

# HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749  
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**Item No. 11.1.6**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**July 7, 2020**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Original Signed by 

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jerry Blackwood, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** June 7, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Youth Engagement Report 2020

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## **ORIGIN**

Motion of Regional Council – April 30, 2019:

MOVED by Councillor Austin, seconded by Councillor Smith:

THAT Halifax Regional Council authorize the Chief Administrative Officer or their designate to:

1. Continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across HRM; and
2. Provide an annual report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee regarding trends issues, best practices and actions taken.

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Charter*, Section 79 (k) recreational programs; (m) ...the expansion of employment opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality; and (d) police services.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council suspends the rules of procedure under Schedule 3, the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee Terms of Reference, of Administrative Order One, the *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order* to accept the annual Youth Engagement update.

## **BACKGROUND**

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) to continue to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax.

In April 2019, staff were directed to provide an annual report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming.

## **DISCUSSION**

The attached Youth Engagement Report outlines current youth activity for the period between April 2019 to March 2020, in relation to youth events and programs in the municipality. Typically, this report would be presented as an information report to Community Planning and Economic Standing Committee. With the ongoing COVID-19 situation, standing committees of Council meetings have been suspended. As a result, this report is being presented to Regional Council.

Current data on youth activity is primarily collected from community centres operated by HRM staff, however, discussions are ongoing with Multi-District Facilities, other partner facilities, HRM departments, and external youth organizations to develop a common process for collecting data from these areas. This annual report (Attachment 1) includes some updates from these areas and additional areas will continue to be added in future reports.

On January 16, 2018, Regional Council approved a two-year pilot project to establish a Youth Advisory Committee for HRM. The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC), through the Executive Standing Committee, will advise Regional Council on municipal matters that impact youth. This annual report provides a brief overview of the committee and YAC will provide an annual report to CPED as they are entering their second operational year.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

## **RISK CONSIDERATION**

There risks associated with this report rate low. To determine this, consideration was given to financial and reputational risks.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Staff engaged youth to complete this report in order to obtain feedback from the youth on the trends and issues presented in the attached report. This was achieved by visiting existing youth programs and events across the municipality.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**ALTERNATIVES**

Regional Council could choose to not suspend the rules of procedure and refer the report back to Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee when meetings resume.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Youth Engagement Report 2020

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Becca Bishop, Community Developer, Parks and Recreation, 902-233-8129

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# Youth Engagement Report

Update for April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

**Prepared by:**

Becca Bishop, Community Developer &  
Lee Moore, Manager, Youth Programs  
Parks & Recreation  
April 2020

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## Purpose

In May 2013, Regional Council directed the Community & Recreation Services (now Parks and Recreation) to engage youth, both in their communities and online, to better understand the current trends and issues of youth across Halifax.

In April 2019, staff were directed to provide an annual information report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming.

The information presented in this report provides an overview of the services and programs offered to youth from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

## Youth Services Plan

The Youth Services Plan (YSP) was created in 2016 after a six-month youth engagement process. The objective of the YSP was to ensure that municipal programs and services were meeting the needs of the youth.

Over the past three years, recreation staff along with teams of youth, worked to implement the goals and objectives of the YSP. A summary of the YSP is provided in Appendix 1.

Work has begun to develop a youth outreach and consultation plan for the second, three-year YSP. The new YSP will focus on a broader range of municipal services, not just Parks and Recreation. In November 2019, an engagement session with multiple Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) business units was held to discuss the Youth Services Plan V2. The purpose of this engagement session was to receive input and feedback on how HRM business units can participate in this Youth Services plan.

# Youth Program Showcase

## Halifax Public Libraries

The Library is committed to serving young adults and delivers services and programs for youth at all fourteen branches and at community sites. Extensive partnerships with community experts and service providers help the Library support youth development and reach diverse teens. Examples of partners include: Family SOS, 902 ManUp, the YMCA Newcomer Centre, Phoenix Youth, Halifax Recreation, Autism Nova Scotia, the Youth Project, Capital Health, CEED's Youth Employability Project, and Restorative Justice. In 2019/2020 Halifax Public Libraries delivered a total of 718 programs for teens ages 12-18, with a total attendance of 15,398.

