbia's Career and Personal Planning (CAPP) curriculum, are intended to help develop employability and longer-term career direction. However, some youth service providers interviewed as part of this study suggested that CAPP work experience may be more oriented to short-term employment opportunities than to development of career direction over the long term. Some researchers suggest that low-wage employment associated with the youth labour market can become a trap and that high school graduates often have difficulty finding jobs that pay a living wage (Hamilton 2000).

Published quantitative research confirms that youth volunteering can contribute to the qualities needed for success in employment and career development. For example, a longitudinal study of 1,000 American high school students concluded that: "volunteering encourages self exploration with respect to values, job interests, and one's role in the community" (Johnson et al 1998). The study further concluded that volunteering "enhanced intrinsic work values".

Such outcomes may be particularly important for young people who are marginalized. For example, volunteering and other work experience may be critical in developing job interests. As pointed out in the research, limited experiences associated with factors such as poverty and disability can constrain interest development (Szymanski 1997). For young people who face barriers to employment, additional work experience or mentoring programs may be necessary to widen career options (Szymanski 1997).

3.3 Existing Pre-Employment Services for Youth

An inventory of youth pre-employment and work experience programs in the Greater Victoria area (as of May 2004) identified 10 programs:

- Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)¹

¹ Career Shop will close in March 2005.

- CATTS – Construction and Trades to Success (John Howard Society)
- Downtown Youth Internship Program (Spectrum Job Search Centre)
- Hire-A-Student (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)²
- Pathway Project (WorkLink Employment Society)
- Springboard to Success (Peninsula Community Services)
- YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program (YM-YWCA)
- YouthSpeaks (Victoria International Development Education Association)
- Youth Community Entrepreneur Program (LifeCycles)
- Youth Visions Employment Project (Sooke Works).

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) is the funding partner for all of these programs, except for the YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program (which is funded by the Government of Canada Treasury Board).

These programs typically serve people aged 15-30, and typically are targeted to those who are “at risk” (not in school and facing one or more barriers to employment) and are not eligible for services available for Employment Insurance clients.

The complete inventory is attached as Appendix D.

3.4 Service Gaps

Analysis of interview comments by service providers and youth regarding gaps in youth pre-employment service reveals five main themes:

1. Lack of pre-employment programs that deal with barriers and do not necessarily lead directly to employment;
2. Lack of programs that use volunteering in the non-profit sector as a form of work experience (with supports for both youth and host agencies);
3. Lack of information about what programs exist;
4. Inadequate number of spaces in existing programs;
5. Absence of casual labour programs geared to marginalized youth.

Lack of Pre-Employment Programs for Youth Facing Multiple Barriers

Provincial funding for pre-employment programs designed for youth facing multiple barriers (such as Bladerunners) was eliminated in recent years. Existing programs, even those geared to young people facing multiple barriers, generally focus on one primary outcome: moving directly to employment. For many young people, however, addressing and overcoming those barriers is a necessary first

² Hire-A-Student is a seasonal program.

step. For example, program participants who are active in their addictions may not be ready for success in securing a job or starting a business. Service providers' comments highlighting this gap included the following:

- “There are pre-employment programs, but because of the way they're funded they have to have certain percentages returning to work or school, so they need to cream... So that leaves a whole crew of people with barriers still trying to push beyond them. “
- “Training to deal with personal finances, communication skills, and conflict resolution skills.”
- “Making sure they're networked – here's your local community association, the events going on, a bunch of things you'd probably find interesting, based on what you've told us so far. Through those they'll get more support...”
- “Horizons and Cooks Down Under and Springs and Stages and Mile 1 were cut. All of those programs were for these kids...”
- “There's a huge gap: pre-pre-employment. Some of the kids coming out of youth custody – they come into this and they're not ready for it. They're still in the crime world. Some of these community programs – like the CAPP program - would be better to give them a taste of what it's like. There is a huge volume that needs something before this. Our funding depends on success – and that means getting a job.”
- “There is a difference between employment ready and employment readiness programs. The latter would take all of those kids who are still dealing with addictions... and the result wouldn't necessarily be tied to getting a job. It would be a baby step toward being employable.”

Youth comments highlighting this gap included the following:

- “More life skills.”
- “For these kids there's nothing: there's jail.”
- “There's stuff for people who are motivated.”

Lack of Supported Volunteer Work Experience

In a stakeholder meeting to review findings of this study, community partners noted that that programs providing support for marginalized volunteers also need to provide support to the non-profit agencies where they are placed. This discussion validated Volunteer Victoria's view that support needs to be available for both parties.

Service providers' comments highlighting the lack of supported volunteer work experience included the following:

- “That support thing: many youth just don't have the know how... They think they have the confidence until they get out there. So if there is some sort of a network that can support them in volunteering. You can't just expect them to get out there and volunteer on their own. “

- “A big one is skills enhancement opportunities... They still have to do volunteer hours to graduate. But if you’re dealing with kids who aren’t in a school there has to be some other way.”
- “Volunteering is a good opportunity for skill enhancement while kids are on a waitlist for a course.”

Input from young people also suggests that they perceive a lack of supportive volunteering and work experience programs. Focus group and interview participants spoke about the need for access to information about volunteer opportunities, the need for supports for people with health issues that may make it difficult to commit to set hours, and the need for programs that match youth interests to specific volunteer work. Youth comments on what’s missing in the range of pre-employment services included the following:

- “The supportive atmosphere is really huge for youth. Putting the work of volunteering together with learning what’s going on in our community. How we can find a job that’s right for you?”
- “People who have mental illness or physical illness, but want to volunteer: how do you, when you can’t commit to set hours?”
- “It would be good if there’s a phone number you could call to tell you all the places you can volunteer.”

Several youth comments highlighted the need for increased publicity and outreach about volunteering, particularly for students before they drop out and find themselves lacking in practical experience and confidence:

- “More advertisements in schools for kids coming out. I had the 30 hours, but other than that I was completely clueless. I dropped out.”
- “Same here. I felt almost useless: ‘I have no school, no experience’.”
- “Youth aren’t aware of a lot of the opportunities out there.”
- “Do five-minute presentations in every class.”

Lack of Information About of What Programs Exist

The inventory prepared as part of this research project provides a concise listing of existing pre-employment programs for youth. The fact that no such listing was available, and that the preparation of the inventory was so time consuming, suggests that this was a gap. Both youth and service providers who work with them identified the lack of information about existing programs and how to access them as a significant gap.

Service providers’ comments highlighting this gap included the following:

- “Awareness of what services are available and how to access them... It’s mostly word of mouth.”
- “There’s a gap in awareness of what’s available and how to access them.”

Youth comments included the following:

- “A list of programs.”
- “It’s not until you probe that you find out these programs are available.”
- “There’s not an open awareness of these programs.”

Inadequate Number of Spaces in Existing Programs

Service providers’ comments highlighted their perception of an inadequate number of spaces in existing programs. For example, one commented: “I could easily run 2-3 programs like this simultaneously. I interview 30-40 kids for 10 spots. It’s hard to decide which kids to take.”

Youth participants also commented on the gap between demand for pre-employment programs and the number of spaces available. For example, one said: “Need for more spaces in programs like this.”

Absence of Casual Labour Programs Geared to Marginalized Youth

Service providers’ comments highlighting this gap included the following:

- “A program that would work great would be like the one in Vancouver: Street Youth Job Action.”
- “There is a gap around casual work. Some people are not ready to face 9 to 5 five days a week, but they might be able to do part time, and do a few hours of volunteering. The more casual labour stuff that people can explore with – whether that’s paid or volunteer – the better.”

Other Possible Gaps

Other comments from service providers regarding gaps focused on the former provincial wage subsidy program, mentorship, and apprenticeship:

- “From provincial programs I see no commitment directed to youth. The old Job Start program that supported youth to get their foot in the door with a wage subsidy. With the federal program, the bureaucracy keeps employers from jumping in. Employers like to try people out before going through the paperwork. The provincial program allowed for the youth to work for a bit, with just minimal paperwork.”
- “One of the major things would be a solid mentorship program”.
- “Apprenticeship with the trades. Hands on. “

Additional youth comments regarding gaps focussed on the need for services that help young people identify their interests and aptitudes, job search training, job fairs, and hands-on training and work-related certificates. In addition, several comments focused on the need for services geared to people who are unable to participate in mainstream programs:

- “A program for people who won’t qualify for these programs: people who are homeless.”

- “So many kids in foster care – not easy to keep a permanent address. Most are kicked out for the day.”

3.5 Overview of Marginalized Youth in Greater Victoria

Based on 2001 census figures, there will be approximately 57,700 Greater Victoria residents in the 15-29 age-range as of 2006.³ Estimating the percentage of this population that could be classified as marginalized would be extremely difficult.

Projected 2006 Youth Population in Greater Victoria

	Capital Region - Total	Non-Greater Victoria	Greater Victoria Subtotal
15-19	18,410	955	17,455
20-24	20,245	945	19,300
25-29	21,490	545	20,945
Total	60,145	2,445	57,700

2001 Census figures show that approximately 4% of the total Capital Region population 20 years and over had less than grade 9, and an additional approximately 15% had less than grade 12.

The table below shows the typical characteristics of various types of marginalized youth.⁴ For purposes of this study, the primary focus is on the at-risk and non-joiner populations. However, some of the youth focus group and interview participants could be characterized as high-risk.

Types and Characteristics of Marginalized Youth

Type of Youth	Typical Characteristics
High-risk, street-involved	Lacking access to adequate housing, clothing, and other basic needs. Substance abuse. Involvement with legal system.
High-risk, non-street-involved	Not homeless, and may be in school, but lacking a support system and generally having other characteristics of street-involved youth.
At-risk	Facing some of the same issues as high-risk youth, but with better support systems.
Non-joiners	Not having the issues of high-risk youth, but facing risk due to social isolation.

³ This projection does not take into account net in-migration or deaths in this age range. For purposes of this calculation, all areas of the CRD are deemed to be within Greater Victoria except for the Gulf Islands and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

⁴ Victoria Youth Empowerment Society Executive Director Pat Griffin identified the categories in this table (personal conversation, February 2005).

