fostering CHANGE

Community Conversations

Abbotsford | May 25, 2015

vancouver foundation

ABOUT VANCOUVER FOUNDATION

Vancouver Foundation's mission is to build healthy, vibrant, and livable communities across British Columbia. We do this by connecting the generosity of donors with the energy, ideas and time of the community. Although Vancouver Foundation is a broad funder, we focus additional energy and resources on key initiatives that engage young people whose pathways to success are blocked by our existing system of public policies, practices and community connections.

ABOUT FOSTERING CHANGE

Fostering Change is a youth engagement initiative of Vancouver Foundation that seeks to improve policy, practice and community connections for young people transitioning from foster care to adulthood. In British Columbia, far too many young people who have been in government care face significant barriers to connecting with people and opportunities that prepare them for achieving success as adults. We're working in collaboration with a growing set of partners to achieve our goal – that every young person leaving foster care has the opportunities and support needed to thrive as adults.

Fostering Change developed out of our long-standing interest in strategies to address youth homelessness. We figure the best way to end youth homelessness is to prevent it from happening in the first place. Given over 40% of homeless youth are estimated to have been in government care as children, Vancouver Foundation has committed to strengthening the systems available to youth as they navigate their gradual transition into adulthood.

OUR APPROACH

Through Fostering Change, we work to address these issues by influencing four main outcomes:

- A growing public constituency is aware and engaged in issues facing young people in transition from care to adulthood;
- Young people have increased voice and include in planning and decision-making that impacts their lives;
- Community organizations have increased resources, knowledge and connections to better support youth transitioning from care to adulthood;
- We generate research, evaluation and learning that expands knowledge and effectiveness.

We do this by investing money, knowledge and relationships in the creation of community programs, building awareness, growing knowledge, and developing leadership and advocacy efforts that engage youth and communities to generate solutions.

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Public engagement and convening efforts are one of the important ways we work with others to influence these outcomes.

In May and June 2015, we convened more than 350 people to participate in five community conversations across the Lower Mainland with the support of our partners. These conversations were designed to:

- get participants sharing knowledge and networks with each other;
- spark new thinking from local perspectives;
- map local assets and capacities for supporting young people leading up to and following aging out of care; and
- identify trends that would help establish shared interests in new granting, public policy, and youth and community engagement priorities.

We thank our partner organizations for co-hosting this series. The Federation of BC Youth in Care Network, FirstCall BC, McCreary Centre Society, Public Guardian and Trustee and the Office of B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth provided fantastic staff, resources and expertise to the series. We also leaned heavily on the expertise of Amanda Gibbs and Public Assembly for design, facilitation and reporting support and are thankful for their involvement in this work.

At the heart of these Community Conversations, we asked: how can we do better, together? Our conversations were grounded in the belief that in order to influence systemic change, we must create opportunities to surface the wisdom, assets and solutions that already exist in communities where young people are growing up. Young people in and from foster care, people working in community organizations, school districts, government, universities, business owners, faith communities, foster parents, advocates and caring citizens were all among those participating in these conversations.

We hosted one conversation in each of the five community service delivery areas of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. They were designed to increase connection, surface assets or challenges and to ensure that the wisdom of participants would have an opportunity to inform our future public engagement strategy.

We were struck by the willingness of participants to listen deeply, be curious, suspend judgment and be generous with one another. Participants recognized that they need to work together to ensure that young people have better access to knowledge and relationships.

We also made a commitment to listen to feedback and make sure that the information we gathered would be beneficial and accessible to others. This meant that over the course of the five conversations, we made some modifications to our approach. Whether based on the energy in the room, the needs or requests of participants or what we were learning about how best to facilitate the conversation, these adjustments meant that though they all shared much in common, each conversation was a little bit different. Which is kind of like the communities we live in. Which is kind of nice.

As our work continues to grow, we hope that this conversation series showed that how we do things is as important as what we do. We cannot expect the same practices and pathways to lead to better results without expanding the network of people willing to work together.

