

## ADULT FOCUS GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

### Instructions:

These recommendations were generated from the issues discussed in the report. Each recommendation corresponds to data from a theme, noted to the left of the recommendation. To the right, the systems it applies to are identified. To only see the recommendations relevant to you, click on the arrow to the right of the 'System' header and select the options that are applicable to you. Use these recommendations to guide discussions and next steps.

Number	Theme	Recommendation	System
1	N/A	Many of these changes will require funding and support. Utilize the findings in this report as evidence in applications for funding and for gaining support.	All community members, including the systems listed
2	1	Adult comments about feeling unsafe in playgrounds support Recommendation 11 in the Youth Report: <i>Identify ways to address how some youth may feel unsafe in playgrounds after school hours. Consulting youth is recommended.</i>	City/County Government , Protective Services, Parents/Caregivers, School Administrations, School Staff
3	1	Comments from adults support Recommendation 12 in the Youth Report: <i>Some youth feel unsafe when alone or in particular areas of the community, such as near John Peake Park. Engage in education and awareness so youth have strategies to stay safe when they are alone.</i>	City/County Government , Protective Services, Parents/Caregivers
4	1	Adults flagged that the skatepark and outdoor rink in Langdon may be another space that feels unsafe to youth. Identify ways to create a safer and less risky space for youth in these two locations. Additionally, provide youth strategies on what to do and who to contact if they feel unsafe in a community space.	City/County Government , Protective Services, Community Agencies
5	1	<p>Adults described: a lack of social-emotional skills in youth, perhaps impacted by technology; difficulties with relationships, understood through the observations of youth being mean, rude, or general conflict and bullying; and a lack of empathy in some youth. This supports the need to act on Recommendation 37 in the Youth Report: <i>Develop a community-wide strategy utilizing the issues and behaviours identified in the report about bullying, teasing, and conflict in peer relationships. Both reactive and preventative approaches should be included. This strategy must respond to the insight that there is serious conflict between peer groups, which implicates tensions between different ethnicities and identities in our community. It also must take into account all forms of behaviour, from online, psychological/emotional, and physical conflict with weapons.</i></p> <p><i>From our perspective, developing skills related to empathy, respect, and relationship building is one critical aspect of addressing these behaviours. However, there may be insight from a range of disciplines about the appropriate responses to these observed behaviours, and this knowledge should be utilized when developing a strategy. Consult subject matter experts and the literature as necessary. Within families, schools, and the broader community, a culture that values these practices at all levels is also imperative. Therefore, this effort will require consistent collaboration at all levels so that there can be interventions applied in a way that surrounds youth. This strategy must also include an evaluation plan.</i></p> <p>Adults also flagged that this starts to occur at a young age, so ensure that the response to this recommendation is applied to younger youth. Lastly, adults noted that LGBTQ2S+ youth may face particular challenges from peers, so this strategy should directly target improving attitudes and respect towards those who identify with the LGBTQ2S+ community.</p>	All community members, including the systems listed