4.0 Voices of Youth, Service Providers, and Employers

4.1 Motivation to Volunteer

The perspectives of marginalized youth on their tendency to volunteer differed significantly from those of youth-serving professionals. Comments from staff of pre-employment programs for youth, youth-serving community agencies, and alternative schools suggested that this population of young people is generally not inclined to volunteer. However, comments from the young people themselves suggested that they are motivated to volunteer. This was consistent with the research referenced in section 3.1, suggesting that youth who face socio-economic disadvantages and other barriers may be equally inclined to volunteer as more mainstream youth.

4.1.1 Service Provider Perspectives on Motivation

Asked about the inclination of marginalized youth to volunteer, youth-serving professionals typically indicated a view that they tend not to unless it is mandated or there is an incentive that relates to their immediate survival. Comments included the following:

- “They want to get paid.”
- “They tend not to, unless there’s some incentive...”
- “It’s difficult for them to be able to do that just like its difficult for them to be able to do work.”
- “On their own it probably doesn’t happen. With support it can happen very well.

Others suggested that some marginalized youth do feel motivated to volunteer. For example, one said: “They certainly enjoy getting paid, but some like to volunteer.... doing something concrete.”

Some pointed out that idealistic youth do tend to volunteer. One said: “It’s only certain types who are willing to do it – a lot more don’t see the value in it.”

Other service providers pointed out that marginalized youth tend to volunteer informally, often helping their peers or their own community. For example, one commented as follows: “They are so there for each other – they volunteer within their own community.”

4.1.2 Youth Perspectives on Motivation

Asked whether they had ever volunteered, the majority of youth participating in focus groups and interviews indicated they had. Approximately 59% indicated they had volunteered, 30% indicated they had not, and 12% indicated they had done mandated work experience or community service (but not actual volunteering).

Among those who had volunteered, the most commonly cited motivations were:

- To contribute to the community (9 participants);
- To participate in environmental and social action (7 participants);
- To gain employability (7 participants);
- To gain skills and knowledge (6 participants);
- For personal development and fulfillment (6 participants).

To Contribute to the Community

The most frequent type of comment on motivation to volunteer was to contribute to or get involved in the community. Youth participants commented on their desire to “help out the community”, to “get involved” and to “give back”.

To Participate in Environmental and Social Action

Another frequent type of comment on motivation to volunteer, closely related to the above, was to participate in environmental and/or social action. For example, youth commented as follows:

- “Lots of environmental volunteer work – because you want to see change happen, get people organized to work together.”
- “To help people in the street. Soup is a lot to someone who’s got nothing.”

To Gain Employability

Another frequent type of comment on motivation was to gain employability. Youth commented on how volunteering “looks good on your resume.” Some noted their motivation was to gain work experience.

To Gain Skills and Knowledge

A related frequent type of comment on motivation to volunteer was to gain skills and knowledge. For example:

- “It’s a way to get training without having any qualifications.”
- “If you want to learn something, volunteering is a good way...”
- “I wanted a change and needed skills. It turned out to be the best thing in my life.”

Personal Development and Fulfillment

Another frequently cited motivation was personal development and a sense of fulfillment. Youth commented as follows:

- “To round off my character.”
- “It’s something I like doing.”
- “Keeps you from being depressed – that’s a big thing for people.”
- “Because it’s fulfilling.”

- “Feel better about yourself.”
- “It’s a good feeling. You get a lot of responsibility.”

Other Motivations

Other motivations cited by multiple participants were to explore possible employment, as a stepping-stone to paid work, for fun, to please family members, to be with family members, to feel connected, and to share a personal passion.

- Some participants commented on how they saw volunteering as a way to try out possible types of employment: “to gain experience in a chosen field” and “to get a sense of the environment – to get more information from the people actually doing it.”
- Some commented on how they were motivated by the possibility that volunteering could lead to paid work: “I was hoping to get a job with these people.”
- Some participants indicated they were motivated by the desire to have fun. For example, one said: “For fun - you get some perks: free movie, basketball.”
- Some said they volunteered to please parents or grandparents: For example: “My grandparents thought it would be a good idea...”
- Some indicated they were motivated by a desire to connect with family members: “to be part of my sister’s life (she’s disabled)” or “to get closer to my parents.”
- Others indicated they wanted to feel connected or involved in something: “festivals – to be part of it”, or “to be involved – helped pave the way for athletics...”
- Last, but not least, some indicated that they were motivated to share a personal passion with others. For example, one had taught climbing: “skills I just want people to have.” Another had worked at a radio station: “I wanted to spread the music I listen to.”

4.2 Barriers to Volunteering

4.2.1 Service Provider Perspectives on Barriers

Six main themes emerge from analysis of comments from youth-serving professionals about the common barriers to volunteering that marginalized young people face: a perception of volunteering as not being valuable or desirable; lack of confidence and self-esteem; lack of self awareness; lack of positive role models; lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities; and substance misuse issues. Other barriers cited by more than one youth-serving professional were: lack of transportation; lack of access to basic needs; and disabilities.

Perception of Volunteering

Themes evident in service providers' input included perceptions that most marginalized youth do not see the value in volunteering and that they typically see it in a stereotyped way. For example:

- “They don't see the value of it – learning some skills and networking. For them it's 'I need to get paid, I need to make money' – so they're not getting the underlying benefits and that it can lead to employment.”
- “Many don't have a resume – so the idea that it will help their resume doesn't fit.”

Self-Esteem and Confidence

Service providers frequently mentioned self-esteem, confidence, and identity issues. For example, one said “it's the lack of self-esteem and self confidence...” Commenting on confidence issues, another elaborated as follows: “A lot of the youth are already on this uphill battle. It's harder to go out there and say 'yes I can ...make a difference'.”

Self Awareness

In a similar vein, some spoke about low self-awareness, including lack of awareness of personal interests, aptitudes, and skills. For example:

- “Lack of self-knowledge, not knowing what they want to do.”
- “Few are aware of their inventory of skills.”

Awareness of Volunteer Opportunities

In addition, service providers indicated a perception that many marginalized youth do not know where to look for volunteer opportunities or how to apply for volunteering.

Role Models

Some commented on the lack of positive role models. For example:

- “They tend not to have somebody who's mentoring them along or just hanging out with them and showing them some of the real basic things.”
- “Haven't been exposed to it [volunteering] through their role models. And the requirement through the high school system is only 30 hours over four years.”

Substance Misuse

Some spoke about substance issues in the lives of young people. For some, drug and alcohol misuse is linked to other issues. One service provider commented as follows: “They live fractured lives: mental health issues, drug issues, family issues.”

Other Barriers

Other barriers noted by service providers were lack of transportation, lack of access to basic needs, and disabilities such as ADHD.

4.2.2 Youth Perspectives on Barriers

The barriers to volunteering most frequently cited by youth participants were lack of pay, lack of time, transportation issues, substance use, and lack of awareness about volunteer opportunities.

Lack of Pay

Asked what gets in the way of volunteering, not getting paid was by far the most frequently mentioned. For example:

- “If I’m going to work, I want to get paid.”
- “Cash – not having any. Getting yourself to a sustenance level.”

Lack of Time

The second most frequently mentioned barrier was “lack of time”. A related type of comment was about “timing and availability.”

Transportation Issues

The third most frequently mentioned was lack of transportation.

Substance Use

The fourth most frequently mentioned was substance use. For example:

- “Partying, partying, and more partying! Lots of drinking.”
- “Getting high – that’s my biggest problem. I’ve wanted to work with handicapped people for so long.”

Lack of Awareness of Volunteering Opportunities

And finally, some youth indicated lack of awareness about volunteering opportunities as a barrier:

- “Not being aware of the events/what your options are to volunteer.”
- “Not knowing when there’s a need in your community.”

4.2.3 Comparison of Perspectives on Barriers

Comparing youth and professional perspectives on barriers reveals some common themes. Both identified transportation issues, substance use, and lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities. Furthermore, the two barriers most frequently cited by youth - lack of pay and lack of time - may be regarded as a reflection of the barrier most frequently cited by professionals: the perception of volunteering as not being valuable or desirable. The fact that youth participants

did not focus on the other three barriers frequently cited by professionals is no surprise, as these are issues that tend to be invisible to those who face them: lack of self-esteem and confidence; lack of positive role models; and lack of self awareness.

4.3 Incentives

Considering the multiple barriers and issues that get in the way of volunteering by marginalized youth, it makes sense to look at what kinds of incentives might help. However, there appears to be little pre-existing research evidence on this. According to a literature review by the Centre of Excellence in Youth Engagement, more research is needed to identify factors at both the individual level and at the systems level that will initiate greater youth engagement (Pancer 2001). The *Volunteer Connections* manual recommends that agencies offer young people “tangible rewards, especially references” and suggests that the possibility of connecting with potential employers would be an incentive (Volunteer Canada 2001).

4.3.1 Service Provider Perspectives on Incentives

Analysis of comments of participating youth-serving professionals reveals that the most frequently mentioned volunteer incentives (in order of frequency) were: bus tickets and other material incentives; food; cash incentives; recognition and respect; skill building and mentorship; and potential employment.

Bus Tickets and Other Material Incentives

Bus tickets are both a common incentive and a practical way to enhance accessibility, given that transportation can be a real barrier. Bus tickets and other material or practical incentives such as t-shirts and tuition credits were the most frequently mentioned by service providers (5).

Food

Food was also frequently identified as an incentive (4). One service provider commented: “food seems to be the best incentive with our population.” Another said: “Definitely food. The street community is hungrier now than before, and food is identified by the youth. Stick with food vouchers – so they can pick the food.”

Cash Incentives

Offering some form of cash incentive was also frequently mentioned (4). Comments included the following:

- “Financial assistance is always a pull for the youth.”
- “Some kind of a financial bonus – even a small amount of money – would work with some kids. Because they can’t see the bigger picture – that doing volunteer work will help them get paid work.”

Recognition and Respect

The prospect of gaining community recognition and respect was also frequently mentioned (4). Some comments suggested that this is both a positive incentive and a potentially powerful means of building confidence and a sense of inclusion:

- “The opportunity to gain respect from the community and from their peers for the work they are doing. From my experience working with youth at risk, this is the key. It works to breed the respect they will need in themselves in order to nurture self-confidence and motivation in their future endeavours.
- “Appreciating them and including them... and really making sure that they are supported and hear about other things. That supports them in feeling part of the community.”
- “Positive recognition, a sense of inclusion.”