This summary report offers a snapshot of what we've learned and heard at our Abbotsford Community Conversation. We hope that the information gathered will be used by anyone and any organization who realizes that providing support to all young people on their path to adulthood needs to include youth who've been in government care. We know that this is not an exhaustive description of everyone and everything that is working in communities, nor of what we're missing. It's a starting point for building on the knowledge that exists in communities, to better serve, support and enable healthy transitions to adulthood for young people in our care.

Summary

As part of the Fostering Change Community Conversation series, approximately 60 organizational and community leaders, front–line workers, and engaged volunteers from Abbotsford gathered at The Reach Cultural Centre to share hopes, ideas and experiences for young people in their community.

During the course of the session, participants shared their knowledge of the tools and gaps that exist in community to support young people in and aging out of care. We also asked the group to imagine the opportunities to involve people who may be new to the issues or who are looking for ways to engage as allies with young people and the organizations that support them.

What We Heard

While there were comments and ideas common to all communities, we heard key priorities about the challenges and opportunities in Abbotsford, in particular, and opportunities to both improve coordination and awareness.

LOCAL CONDITIONS / EAST FRASER

There are a number of issues related to this municipality that are significant when looking at supports available to youth aging out of care.

- 66 youth in care will age out in 2015, representing 1.6% of all 18 year olds in the region
- Over the next five years, approximately 275 youth in care will age out in the region, representing 1.5% of all 14-18 year olds currently living in the region
- 47.4% of youth in care in the region completed high school
- 22.7% of youth claimed “Income Assistance: Expected to Work” within six months of aging out of care

DISTANCE/ TRAVEL/ TRANSPORTATION

The distances from home to services to work are challenging for young people to navigate. Transit is sporadic and time consuming. This gave rise to several approaches that emerged through the conversations:

- Abbotsford is innovating with one-stop shops and co-location of health and other services for youth in care, but according to participants there needs to be more. Participants promoted the idea of developing a safe place/one-stop-shop to help facilitate after hours support as well as providing access and learning about all services that are available.
- One of the barriers with most services or resources is getting there. Several participants suggested that a free transportation service would be incredibly valuable to young people. “We have these appointments with these clients, let’s make sure the transportation is covered as well!

BRIDGING BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Participants agreed that while there is a wealth of services and programs, and a good level of collaboration among service providers and partners, there needs to be more facilitation between workers and community members. Advocacy is required. Relationships are needed. With long-lasting relationships comes trust. Trust is critical in feeling like a person can access services or support without fear of persecution/ discrimination.

Participants discussed growing collaboration and co-location as a solution, using existing community tables. They also framed solutions as sharing and creating a common "rolodex" or compendium of available services and programs – perhaps one that was available on the municipal website – as a list that community members could go research, find out about ways that they can contribute, or for youth to access these services.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

There are opportunities to enlist support from Abbotsford's Mayor and Council both to coordinate efforts to raise the profile of challenges faced by youth in care in community. There were also recommendations to get involved in housing policy in terms of providing affordable and supportive housing for young people.

MORE ABORIGINAL–LED & FOCUSED SERVICES AND BETTER COORDINATION

Participants flagged the need for more culturally specific programs for Aboriginal young people as well as improved coordination between all service providers and organizations, whether Aboriginal-led or not.

PUSH FOR LIVING WAGE JOBS FROM LOCAL EMPLOYERS

Businesses could gain public profile by providing living wage jobs to young transitioning from care. Participants suggested contacting large companies and financial institutions: Costco, Home Depot, Starbucks all help youth, as well as credit unions and banks.

THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS

Thank you for your participation in these dialogues. The findings and direction we heard from your community will shape and inform ongoing public and sector–wide work by Vancouver Foundation now and in the months ahead. We hope to continue to involve you in changing the public dialogue and increasing the community networks and support for young people making a transition to adulthood in your region.

We invite you to stay engaged by doing one or more of the following actions:

- **SIGN UP:** stay in touch with our efforts by becoming a supporter of this initiative at www.fosteringchange.ca
- **READ STORIES:** learn about the people, places and programs making a difference in the lives of young people making a transition from foster care to adulthood.
- **SUBMIT STORIES:** help us highlight the amazing work being done to support young adults in your region.
- **SHARE STORIES:** spread the word through your online networks by sharing our video, joining the twitter conversation with #fosteringchangebc and connecting to us on facebook.
- **CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION:** request the raw data from your community conversation, add to the knowledge created, and identify ways to continue engaging new allies in these efforts.
- **CELEBRATE SUCCESS:** remember to celebrate with young people, community members, fellow service providers and others on the path to creating increased opportunities and support for youth leaving foster care

We're excited to continue taking our next steps alongside you, your organization and your community.

