



Annual Report 2013

because
youth
matter

message from the president

I want to start this year's message from the president by reiterating the mission statement: **The Abbotsford Youth Commission exists to identify, promote, improve, increase, and provide services and programs for youth in Abbotsford.** The Abbotsford Youth Commission has a very important role to play in our city because youth are in need of all of these functions.

Of course such a mission does not happen without dedicating substantial resources toward the task. We are fortunate to have a city council that provides us with a good portion of the administrative funding needed to operate an efficient office that is run by a small group of dedicated individuals. These folks use creativity, relationship-building (with youth and community), and just plain hard work to perform the core activities that keep the AYC running.

In addition, the Abbotsford Youth Commission brings in significant funds from outside the city to run youth programs. Without the AYC, these funds would simply not be here in Abbotsford. When I review all of the services and programs that are provided by the Abbotsford Youth Commission I see that a wide variety of youth are attracted to them. In some cases, youth leaders are given opportunities to shine, to be good examples, and to help organize many wonderful activities that enhance life in Abbotsford. In other cases, youth who have substantial needs are served by filling some of those needs. In yet other examples, youth are provided with meaningful activities and safe locations that are positive alternatives to getting into trouble at key times of the day. The AYC hires enthusiastic youth workers to ensure that all of these programs operate with consistent quality and zeal.

As president of the board I know that this is truly a combined effort. AYC administrators, coordinators, centre staff, activity providers, board members, and many community members are all involved in bringing the best programming available to the more than two thousand individual youth who take advantage of our services each year.

Thank you to the City of Abbotsford, many businesses and community service clubs, federal and provincial funders, and individuals for the strong vote of confidence you provide each time you add to the money needed to make this all work. Thank you, as well, to our group of dedicated workers; Bev Olfert, Christy Friess, Christy-Lee Ovens, and the many part-time staff who run our programs and drop-in centres. Our hard-working board of directors needs some well-deserved thanks as well.

Les Stagg, President
Abbotsford Youth Commission

message from the executive director

The Abbotsford Youth Commission's **vision** is that **Abbotsford is a city where every youth feels included, safe, valued, empowered and connected.** For more than two decades now we have been working to accomplish this vision by providing safe, productive places for youth to go after school, in the evening, and daily in the summer; encouraging youth to live a healthy balanced lifestyle through exercise and recreation; providing an opportunity for youth to talk about issues that influence their development and learn skills to respond to negative experiences; working towards crime prevention by offering youth pro-social activities during high-risk hours; providing youth with the strong adult mentors that they are seeking; giving youth a forum to have their voices heard and assisting them to create positive change in their community. The Abbotsford Youth Commission exists **because youth matter.**

2013 was an exciting year for the Abbotsford Youth Commission. We experienced significant growth in many of our programs and hit all time high participation numbers in six of our drop-in programs as well as in our Girls Nite Out program. We also had more than one hundred people attend our annual URoc Awards where we honored youth, youth serving professionals, and local businesses and organizations for outstanding contributions to the lives of Abbotsford's youth. Our 'Pink Shirt Day' Bullying Awareness activities included three full page articles in the paper, presentations by our Youth Council and a Rally involving many community partners and close to 60 youth.

Another highlight this year was the start of our Character Project. The AYC is a champion of the Abbotsford City of Character initiative and as such we have been working to connect youth with the six character values of Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Empathy, Courage and Service. This year we decided to focus on the value of Service as it has been shown that youth who give back to their community feel more connected and as a result engage in more positive behaviours and choices. In July we began our YES project, Youth Engaged in Service, which has already engaged 38 young people in giving back to their community in various ways. Youth involved with the program have volunteered at the food bank, raised money for local charities, collected for and packed 15 boxes for Operation Christmas Child, volunteered at community events and participated in numerous random acts of kindness events. Through participation in the project youth have experienced the satisfaction of helping others and it is our expectation that they will connect with the value of Service in such a way that it becomes a part of who they are as well as a part of their

culture and experience as they grow into adulthood.

In addition to the many programs, events and presentations that we offer, we also spend many hours working to be the voice of Abbotsford's youth and to advocate on their behalf. We chair and host numerous committee meetings every month; these community collaborations help to ensure that at-risk youth in our city are not falling through the cracks. The AYC is a hub for youth programs and services providing a place for youth and parents to come in and seek advice. Every year we provide support and referrals for youth who find themselves in difficult situations such as having no place to sleep, needing drug or alcohol treatment or police and ministry referrals for youth who find themselves in unfortunate circumstances. The AYC also partners with numerous other organizations working to improve the lives of youth in our community.

The AYC functions in a community environment and receives many benefits from the involvement of our community partners. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our partners, our generous funders and donors, our board of directors, our practicum students and our volunteers. Without the valuable support provided we would not succeed. Thank you.