Skill Building and Mentorship

The other frequently mentioned type of incentive was the opportunity to build skills and experience mentorship. Like recognition and respect, some of the comments on this incentive suggest strategies for successful work experience programs geared to the needs of marginalized youth. Some comments focused on the appeal of hard skills and learning on the job:

- “If there are some concrete skills: at the end of this volunteer piece you will have this skill. If there is a bit of training that goes along with that – e.g. first aid. That focus on the hard skills is probably more attractive than any of the soft skills.”
- “Actual real workplace based training – definitely one on one – with a carpenter, a forklift driver, a librarian. Not about teaching or imparting wisdom, but doing something.”

Other comments focused on mentorship, either as a way of getting established in a volunteer job or as a way of learning hard, practical skills:

- “The big one would be a mentorship – attaching the youth to somebody who can provide the support, direction and information for that initial piece.”
- “Mentoring where you’re learning practical skills. Especially for the guys, they don’t see the value unless they leave with some hard skills...”

Potential Employment

Some service providers mentioned the potential for subsequent employment as an incentive. Comments included the following:

- “‘Volunteer with us and then have a work term’ – a lot of youth need to either get into school or get employment. From a youth point of view it’s got to be more immediate.”
- “Having some sort of a structure that says ‘at the end of this volunteer placement you will have a bursary or a job lead somewhere else’.”

4.3.2 Youth Perspectives on Incentives

Analysis of comments by participating youth reveals that the most frequently mentioned volunteer incentives were: food; work experience; recognition and respect; potential employment; and other material incentives. Additional incentives mentioned by multiple youth are as follows: some type of cash payment: social activities; and a friendly environment.

Food

Providing food was mentioned by the most youth (14). Some comments suggested it was both an incentive and a practical consideration: “provide a meal – or a lunch – to help sustain you while you’re there.” Others linked food offerings such as a pizza day and free coffee to the sense of a fun and positive environment. Some suggested provision of food stamps or vouchers.

Work Experience

Work experience and resume development was the second most frequently mentioned type of incentive (11). Youth commented on how it looks good on a resume, how it is a source of job experience, how it develops transferable skills, and how it can be used as a work reference. For example:

- “Shows that you can actually do that kind of work, without even getting paid.”
- “You have experience. Possibly will need less training, less supervision.”

Recognition and Respect

The opportunity to gain community recognition and respect was the third most frequent type of incentive mentioned by youth participants (10). Their comments suggest a strong desire to overcome their marginalized status, and a sense that volunteering could be a way to receive something they have lacked. For example:

- “To wipe the word ‘delinquent’ off my forehead.”
- “Ceremonies. A certificate. A hug. That we can have a say.”
- “Respect for volunteers. If people feel like they are being valued and part of something that’s recognized.”

Potential Employment

The potential of volunteering leading to paid employment, either indirectly or directly, was also frequently mentioned as an incentive (9). Comments included the following: “exposure to possible employers, an opportunity to make an impression on somebody.”

Bus Tickets and Other Material Incentives

Material incentives such as bus tickets, “free stuff”, t-shirts, and discounts from participating stores were also frequently mentioned (9).

Cash Incentives

“Getting paid” was mentioned by six youth. In some focus groups, the discussion identified the dilemma that being paid would seem to be contradictory with the idea of volunteering.

Social Activities

Three youth mentioned social activities such as volunteer appreciation nights, parties, and social outings as an incentive.

Friendly Environment

Three suggested that providing a youth-friendly environment can be an incentive:

- “Friendly, open, available atmosphere.”
- “There’s gotta be a welcoming environment: an environment where people don’t have their heads up their asses.”
- “It all depends on what the organization’s attitude is like. Some like certain types of people: you’ve got to be white, 25 years old, you’ve got to be the perfect volunteer all of the time.”

4.3.3 Comparison of Perspectives on Incentives

Once again, the analysis reveals several themes common to both youth and service providers: food; cash incentives; recognition and respect; bus tickets and other practical incentives; and potential employment. Interestingly, work experience and resume development was one of the incentives most frequently mentioned by youth, but was only mentioned by one service provider. Other incentives mentioned by multiple youth but not by service providers were social activities and provision of a friendly environment.

4.4 How Volunteering Can Meet the Needs of Youth

4.4.1 Service Provider Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Youth

Service providers suggested that volunteering meets the needs of youth to gain skills; strengthen confidence and self-esteem; develop social connections; increase employment readiness; and explore career options.

Skills

Building skills was one of the most frequently mentioned ways that volunteering could meet the needs of youth (by 5 youth serving professionals). Some comments emphasized the link between skill building and employability. For example, one interviewee said: “Skills enhancement stops that cycle of ‘how do I get a job without experience...’”

Personal Development

Strengthening self-esteem, building confidence, and other forms of personal development was the other most frequently mentioned way (5). Comments included the following:

- “It will give them a greater sense of self-confidence, especially if they’re able to stick with it for awhile.”
- “Would give them some positive experience working with adult role models in the community. Expose them to...positive feedback they don’t always get.”

Social Connections

A related need identified by youth serving professionals was formation of social connections and reduced isolation (4). Early community involvement would help prevent alienation and depression: “I would start volunteering in grade 7 – so they would feel more involved in the community – a lot of them feel very alienated, they don’t feel connected – and that’s why so many are depressed.” Other comments were as follows:

- “Building community if you’re new here.”
- “Connecting them with positive role models. Giving some stability in their lives. Having them connect with others.”
- “Having other people who care about them.”

Employment Readiness

Several identified employment readiness (4). Comments linked volunteering and community engagement with factors that affect ability to get jobs, such as having a network, having experience, and having references:

- “Help you to be networked – and be part of the community and have better chances of getting jobs.”
- “It can give them the experience, develop work skills, a practice area for paid employment...”
- “If you do a great volunteer job, and it’s in an area of interest, you get some great references.”

Exploration of Career Options

Some suggested that volunteering helps youth meet their need to explore potential career options (2):

- “A big one is helping figure out what it is that they really like. We set someone up with a group who worked with animals – but she really hated it – and that’s equally valuable: figuring out what you don’t want to do.”
- “Helps identify some of their strengths and interests – and clarify what educational or employment path they want to pursue.”

4.4.2 Youth Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Youth

What youth said about how volunteering can meet their needs re-emphasized some of what they said about what motivates them to volunteer. The most frequently mentioned ways were: to increase employment readiness; to gain skills; to achieve personal development and fulfillment; to contribute to the community and the environment; to build social connections; and to explore career options.

Employment Readiness

By far the most frequent type of comment in response to this question was to increase employment readiness and employability (25). Analysis of youth comments around this need reveals several main themes: networking, general job skills, and the chance to demonstrate aptitude for paid work.

- “Experience, networking, a positive feeling.”
- “Commitment, skills, dedication: not just the person that checks in and out at the beginning and end of their shift.”

Skills

The second most frequently mentioned way that volunteering could meet youth needs was in building their skills and knowledge (11). Some emphasized people skills. Some suggested a belief that volunteering can be an effective form of training:

- “It’s like taking some training.”
- “I wouldn’t be where I am now without the skills I got through volunteering.”

Personal Development and Fulfillment

The third most frequent category of comments on how volunteering could meet the needs of youth was personal development and fulfillment (10). For example:

- “Feeling accomplishment.”
- “Challenging yourself.”
- “Shifts perspective on what’s happening and the reason it’s happening.”
- “Helps you open your eyes, your perspective.”

Contribution to Community and Environment

Also frequently mentioned was the need to contribute to community, society as a whole, and the environment (6). For example:

- “Makes you feel like you’re giving something to society, to humanity.”
- “A lot of people are highly compassionate and like to give in the world. It feeds that need of compassion.”

Social Connection

The chance to meet the need to connect with others and reduce isolation was frequently mentioned as well (6). Comments included the following:

- “Not falling out and feeling isolated from the community. Teen depression is a huge thing.”
- “To be heard, seen, get out there and know people. We don’t really get acknowledged.”

Explore Career Options

Finally, youth commented on volunteering as a way to meet their need to explore career options (4). One comment could be interpreted as relating to both career and personal development: “it gives you a good understanding of who you want to be and how to get there.”

4.4.3 Comparison of Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Youth

Although there were several common themes in the comments on ways that volunteering can meet youth needs, there were some significant differences. Both groups discussed employment readiness, skill building, personal development, social connection, and career exploration. Whereas employment readiness was clearly the way most frequently identified by youth, service providers mentioned this less frequently. Contribution to the community was a major theme for youth, but just one service provider mentioned this. Analysis of youth comments within the ‘personal development’ category suggests a strong sense that volunteering meets a need to contribute, whereas the service providers’ comments focused on self-esteem and confidence. This apparent difference in views may just reflect two perspectives on the same need: to feel good about oneself through contributing.

4.5 Skill Development

4.5.1 Service Provider Perspectives on Skill Development

Asked about how volunteering could help meet the needs of pre-employment programs, service providers identified two general areas of skill development: employment skills and life skills. The former are widely applicable and transferable from non-profit to business settings.

Analysis of service providers’ comments about the common skill deficits faced by marginalized youth reveals five main areas: literacy and ability with numbers; general employment skills; communication skills; life skills; and ability to focus.

Literacy and Ability with Numbers

Seven comments address literacy and/or ability with numbers as a common skill deficit. For example: “the biggest is not having completed high school – so they’re functioning at lower levels of literacy and numeracy.”

General Employment Skills

Five comments referred to low levels of general employment skills, such as the ability to show up on time, follow directions, and demonstrate responsibility. Some focused on the development of the ability to transfer skills among settings. For example, one commented as follows: “for our clients it’s transferring work skills – using knowledge from one setting in another.”

Communication and People Skills

Four referred to communication and people skills, including the ability to communicate with authority figures. For example: “Communication and listening skills, most notably with those they consider authority figures such as bosses and teachers.”

Life Skills

Two referred to general life skills, such as how to do a phone call, how to meet someone for the first time, and how to manage personal finances.

Ability to Focus

Two commented on the tendency to have a limited ability to stay focussed on a particular task. One cited electronic media saturation as a factor: “It comes from this generation of kids raised on instant images.”