Community Mapping

Using an asset mapping tool tailored for these conversations, we've created a snapshot of services, supports, and gaps or barriers. We recognize that these data are not exhaustive, but are instead representative of what we heard from participants during our session. We invite others to use these data, build on them, and improve them.

COMMUNITY

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has resources in place to support the spiritual development of young people, if they seek it.	Churches – easily accessible by youth, wide range of religions. Formal Youth Groups Youth Unlimited – drop–in, weekly meetings Cyrus – Slightly faith based (inclusive), goes past 19 years. Mennonites. VYPER… getting kids connected to have input of resources	Barriers: Challenge if outside Christianity and Sikh. Stigma around certain. LACK OF FUNDING FOR ALL	Who else?: Aboriginal Bands. Try to recruit community members to join Youth Unltd. Temples. More Church outreach generally. Youth Workers
B. The community has resources in place to support the cultural development of young people and to support connections with their cultural heritage.	Abbotsford School District – has Aboriginal focus, settlement volunteers. Fraser Valley Aboriginal Community Services – Youth settlement services, SACRO (South Asian Community). Reach and Library – specific around cultural heritage. Sikh Temples. Youth Buddy Program – schools, + ACS, connecting students, also international program, 3 or 4 people to connect international students (Rose Mann)	Barriers: Lack of specific cultural centres/cultures. Have to go to Vancouver. Physically getting youth there (Transportation). Very few heritage social clubs in Abbotsford	Who else?: Find specific cultural groups

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
C. The community has a process in place to help young people transitioning from foster care to connect with one another and offer peer support.	Churches – foster relationships between peers. Youth Resource Centre ACS – youth workers to help connect youth. Independent Living Workers ACS. All know there is a problem with aging out. Youth resistant to connect with other peers (with a pro–social peer group). Want 1–on–1 support. Babich House – Enter before youth turn 19 and can stay after they age out. Not all youth have a significant relationship with an adult.	Barriers: Once they age out, they just stop being connected – consistency	Independent Living Workers ACS – The City is Missing This.
D. The community provides free or reduced fee access to local Arts and Cultural spaces and events.	Youth Commission – 12–19 Everyday Reach Jam + Jubilee City: Leisure Access Centres – respectful passes. Valley Concert Association – not well accessed. Self–identifying with a disability… more access to reduced fees. Low–income application for leisure activities.	Barriers: Abbotsford spends very little $ on arts and culture. For high risk youth the attachment is with peers and not community.	Who else?: Local businesses to donate.
E. The community has resources in place to help young people access the BC Bus Pass Program.	Discounted bus passes for students – from schools. Income Assistance MCFD – certain occasions FVACFSS gives out bus passes. United Way for specific programs. Triangles – (Employment support branch of Abbotsford Works). Community Services – to help youth access services Ministry for Soc. Dev.	Barriers: Have to be affiliated to receive services. No one who really “gives out” bus passes. Transportation is a huge barrier.	Who else?: Mentorship w police officers etc., Unions to sponsor young people.

