



City of Maple Ridge News Release

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Maple Ridge Youth Strategy Acknowledges “It Takes a Village”

Maple Ridge, BC: At this Monday’s Council Workshop meeting, Council unanimously endorsed the Maple Ridge Youth Strategy acknowledging that it does “Take a Village” to ensure the youth of Maple Ridge are provided with the best environment in which to grow and thrive in.

The Youth Strategy is a community-owned plan, created with the ideas and input from local youth, emerging adults, parents, caregivers, and service providers. Making Maple Ridge a place where youth can thrive is a shared responsibility of our whole community. Developing the Youth Strategy is the first step on this journey and the actions of many partners will be needed. Together, we can create an even stronger network to support, engage, and empower the younger members of our society

The “Circle of Courage” philosophy has been used to guide the development of the Youth Strategy, the Youth Development Wheel and the engagement process. This model, developed by the Reclaiming Youth Network, integrates First Nations philosophy to identify the following four universal growth needs of youth:

1. **Belonging** – a sense of being part of a community and feeling connected to others.
2. **Generosity** – the virtue of helping others and making positive contributions to the world.
3. **Mastery** – striving for personal growth; a sense of competence and the ability to overcome challenges.
4. **Independence** – the ability to make decisions, solve problems and show personal responsibility.

The Youth Strategy provided a number of key recommendations to enhance support for youth and emerging adults, improve working partnerships between youth, caregivers and service providers and create pathways to ensure that youth are seen as partners in their own future.

These recommendations have been organized into four major theme areas. While there is some overlap, each theme area generally aligns with one of the four components of the “Circle of Courage”:

1. Inclusive Community Spaces & Activities (**Belonging**)
2. Community Engagement (**Generosity**)
3. Wellness & Mental Health (**Mastery**)
4. Transitioning to Adulthood (**Independence**)

From the recommendations, staff will prepare a report for Council outlining a multi-year implementation plan which will require continued communication, collaboration and action by many partners. The City’s roles in implementing the recommendations may to lead an action, to partner with other organizations, or to advocate to influence decisions and policy at more senior levels of government.

Councillor Duncan lauded the plan stating that, “Just when I thought the draft version couldn’t get any better, the final is that much better.”

For more information on the Youth Strategy please contact Meghan MacMillan, Youth Programmer, Recreation & Community Services at 604-467-7354 or by email at mmacmillan@mapleridge.ca.