4.5.2 Youth Perspectives on Skill Development

Asked what kind of skills young people can develop through volunteering, many youth focus group and interview participants pointed out that this depends on what kind of volunteer work you are doing. The most commonly cited types of skills they said young people gain through volunteering were general employment skills, people skills, leadership skills, and life skills. Interestingly, service providers identified these skill sets as being generally lacking among marginalized youth.

General Employment Skills

Nineteen youth suggested that volunteering helps build general employment skills, such as team-work, ability to consistently show up on time, and learning what employers want. Comments included the following:

- “Working in teams.”
- “Being organized and responsible.”

Communication and People Skills

Sixteen youth said volunteering helps build communication and people skills. Some commented on customer service skills and ability to work with the public. Others commented on social and interpersonal skills. One simply said: “Learning to get along with others.”

Public Speaking and Leadership Skills

Eight youth commented on a related skill set: public speaking and leadership skills. For example, one said volunteering could develop the ability to “be out there and talk to people in groups.”

Life Skills

Five youth commented on general life skills, such as stress management and time management. One suggested it would help with the skills needed to be resilient in the face of difficult circumstances: “How to deal with life, especially in hard times, when you have a problem.”

4.5.3 Skills Employers Look For

Analysis of comments from employers on what skills they look for in young, entry-level applicants revealed four themes: ability to be punctual and reliable; other general employment skills; communication and interpersonal skills; and computer skills.

Ability to Be Punctual and Reliable

The ability to consistently show up for work, and to do so on time, was the most frequent skill set employers said they look for (10 out of 30 employers). Several comments suggest that applicants’ record of work experience is often used as an indicator of this ability:

- “I look for any work experience, so it’s shown they can show up for work on time and work in a team. Demonstrated that they are reliable and dependable.”
- “Make sure they are on time, punctual. We will check references with past work experience, teachers.”

Others suggested that the ability to stick with a job over an extended period was felt to be important:

- “Loyalty – longevity of job history, why they left jobs.”
- “I hate to see when they have been two months here, two months there.”

Other General Employment Skills

The second most frequently mentioned skill set was general employment skills such as teamwork, ability to multi-task, and organizational skills (6 employers). Comments included the following:

- “Willing to work hard, and be a part of the team. Not become competitive, listen to what the supervisor says – provide suggestions for improvement.”
- “Good judgement, initiative, proven ability to take on responsibility, creativity, the ability to work in a team environment, the ability to work independently, the ability to act on constructive feedback, good organizational skills, good

planning skills. And the potential for those things: we want to be able to coach them.”

One comment suggested that work experience is an effective way for an entry-level person to demonstrate their general employment skills: “We don’t really look at what they have on their resume. We’ve got some of our best young staff from work experience.”

Communication and People Skills

Not surprisingly, communication and interpersonal skills were also among the most frequently mentioned (5 employers). One said they look for: “communication, writing, people, and life skills”.

Customer Service Skills

Several mentioned customer service skills and ability to work with the public (5 employers). Employers indicated they look for experience with customer service. Those in retail emphasize the importance of demonstrated sales and cashier experience. One said: “The #1 most important thing is the ability to work well with members of the public – being courteous, personable, going the extra little bit.”

Computer Skills

Some employers indicated that they look for computer skills and knowledge (4). Some of those in the restaurant business said they look for computer abilities so that employees will be able to work with their Squirrel point of sale systems.

4.5.4 Other Qualities Employers Look For

Other qualities employers said they typically look for in entry-level applicants were: positive attitude; friendliness and assertiveness; enthusiasm; eagerness to learn; work ethic; and appropriate appearance.

Positive Attitude

Positive attitude was one of the most frequently mentioned qualities (9 employers). Several comments suggested that attitude is more important than skills, because it cannot be taught:

- “Attitude. Skills are things I can teach.”
- “As long as I’m confident they’d be good with guests I have no problem training them. Attitude can’t be taught.”

Friendliness

The other most frequently mentioned personal characteristic was friendliness and assertiveness (9). Comments on this included the following:

- “Friendly, compassionate, and outgoing.”
- “A people person.”

Enthusiasm

The third most frequently mentioned personal characteristic was enthusiasm (6). Comments on this included the following:

- “Confidence and enthusiasm without being overboard.”
- “Enthusiasm, people that like dealing with the public.”

Some employers’ comments suggested that they look for indications of enthusiasm regarding their particular business:

- “I look for enthusiasm. It really helps if a person has looked at your website.”
- “Dynamic, enthusiastic people, presentation means a lot, how they approach us, if they speak highly of our products and use our products.”

Willingness to Learn

Willingness and eagerness to learn, a quality that relates to positive attitude, was also frequently mentioned (5). Comments included the following:

- “We look for people who want to learn and are open to trying new things.”
- “Eager to learn.”

Work Ethic

Employers also indicated they look for a strong work ethic (5). Several suggested they expect people to show up early for work. One said they look for “willingness to take on any projects, menial or otherwise, with the same sort of vigour.”

Appearance

Finally, some employers said they look for appropriateness of applicants’ clothing and appearance for the job they are applying for (2).

4.5.5 Characteristics and Skills That Youth Tend to Lack

Analysis of employer comments suggests that several of the characteristics and skills identified above were felt to be missing among typical young, entry-level applicants. The most frequently mentioned were work ethic and appropriate clothing. Employers commented less frequently on confidence, reliability, expectations, attitude, and ability to work without supervision.

Work Ethic

Lack of a work ethic was noted by far the most frequently (7 employers). Their comments included the following:

- “Depending on their work experience, if it’s their first job: their work ethic – it’s not instilled in them yet. “
- “Willingness to work hard to get where you want to be: they’d rather get paid more to work less.”

Some comments suggest that there is often a trade-off between work ethic and friendliness:

- “Ability to buckle down and work would be the biggest one. And outside social conversations – friends coming in.”
- “We find a lot of young applicants are very friendly but sometimes they socialize too much on work time.”

Appropriate Clothing

The second most commonly noted characteristic employers indicated tends to be missing was appropriateness of clothing and appearance to match the specific workplace setting (4). One said that youth are often either “too casual or too dressed up – they have to fit in.”

Confidence

Some employers noted that confidence is often lacking (3). Their comments suggest that this lack has to do with not having work experience and/or not having had experience dealing with adults:

- “Self confidence that comes obviously with experience. If they had had the ability to participate in something...”
- “Maybe just confidence in dealing with people older than themselves.”

Reliability

A few employers noted that commitment, reliability, and dependability are often lacking (3). For example: “The commitment - when you say you’re going to do this, to follow up and do it.”

Other

Some employers noted a lack of realistic expectations (2). For example, one said: “they tend to think they’re going to start off at mid-management – need to be aware of how their expectations match their skills.” Some suggested having a positive and enthusiastic attitude is often lacking (2). Others commented on a lack of ability to work without supervision (2). One said: “employers don’t like to baby sit.”

4.5.6 Comparison of Perspectives on Skills

Interestingly, several of the skills identified by service providers and employers as commonly lacking are some of the very skills that youth suggested they can develop through volunteering. Most notably, general employment skills and people skills are high on all of these lists.

4.6 How Volunteering Can Meet the Needs of Employers

Employers, youth and service providers all said that volunteering helps meet the needs of future employers.

4.6.1 Service Providers' Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Employers

According to service providers, the main benefit of volunteering for future employers is that the youth will have experienced work environments and will have developed skills. Some suggested that it benefits employers as a source of work references, while others suggested that the personal development youth experience also benefits future employers.

Experience and Skill Development

The most frequent type of comments from service providers on how volunteering could be valuable to future employers was as a source of work experience and an opportunity to develop employment skills (8). Some spoke of the value of becoming accustomed to working in the community, demonstrating an ability to successfully take on commitments, and learning to follow directions. Comments included the following:

- “Every piece of volunteer work that somebody does adds to their skills.”
- “You end up with someone with increased work skills and workplace knowledge and probably a more confident worker.”

A Source of References

In addition, some noted that it could be valuable as a source of references. This can be particularly important for youth who are new to the region.

Personal Development

Other service providers suggested that the personal development achieved by young people through volunteering also benefits their future employers:

- “Most importantly you get a more rounded person, somebody who will work out of the box and be flexible, give a little more... I believe people who have volunteered will fit in better with the organization.”
- “A great training ground for ultimate empowerment.”

4.6.2 Youth Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Employers

As with service providers, youth identified work experience and skill development as by far the most significant benefit to future employers. Other frequently mentioned ones were: the opportunity to try out a potential employee; a source of work references; and an opportunity to move beyond the stereotypes of marginalized youth.

Experience and Skill Development

Echoing their previous comments about how volunteering could help meet their needs and develop their skills, many youth commented on how experience with volunteering in the community could benefit their subsequent employers by broadening their base of work experience and strengthening their work-related skills (19). Comments included the following:

- “Shows you’re reliable.”
- “You’ve learned how to communicate.”

Opportunity to Try Out a Potential Employee

The second type of benefit to future employers most frequently mentioned by youth was the opportunity to try out and train a potential employee (9).⁵ For example, one said: “If they see this volunteer is a good worker, they might be able to gain good quality staff.”

Demonstration of Interest and Commitment

Another type of benefit to future employers frequently mentioned by youth was that they would have had the opportunity to demonstrate their interest, commitment, and motivation (7). Comments included the following:

- “Shows they’re genuinely interested. Shows they don’t just want any job.”
- “To know that they’re not motivated strictly by cash: ‘he already has his heart in it.’”

A Source of References

Like service providers, some youth said volunteering would benefit future employers as a source of work references (5)

Opportunity to Move Beyond Stereotypes

Comments from some youth suggested that volunteering would help employers move beyond negative stereotypes of marginalized youth (3). For example, one said volunteering can help “show employers that youth aren’t so bad.”

4.6.3 Employers’ Perspectives

Analysis of comments by employers reveals that they generally recognized volunteer experience as valuable, especially when it was related to their business and/or was sustained over a significant period. Asked whether they think it is helpful for entry-level staff to have had volunteer experience, a large majority of participating employers (24 out of 30) indicated yes. Comments included the following:

⁵ This input from youth suggests that they may perceive work experience placements with businesses to be a type of volunteer placement. As noted in the definitions section of this report, Volunteer Victoria limits the definition of volunteering to the non-profit sector.