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
F. The community supports youth participation in community activities.	Schools Foster Parents. More activities for pre–teens. Youth Health Clinic – yoga. Youth Commission is a free drop–in. YMCA Youth Unlimited does some outreach. Fraser Valley Youth Society, LGBTQ, non–LGBTQ participate as well Major Sports – gap in bringing youth to/in sports	Barriers: Need to change definition of "activity" – doesn't need to be organized. High–risk youth don't feel comfortable, only present if already connected to an agency/organization	Who else?: Associations doing this probably already out there doing this. Giving youth ownership of activities
G. The community has connections to local land–based First Nations or Aboriginal organizations to access culturally relevant programs and experiences.	Aboriginal Education Services – Ab. worker in each school in Dis. 34, make connections to their band office. F.V. Aboriginal CASS – (Aboriginal MCFD), new position of a youth worker trying to connect kids to community (Bailey?). Kilguard Band office. Maple Grove Band office. Matsgui, Sumas. Lot of options and a lot of kids don't want it		
H. The community has resources in place to ensure that the young person is involved in developing their Aboriginal cultural plans of care and has a copy of it.	F.V. Aboriginal FVACFSS. Aboriginal Education Centre – Working students. Métis association	Barrier: Kids' desire to have that	
I. The community has resources in place to help young people access and navigate public transportation.	Individual workers/relationships Group Home workers – foster homes, cyrus centre, autumn house. Youth Unlimited	Barriers: Mandate to help kids in community is barrier. Youth having life skills to be able to plan/schedule ahead. Lacking early intervention. Geography, the trek to get outside the Fraser Valley	Who else?: Taxi companies or youth specific busses (like a handy dart). Orgs offering pro–bono services eg. 5% donated. Youth–Friendly businesses to come in and ask questions about bus routes etc.

EDUCATION

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has an adequate array of services to support young people in graduating from high school.	Bakerview Centre for Learning. The Reach Program. New Beginnings. AVS Abbotsford. Virtual School High School Planning Course. Transitions Youth Worker through S.D. 34. Aboriginal Support Services. ACS Counsellor Services within schools for high risk youth	Sexual health education (STI's, AYHC provides). Kids drop out of school – someone to talk to. Mentoring Relationships	
B. The community has resources to help young people obtain an Adult Dogwood Certificate.	Bakerview – Adult Continuing Education. UFV Continuing Education. New Beginnings. UPP University Preparation Program. Abby S.D. trade YIC, id mentor. Time is a barrier to get ready by 19. Takes time to understand importance of education		
C. The community has a process in place to help young people identify and prepare for admission to post–secondary education.	School Board Office. UFV. Most Post Secondary Institutions High schools – planning, graduation requirements. Social Workers for Youth in Care & youth & family workers. Work BC? Abbotsford Workers		
D. The community has resources to help young people apply to post secondary education.	UFV Social Workers, panning social workers. YRC workers (Youth resource centre) – Individualized based on relationships		
E. The community has resources to help young people apply for financial support, so that they can attend post–secondary institutions, including tuition waivers, YEAF, and foster–care specific grants and bursaries.	MCFD foster parents. FVACFSS. Group homes. Individual support workers – ie., YRC, Cyrus Centre Care teams. UFV hasn't signed up for tuition waivers. FVACFSS = Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children's and Family Services Society		

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
F. The community has resources in place to support young people in graduating from post–secondary education.	YEAF/AYA/Tuition Waivers Funds through FVACFSS UFV Student Services – not necessarily specific to YIC. Relationship Based. Having a mentor makes this more likely	Having a positive support from an adult outside family, like a teacher, Alumni mentorship programs	
G. The community has resources in place to help young people in post–secondary education access year–round housing and other supports.	YEAF/AYA/Tuition Waivers MNBC – 24 mos. of support for – Métis Nation adult learners of BC		
H. The community's schools have resources to support young people in care who are in school.	Part–time jobs, safe places, before and after school. School based youth workers and counsellors. Foster homes, group homes. Re–engagement program. Alternate program. YRC. The Reach – beyond school hours. Big Brother/Sister	Something like boys and girls club for teens. Provide volunteer opportunities. "Grocery Store" of volunteers – Hub → ex. "I have Saturday off…" Peer Volunteers	
I. The community has resources to help young people attain an Individualized Education Plan, if required.	Schools Child & Youth Mental Health Services Culture of pro–bono services – every business		
J. The community has resources in place to help young people obtain their driver's license, and/or attend driver's education.	Bladerunners – learners. Social worker will sign & MCFD pays for lessons. Some foster parents will allow use of car for practice. Cars – MCFD for practice. Driving Schools set aside 5% pro bono		
K. The community has resources in place to educate young people regarding car ownership, including information on auto insurance and financing.	Autumn House/YRC life skills. Abbotsford Youth Health Centre. Case by case with social worker, youth worker, foster parent		
L. The community has adequate resources in place to ensure young people are registered voters.		School classes/programs. foster parents Mentoring for older youth. Lower priority items	