Libraries provide youth with:

- Welcoming spaces to hang out, connect with others, study, play, create and learn during all open hours.
- Open access to computers, wi-fi, a media studio, a creative studio and other technologies.
- Staff with skill in youth engagement and the ability to connect teens with information and the wider network of community support.
- Supportive adults who build relationships with youth and are often relied upon as allies and mentors for young adults experiencing challenges or in transition.
- Opportunities to give back to the community, develop skills, connect with others, and lead through volunteering. Youth Advisory Group participation, mentoring young readers, planning and hosting events, participating in community conversations, and preparing food for community members are a few examples of contributions young adults are making. Library experience is often a springboard to scholarships, school applications and future employment.
- Diverse resources for recreation and learning – from traditional collections to e-books, streaming movies, technology, board games, musical instruments, video games, art materials and cooking equipment.
- Support for health and wellness including healthy snacks afterschool and free menstrual products
- A wide range of free programs providing opportunities for discussion, hands-on learning, skill development, creativity, self-expression, and social interaction. Highlights include:
  - Weekly Teen Nights at several branches offering a lively variety of activities and social time, drop-in style.
  - Food literacy programs that develop knowledge, cultural appreciation, and practical cooking skills.
  - Media Studio experiences such as jam sessions, a podcasting club, and music recording.
  - Lou Duggan Creative Studio sessions inviting creative hands-on experiences in art, craft and technology – from painting and sewing to robotics and 3D printing.
  - Special events such as the Chopped Cooking Competition, Video Game Tournaments, Youth Drag Show, Yule Ball, African Heritage Month Youth Quiz, and the Prom Dress Giveaway.

## Parks & Recreation

The following section provides highlights of various youth events, programs and activities offered by various departments throughout the municipality.

### Eastern Shore/ Dartmouth

#### ***Sheet Harbour Recreation***

A new open gym program at Duncan MacMillan High School has more than 20 youth participants showing up each evening. Youth are traveling up to 20 minutes to socialize with their peers and participate in active sports and games.

Staff work closely with staff at Duncan MacMillan High School to provide programming at the school. Activities are provided at lunch hour twice a week. The partnership with the High School has demonstrated the importance of Parks & Recreation having a presence in the school, which resulted in an increase in recreation participation outside of school hours.

#### ***North Preston Community Centre***

The North Preston Community Centre (NPCC) offered a wide range of programs and activities for youth in 2019. Beyond the Bell program had 43 youth participating in leisure, arts and sports-based programming. In addition, 12 girls participated in the Active Girls Program, a program designed to engage young girls in sport and healthy eating.

NPCC provided youth with various creative outlets. This included urban, jazz and hip-hop dance classes where youth were encouraged to showcase their talents at community engagements and by creating original music in the centre's sound recording studio.

### Bedford/Hammonds Plains/Sackville/Fall River

#### ***Sackville Sports Stadium***

The Sackville Sports Stadium partnered with Millwood High school in support of the "Leveling the Playing Field" initiative. The goal of the initiative was to build the students' sense of belonging to the larger community and others. Throughout the program, students participated in several activities such as spin classes, yoga, skating, swimming, floor hockey and cooking. The program ran for six weeks and had an average of 16-20 youth each week.



#### ***Gordon Snow Community Centre***

On Saturday, February 1st, 2020 the Gordon R. Snow Community Centre hosted a Winter Fest and Youth Art Show. Youth were encouraged to submit art for display and all mediums were welcome. Youth volunteers and staff led the afternoon activities which included a scavenger hunt, snowshoeing, relay races, indoor games and winter crafts.

### Peninsula Halifax

### ***Needham Community Centre***

Youth Leaders from the Youth Leadership program assisted with the annual North Lights Lantern Festival. The youth prepared 500+ jars with handles for children to do a lantern walk at the event in August of 2019. The day of the event the same Youth Leaders helped with set up and volunteered at various stations at the event.

