

YOUTH VitalSigns 2010



WHAT

Youth VitalSigns gives voice to Calgarians aged 12 - 24.

This youth driven report combines an opinion survey with timely research to inform the public and private sectors, governments, youth funders and youth serving charitable organizations.

WHY

Youth engagement can only happen when youth voices are heard....

Youth Central and The Calgary Foundation launched **Youth VitalSigns** to support positive leadership & development opportunities for youth to:

- influence change by sharing their experiences and perspectives
- expand their understanding of local community issues
- take action in their home, school & community

I need help getting a job!

Calgary's a great place to learn.

We need more places to hang out.

Apartments need recycling bins!



Youth VitalSigns is a project of:



Formerly Child and Youth Friendly Calgary



THE CALGARY FOUNDATION
FOR CALGARY FOREVER

Youth VitalSigns is:

inspired by The Calgary Foundation's
CALGARY'S

VitalSigns

supported by



THE ARTS SCENE



Vital Action: Release your inner artist at an all ages space comrad.ca

What Was Graded: admission fees, access to programs & performances... theatre, literature, dance, film, music and festivals.

Arts Scene Growth

In 2009, Calgary hosted over 5,800 arts events and saw over 450,000 people attend events free of charge, up 78% from the previous year.

Careers in the Arts

Over 7,000 students graduate annually from Calgary's four major post-secondary institutions with creative industries-related degrees.

HEALTH & WELL-BEING



Vital Action: Drop in at the Alex Youth Health Centre thealex.ca

What Was Graded: promotion of mental and physical health, access to addiction counseling, family and youth clinics.

Youth Smoking

Calgary has the lowest rate of youth cigarette smokers (grades 7-12) in Alberta (5.2%), but the highest rate of youth who smoked cannabis in the past year (20.1%).

Screen Time

Calgary's youth, aged 12 - 19, sit in front of their computer or television an average of 18.3 hours a week, compared to the national average of 17.7 hours a week.

YOUTH HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS



What Was Graded: youth homelessness, cost of housing and renting.

Vital Action: Make sandwiches for the homeless spreadthelove.ca

Street-Involved Youth

71% of Calgary's street-involved youth report having experienced neglect or abuse and 45% report being kicked out of school, suspended, or having dropped out of school.

Street Drug Use

94% of Calgary's street-involved youth report using tobacco, alcohol or drugs in the past two weeks, while 29% report using alcohol or drugs before turning 12.

YOUTH SPACES



What Was Graded: libraries, community centres, coffee shops, nightclubs, parks and other places to hang out.

Vital Action: Check out the New Black Centre thenewblackcentre.com

Biggest Free Outdoor Skate Park

Calgary's Shaw Millennium Park is North America's largest free outdoor 24 hour skate park hosting 35,000 visitors annually.

Places to Hang Out

The City of Calgary provides seven leisure centres and 56 parks and gardens where youth can exercise and socialize.

SAFETY



Vital Action: Become a Student Ambassador kidshelpphone.ca

What Was Graded: crime levels, gang violence, internet exploitation, bullying, relationships with police, emergency preparedness, and sexual exploitation of youth.

Youth Offences Decreasing

Youth offences have decreased by almost 25% since 2005.

Gang Related Homicides Decreasing

Gang related homicides have decreased by over 50% since 2008. In 2009, there were seven gang related homicides reported, a rate lower than pre-2005 levels.

YOUTH VOICE



Vital Action: Be inspired by youth doing great things youthareawesome.com

What Was Graded: voting, participation on advisory committees, youth activism, and getting involved in community.

Youth Involvement

Each year, Youth Central sees 2300 youth volunteers contribute over 32,000 hours to the Calgary community.

Learning About Voting

Student Vote combats low voter turnout among 18 - 25 year olds by teaching the democratic process to future youth voters. In the 2008 general election, 130 schools in Calgary participated in a parallel election where 22,436 students cast ballots.

EDUCATION & LEARNING



B

What Was Graded: quality, availability and cost of post-secondary education, class sizes, ESL support and opportunities for special needs students.

Vital Action: Volunteer with Reading Buddies
calgarypubliclibrary.com

Higher Tuition Fees

The average cost of post-secondary tuition in Alberta is \$5,520, \$600 higher than the national average.

Smaller Class Sizes

In 2008/2009, the average class size for junior and senior public high schools in Calgary was 22.8 and 24.3 students respectively, both less than the Alberta Commission on Learning guidelines of 25 and 27 respectively.

Vital Action: Help maintain a community garden
calhort.org

What Was Graded: environmental awareness, air quality, recycling, pollution and sustainable living. (i.e. composting, community gardens)

GOING GREEN



G+

Students Composting

Since 2007, Green Calgary has introduced 15 composting sites into Calgary's public schools... all to be maintained by students.