6	1, 2, & 5	<p>Improve youths' sense of agency to tell adults about a struggle or to ask for help. Address the perception and reactions associated with 'snitching' and other associated stigma.</p> <p>Responses to this could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education;</li> <li>- Acting on Recommendations 5 and 7-10. in the Youth Report, all of which call for <i>more and/or deeper relationships to be built with youth in schools, with governments, within programs and organizations, with protective services, and with parents/caregivers and other trusted adults.</i></li> <li>- Acting on Recommendation 25: <i>Engage in methods to improve the feeling of inclusivity and welcoming in schools. Review existing strategies to develop this environment and modify them as needed. Rely on evaluation data to inform how to improve this feeling for youth. If no strategies exist, develop one in consultation with youth. A starting place may be that youth identified they had a need for connection with peers that school was not satisfying. They asked for more opportunities to build relationships with each other, such as through school/community dances and other gatherings. How can we build on the strength of something like school dances? Are there any other approaches to building a community that have not been tried yet?</i></li> </ul>	Protective Services, Public Health Care, Community Agencies, Recreation Services , Business Community , Parents/Caregivers, Parents/Caregivers, School Administrations, School Staff
7	1	<p>The comments from adults about physical conflict amongst youth support the need to act on Recommendation 23 in the Youth Report: <i>The community as a whole must address the issues of physical conflict and weapons in schools. First, ensure that you fully understand the problem. The community should work collaboratively to determine root causes. Use the details in this report as a starting place. Develop interventions that address these root causes and are not simply punitive such as restorative justice. A preventative intervention should be included in the approach to this issue, which may involve engagement with elementary schools and community services. Consultation with youth and evaluation throughout this process is key.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed
8	1	<p>Adults highlighted that youth seem to be less fearful of consequences and that the current consequences may not be appropriate, reinforcing Recommendation 24 in the Youth Report: <i>Youth told us that the current consequences do not provide justice, they do not contribute to change in the individual facing these consequences, and they negatively impact youth around this individual. Schools must review and adapt their approach to consequences. Decide if individual schools will continue to apply an approach that works best for their context or if a community/division-wide standard should be developed. Either way, this will require collaboration with Councils and Protective Services due to the existence of the Anti-Bullying Bylaw. Restorative justice approaches to this consequence framework must be considered. Again, consultation with youth and evaluation is imperative, so that they can determine if consequences have become more effective.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed
9	1	<p>For parents/caregivers who have a child who is experiencing bullying and are engaged with the school in their remediation process:</p> <p>A) Please consider the benefits of having your child who is experiencing bullying being involved in the remediation efforts, so long as it is deemed appropriate and safe for them to be involved by the administration, and the child provides their consent for involvement. The benefits to having them involved can be significant if a restorative justice approach is being used, and can contribute towards successfully addressing the bullying issue.</p> <p>B) Please understand that the school may not share the consequences/interventions applied to the child perpetrating the bullying in an effort to protect their confidentiality, safety, and privacy. Each school currently handles bullying situations differently, so if you have concerns, please raise these through the appropriate channels in a respectful way.</p>	Parents/Caregivers

10	1	<p>The concerns about online safety support Recommendation 18 in the Youth Report: <i>Make it a priority to educate youth on how to stay safe online. This is most likely to be successful if taught as part of a school curriculum such as health and/or computer sciences, from elementary school through graduation, as it ensures all children are aware and reminded that they are empowered to keep themselves safe. This education must cover the topics of cyberbullying, privacy protection, responsible social media use, and online pedophilia. They also must cover safety on all online platforms, such as video games, social media, and texting. Use the findings from Theme 4, Code 4 to support the types of lessons provided.</i></p> <p>Furthermore, adults stated that the following must be included in this education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The impact of cyberbullying on mental health must be emphasized</li> <li>- The range of ways cyberbullying can occur must be discussed</li> <li>- How to hold safe relationships online and how to avoid exploitation</li> <li>- What to do when you come across inappropriate or adult material online</li> <li>- The issue that social media does not necessarily reflect reality must be discussed (i.e., everyone's life is perfect online).</li> </ul>	Protective Services, Community Agencies, Parents/Caregivers, School Divisions, School Administrations, School Staff, Provincial Government
11	1 & 4	<p>Provide training and education for adults so they feel equipped to help youth navigate the complex challenges they face. Adults need to make continuous education a priority. Topics of trainings may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to navigate the online environment.</li> <li>- Mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Equity, diversity, and inclusion.</li> <li>- Parenting, including topics such as emotional regulation, consequences, conflict management, and attachment.</li> </ul>	Provincial Government , City/County Government , Public Health Care, Community Agencies, Parents/Caregivers, School Administrations
12	1	<p>Comments from adults about the differences in attitudes and approaches to mental health reinforce Recommendation 39 in the Youth Report: <i>Youth identified that there is still a wide range of attitudes and reactions they experience when discussing their mental health and wellbeing. The needle needs to be moved in a direction where all attitudes and reactions are positive and supportive. Therefore, enhance education for youth about mental health and wellbeing. Developing empathy and providing skills that youth can use to support peers struggling with mental health and wellbeing must be included in this education. This must address the further stigmatization experienced by boys and the realities of different attitudes held by different cultures/worldviews.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed
13	1	<p>Consult with youth on ways to make them feel seen and included for their cultural identity in schools and the community, and then implement these strategies. Routinely collect feedback on how this makes youth feel and continue this effort. Look for funding to support these strategies, especially as there has been an increase in grants for cultural initiatives.</p>	All community members, including the systems listed
14	1 & 4	<p>Adults who engage with youth must make it a priority to consistently and continuously engage in learning, reflection, and action to improve the way they understand and approach equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). This is a responsibility for everyone and affects interactions with youth.</p>	All community members, including the systems listed
15	1 & 5	<p>the comments in Theme 1, Code 6 and the barriers in Theme 5, Code 1 reinforce the need for Recommendations 5 and 7-10 in the Youth Report, all of which suggest that adults build more and/or achieve healthy and supportive relationships with youth, as well as encourage youth to engage in healthy and safe relationships with adults.</p>	All community members, including the systems listed