- “It is helpful - it’s just as valid as paid work. What you’re looking for is commitment, how much work experience did they get from that. It also shows you what their interests are.”
- “Yes, they have had to commit to get in there, show up be on time, work as a team. A reference - I really want to see some work experience.”
- “Yes. Just the fact that they have been out working with people. It’s not really the workforce but in a way it is.”
- “It shows they’ve coexisted in a work environment in a non-school or social atmosphere – a good basic employment training.”

Some who indicated ‘yes’ qualified that response with comments on how the volunteer work has to be relevant. For example, one said: “Depends on the role: for some it makes an absolute difference - especially a people role. It shows a balanced, well rounded individual. Shows a person is prepared to go the extra mile.”

Just two of the thirty employers indicated uncertainty or ambivalence about whether having volunteered would be helpful. One said: “to an extent: 20% of the time that is helpful.”

Ways Volunteer Experience is Helpful

Some comments reflected the perceived importance of developing a strong work ethic and the belief that volunteering could be helpful in this:

- “Yes. It shows that you are willing to work – you obviously have some work ethic. It’s a sign of someone who is unselfish. Work in teams.”
- “Yes. It gives them an understanding of what hard work is.”

Some employers emphasized that volunteering is helpful in demonstrating a sense of commitment and concern for the community. For example:

- “I think it gives them a sense of commitment...People who have done volunteer work and shown a commitment to that turn out to be very reliable people.”
- “Absolutely, it provides life experience, an opportunity to see different organizations in action, to have received direction from people with different leadership styles. We look for people who have had broad ranges of experience. To us it shows a certain level of personal commitment – to a certain cause, or to the community...”

Some comments referred to the value of volunteering as a form of career exploration:

- “Just to see if it’s a job for me.”
- “They’re not coming in where it’s real life and they’ll be completely blinded. They would have some idea of what they are looking for.”

Value of Volunteer Work on a Resume

Asked what value they place on volunteer work on a resume, a substantial majority of employers indicated that they value it highly (20 out of 30). They spoke of the value in terms of socialization, friendliness, positive attitude, commitment, and sense of community. Comments included the following:

- “I would put as much value on volunteering as paid work.”
- “I think volunteer work is quite a good asset to have. I always give opportunities to people who have done volunteer experience...”
- “When I see a long track record of community work it’s really important – because I see that sense of community.”
- “It shows that you are a team player, and have more confidence.”
- “Almost everyone I’ve hired here has had volunteer or work experience on their resume.”
- “In the under 20 category the entire weighting is based on volunteering. Individuals who are socially active, willing to interact with other persons of like interest. “

Some indicated that they rely on work experience in the absence of a history of paid employment. For example, one employer said that “for many youth it may be their only experience.”

Some employers indicated that demonstrated volunteerism among youth applicants indicates a good fit with their identity as a socially responsible company:

- “We are involved in the community as well. It could be anything, even with children. It shows they’re taking initiative.”
- “Huge value on volunteer work. It is one of our core competencies – service to the community.”

Several other employers suggested they value it moderately (9). One of these said: “it definitely has some value, it’s important to me that people are willing to sacrifice their time.”

Among those employers who suggested that they value it moderately, several pointed out that it depends on the relevance of the volunteer experience to the job the person is applying for. For example:

- “Depends on what they’ve done, but I always put that as one of my top things.”
- “It just depends – if it is something that is work related it is high on our scale. Other volunteer work we don’t look at.”
- “Pretty good if it’s in a related field. Being involved in the community is pretty important.”

Just one employer indicated that they do not value volunteer work, commenting as follows: "I dismiss it."

4.6.4 Comparison of Perspectives on Meeting the Needs of Employers

All three groups (service providers, youth, and employers) indicated a perception that volunteering benefits future employers, particularly as a form of workplace experience and related skill building, an opportunity to try out prospective employees, a source of references, and a demonstration of interest and commitment.

Comments from youth suggested that employers could benefit in two ways not identified by the other stakeholder groups: an opportunity to move beyond negative youth stereotypes, and a source of free labour. Youth comments did not touch on personal development, whereas comments from the other stakeholder groups suggested that becoming a more well-rounded, confident person would benefit their future employers.

Employers indicated three additional ways they would benefit: youth having developed their sense of community involvement, having strengthened their work ethic, and having done more exploration of what types of work they find fulfilling.

4.7 Prospects for Program Development

Youth, service providers and employers all spoke about how volunteer work experience could be a positive complement to youth pre-employment training. This suggests widespread recognition that volunteering can be a valuable type of work experience, building skills that can be used in future employment.

4.7.1 Youth Input on a Development of Volunteer Program

Asked about whether they feel a volunteer placement program would complement existing services and programs, youth consistently indicated 'yes'. They spoke about the value of such a program in terms of work experience, positive recognition, and the opportunity to receive awards. Their positive general comments included the following:

- "Yes – it's a good idea. It's hard to get past being focused on getting a paid position."
- "Yes, for sure. A wide variety of people don't realize they can volunteer."
- "When you look at the big picture volunteering makes a lot of sense."

Several comments indicated that youth participants in local pre-employment programs would be interested in having a volunteering component built in, or at least more information available about volunteering opportunities. For example:

- "It would be really 'rad' if they had a volunteer part of this."

- “Would be really cool if this Centre and the Career Shop had a volunteer list.”
- “If they assembled some sort of package – not just the places you usually think of as volunteer places. Take you around to the various establishments that have signed up.”

Some youth commented on the value in trying out different work situations, and how the process of volunteering would ultimately result in greater job satisfaction. For example, one said: “We would probably get somewhere we’d really like – because we find all the things we can’t stand doing.”⁶

During the informal opening of the focus groups, few youth participants indicated knowing of Volunteer Victoria. Of those who did, one had only accessed it virtually, via the website. During the focus group discussion on a volunteer placement program, one youth indicated difficulty and discomfort in accessing the Volunteer Victoria office: “Volunteer Victoria is difficult to find. I didn’t feel too safe going there.” Another suggested that a volunteer placement program for youth would need to be integrated with existing youth programs and services: “That would be extremely helpful. I’ve never been to Volunteer Victoria.”

Asked whether they felt they could get volunteer jobs, youth generally indicated ‘yes’ or indicated they had never tried. Comments included the following:

- “The Volunteer Victoria website makes it really easy.”
- “Dime a dozen.”

Some noted that certain volunteer jobs were less accessible. For example:

- “When I tried to get into more mainstream volunteering they were really disorganized. They called me nine months later. I mailed them stuff. If there were more organizations that help place volunteers – so you didn’t have to go on a long waiting list...”
- “I had to pay \$70 to get a membership before you could volunteer.”

Comments later in the focus group revealed a sense of frustration with the time line and difficulty of the application process for some volunteer jobs. For example: “There are a lot of places where you are thinking about volunteering – sometimes it takes forever – at the hospital it takes four months.”

Comments from several youth indicated that they would appreciate having more options in where they could volunteer:

- “More places that are good to volunteer at. I got stuck at the WIN store steaming clothes.”
- “If I heard of a single computer-related volunteer job...”
- “If you give the kids something to do that would stimulate them, something they would like to do.”

⁶ Many comments from youth participants in this research suggest that they do not necessarily distinguish between volunteering in the non-profit sector and work experience with businesses.

Several youth commented on the value of a volunteer placement program that would reach out to and assist people who are marginalized due to factors such as addictions and/or being unattached to school, work, or community programs. Such comments included the following:

- “It would really look good for people who have drug addictions: get them out in the community, and see there’s another way. That’s what we want to do.”
- “If you catch people just when they’re dropping out or graduating. Before they are too far gone.”
- “When you’re in grade 11 you don’t really know how much volunteering could help you. To save me from drug addictions and get me in touch with future employers.”

Youth offered suggestions about how peer-based outreach could occur as an element of a youth-focused volunteer program. One commented as follows:

- “Have a person going around to every class in every school. Someone their age showing what they’ve done in the community, someone they would look up to. ‘It helped them and they’re still cool.’ You see those commercials of other people volunteering in the community and you think ‘what a geek’.”

Others suggested that advertising and posters would be helpful:

- “Yeah – totally. If there were more advertisements about it... A lot of people think ‘I don’t want to do that – what am I going to get out of that?’ Some people are just selfish that way. Would be good to make more posters about volunteering.”

Youth identified specific populations of marginalized young people they felt would benefit from a volunteer placement program, including people who are expecting a first child, young parents, older youth facing various problems, youth facing mental health issues, youth with disabilities, and minority groups.

Some youth suggested that there should be information and assistance with volunteer placement offered to people on the waiting list for youth employment programs. Some indicated that a physical space focused on youth volunteering would be valuable.

Youth generally indicated that they felt volunteer placement should be optional. This would fit with the definition of volunteering as a truly voluntary activity. If it is mandated or in any way required, it is more like court-ordered community service and less like something that is driven by internal motivations.

4.7.2 Service Provider Input on Development of a Volunteer Program

Service providers generally indicated enthusiasm about inclusion of volunteering in pre-employment programs. For example, one said: “very good – a terrific idea.” Another said: “I truly believe there needs to be a venue where volunteering becomes more accessible.”

Service providers indicated they see value in adding a volunteering component to their programs as a chance for participants to apply and develop their new knowledge and skills, and to connect with community members who share their interests:

- “It can be a practice for work skills. We have our workshops, and we would like the work experience piece where the knowledge could be practiced, and if that could happen before they go to paid employment. Right now we skip that piece.”
- “Volunteering is something we’re not mandated to do. We see it as a huge piece. We used to use the Volunteer Victoria program a lot – while it was funded. I was really happy to hear about this project.”
- “We’re looking at starting a mentorship program – a chance for people to hook up with people doing whatever they’re interested in. So they’re willing to spend more time discussing their career path. Most of the volunteer coordinators are so stretched – they don’t have a lot of time to nurture or do a lot of relating.”

Asked about how volunteering could help meet the needs of employment programs, one program that had experimented with inclusion of a volunteer placement component reported that it produced significant benefits both for participants and facilitators: “The volunteer portion of the program quickly proved to be extremely valuable to both youth participating in the project and for facilitators.” Volunteering provided participants with the following opportunities:

- To extend skills learned in workshops into the work place, thereby providing them with a venue to practice new skills;
- To establish work experience to be used on their resumes;
- To allow participants to perform what they had learned – statistics say that we remember 20% of what we hear and 90% of what we do;
- To help facilitate self-efficacy;
- To try out a career and obtain information about the field;
- To develop a relationship with an “employer” and obtain an understanding of that relationship;
- To develop skills in teamwork and in independent work strategies.