Bev Olfert, Executive Director
Abbotsford Youth Commission



Left to Right: Christy-Lee Ovens, Administrative Assistant; Jessica Mooney, Youth Programs Coordinator; Christy Friess, Supervisor of Recreation; Bev Olfert, Executive Director

programs and services

Drop-In Programs

The **AYC Youth Centre at ARC** offers our free After School Drop-in and Youth Zone programs as well as Summer Youth Zone and Youth Focus. Youth are able to participate in activities such as: basketball, pool, video games, air hockey and foosball. In 2013, 825 different youth used the Youth Centre at ARC amounting to just over 7500 entrances to the programs. This centre is open 25.5 hours a week providing more than 1300 hours of service each year.

The **AYC Youth Centre at MRC** also hosts our free After School Drop-in, Youth Zone and Youth Focus programs. In 2013, 288 different youth used the MRC Youth Centre amounting to just under 3500 entrances to the centre. Overall, fewer youth attended the MRC Youth Centre, however on average the youth who did attend did so more frequently. This centre is open 16.5 hours a week 38 weeks per year providing just under 630 hours of yearly service.

Drop-In Basketball just completed its tenth year and is offered as a free program every Wednesday evening during the school year. A highlight of this program was that once a month members of the Abbotsford Police Department came out to play against the youth. This year, 147 youth were involved in the program.

In 2013, 91 youth participated in our **Drop-In Floor Hockey** program which was offered every Thursday after school.

Summer Youth Zone combines our free drop-in programs at the Abbotsford Recreation Centre with our other programs which range from life skills to recreation and everything in-between. In the summer of 2013, 291 youth took

advantage of our free drop in program and more than 230 youth participated in our life skills programs.

Boyzone is a drop-in program for grade seven and eight boys at Eugene Reimer Middle School. The goal of this program is to provide boys with positive role models and engage them in pro-social activities and discussions. In 2013, 47 different boys were impacted by this program.

Noon Hour Games is offered at two local middle schools once a week at lunch hour. Staff from the AYC provide games, activities and supervision during the lunch hour while developing supportive relationships with the youth at the schools.

Each year a variety of **Special Events and Awareness Days** are held at both of our youth centres. This year they included: Culture Days, Wear Pink to Take a Stand against Bullying Day, activities every day of Spring Break, Girl Culture, Service Projects with YES, our Summer Safety BBQ, a Back to School BBQ, Halloween Events and we ended the year with fun activities everyday over Winter Break.

Leadership Programs

Youth Council is a leadership program for youth in grades 10-12 made up of members representing each high school in Abbotsford. The Youth Council members come together to work on youth initiated projects each year; working together to make a difference in their community. This past year, youth council prepared and delivered an in depth Bullying Awareness presentation and worked on their City Council Collaboration project.



Our **Youth Focus** program is a leadership program for the youth who attend our Youth Centres. Youth have the opportunity to offer feedback on programs, become a role model, and discuss pertinent issues facing youth. In 2013, forty-two youth participated in this program.

Self Esteem Programs

Just for Girls is a psycho-educational program for grade seven girls which is facilitated within the school environment. The objective of the program is to attempt to prevent harmful emotional and behavioral issues such as low self-esteem, eating disorders and abuse. In 2013, the program was in 11 schools with 212 overall participants.

In 2013, 100 boys participated in **Guys Alive** which is a psycho-educational program for grade seven boys offered at local schools during the lunch hour. The objective of the program is to educate boys on peer pressure, bullying, relationships, healthy living and teamwork.

Healthy Living Programs

Girls Nite Out is a non-competitive social recreational program designed to encourage girls to try new activities in a fun and supportive environment while enjoying the activities at their own pace and ability. In 2013, 87 girls participated in fun and challenging physical activities through this program.

The **Guys Nite** program gives boys an opportunity to try a new activity or sport while teaching them the values of teamwork and active living. In 2013, 44 youth participated in the program participating in activities such as: golf, rock climbing, bowling, gymnastics and karate.

Life Skills Programs

Our **Life Skills Programs** offer youth an opportunity to have fun, learn new skills and try new activities. In 2013, the AYC offered 25 programs to 231 youth; with a total of 468 program registrations. Programs offered were all of an introductory nature and fell under the following categories: cooking, baking, leadership, babysitters training, Food Safe, recreation, and sport.

Events

Youth Week 2013 was a great success with a major event held each day. This year we hosted our seventh annual Youth vs Community Leaders Floor Hockey Game, Random Acts of Kindness, Minute to Win It, Digital Scavenger Hunt and our Youth Council and City Council Collaboration event. In June 2013, we held our Annual **URoc Awards and Volunteer Appreciation Ice Cream Social** where we recognized local businesses and adults for being youth friendly. We also recognized several youth for their contributions to our community.