### ***Emera Oval***

The Emera Oval continues to see an increase in youth participation year-round with winter programming being the most active. Over 5,700 students participated with their schools over the winter season, many youth are also attending public skates with friends and family on evenings and weekends. This season there was an increase in the number of youth attending public skates on their lunch breaks and during their free time.

### **Mainland North and Mainland South**

Youth Leadership Program participants from Chocolate Lake, St. Andrew's, and Lakeside Community Centre supported Feed Nova Scotia (FNS) by volunteering their time transporting and organizing food at the FNS Dartmouth warehouse. Food was collected throughout the summer in a variety of ways, including a very successful car wash operated by the youth.

### **Regional Inclusion and Aquatics**

Adapted aquatics programming is offered in three locations; the Captain William Spry Community Centre, the Sackville Sports Stadium, and Needham Centre. The program is for children ages 5-15 years. Participants have a varying degree of disabilities or require extra support in a pool environment.

This past summer 52 inclusion specialists were hired to work with over 200 youth throughout HRM in a wide variety of summer camps.

To reduce the barriers for youth to gain meaningful employment free swim Instructor and lifeguarding courses were offered for youth 15-17 years of age. Participants who completed the leadership courses were then offered employment at the HRM operated aquatic facilities and beaches.

## Civic Events – Hopscotch Festival

Hopscotch's vision is to unite, energize, support and celebrate the Municipality's diverse music and youth community, and find innovative ways of working together towards common goals.

This year, Hopscotch was sold out two weeks in advance. The main event had 1600 people under the age of 25 in Rogers Square. There was a major boost in youth aged 14-25 in 2019 on social media. There were hundreds of new followers after the re-focus on the headline artist to "YBN CORDAE". The plan is to continue to highlight brand new artists that are young and relevant to continue this momentum. YBN, since performing at Hopscotch, went on to receive two Grammy nominees and was in one of this year's Super Bowl commercials!

The day before the main event, there were free events and dance workshops in Rogers Square and on Saturday there was a free dance battle. These events brought in an additional 2000 youth throughout the two days. Hopscotch remains the largest festival in HRM dedicated to Hip Hop with a focus on high school and university students.



## Youth Leadership Program Summit

The goal of this summit was to create an opportunity for youth from different recreation centres to come together and connect. The event exposed youth to opportunities in work, education and volunteering outside of the Youth Leadership Program offered by HRM Parks & Recreation

### Highlights:

- Keynote Speakers – Travis Price – Creator of Pink Shirt Day
- Keynote Speaker – Quentrel Provo – Founder/CEO of Stop the Violence and Award-winning Activist "World's Top 100 Most Influential People of African Descent Under 40"
- Wellness breaks including basketball, capture the flag, art and mindfulness sessions
- Career fair and education fair



## Y.E.S. Camp

Y.E.S (Youth Engagement Strategy) Camp is a 3-day/2-night off-site camp for youth who enrolled in Parks & Recreation's Summer Youth Leadership Program.

The camp has a variety of components that foster the social, experiential and community development of the youth through activities and workshops. They partake in team building activities, social interactions and creating community action plans to enact in their own home community.

### **YES Camp 2019:**

44 youth (ages 14-15)

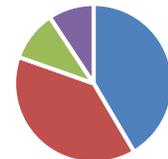
14 Staff (Ages 19-24)

3016 youth hours (52 hours of camp X 58 Youth)

## Teens Now Talk Expo

Teens Now Talk Expo gives youth the opportunity to network with key individuals, businesses, organizations and post-secondary institutions who will assist in their personal, social, educational and career development and success. This year approximately 4000 youth attended the expo. To better understand how to connect with youth for the upcoming second Youth Services Plan, the Community Developer for youth surveyed 1000 participants asking the following question: *What are the two best ways to connect with you?*

### Perfered method of engagement



■ Snapchat ■ Instagram  
■ School ■ Other

## Halifax Regional Police Youth Program

The Halifax Regional Police Youth Program (HRPYP) is for youth aged 14-18 who are interested in learning about civic engagement, leadership and voluntary service to the community within a policing environment. Along with regular meetings in a structured learning atmosphere, the group often participates in a variety of activities and events throughout the year, which can be educational, community-service related or recreational. Some examples are participating in parades (Natal Day, Pride, Parade of Lights) or ceremonies (tree-lighting); staffing lost child booths; acting as "Blue", the HRP mascot; completing Child Identification Records with fingerprinting; cleaning up neighbourhoods and doing summer bicycle patrols. The HRPYP builds positive relationships and bridges the gap between youth and the police. In 2019, 25 youth participated in the program.