The service provider further reported that the volunteer component served the needs of program facilitators in several ways:

- To observe participants in the workplace in order to determine strengths and points to grow, how they perform in a team setting and on independent tasks;
- To receive feedback from employers on participants’ work style and behaviours;

- To provide participants with this feedback for positive reinforcement and to determine areas that require attention.”

Among service providers’ comments on how to meet youth needs were several suggestions regarding what should be considered:

- “Each of them is so individual: you would have to speak to them to find out what their values are and what would motivate them.”
- “Make sure that whatever they are providing is doable by the kids – make sure the volunteering appeals to them.

Other suggestions for consideration in development of a youth-focused volunteer program included the following:

- “Have a beginning, middle, and end. Have simple goals. Focus on the kids. Keep it simple (the procedures and bureaucracy). Tie in to literacy and social activities.”
- “What makes the work experience successful is that there is an intermediary... To just liaise and sort of smooth things out.

Some service providers indicated scepticism about the viability of a volunteering program for a population whose basic needs are often not being met, and who may not have motivation to give to the community. For example, one said: “I don’t understand how volunteering fits for young people who lack food, clothing and shelter, and if they are at risk...”

Some indicated concern about having volunteers do work that should be done by paid staff. One said: “Volunteering opens up a lot of opportunity for people to be exploited – a lot of essential services are run by volunteers...”

4.7.3 Employer Input on Development of a Volunteer Program

Asked what they would think of including volunteer work experience in pre-employment training for young people, a large majority of employers indicated enthusiasm. General positive comments included the following:

- “It’s probably a good idea. Working with those volunteer organizations – at least they’ve learned to show up when they say they are going to.”
- “I think it’s very valuable. It really does give somebody real world experience. It does impress on people what work is about.”

Some indicated a neutral or sceptical view of the idea:

- “I work particularly in customer service. As long as it highlights going out and interacting with the public, I’m not offended by it at all.”
- “That’s a tough one. You’re not going to get any volunteer work out of that group. Some maybe – as an option, yeah.”

Some employers said they had experienced success with work experience as a precursor to paid work.

Some emphasized that the volunteer work experience in the non-profit sector should be optional:

- “If you make it mandatory: in some cases people have done hours, but was it meaningful?”
- “If they’re doing it just because they have to that’s not good.”

Mentorship Capacity

Asked about their capacity for mentorship, most employers suggested that some form of mentorship is integrated with their ongoing human resources development practices. Some indicated their organization had formal mentorship procedures:

- “We do some. It goes on – it is instituted within the system, and with very formal feedback on it. There is an expectation that that will be done all the way along.”
- “For the first six months, they’re never left alone. We give them a work buddy.”

Other comments suggested a more informal mentorship model. For example, one said: “each section has a team leader” who functions as a mentor.

Other employers indicated that they have low capacity for mentorship due to being a small enterprise or simply not having it as a priority.

4.7.4 Comparison of Perspectives on Development of a Volunteer Program

The input from these three stakeholder groups on development of a youth-focused volunteer program suggests that it could be a win-win-win. All three confirmed that it would complement existing pre-employment training. Youth participants commented on the value of reaching out to various marginalized populations, and suggested that volunteering should be more actively promoted.

Discussion of a draft of this report among the three stakeholder groups generated the comment that it is important for the non-profits hosting marginalized youth volunteers to be aware of the need for support and mentoring that may be required. The group also noted that work with this population requires a multi-faceted approach. Volunteering can be one element. However, youth in high-risk situations will need to deal with issues such as stabilization of housing and meeting basic needs before extensive volunteering is a viable option. A new volunteer work experience program would focus on marginalized youth who are not high-risk or street-involved.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 What the Research Has Shown

Both the published research and the findings of this study show that volunteer work experience can be a powerful way for youth to develop skills and explore career options (Szymanski 1997, Yates and Youniss 1998, Pancer 2001). While there are a number of pre-employment programs for youth in Greater Victoria, there is a lack of opportunities for supported volunteer work experience for marginalized young people.

The study suggests that youth are motivated to volunteer as a way to contribute to the community and participate in positive change as well as for personal benefits such as increased skills, employability, and personal fulfillment. Their desire to volunteer is impeded by several barriers, however, including transportation issues, substance misuse, and lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities. Incentives that may encourage them include: food and/or grocery store gift certificates; cash or honorarium; recognition and respect; practical incentives such as bus tickets; and the prospect of subsequent employment.

Analysis of input from study participants suggests that volunteering can meet the needs of marginalized youth in several ways. They can build general employment skills, people skills, and life skills. They can become more ready for employment, more confident, more socially connected, and more aware of their work interests and aptitudes. These outcomes also benefit their future employers. In addition, employers may benefit by having a source of work references.

Analysis of employer input shows they look primarily for personal qualities -such as attitude, eagerness to learn, and work ethic - in young entry-level applicants. They also typically look for soft skills, such as people skills and the ability to show up consistently. Few focus on hard skills. Typically, they place a high value on volunteer experience and view it as an indication of youth having developed both their ability to function in a workplace and their sense of community involvement.

One of the most significant findings of this study is that marginalized youth participating in focus groups and interviews consistently support the idea that a volunteer placement program would positively complement existing services. They spoke enthusiastically about the value of supporting young people in finding suitable volunteer work. In addition, many suggested that volunteering should be more strongly promoted to youth, including through advertising and peer presentations in schools.

Employers and service providers also expressed enthusiasm about the idea of a volunteer program for this population. Assisting marginalized youth to engage in volunteering that fits their interests will help pre-employment programs and youth-serving agencies achieve their goals, will help provide employers with well-prepared entry-level workers, and will help the youth find stepping stones toward becoming gainfully employed and recognized as valued members of the community.

5.2 Recommended Next Steps

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend the following actions:

RECOMMENDATION 1: That Volunteer Victoria continue to engage multiple stakeholders in exploring how to move forward and develop a volunteer program based on this report.

RECOMMENDATION 2: That Volunteer Victoria work with suitable funding partners to carry out the necessary program development activities in collaboration with community partners.

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Appendix A: Acknowledgements

Volunteer Victoria initiated this study and developed a proposal in consultation with the funding partner, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). HRSDC provided funding through its Local Labour Market Partnership Program. James Pratt Consulting provided the necessary research and writing services, working in collaboration with Volunteer Victoria and project partners.

Volunteer Victoria is profoundly grateful to the five Project Partner representatives who provided strategic input and practical assistance throughout the project:

- Pat Griffin, Victoria Youth Empowerment Society
- Dawn Schell, Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)
- Bill Taylor, YM-YWCA
- Jim Taylor, Spectrum Job Search
- Jo Zlotnick, WorkLink Employment Society.

Volunteer Victoria also acknowledges the project Reference Group members, who assisted with the research and provided feedback at one or more key stages of the research:

- Bev Anderson, Transition Youth Employment Services
- Murray Anderson, PhD Candidate, University of Victoria
- Cindy Bachop, Centre for Youth and Society, University of Victoria
- Shelley Booth, Centre for Youth and Society, University of Victoria
- Michele Breuer, the PATHWAY project (WorkLink Employment Society)
- Nicole Burgess, Business Victoria (Greater Victoria Economic Development Commission)
- Tara Caines, the PATHWAY project (WorkLink Employment Society)
- Sandra Davis, Victoria High School (School District 61)
- Tim Ewanchuk, LifeCycles Project Society
- Steve Frankel, SJ Willis Alternative School (School District 61)
- Tom Galway, John Howard Society
- Lehanna Green, JobWave
- Jennifer Harrison, Sooke Works Employment Centre
- Rita Harvey, Victoria High School (School District 61)
- Munera Hedger, Spectrum Job Search Centre
- Robin June Hood, Independent Consultant

- Rebecca Hudson Breen, Centre for Youth and Society, University of Victoria
- Rose Hunter, Peninsula Community Services Society
- Dr. Mikael Jansson, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria
- Nicola Ker, Spherion
- Donna Lafranchise, Peninsula Community Services Society
- Josephine MacIntosh, PhD Candidate, University of Victoria
- Dr. Anne Marshall, Faculty of Education, Education Psychology and Leadership Studies, University of Victoria
- Lana Millott, Peninsula Community Services Society
- Erin O'Byrne, Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)
- Alison Peever, Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)
- Tricia Roche, YM-YWCA
- Rosalind Scott, WCG International
- Dr. Blythe Shephard, Faculty of Education, Education Psychology and Leadership Studies, University of Victoria
- Captain Snowdon, YM-YWCA
- Tom Stevens, Western Opportunity Network (School District 62)
- Rod Taylor, YouthSpeaks (Victoria International Development Education Association)
- Kathi Whiting, Boys and Girls Club
- Martha Wood, Destinations (Grant Thornton Job Placements Inc.).

In addition, Volunteer Victoria is deeply grateful to the 86 young people, the 20 youth-serving professionals, and the 30 employers who participated in focus groups or interviews (see Appendix C). Without their time and input, this study would not have been possible.

Appendix B: Data Gathering Tools

Youth-Serving Agency Focus Group/Interview Questions

Project goal: To identify the role that volunteering can play in job acquisition for marginalized youth (aged 16 – 29, with a focus on the 16 – 20 range).

Responses are anonymous. However, we ask permission to have your name and organization listed in the credits.

What is the tendency of marginalized youth to volunteer?

What are some of the common skill deficits they face?

What other factors might be barriers to their engagement in volunteering?

What incentives might help?

What other things might help make volunteering work for them?

What youth pre-employment service gaps exist or are emerging?

How could volunteering help meet the needs of marginalized youth?

How could it help meet the needs of employment programs?

... of employers?

Any other comments?

Many thanks for your input!

Youth Focus Group/Interview Questions

The goal of this research project is to identify the role that volunteering can play in job acquisition for young people (16-29) who face barriers to employment. The purpose of this focus group (or interview) is record your thoughts and opinions about volunteering. Responses are anonymous.

Have you done any volunteer work?
If yes, what were your motivations to volunteer?
If no, why not?

Do you feel able to get volunteer positions?