16	2	<p>Concerns about the capacity of staff in schools must be considered when addressing issues within schools - this supports Recommendation 35 in the Youth Report: <i>When discussing and implementing these changes, the capacity of the staff must be accounted for. Youth notice how their experience in schools is directly impacted by the capacity of the staff and understand that staff sometimes are struggling to keep up too.</i> Identify ways to improve capacity and make staff feel supported. This is especially important for support staff such as Child Development Advisors and counsellors.</p>	Provincial Government , School Divisions, School Administrations, School Staff
17	2 & 5	<p>Address the service needs within schools identified in Theme 2, Code 3. Both schools and parents/caregivers can advocate for these services to funders and the government. Otherwise, collaborate with community/recreation services to identify ways that these services can be utilized to address these needs. Additionally, find ways to make it easier for youth to access help during school hours so that the pressure of academics does not present a barrier for taking time to meet with a CDA or counsellor.</p>	Provincial Government , City/County Government , Community Agencies, Parents/Caregivers, School Divisions, School Administrations, School Staff
18	3 & 5	<p>Enhance funding for, and access to, mental health and wellbeing services for youth. This must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More resources directed towards supporting youth with trauma.</li> <li>- More support for developing skills and strategies to manage their mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>- Increased access to child psychiatry.</li> <li>- Decreased wait times for services.</li> <li>- More low/no cost mental health and wellbeing services.</li> <li>- Improved inclusivity of services to meet the needs of youth with complex needs.</li> <li>- Increased access to medical doctors.</li> <li>- Greater access to Restorative Justice practices or other similar rehabilitative practices.</li> </ul> <p>Improving access to services is particularly important in Langdon and SE Rocky View, where there is an overall lack of mental health and wellbeing services.</p> <p>This aligns with Recommendations 39 &amp; and 43 in the Youth Report.  <i>Recommendation 39: Youth identified that there is still a wide range of attitudes and reactions they experience when discussing their mental health and wellbeing. The needle needs to be moved in a direction where all attitudes and reactions are positive and supportive. Therefore, enhance education for youth about mental health and wellbeing. Developing empathy and providing skills that youth can use to support peers struggling with mental health and wellbeing must be included in this education. This must address the further stigmatization experienced by boys and the realities of different attitudes held by different cultures/worldviews.</i>  <i>Recommendation 43: Based on the experiences shared throughout Theme 5 and the gap in mental health services identified in Theme 6, establish accessible and stigma-free mental health support services in schools and the community. This includes counseling, stress management, and resources for students facing emotional challenges, among others.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed