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
M. The community has resources in place to help young people develop financial literacy, for example, developing monthly budgets, monitoring credit scores, doing taxes, etc.	Vibrant Abbotsford. YRC. RBC. TD. Autumn House. Junior Achievement. Foster Parents Education on personal responsibility – who do you have in your life that you're not paid to see		
N. The community has resources in place to support young people in addressing any legal issues the confront.	Autumn House YRC MCFD – lawyers on contract. foster parents. ARJAA – Abbotsford Restorative Justice ACS: Legal Advocacy Program – needs to raise profile		
O. The community has adequate resources in place to prepare young people to communicate effectively, including as self–advocates.	Autumn house. YRC Youth health Centre. Abbotsford Youth Commission. RCYBC		

WELL–BEING

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has a network of providers to provide health and mental health care to young people transitioning from foster care.	AYHC – 12–24 Years Old. Youth Health Club. Local Action Team – Mental Health Collaborative Child + Youth. Mental Health Social Media Basics – FB, Community needs to know		
B. The community has resources in place to ensure free or subsidized dental care for young people transitioning form foster care.	The food bank "You Rock Awards". Clayburn Dental – Free Dental Day. *Request by a citizen to provide subsidized service – childhood trauma. Role of Supportive Adults + Networks – Education		
C. The community has a network of vision providers to serve young people transitioning from foster care.	Services for Kindergarten – Eye See Eye Learn Outreach – go to people		

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
D. The community has resources in place to help young people complete critical health documents, such as health care power of attorney.	AYHC Advocacy Support Worker "talk about kids" – get help – from office or neighbourhood		
E. The community has a process in place to help young people access their medical and vaccination records.	No – And vaccination records stay in their health Authority – no overall records exist if kids have moved in Province		
F. Youth have access to information regarding alternative and holistic medicinal and therapeutic approaches for example Naturopathy and Acupuncture.	Access – Host one stop event monthly = Relationships and Advocacy. Ask our neighbours – ie. dental hygenists? Safe Space		
G. The community has health education resources in place to ensure that young people are well–informed regarding: Coping with stress Nutrition Healthy Relationships Sexual Health and Pregnancy Prevention Fitness First–Aid Health Self–Advocacy	Abbotsford Youth Health Centre. Health Centre School District Integrated into youth prep. "Here's the # to talk" – Personal connection/relationship Network of Youth Hubs. AYS – One number, Division of Family Practice – 6p. one stop. youthspace.ca 211 = Local One Stop Information	Bridges – Youth need one on one support. Need Facilitation – Bridging – (Pockets of this work). Youth want to CHMH call – come to AYHC, IMPACT – TIMELY MANNER – feeling out too scary losing comments – "when they are ready"	
H. The community has resources in place to help young people understand and access the full range of their MSP benefits or non–insured health benefits for First Nations and Inuit peoples.	MCFD. Pre Age Out Youth Health Centre – Aboriginal Liaison. ACS Resource Hut	Barriers: discrimination comfortable	
I. The community has resources in place to assist young people in obtaining basic life skills, including: Grocery shopping Cooking Cleaning Laundry Safety Personal Hygiene	Vibrant Abbotsford provides resources for meal planning + budgeting		

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
J. Young people have access to LGBTQS safe spaces, health resources and non judgmental physical and mental health practitioners.	High schools. YRC. Viper. AYHC. Fraser Valley Youth Society 22 → Safe Space Program – Youth friendly space → Extended more broadly		
K. The community has adequate resources in place to provide young people with healthy recreational and leisure activities.	UFV Students included in tuition. City of Abbotsford proper (limited). Abbotsford Youth Commissions. John Howard drop–in Program w/ barriers to recreation		
L. Young people have access to local substance abuse, detox treatment and post–care follow up and supports.	Abby hospital. IMPACT Addiction Services. Abbotsford Addictions Centre. No Detox Locally	Relationships. Community that give a hand – build relationships beyond referral. Needs to be integrated into youth programming. Need access B. Strong starts have outreach worker – school district/ success by six – resources	
M. The community has resources in place to help young people obtain their birth certificate, and SIN card.	Foster Parents. Informal Adult Mentors. Social Workers – before 19th birthday. YRC. AYHC (free yoga) – also can be under section G. PGT. Sin cards + Birth Certificates	Co–locating + collaborating – virtual and real, Virtual hub where services are Municipal . Website! → People will help if you knew what to do… City website	
N. The community has resources in place to help young people obtain a BC services card.	asabone		
O. The community has resources in place to help young people obtain citizenship/immigration documents.	ISSofBC. ACS. Immigrant Social Workers		
P. The community has a process in place to provide young people documentation that they were in foster care.	Gov. Offices		