What kinds of skills could young people in your situation develop through volunteering?

What factors might be barriers to you doing volunteer work?

What incentives might help? *What might make volunteering more appealing to you?*

What other things might help make volunteering work for you? *What could community organizations do to attract youth volunteers?*

How could volunteering help meet your needs?

How do you think volunteering could help meet the needs of your future employers?

Do you have any comments about what's missing in the pre-employment services and programs available for young people?

Do you feel a volunteer placement program would complement existing services and programs?

Any other comments?

Many thanks for your input!

Employer Focus Group/Interview Questions

Project goal: To identify the role that volunteering can play in job acquisition for marginalized youth (aged 16 – 29, with a focus on the 16 – 20 range).

Responses are anonymous. However, we ask permission to have your name and organization listed in the credits.

What skills do you look for in young, entry-level job applicants?

What other qualities do you look for?

What tends to be missing in young, entry-level applicants?

What value do you place on volunteer work in a resume?

As an employer, do you think it is helpful for entry-level staff to have had volunteer experience? *(If yes, how?)*

What would you think of including volunteer work experience as part of pre-employment training for young people?

What is your capacity for mentorship of new employees?

Any other comments?

Many thanks for your input!

Appendix C: Research Participants

The following list summarizes youth participation in focus groups and interviews:

- 5 Alliance Club program participants;
- 11 Career Shop clients;
- 9 Downtown Youth Internship Program participants;
- 10 PATHWAY project participants;
- 16 SJ Willis Alternative School students;
- 11 Springboard to Success participants;
- 10 Western Opportunity Network students;
- 7 Youth Community Entrepreneur Program participants
- 7 YouthSpeaks participants.

The following youth serving professionals provided input through participation in a focus group or interview:

- Bev Anderson, Transition Youth Employment Services
- Sandra Davis, Victoria High School (School District 61)
- Tim Ewanchuk, LifeCycles Project Society
- Steve Frankel, SJ Willis Alternative School (School District 61)
- Pat Griffin, Victoria Youth Empowerment Society
- Jennifer Harrison, Sooke Works Employment Centre
- Munera Hedger, Spectrum Job Search Centre
- Donna Lafranchise, Peninsula Community Services Society
- Lana Millott, Peninsula Community Services Society
- Erin O'Byrne, Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)
- Tricia Roche, YM-YWCA
- Dawn Schell, Career Shop (Work Streams Employment Society)
- Captain Snowdon, YM-YWCA
- Tom Stevens, Western Opportunity Network (School District 62)
- Bill Taylor, YM-YWCA
- Jim Taylor, Spectrum Job Search
- Rod Taylor, YouthSpeaks (Victoria International Development Education Association)
- Kathy Whiting, Boys and Girls Club
- Martha Wood, Destinations (Grant Thornton Job Placements Inc.)
- Jo Zlotnick, WorkLink

The following employers provided input through participation in an interview or focus group:⁷

- Ken Brach, Human Resources Manager, The Bay
- Jeffrey Bridge, Vice President, Business Development, The ARC Group
- Chris Coleman, Manager of Marketing and Promotion, Milestones
- Gaya Cutler, Manager of Staffing and Recruitment, Thrifty Foods
- Ian Davis, Enhanced Voice Solutions Consultant, Sprint Canada
- Alan Dufleit, Restaurant Manager, Chateau Victoria
- Joe Frenette, President, Legend Scaffolding and Integrity Wall Systems
- Lori Hepner, Store Manager, Randy River
- Carole Ireland, Manager of Community Services, Saanich Parks and Recreation
- John Jahangiri, Owner/Manager, White Spot
- Mariana Juras, Owner, Victoria Masonry
- Bev Kent, Human Resources Manager, Home Depot
- Nicola Kerr, Branch Manager, Spherion
- Joan Kotarski, Executive Director, Fairfield Community Association
- Adrian Langereis, Assistant Store Manager, Market on Yates
- Dale Logan, Lift Supervisor, Mount Washington Alpine Resort
- Oressa Meheriuk, Manager, Stitches
- Pat Mellett, Store Manager, Sports Traders
- Michelle Neid, Manager, Tim Hortons
- Brian Orr, General Manager A&B Sound
- Carmen Pedem, Labour Relations Clerk, BC Ferries
- Michael Peters, Pacific Music Marketing
- Ryan Petterson, Owner, Levis Store
- Brad Potentier, Owner, Chocolates by Bernard Callebaut
- Anne Powell, Store Manager, The Body Shop
- Rob Reid, Owner, Front Runners Footwear and New Balance Victoria
- Jennifer Shaw, Personnel Manager, Walmart Canada
- Melissa Wilson, Supervisor of Health, Fitness and Recreation, YM/YWCA

⁷ Two employers chose not to be named in this report: a restaurant manager and a shoe store manager.

Appendix D: Youth Pre-Employment Resource Inventory

Youth Pre-Employment and Work Experience Resources in Greater Victoria: An Inventory

Prepared for Volunteer Victoria
By James Pratt Consulting
(Updated February 2005)

Introduction

This resource inventory has two purposes:

- To inform young people and youth workers about employment and work experience resources available in the region.
- To provide background information for a research project being lead by Volunteer Victoria.

The inventory includes profiles of each of the youth pre-employment and work experience programs in the Greater Victoria area (as of May 2004):

- **Career Shop** (Work Streams Employment Society)⁸
- **CATTS – Construction and Trades to Success** (John Howard Society)
- **Downtown Youth Internship Program** (Spectrum Job Search Centre)
- **Hire-A-Student** (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada)
- **Pathway Project** (WorkLink Employment Society)
- **Springboard to Success** (Peninsula Community Services)
- **YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program** (YM-YWCA)
- **YouthSpeaks** (Victoria International Development Education Association)
- **Youth Community Entrepreneur Program** (LifeCycles)
- **Youth Visions Employment Project** (Sooke Works).

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) is the funding partner for all of these programs, except for the YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program (which is funded by Treasury Board).

These programs typically serve people aged 15-30, and typically are targeted to those who are “at risk” (not in school and facing one or more barriers to employment) and are not eligible for services available for Employment Insurance clients.

⁸ Career Shop will close in March 2005.

Career Shop

848 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1H8
388-3880

www.workstreams.bc.ca

The Career Shop, operated by Work Streams Employment Society, serves youth aged 15-30. Intake is continuous, and services include drop-in job search assistance and resources, career counselling, job clubs, workshops, and a youth internship program.

Specific services include the following:

- Computers for resume and cover letter writing;
- Internet access;
- Career counselling, job postings, help with where to look for jobs, and assistance with interview practice;
- Individual skills enhancement;
- Workshops on job search, goal setting, career exploration, and the local labour market;
- Job fairs;
- Fax, phone, message and photocopy services and coffee;
- Youth internship placements (up to 50% wage subsidy).

CATTS – Construction and Trades to Success

John Howard Society
2675 Bridge Street,
Victoria, BC V8T 4Y4
386-3428

www.johnhoward.bc.ca

CATTS, operated by the John Howard Society, is an innovative wage subsidy program, providing pre-employment training and work experience in construction and related trades. It serves people aged 19-30 who are “at risk” as defined by HRSDC. There are three cycles per year, with up to approximately 18 participants per year. Training includes life skills, job readiness and safety, and job-specific skills. The program also offers the opportunity to explore apprenticeships in a desired trade. Participants receive \$8 per hour during 3-weeks of classroom training. Employers receive \$3 per hour for up to 600 hours.

Training during the 3-week classroom component includes the following:

- Life skills, including conflict resolution, goal setting, time management, money management, self esteem building, and problem solving;
- Job search, including resume writing and interview skills;
- First Aid, WHMIS, health and safety, fall protection;
- Work site visits and observation;
- Job maintenance, including job site behaviour and problem solving.

Downtown Youth Internship Program

Spectrum Job Search Centre
1405 Douglas Street,
Victoria, BC V8W 2G2

381-9074

www.spectrumjobsearch.com

The Downtown Youth Internship Program, operated by Spectrum Job Search Centre, offers 6 weeks of classroom-based job readiness training plus a 12-week internship with an employer. The program serves people aged 15 through 30 with multiple barriers. Intake happens 4 times per year, with up to 10 participants in each cycle (February, April, June, and September). Participants are paid \$8 per hour for both the classroom and work experience time.

The program emphasizes presentation skills and employability training, including:

- Job readiness and attitude assessments;
- Roadblocks to success and dealing with transitions;
- Decision making and goal setting;
- Resumes, cover letters and application forms;
- Vocational/personality work styles;
- Telephone skills, approaching employers, and first impressions;
- Team work skills and communication/assertiveness skills;
- Work experience process and presentation;
- Career planning;
- Labour market information;
- Informational and job interviews (videotaping);
- Budgeting;
- One-to-one weekly counselling and check in;
- SuperHost, Occupational First Aid (level 1), and FoodSafe.

Hire-A-Student

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
(Location to be announced)

363-0344

www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/yi/yep/newprog/summer.shtml

The Hire-A-Student office, operated by HRSDC, provides employment assistance and casual labour referral to youth (including non-students) aged 15-29. Intake is continuous through the summer season (in 2004, open May 3 August 13).

Specific services include the following:

- Job postings, pamphlets and other information resources;
- Help with resumes and cover letters;
- Referral to casual employment (up to 5 days work – e.g., general labour).

the PATHWAY project

WorkLink Employment Society

101-847 Goldstream,

Victoria, BC V9B 2X8

391-1487

www.worklink.bc.ca

The PATHWAY project, operated by WorkLink Employment Society, offers 6 weeks of pre-employment training (30 hours per week) followed by 10 weeks of work experience. It serves people who are “at risk” as defined by HRSDC and are aged 16-30. Intake is 4-5 times per year. Participants are paid \$8 per hour for the classroom time and a wage subsidy of up to 50% for the work experience.

Specific services include the following:

- Training in job search skills;
- Life skills and communication skills;
- Referral to other services;
- First Aid;
- Customer service.

Springboard to Success

Peninsula Community Services

9860 3rd Street,

Sidney, BC V8L 4R2

654-0454

www.peninsulaservices.com

Springboard to Success, operated by Peninsula Community Services, offers 6 weeks of pre-employment training (30 hours per week) followed by 10 weeks of monitored work experience. It serves people who are “at risk” as defined by HRSDC and are aged 15-30. Intake is four times per year. Participants are paid \$8 per hour for the classroom time and a wage subsidy of up to 50% for the work experience.