## RCMP Stetsons & Spurs

RCMP Stetson & Spurs program is for youth grade 8-12. The program gives youth the opportunity to be exposed to different aspects of police work, provide service to their community, attend community events, participate in volunteer opportunities as well as crime prevention initiatives. In 2019, 19 youth participated in the program.

Each week the program covers a topic based on an area of policing. Topics explored included, touring the Airport with Canada Border Services, presentations from Emergency Health Services, as well as education on impaired driving and healthy relationships. Youth also had the opportunity to visit police headquarters to tour specialized units (Forensic Identification Unit, Explosive Device Unit, Emergency Response Team, Underwater Recovery Unit).

## HalifACT 2050 – Energy & Environment

HalifACT 2050: Acting on Climate Together is the municipality's long-term climate action plan to reduce emissions and help communities adapt to a changing climate. Youth were identified as one of the key stakeholders for engagement. Efforts to specifically engage with youth included a presentation to the Youth Advisory Committee in September 2019, the Teens Talk Now Youth Expo in November 2019, and outreach on social media platforms through the engagement period of HalifACT 2050.

Energy & Environment staff presented to the Youth Advisory Committee with respect to HalifACT 2050. Highlights of this presentation included; an overview of the public engagement strategy, descriptions of the climate emergency declarations (municipal and otherwise), an overview of municipal operations and their contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, Canadian cities and their commitment to emissions reductions, and an overview of the HalifACT 2050 strategy. The Youth Advisory Committee discussed effective youth outreach using social media platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat to reach younger demographics as well as consideration of visiting local schools to have a larger impact.

Energy & Environment staff attended the 9th Annual Passport 2 Youth Success XPO held at the Halifax Forum in November 2019. The event is organized by a not-for-profit organization called Teens Talk Now and is geared towards bringing together youth and connecting them with industry professionals. At this event, youth shared their questions and concerns with respect to climate change and discussed how they see themselves playing a role in our climate action plan. During this event students were asked to write down one or more hashtags they think would be helpful for the HalifACT social media campaign. The following are some of the hashtags mentioned by the youth:



- #FlipTheSwitch
- #SaveOurFuture
- #KeptItClean
- #ActForEarth
- #HalifACTForTheEarth
- #OldWorldNewMinds

Youth had a general awareness of climate change as a problem that needs urgent attention by the whole community and are concerned that their future is at stake.

## Sackville Special Election

To engage youth in the 2019 Special Election the Elections Coordinator held pop-ups at various locations in Sackville, including Cape and Cowl Comic Book Shop, Apartment 3 Coffee Shop, the Sackville Public Library and the Sackville Sports Stadium. The Elections Coordinator also attended community events where youth naturally convened such as a community high school football games and a public outdoor movie night.

To raise awareness about the special election and municipal government more broadly, the Elections Coordinator presented at the junior high schools in the area to grade 9 classes.

These events and activities were chosen so the Clerks Office could engage with youth at a grassroots level. This included youth who were not old enough to vote yet, as there is value in educating minors to inform their future practices.

## Youth Advisory Committee

[www.halifax.ca/yac](http://www.halifax.ca/yac)

The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) was appointed by Regional Council on February 12, 2019 and held its first meeting on March 21, 2019.



### 2019 Highlights:

- YAC presented to Regional Council on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019
- YAC hosted a Youth Summit in the spring of 2019, this will become an annual engagement event
- YAC representatives helped to facilitate a discussion on youth issues, at the Parks and Recreation Youth Engagement Strategy (Y.E.S) camp for youth volunteers
- Two YAC representatives were sent to the 2019 Mawita'jik Conference
- YAC members attended the HRM Youth Engagement Session for staff to voice opinion on the creation of the next Youth Services Plan

In Fall 2019 an evaluation of the Youth Advisory Committee.