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
Q. The community has resources in place to help young people obtain their Indian Status Card or Métis identification card, if appropriate.	Local nations. MNBC. Métis Nation – Abbotsford ACS Aboriginal Liaison Urban Akayil (?) Not Available, Wait List ACS – limited access Relationship Basics Huge GAP to Access Counselling. Not one program can do it all…		
R. Access to free or reduced cost counselling services and trauma informed therapists.	YRC/UFV? Youth Unlimited. TWU Impact – Free Counselling. Women's resource society of the Fraser Valley. "Women's support services" for women (not men). CYAP. Victim Assistance Program.	Private Counsellors. Students – reduced cost informal support. Centralized intake – directory – Comm Services Web Page	

WORK

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has resources in place to help young people open checking and savings accounts with banking institutions/credit unions.	Yes. Royal Bank/ TD Bank. Financial Literacy. Vibrant Abbotsford. YRC. MCFD. Prospera/Vancity (Matched savings programs)	Barriers: Education Intimidation (BIG). Do Youth know about it. Transportation. ID Needed. Criminal Record	Who else could be involved?: Banks – knowledge on needs. Schools
B. The community has resources in place to help young people access income support beyond their job such as income assistance, PWD, AYAs, etc.	Yes. Youth Health Centre. YRC. ACS. MCFD. Fraser Valley ACFSS .Youth Skills. BC Social Workers	Barriers: Lack of personalized services. Access to doctors for PWD. Red Tape! Bureaucratic. Youth need guidance to get there	Who else could be involved?: Service Canada. MSD. Specific Case Workers?
C. The community has resources to enable exploration of work and career options like internships, volunteering, job shadowing, workplace mentoring.	MCFD. Aboriginal Internships. MCC (Mennonite Central Committee). ACS, Abbotsford Workers. Youth Wage Subsidy (Get youth working). Highschools. volunteer programs/ work experience. Career counsellors. UFV. Counsellors. Career Fairs/Job Fairs throughout school. Step to work. Bladerunners	Barriers: Intimidation. Narrow criteria to programs. Incentives/subsidies to support programs. Navigating. Mentoring. Hand holding. Lost: Youth Employment Resource Centre	Who else?: All businesses Internships and youth experiences. Rotary Club. Chamber of Commerce. BIA's
D. The community has resources in place to assist young people in finding and securing meaningful employment including resume preparation and interview skills.	Abbotsford Work (Employment BC). Youth keep working. AYHC. Advocacy Support Worker .Triangle Services. Bladerunners. School District. YRC. Cyrus Centre. Continuing Education Abbotsford	Barriers: Literacy Under 19 vs. Over 19. Need more post–19 programs. Need essential skills programs.Youth centred programs needed – one–on–one, personalized relationships	Who else?: Partnership with Educational Suppliers. Seniors/ Retirees
E. The community has resources in place that allow young people transitioning from foster care to explore different career paths.	UFV. Highschool Careers Programs/ Apprenticeships. Works BC AYA, ACS/YRC, Triangle. Discovery to Apprenticeship?? Essential skills for Aboriginal Futures (New West)	Barriers: Confidence. Interest. Lack of direction. Fees (No more free courses)	

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
F. The community has resources in place to help young people to retain employment.	Need Area (Abbotsford lacking). Sentinel/ACS YRC	Barriers: No Follow–up. Navigating the system. No systemic analysis of where this falls apart ("why?"). Lack of "common sense"? Mental health, substance abuse etc.	Who else?: School Counsellors (Curriculum)/ School District
G. The community has resources in place to help young people access federal and provincial employment training programs.	Need area Abbotsford works Trade specific (STEP Program)	Barriers: Navigating the system. Lack of a plan for services post–19 → Applies to all questions	
H. The community has resources in place to help young people understand and navigate employment insurance, worker's compensation, and worker's rights.	Need area Triangle/Service Canada	Barriers: Guidance/Mentorship required	