Schools Become EcoSites

In 2009, The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) launched EcoSites to "Advance Operational Environmental Literacy". Schools will be rated as Emerging Green, Green, or Leading Green. CBE's target is to have all schools become EcoSites by 2012.

RECREATION & SPORTS



B

What Was Graded: availability of recreation facilities, recreational programs, and affordable, fun and healthy activities.

Vital Action: Attend youth night at a Leisure Centre
Call 3-1-1

Calgarians Love Sports

Approximately 320,000 Calgarians engage in 85 different sports administered by over 400 organizations. On average, youth aged 13 - 19 participate in at least one sport activity.

After-School Programs

In 2009, Calgary became the first Canadian municipality to coordinate a city-wide approach to after-school programs that offer 193 supervised activities for youth between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION

Vital Action: Earn a bike through volunteering
twowheelview.org

What Was Graded: cost, accessibility, convenience of the bus/c-train, bike routes, reliance on cars, and accessibility for youth with disabilities.



G+

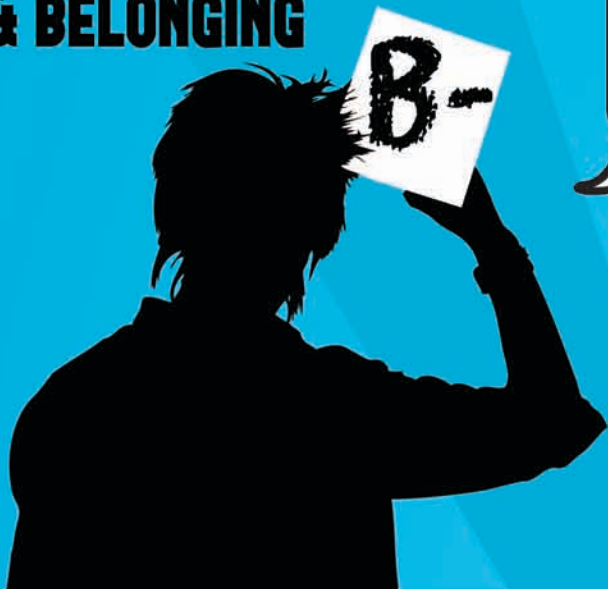
Youth Transit Users

Over 15,000 students, from both private and public schools, use one of Calgary Transit's 29 direct bus routes to get to junior or senior high school on a given day.

Urban Pathways

With over 700 km of pathways and nearly 290 km of on-street bikeways, Calgary has the most extensive urban pathway and bikeway network in North America.

CULTURE: IDENTITY & BELONGING



B-

Vital Action: Prevent racism and bullying
dontbuyin.ca

What Was Graded: discrimination, homophobia, class and gender issues, opportunities to explore and understand one's own culture and those of others.

ESL Students Triple

Between 1988 and 2008, Alberta's ESL (English as a second language) students tripled from 14,673 to 48,346. In 2009, 29 % of Calgary's Grade 3 students were ESL students, compared to the provincial average of 13 %.

Multicultural Festivals Thrive

The Calgary Multicultural Centre lists 24 prominent multicultural festivals that are held annually, and posts hundreds of smaller events at calgarymulti.com

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

What Was Graded: job availability, wages, job training, workplace rights, resume building, job searching, and career planning.

Vital Action: Enhance your resume
yec.nextsteps.ca



G+

High Level of Student Workers

In 2008/2009, 46% of Alberta's youth, aged 15 - 19, worked while attending primary or secondary school, compared to the national average of 35%.

Economic Downturn Affects Youth

In October 2009, the unemployment rate for Calgary's youth reached 15.3 % - twice the rate of unemployed adults.

WHAT DO YOUTH HAVE TO SAY?

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Education & Learning | B |
| Going Green | C+ |
| Recreation & Sports | B |
| Transportation | C+ |
| Culture: Identity & Belonging | B- |
| Employment & Training | C+ |
| Youth Voice | C |
| The Arts Scene | C+ |
| Health & Well-Being | B |
| Youth Housing & Homelessness | C |
| Youth Spaces | B- |
| Safety | C+ |

HIGHLIGHTS - 2010 SURVEY

In every issue area graded, youth who reported being *very connected* to their community gave the **highest grades** and youth who reported being *not connected at all* gave the **lowest grades**.

Over **90 % of graders live with family**, yet the key issue area of youth homelessness and housing received a C, one of the lowest grades. With an estimated **700 people under the age of 24 living on the streets**, graders identified this area as one of the top priorities that needs immediate community investment.

Recreation & Sports received a B, one of the highest grades, with 54% of youth reporting participation in community activities while acknowledging that fees are a barrier for some.

Over 140,000 youth aged 24 and under are living in Calgary, yet graders say there are few opportunities to "have a voice" and gave the issue area of Youth Voice a C.