### Evaluation findings:

- 90% of participants felt that the committee was representative of youth from different regions and demographics.
- 80% of participants felt that the recruitment and interview process was inclusive and accessible
- 75% of participants felt that the meeting location and time of meeting proved to be convenient for most members
- 75% of participants felt that the format and structure of the committee allowed for open and informal discussion while also keeping the formal environment of a standing committee
- 95% of participants felt an overall increase in knowledge of the municipality and feel confident putting motions forward to council in 2020



## **Public Safety Strategy – Youth Action Items**

Twenty-nine actions in the Public Safety Strategy directly or indirectly, target youth. Currently, twenty-eight actions are being implemented with Parks and Recreation leading implementation through longstanding, evidence-based programs, such as the Youth Advocate and Youth Live Programs. There are new innovative approaches to engage and connect with youth, such as the Youth Advisory Council and the Multi-Service Youth Centre (The Den). Programs run across the spectrum of prevention from developmental (which encompasses the general population) to indicated (which targets youth who are at risk for involvement with the criminal justice system, either as victims and/or offenders).

## **Multidistrict Facilities**

HRM has a number of recreation and community facilities which are run by volunteer boards. Youth programming is offered in many of those partner run facilities. This report highlights a youth program from the Zatzman Sportsplex:

### **Zatzman Sportsplex ‘TEEN TAKEOVER’**

Designed to help teens (ages 12-17) unwind from a busy week, get active, and hang out with their friends, the weekly Teen Takeover is a free event held weekly at the Zatzman Sportsplex. This is a fun, safe, and inclusive free event that takes place every Friday night from 7pm - 10 p.m. with no membership required. Youth can swim, play sports in the gymnasium, workout in the fitness centre (16+) including the boxing area. During this time, the youth also have access to Wi-Fi, and they can socialize, play boardgames, and participate in other activities run and supervised by our staff.

From April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020 there was an average of 250 youth showing up to each Teen Takeover event.

## Youth Section Updates

The Youth Section was created in 2016 to create more coordination of Parks & Recreation major youth programs and projects.

### Community Developer for Youth Update

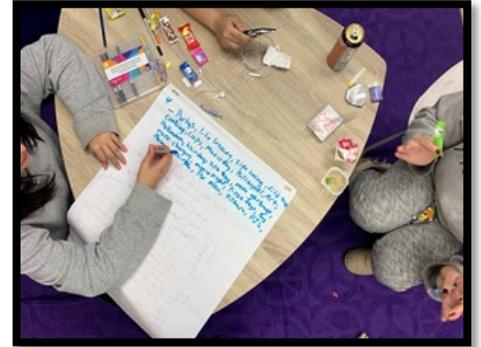
[www.halifax.ca/youth](http://www.halifax.ca/youth)

#### **Project updates:**

#### ***Friendly Faces Friendly Spaces Training***

Friendly Faces Friendly Spaces training was identified in the Youth Services Plan (*Goal 3.1; To design physical spaces that are open and welcoming for youth*) Staff training was identified as a priority for development.

The Community Developer for Youth lead a working group consisting of the Manager of Zatzman Sportsplex, a representative from the Halifax Public Libraries, as well as a cross section of Parks and Recreation staff. This group was responsible for the engagement of youth, which informed the design of the workshop. The interactive workshop provided practical skills on how to create youth friendly cultures and climates, within recreation facilities.



#### **As of February 2020:**

- 105 Parks and Recreation staff have been trained.
- 5 Community Recreation Coordinators have been trained as workshop facilitators
- 2 Aquatic Specialists have been trained as workshop facilitators
- 90 Aquatics staff are expected to be trained in 2020

### Youth Advocate Program

[www.halifax.ca/yap](http://www.halifax.ca/yap)

The Youth Advocate Program (YAP) helps prevent youth aged 9-15 from engaging in anti-social and criminal behaviors.

#### **Highlights:**

- 52 Youth participated in the YAP from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020
- 16 youth participated in an overnight camping experience. The camping experience took place at Falls Lake campground in Windsor, Nova Scotia. Youth had the opportunity to swim in the lake, paddle boat, canoe and kayak. Youth also were able to experience the woods through guided hikes.