HOME

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has an array of supportive housing arrangements for young people transitioning from foster care.	Under 19 – Cyrus Centre, Autumn House, ACS Independent	Barriers: Age. Trust/education. Lack of support for landlords. Affordability/availability. Eligibility	Who else?: Communal living, attenguard (Not specifically youth centred). Landlords/apartment buildings. Partnership w city (Incentives)
B. The community has resources young people transitioning from foster care can access to help locate and secure affordable and stable housing.	ACS	Barriers: Lack of knowledge of what's there	Who else?: Real estate/property management. Home owners. City – Training/awareness. BC Housing Subsidies
C. The community has resources in place to help young people furnish their living space.	Salvation Army. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Thrift Stores. Donations. New Beginnings. Big Brothers. Free Clothing. BC Welcome Wagon. If on Income Assistance, can get moving support	Barriers: Transportation (movers/ moving support)	Who else?: Moving Companies/ Movers. Truck owners. Frog Box

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
D. The community has an organization that advocates for tenant's rights.	Tenancy Board (not local). POVnet (provincial). Individual Support. Nothing local/youth friendly	Barriers: System/Technology Navigation Lack of centralized services	
E. The community has safe and appropriate emergency shelters available for young people transitioning from foster care.	Under 19 – Cyrus Centre Over 19 – Salvation Army (Not Positive/ Appropriate) Fraser Valley Women's Transitions Society	Barriers: Not enough. Not specific/age appropriate	
F. The community has a known network or group of landlords, homeowners, developers and building managers who are willing to rent to young people.	Not any more. ACS in development → sent out weekly list	Barriers: Lack of Education/ Awareness. Risk. Stereotypes	
G. There are youth/young adult–friendly materials and resources available to help new renters understand their role and responsibilities as tenants.	Tenants' Books (tenancy board). ACS, YRC. Vibrant Abbotsford	Barriers: Lack of education/ knowledge re: tenancy laws/ act → regulations, → where to get education. Lack of curriculum in schools. Parenting	
H. Youth/young adults have resources and support to set up and manage utility bills.	Bridges. ACS .AYA, YEAF, Youth going to school	Barriers: Lack of curriculum in school. Not enough life skills/training	
I. Young people have access to knowledge and skill building opportunities about cleaning and caring for their home.	Abbotsford works – how to be a good tenant. workshop (new). Under 19 – Independent living worker. YRC. CYMS. Centre Autumn House. ACS .Sentinel House (Group Home) → all for under 19	Barriers: Lack of curriculum in school Not enough life skills/training	
J. Young people have access to people to help them "make their house a home" and can help them learn how to paint, hang pictures, decorate and organize their space.	Under 19 – ACS	Barriers: Who does this? Resources. Pick battles	
K. Young people have access to knowledge and support to deal with unwanted guests, or conflicts with roommates.	ACS – Bridges. No specific programming but some follow–up under 19 support . Salvation Army – Outreach Workers. MCC. RCMP. Abbotsford Youth Health Centre		Who else?: Landlords. Apt. Managers. Neighbours. Family

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
L. The community has places where one can access new or gently used, low or no cost items for setting up a home, like housewares, linens, furniture.	MCC – need referral? Thrift stores (Salvation Army). Transition Houses. Youth Health Centre . Craigslist. Autumn House		Who else?: Rent to own businesses. Community Stagers (used furniture). Moving companies to help transport. Sleep Country donate mattresses?
M. Community has resources available for emergency food support like food banks, low or no cost food kitchens.	ACS. food bank. Temple. Salvation Army		Who else?: Grocery Stores. Farms. Restaurants
N. Young people have somewhere to "return home to" during school breaks, holidays and in case of emergencies.			Who else?: Residences. Support in developing these relationships. "holiday homestays"