Specific services include the following:

- Life skills and career exploration (first 3 weeks of classroom time);
- Job search training and assistance, personal presentation and budgeting;
- SuperHost, Squirrel, FoodSafe, Serving it Right, and First Aid (level 1).

YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program

YM-YWCA

880 Courtney Street,
Victoria, BC V8W 1C4

386-7511

www.ymywca.victoria.bc.ca/

The YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program offers 10-month, full time internships with the Federal government in Victoria. The program serves people aged 15 - 30 who are unemployed/underemployed, lack work experience, and are interested in obtaining work and life skills. Between 10 and 17 interns are accepted every year and intake is ongoing.

The federal Treasury Board is the funding partner.

YouthSpeaks

Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA)

407a, 620 View Street,
Victoria, BC V8W 1J6

385-2331

www.videa.ca

YouthSpeaks, operated by VIDEA, is a nine-month program for people aged 18 to 30 who face multiple barriers to employment. Intake is once per year, during the January to March period. YouthSpeaks includes pre-employment training and career counselling, and focuses on work experience through the design and delivery of international development educational programs. Participants are linked with community organizations and schools and develop practical skills in community organizing, group facilitation, project management, leadership, and computers. The program also includes one-to-one work to overcome barriers to employment. Participants receive a stipend of \$8 per hour for 30 hours a week.

Youth Community Entrepreneur Program

LifeCycles

527 Michigan Street,
Victoria BC V8V 1S1

383-5800

www.lifecyclesproject.ca

The Youth Community Entrepreneur Program (YCEP), operated by LifeCycles Project Society, provides customized personal and business skills enhancement, mentorship, personal counselling and support. The program serves up to 10 people per year who are 15-30 years old and face multiple barriers to employment. Intake is in mid-January, and the program runs for 35 weeks. The intent is to help them participate in the emerging labour market, further their education, and initiate sustainable community businesses.

Youth Visions Employment Project

Sooke Works Employment Centre
Unit C – 6625 Sooke Road,
Sooke, BC V0S 1N0

642-3685

www.sookeworks.bc.ca

Youth Visions Employment Project, a pilot project operated by Sooke Works Employment Centre, offers 8 weeks of pre-employment training plus a 12-week internship with an employer. It serves youth aged 15-30 who are “at risk” (with one or more barriers to employment). Future intakes will be subject to renewed program funding. Participants are paid \$8/hour for 30 hours per week.

Specific services include the following:

- 1 day per week of volunteer work experience;
- Communication skills and life skills;
- Employer expectations;
- WHMIS and Occupational First Aid.

Other Pre-Employment Programs

Additional pre-employment programs commonly accessed by young people, but also serving people over 30, include the following:

Destinations (Grant Thornton Job Placements Inc.)

957 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

388-0858

www.destinations.ca

103, 814 Goldstream
Victoria, BC V9B 2X7

478-8332

HardHats (Grant Thornton Job Placements Inc.)

957 Fort Street
Victoria, BC V8V 3K3

388-0858

www.hardhats.ca

Transition Youth Employment Services (T.Y.E.S.)

#3-3690 Shelbourne Street, Victoria, BC V8P 4H2

381-7582

www.tyes.ca

WorkSource (Greater Victoria Economic Development Commission)

Sussex Place - Suite G7, 1001 Douglas Street
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 2C5

384-2432

www.worksource.ca/index.html

Youth Pre-Employment and Work Experience Programs in Greater Victoria: Summary

Program (Agency) Web site	Phone Address	Who Served	Intake	Service Description	Funding Partner
Career Shop⁹ (Work Streams Employment Society) www.workstreams.bc.ca	388-3880 848 Fort St., Victoria, BC V8W 1H8	15-30 years of age, not EI eligible	Ongoing.	Drop-in job search assistance and resources, career counselling, job clubs, workshops, and youth internship.	HRSDC
CATTS – Construction and Trades to Success (John Howard Society) www.johnhoward.bc.ca	386-3428 2675 Bridge St., Victoria, BC V8T 4Y4	19-30 years of age, “at risk” and not EI eligible	3 times per year, total of 18 spaces, (ongoing application).	Work experience in construction and related trades. Employers receive \$3/hour. For 3 weeks training in life skills, job readiness and safety, and job-specific skills, participants receive \$8/hour.	HRSDC
Downtown Youth Internship Program (Spectrum Job Search Centre) www.spectrumjobsearch.com	381-9074 1405 Douglas St., Victoria, BC V8W 2G2	15-30 with multiple barriers	10 spaces, 4 times per year.	6 weeks classroom training plus 12-week internship with employer. Participants receive \$8/hour and employers receive up to 50% wage subsidy.	HRSDC
Hire-A-Student (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada) www.hrsdc.gc.ca	363-0344 (location to be announced)	Aged 15-29 (including non- students)	Summer season.	Job postings, help with resumes and cover letters, and referral to casual employment (up to 5 days work – e.g., general labour).	HRSDC
the PATHWAY project (WorkLink Employment Society) www.worklink.bc.ca	391-1487 101-847 Goldstream, Victoria BC V9B 2X8	Aged 16-30 “at risk” and not EI eligible	10 spaces, 4 times per year.	6 weeks classroom training plus 10-week internship with employer. Participants receive \$8/hour and employers receive up to 50% wage subsidy.	HRSDC
Springboard to Success (Peninsula Community Services) www.peninsulaservices.com	654-0454 9860 3 rd St, Sidney, BC V8L 4R2	Aged 15-30 “at risk” and not EI eligible	10 spaces, 4 times per year.	6 weeks classroom training plus 10 weeks internship with employer. Participants receive \$8/hour, employers receive up to 50% wage subsidy.	HRSDC

⁹ The Career shop will close in March 2005.

YMCA/Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program (YM-YWCA) www.ymywca.victoria.bc.ca/	386-7511 880 Courtney St, Victoria, BC V8W 1C4	Aged 15 – 30, lack work experience	Ongoing. 10-17 spaces per year.	10-month, full time internships with the Federal government in Victoria.	Treasury Board
YouthSpeaks (VIDEA) www.videa.ca	385-2331 407a, 620 View St, Victoria, BC V8W 1J6	Aged 18-30 with multiple barriers to employment	Annually, January – March.	9-months of pre-employment training and career counselling, focusing on work experience through the design and delivery of global education programs. Stipend of \$8/hour for 30 hours a week.	HRSDC
Youth Community Entrepreneur Program (LifeCycles Project Society) www.lifecyclesproject.ca	383-5800 527 Michigan St Victoria BC V8V 1S1	Aged 15-30 with multiple barriers to employment	Annually	Customized personal and business skills enhancement, mentorship, counselling, and support in developing a business.	HRSDC
Youth Visions Employment Project (Sooke Works Employment Centre) www.sookeworks.bc.ca	642-3685 Unit C – 6625 Sooke Road, Sooke, BC V0S 1N0	Aged 15-30 and “at risk”	Every 6 months.	8 weeks pre-employment training, including 1 day per week of volunteering, 12-week internship with employer. Participants receive \$8/hour for 30 hours per week. Employers receive up to 100% wage subsidy.	HRSDC

Additional Social and Health Services for Youth in Greater Victoria

Agency	Phone, Address	Description/website
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	475-1117 230 Bay Street Victoria, BC V9A 3K5	www.bbbsvictoria.com
Boys and Girls Club	384-9133 1240 Yates Street Victoria, BC V8V 3N3	www.bgcvic.org
Child and Youth Mental Health	356-1123 302-2955 Jutland Road Victoria, BC V8T 5J9	Assessment and treatment of children and youth with significant emotional and/or behavioural problems.
Dallas Services – Roots Program	727-3554 304-1095 McKenzie Avenue Victoria, BC V8P 2L5	Mental health and addiction services.
CAFCA (Greater Victoria Child and Family Counselling Association)	595-4423 #5 - 230 Menzies Street Victoria, BC V8V 2G7	www.cafca.ca
Help Line for Children	310-1234	Responds to concerns regarding child abuse and neglect. Also responds to requests for support from family members.
Mary Manning Centre	385-6111 210-1175 Cook Street Victoria, BC V8V 4A1	www.marymanning.com (Operated by Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Society of Greater Victoria.)
Need Crisis Line – Youth Line	386-8255	4:00 PM to 10:00 PM daily. Emotional support for young people who need to talk, and referrals to community services.
Nisika Community Services	383-4821 143 Moss Street Victoria, BC V8V 4W2	Support services for adults and children with developmental disabilities and their caregivers.
Office for Children and Youth	356-0831 4-1019 Wharf Street Victoria, BC V8W 2Y9	Operated by Ministry of Children and Family Development.
Operation Go Home	1-800-668-4663	Pays for youth (16-19) who have left home to travel back to parents or a safe family member.

Pandora Project (youth housing)	380-2663 757 Pandora Street Victoria BC V8W 1N9	Transitional housing for youth (15-19). \$325/month. A diverse community environment. Tenant meetings, biweekly counselling sessions, monthly life skills group.
Project Alive	952-5073	Assessment and referral for young people at high risk of suicide.
Victoria Youth Empowerment Society	383-3514 533 Yates Street Victoria, BC V8W 1K7	Alcohol and drug counselling, outreach, drop-in centre, emergency shelter, detox, youth and family counselling, life skills, ACCESS (alternative school), information, referrals, crisis counselling, and advocacy.
Victoria Native Friendship Centre	384-3211 610 Johnson Street Victoria, BC V8W 1M4	www.vnfc.ca Includes a Two Spirit Drop-In for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth. Tuesdays 5pm-8pm.
Victoria Youth Clinic	388-7841 547 Michigan Street Victoria BC V8V 1F5	Full service medical clinic physical health, mental health, and crisis counselling. Snacks. Minority and queer friendly. Tuesday and Thursday, 3:00 to 7:30 PM.
Young Parents Support Network	384-0552 404-620 View Street Victoria, BC V8W 1J6	Peer advocacy services for young parents. www.coastnet.com/~ypsn
YM-YWCA	386-7511 880 Courtney Street Victoria, BC V8W 1C4	Alcohol and drug counselling, youth outreach, supported independent living, and young moms programs.



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