19	3, 4, & 5	<p>Enhance mental health and wellbeing education and awareness for youth. This must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth understand when and how to access help for themselves and peers who share their struggles. This could be general skill building for all youth, and/or a more targeted approach, such as training a group of "peer counsellors" supervised by adult professionals. Strategies and/or programs should be explored and implemented.</li> <li>- Youth understand what resources and help are available to them.</li> <li>- Youth understand why managing their mental health is preventative and that it is a part of leading a healthy life.</li> <li>- Youth understand consent in multiple contexts.</li> <li>- Youth improve their language and understanding of mental health and wellbeing.</li> </ul> <p>This aligns with Recommendation 39 in the Youth Report: <i>Youth identified that there is still a wide range of attitudes and reactions they experience when discussing their mental health and wellbeing. The needle needs to be moved in a direction where all attitudes and reactions are positive and supportive. Therefore, enhance education for youth about mental health and wellbeing. Developing empathy and providing skills that youth can use to support peers struggling with mental health and wellbeing must be included in this education. This must address the further stigmatization experienced by boys and the realities of different attitudes held by different cultures/worldviews.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed
20	3	<p>The list of characteristics of youth supports in Theme 2, Code 4 should be utilized in conjunction with the characteristics identified in the Youth Report (Theme 5, Code 4). Reinforcing Recommendation 41: <i>The data from Theme 5, Code 4 (youth support characteristics) is imperative to addressing issues related to bullying, conflict between peers, mental health, and wellbeing. Adults who work with, care for, or interact with youth should utilize these characteristics for developing/choosing trainings, as a self-reflection tool, as criteria for assessing performance, and as a way to check in with youth, among many other possible application opportunities. How are you demonstrating these characteristics in your relationships with youth? What characteristics can you develop as a skill?</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed
21	3	<p>Use the structural characteristics of supports in Theme 2, Code 4 to review the services currently offered and/or funded. Consider how to incorporate these characteristics into the current service design. Additionally, these characteristics can be used to guide the design of new services. Ensure to consult youth on changes, especially because these characteristics were not directly gathered from youth. Ensure to complete evaluations.</p>	All community members, including the systems listed
22	5	<p>Aligning with Recommendation 21 in the Youth Report, when a youth comes to an adult for help, they must help. However, this applies to all adults in the community, not just schools. The pattern of youth feeling ignored or let down when asking for help needs to end.</p> <p>Recommendation 21: <i>When a student comes to school staff for help, they must find a way to help. The perceived pattern of students feeling ignored when asking for help needs to end. Schools need to review their policies and procedures for this, and modify as necessary. Ensure that staff feel supported to follow the policies and procedures; provide training or education to set them up for success. Complete evaluation on the changes that are made.</i></p>	All community members, including the systems listed

23	5	Parents/caregivers: engage in education to understand what an appropriate and supportive response looks like when your child expresses a mental health or wellbeing challenge they are experiencing. Punishing, applying consequences, minimizing, or ignoring the child are not appropriate responses. Public health care, community services, recreation services, and schools: implement strategies to support and encourage parents/caregivers to engage in this education.	Public Health Care, Community Agencies, Recreation Services , Parents/Caregivers, School Administrations, School Staff
24	5	Improve funding for social and recreation services. Refer to Theme 5, Code 3.	Provincial Government , City/County Government
25	5	Improve access to community spaces for social services to host programming and other community activities. Refer to Theme 5, Code 3.	City/County Government
26	5	Improve recognition and reinforcement of positive behaviour of youth who attend services, programs, and schools, as well as the general community.	All community members, including the systems listed
27	5	Address infrastructure needs in Langdon. Refer to Theme 5, Code 4.	City/County Government
28	5	Consider ways to increase opportunities for connection in the community. Implement solutions based on community consultations and evaluation data.	All community members, including the systems listed

*Note from the research team:* Coming from a place of youth support practice and academia, the perspective of the research team is that there is a lot of knowledge available on parenting. There has been a significant amount of research completed on this topic to determine empirically informed strategies for parents, particularly from development psychology and social work. There are also many resources available regarding parenting. Our message is that it is okay to seek help and knowledge on parenting methods – parents and caregivers need support and learning, too.