RELATIONSHIPS

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
A. The community has resources in place to help young people understand the importance of permanence and how they might go about achieving permanence.	AYHC. AYC. Abby Dads. Every Church/Church groups. Zoaus Alliance. IMPACT. Youth Pastor at North View, Seven Oaks Alliance. Through school, post secondary. Big Brothers/Big Sisters. YRC. Mentoring. FVYS Fraser Valley Youth Society	Barriers: Funding Ends. Age limits (Agency). Hard to locate Youth. Age of young person. Lack of Family Structure. Mental Illness. Substance use/abuse. Abusive Relationship(s). Leaving Community. Literacy. Special Needs/Disability	
B. The community has resources to ensure the young person is involved in developing their permanency plan and has a copy of it.	FVACFSS. MCFD – Care Team involvement. Autumn House. Youth Resource Centre. Sentinel Foster Homes	Barriers: Scary for Youth. Difficult to understand. Hard to feel fully engaged. Professional friendly – not Youth friendly	
C. The community has resources in place to identify supportive adults and develop healthy, lifelong connections for every young person.	YRC Mentoring BBBS. Ventures (Scouts). Cadets. Church Youth Groups. SACRO (South Asian Community Resource Organization). Only in the case of individual relationships. AYHC	Barriers: Aging out Youth disappear/ hard to find/connect with. Youth not ready	

INDICATORS	ANSWERS (EXISTING SERVICES)	BARRIERS	SERVICE GAPS
D. The community has resources in place to help young people identify sibling and kinship connections.	ROOTS. FVACFSS. Family Finder. MCFD. MCFD. Youth Unlimited	Barriers: lack of early family connect/ support and continues attempts to reintegrate youth and family	
E. The community has resources to support young people's relationships with their biological family.	ROOTS. Family Finder. Foster Homes. Cyrus. YRC. Mentors. Family Mediation. Youth Unlimited. MCFD	Barriers: Time	
F. The community has resources in place for young people who are pregnant and/or parenting.	New Beginnings. Best for Babies. ACS/School District. Youth Unlimited. Peers. Prenatal Classes. George Ferguson Mall Program. Fraser Health/Public Health. Various Churches. Autumn House	Barriers: Stigma Lack of buy in	
G. The community provides opportunities for the development of natural relationships and mentoring.	FVYS. Warm Zone. AYHC. Community needs education on how to mentor. IMPACT. New Beginnings. ACS. Abbotsford Youth Commission. Cyrus Centre. Big Brothers/Sisters. Abby Dads. Previous Foster Parents. Support mentors/ landlords. Schools, Cadets, YRC	Barriers: Interest of young people. Limited People and resources. Sense of secrecy/privacy. Lack of trust	
H. The community has resources in place to support young people in making connections with adults who can act as references for jobs, housing and education.	YRC. Schools. ACS. FVYS. AYC – Youth Counsel. Guidance Cousellors. Youth Keep Working	Barriers: Systemic Barriers. Service Providers have to act as references. Youth Criminal Record. Being a Young Person Stigma, mistrust. "crime free buildings". Inconsistent service providers!	

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS SERIES CO-HOSTS

Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks

FBCYICN is a youth-driven, provincial, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of young people in and from government care in BC, between the ages of 14 and 24. We provide programs and services that help young people come together, get individual support, link with learning opportunities, and unite their voice to create positive change in the system. FBCYICN was created in 1993 by young people in care.

Public Guardian and Trustee

The Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT) mission is to safeguard and uphold the legal and financial interests of children; manage the legal, financial and personal care interests of adults needing assistance in decision making; and administer the estates of deceased and missing persons.

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition is a non-partisan, province-wide coalition of over 90 provincial and regional organizations, engaged communities and hundreds of individuals who come together to mobilize British Columbians in support of strong public policies and the allocation of resources for the benefit of children and youth.

Representative for Children and Youth

The Representative is responsible for supporting children, youth, young adults and their families who need help in dealing with the child- and youth-serving system, for advocating for improvements to the system and for providing oversight of MCFD and other public bodies that deliver services and programs to children and youth.

McCreary Centre Society

The McCreary Centre Society is a non-government not-for-profit committed to improving the health of BC youth through research, education and community based projects. Founded in 1977, the Society sponsors and promotes a wide range of activities and research to identify and address the health needs of young people in the province.

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