## Youth Live Program

[www.halifax.ca/youthlive](http://www.halifax.ca/youthlive)

Facebook: @hfxyouthlive

The Youth Live Program is a supportive work environment that offers up to 21 weeks of work place mentoring, as well as life and job skill development for youth between the ages of 16 to 24 years, who are not in school and who are facing employment barriers. 20 youth graduated the program between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020.



### Where are the youth from?



Halifax: 45%  
Dartmouth: 40%  
Sackville: 10%  
Other Areas: 5%

### Barriers to Employment



Lack of Job Experience: 99%  
Mental Health: 70%  
Learning Disability: 50%  
Addiction History: 20%  
Did not graduate high school: 50%  
Minority: 30%  
Has Children: 10%

\*Data obtained through the intake process

### % youth who left Youth Live with increased employability skills



### Resiliency

64% of participants left the program with increased resilience, self-esteem and future aspirations.

## Adventure Earth Centre

[www.halifax.ca/aec](http://www.halifax.ca/aec)  
Facebook: @hfxaec

The Adventure Earth Centre (AEC) provides opportunities for people of all ages to connect with the natural world, to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle outdoors, to develop personal and leadership skills, to give back to the community, and to connect with other like-minded people.

With locations in Sir Sandford Fleming Park and Shubie Park, the Adventure Earth Centre has been offering outdoor recreation and earth education programs for over thirty-five years.

### ***Program Updates:***

#### **H.E.A.T Youth Action Team (Helping the Earth by Acting Together)**

The Adventure Earth Centre (AEC) offers opportunities through its H.E.A.T Youth Action Team Program for leadership development and experience, environmental action, community service, skill development, and connecting with other youth at social events. During the holiday season, a group of youth went out “caroling for cans” and donated 17 kg of food they collected to Feed Nova Scotia. This team has had an amazing, active and successful year; during the Spring, Summer and Fall 2019, with 32 youth participating in each of the three overnight camps held at Camp Mockingee. They then kicked off the new year volunteering in the warehouse in early January 2020!



#### **Program planning with staff and past program participants**

On February 9, 2020, youth leaders and staff created vision boards and shared ideas to help ensure the high quality (and magic!) of the programs offered by the AEC are maintained for the upcoming summer season. There were 20 youth leaders who were inspired by past participants who spoke about the impact the AEC had on them as youth. The guest panel consisted of two Doctors, an entrepreneur, Parks Canada Staff and Hope for Wildlife – All of whom are still working to help planet, wildlife and connecting with nature.



## Youth Section Marketing Projects

The Youth Live Program and the Youth Advocate Program developed special recruitment videos to directly target at-risk youth.

### What's your story? – Youth Live Recruitment Video

Youth Live Program officially launched its new recruitment video in May 2019. The lyrics of the video were created by a past program participant, Maje, and one of Youth Live's staff, Shawn Marriott. This video has a positive message to youth letting them know how the program can help them. Each youth has a story and this video invites the youth to make Youth Live a part of their story.

A special thank you to our actors, Haillie, John, Tyrel, James and a special guest star Mayor Mike Savage.

The new video can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/7UuOGXrfweY>



### Youth Advocate Recruitment Video

The Youth Advocate program, with the creative direction from Terrence Taylor of Terrence Taylor Media (TTM) created two new videos to reflect and capture the selflessness of the Youth Advocate Workers and the vibrancy of our youth and communities we serve.

The new video can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/zSrHyJgckbU>



## Power House Youth Centre

1606 Bell Road, Halifax

[www.halifax.ca/powerhouse](http://www.halifax.ca/powerhouse)

The Power House Youth Centre serves as a place for youth to gather, learn, and connect with others. It is also a meeting place for Halifax Regional Council's Youth Advisory Committee.

Programming started in June 2019, where staff engaged youth at local schools to gain feedback on what type of programming should be offered. The feedback from the youth identified arts & crafts, performances & karaoke, leadership skill development, first aid, mental health first aid and employment readiness (resume, job search and interview prep) as high priority areas of interest. Youth also identified that they wanted an unstructured drop-in space to hang out with friends.