“The ABBOTSFORD
YOUTH
COMMISSION
is one of the most
positive places that
my 2 children go to. . .
My children have felt
like a part of a group
that they have never
experienced before
and that has helped
them develop social
skills and feel better
about themselves. The
after school program
is wonderful as they
now have a safe place
that I can feel good
about them being at
and they have a place
to hang with kids
their own age so they
don’t feel like
losers. I commend our
community for caring
about the youth and
providing a
wonderful positive
service with caring
supervisors that I feel
do a great job making
the drop in a very
successful and
important part of
the children’s lives.
Thank You.” - parent

community development

abbotsford is
a city where
every youth
feels . . .

Community Development

In addition to the many programs, events and presentations that we offer, we also spend countless hours working to be the voice of Abbotsford's youth and to advocate on their behalf. We chair and host many committee meetings every month; these community collaborations help to ensure that at-risk youth in our city are not falling through the cracks. A highlight this year has been our work with the Abbotsford City of Character, organizing the youth forum and the development of our Youth Engaged in Service project (YES).

The AYC is a hub for youth programs and services providing a place for youth and parents to come in and seek advice. We provide referrals, support and a safe place for youth who find themselves in difficult situations. The AYC partners with other local organizations working to improve the lives of youth in our community.

Resources

One of the goals of the Abbotsford Youth Commission is to share youth information and resources with the community. We did this through our newsletter the Whatz-Up, our resource library, referrals over the phone and in person, as well as our by distributing our Youth Workers Resource Guide which is available in hard copy and on the web at www.abbyouth.com/resources/referral-guide.html

Promotion

To let people know about the resources, programs and services available at the Abbotsford Youth Commission we promoted the AYC throughout the year. We did this by hosting our information booth at public events, community forums and parent teacher nights; advertising in the Abbotsford Program Guide; presentations to service clubs, PAC groups, and community organizations; our website; and promotion to youth in Abbotsford Schools.



financial highlights

Abbotsford Youth Commission January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013

RECEIPTS	2013	2012
City of Abbotsford	\$ 195,000	\$ 195,000
Gaming	\$ 83,500	\$ 83,500
Program Registrations and Events	\$ 29,748	\$ 41,539
Donations and Grants	\$ 12,477	\$ 5,475
Service Canada Grant	\$ 15,559	\$ 13,300
Interest	\$ 110	\$ 110
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 336,394	\$ 338,924
DISBURSEMENTS		
Wages and Related Costs	\$ 275,197	\$ 255,910
Office Operations and Equipment	\$ 31,237	\$ 35,289
Program Costs	\$ 41,470	\$ 55,469
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$347,904	\$346,668
NET SURPLUS / DEFICIT FROM OPERATIONS	\$(11,510)	\$(7,744)

thank you

Our Volunteers

We would like to thank all of the people and organizations that assist us in providing programs and services for youth in Abbotsford. A special thank you to our Board of Directors and to our volunteers; without their help our programs and events would not be possible. Thank you so very much!

... included
safe
valued
empowered
and
connected



board of directors

Les Stagg	President
Rick Lucy	Past President / APD Representative
Stan Petersen	Vice President / School Board Representative
Cheryl Unger	Secretary/Treasurer
Arjun Gill	Director/Youth Council Representative
Balbir Gill	Director
Chris Luff	Director
Jasica Grewal	Director
Jenny Thornton	Director/City of Abbotsford Representative
Les Barkman	Director/City Council Representative
Louanne Carlton	Director
Rachel Bae	Director/Youth Council Representative
Teresa Pippus	Director

donors and supporters

In 2013 the AYC received financial assistance from:

City of Abbotsford
Province of British Columbia
Service Canada
Abbotsford Rotary Club
Abbotsford Heat Foundation
Abbotsford Community Foundation
Canadian Tire Jumpstart Program
Kiwanis Club of Clearbrook
Participaction
Soroptomist International of Abbotsford Mission
Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce
Abbotsford Social Activity Association
Abby Times

In 2013 the AYC received in kind support from:

Abbotsford Community Services
Abbotsford News
Abbotsford Parks Recreation and Culture
Abbotsford Police Department
Abbotsford School District
Abbotsford Times
Canadian Tire Jumpstart
City of Abbotsford
EB Games
HSBC Bank Canada
United Way of the Fraser Valley
University of the Fraser Valley
Thrifty Foods

how to find us:

our offices are located at:

32315 South Fraser Way
Abbotsford, BC V2T 1W7

our youth centres are located
at:

Abbotsford Recreation Centre
2499 McMillan Road

Matsqui Recreation Centre
3106 Clearbrook Road

www.abbyyouth.com
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