As graders, the **top 3 changes** that would improve our quality of life are:

- better transportation
- lower recreation fees
- affordable education

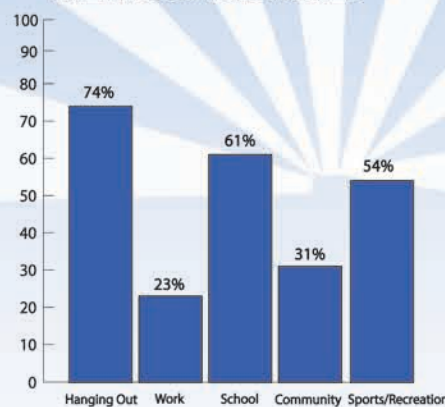


WHO ARE THE GRADERS?

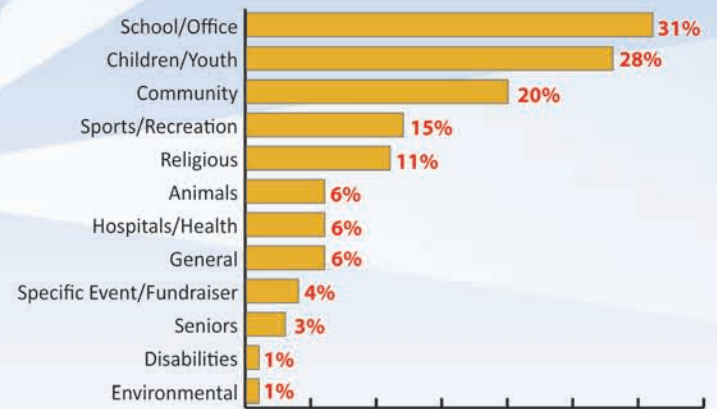
From emails, Twitter, friends on Facebook or at school, **1235 YOUTH** took up the invitation to HAVE THEIR SAY.

- 65% aren't working and 20% can't find work
- 77% speak English most often at home
- 43% are male, 57% are female
- 81.5% are born in Canada
- 86% are aged 12 - 18
- 92.6% attend school
- 55% volunteer

WHAT YOUTH ARE DOING IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



YOUTH VOLUNTEER AREAS



HOW WAS THE REPORT MADE?

THE START

Approximately 30 members of the Calgary Youth Foundation and the Mayor's Youth Council began the process by identifying 12 key issue areas and selecting the survey questions.

THE SURVEY

The Praxis Group conducted a 3 week online survey targeted at local youth between the ages of 12-24. Praxis provided a complete analysis of the data and presented the key findings in a final 40 page report.

INDEX OF GRADING

- A: Excellent, stay the course
- B: Good, but some improvements could be made
- C: Average performance, suggest additional effort be made to address these issues
- D: Below average performance, additional work is required
- F: Failure, immediate action is crucial

RESEARCH

Local experts working in each key issue area provided the most current statistical data that was used as indicators of quality of life.

RESEARCH TEAM

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Calgary Arts Development | City of Calgary |
| Calgary Board of Education | Coalition for Equal Access to Education |
| Calgary Economic Development | Community & Neighbourhood Services, |
| Calgary Health Region | The City of Calgary |
| Calgary Homeless Foundation | Green Calgary |
| Calgary Police Services | Student Vote |
| Calgary Sport Council | United Way of Calgary and Area |
| Calgary Transit | YMCA Community Outreach |
| Canadian Federation of Students | |

THANKS

PROJECT SUPPORT

THE CALGARY FOUNDATION

Janice Francey
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YOUTH CENTRAL

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Karen Wong (designer)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Calgary Foundation
Youth Central

SURVEY

The Praxis Group

COMMUNITY

Southland Leisure Centre
Thornclyffe After School Program
Village Square Leisure Centre

VOLUNTEERS

Calgary Youth Foundation
Mayor's Youth Council

PARTNER

TELUS Community Board



INFO

THERE'S MORE TO READ ONLINE

- youth comments
- research sources
- research data
- action items



THE CALGARY FOUNDATION

thecalgaryfoundation.org
403-802-7700



cyfc.ca
403-266-5448

YOUTH VitalSigns IS A PROJECT OF:



Youth Central (formerly Child and Youth Friendly Calgary) envisions a community where all children and youth are engaged, informed and inspired. This vision is based on the firm belief that young people who experience involvement and philanthropy at an early age grow up with an ongoing sense of responsibility to their community. Youth in modern society are undervalued and should be challenged to take more on; they need to be included in all aspects of community life.



THE CALGARY FOUNDATION
FOR CALGARY FOREVER

The Calgary Foundation, established in 1955, helps create a giving and caring community by identifying needs, convening groups around common concerns, making knowledgeable grants and facilitating philanthropy for the long term benefit of Calgary and area. With over 900 Endowment Funds established, the Foundation strengthens the charitable sector in the areas of Arts & Heritage, Human Services, Education, Environment, Health and Neighbourhoods.