The most successful programs offered to date were; free First Aid training, Dungeons & Dragons Night and a learn to play guitar sessions.

The programming at the Power House supports the Youth Services Plan Goal 4.2: To diversify our selection of "non-standard" art programs.



### Youth Feedback

"The Power House allows me to explore my passions and the environment fosters creativity" - Youth Participant, 19

"The Power House gives me an opportunity to explore mediums I wouldn't be able to otherwise try" - Youth Participant, 19



Free First Aid Training at the Power House

## Multiservice Youth Centre - The Den

*Acadia Centre, 636 Sackville Drive, Lower Sackville*

[www.halifax.ca/TheDen](http://www.halifax.ca/TheDen)

On March 6, 2018, the Multi Service Youth Centre (MSYC) was approved by Regional Council in Sackville as a pilot project. The MSYC, named “The Den” by the youth, opened on December 3, 2018. The Den is a safe and inclusive space for youth ages 13-24 years old in the Bedford, Lower Sackville community.

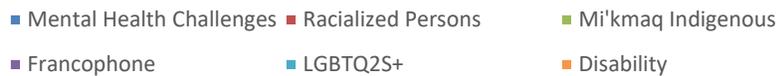
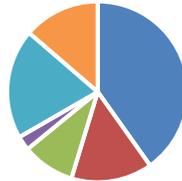
### Youth Feedback

“I like coming to The Den because the staff are supportive, I can be myself, laugh and have fun” – Youth Participant



To date, 188 individual youth were regular participants at the centre, with an average drop in rate per day of 35. During the in-take process youth were given the option to self identify in various categories. The following information about the youth was identified:

### Self-Identified Youth



During the pilot period, the Den received tremendous community support. A special thank you to the following community organizations for their involvement with this centre: Laing House, Freedom Kitchen Food Truck, Community Outreach Meal Exchange, Knox Church, St. John the Anglican Church, Sackville Warm & Cozy Quilters, Sackville Subway, Kinsmen Club, Beacon House Food Bank, Sackville Square Roots, Sports Wheels, Sackville Public Library, and many individual community members.

## Conclusion & Next Steps

This report highlighted several youth programs and events that have taken place within the municipality. The feedback received from the youth at engagement events and programs was very positive. This shows the positive impact that the municipality is having on the youth in HRM.

### Next Steps:

1. Continue to provide an annual information report to the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED) regarding trends, issues, best practices, and actions taken with respect to youth programming.
2. Begin to work on the second version of the Youth Services Plan, engaging multiple business units and youth during its creation.
3. Complete assessment of the “The Den” pilot project and return to Regional Council for direction on the continuation of the program.
4. Review the data collection process that informs this report and implement changes to make reporting more consistent across business units and within Parks and Recreation.

# APPENDIX 1: Youth Services Plan Summary

## By the Youth, for the Youth

This plan was created in 2016. A team of youth supported by staff engaged over 1400 youth through online surveys, workshops and events. This plan was created by the youth, for the youth.

## Vision Statement

The Municipality's Youth Services provides an open & diverse environment that is accessible to all youth. We support mental & physical wellbeing while promoting unity, friendship, and most importantly happiness.

## Mission Statement

We enrich the quality of life for all and strengthen communities by providing fun, accessible, friendly, and inclusive youth services.

## Core Values

Core values are the foundation for all the municipality's youth services. They are the rule of engagement to make the mission and vision come true.

The Youth Services core values are:

- Support
- Happiness
- Inclusivity
- Friendship
- Opportunity for all

## Youth Services Plan Strategic Visions

The Youth Services Plan has five strategic visions. Following are highlights examples of goals that were achieved for each of the visions over the past 3 years:

Strategic vision 1:	Our services positively impact the mental health and physical well being of youth
Strategic vision 2:	All youth are able to access our services
Strategic vision 3:	The municipality offers friendly and welcoming environments for youth
Strategic vision 4:	Services are diverse and geared towards youth interests
Strategic vision 5:	All youth are aware of the services offered by the municipality