

Youth Net Peel Annual Youth Friendly Survey 2007-2008 Report

Purpose of Survey

The aim of the Youth Friendly Survey is to:

- help generate awareness about the youth-friendliness of services
- aid in elevating the youth-friendliness of services
- assist youth in feeling more comfortable and confident about calling for help

Youth involved with Youth Net and Canada's National Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement define youth friendly as someone who is:

- Non-judgmental
- A good listener
- Open minded

And has:

- Respect for youths individuality & life experience and treats them as equal
- A sense of humour
- An understanding of youth culture

Survey Says!

Rating	Percentage	Score	
Very Youth Friendly	66%	43%	1
		23%	1.5
Youth Friendly	28%	14%	2
		14%	2.5
Okay, but	4%	4%	3
		0%	3.5
Not Youth Friendly	2%	2%	4

The majority of agencies (94%) received a score between 1 and 2 meaning they were either very youth friendly or youth friendly. This is up from 53% of agencies receiving a rating between 1 and 2.25 in our 2006 survey.

Very Youth Friendly (1) = Surveyor felt respected, the service was accessible and confidential, they were given clear information and they would highly recommend this service to another youth.

Youth Friendly (2) = Surveyor overall felt well served.

Okay, but (3) = Surveyor felt there should be two-three things that could be improved.

Not Youth Friendly (4) = Surveyor would not recommend this service to another youth, and there were numerous reasons the youth did not like this agency.

Agencies were identified as those specifically serving youth or serving people 16 years and over. A full list of agencies surveyed is shown as Appendix A.

Although most agencies were receptive to the youths' questions, two main problems were encountered. The first was the agencies wanting to know the information of the caller (i.e. name, age, where they were calling from and why). This made it difficult because the caller is to try not to disclose their personal information. The second problem was agencies not wanting to answer questions unless the surveyors revealed their names and where they were calling from.

Sharing the Results

The results of the Youth Friendly Survey are available to agencies in Peel and agencies are permitted to inquire about their specific results. Youth Net Peel uses this information to inform youth of approachable agencies, boosting their confidence to make a call. Statistics show youth would rather seek help from friends, but it is not always enough. In general, if an agency receives a poor rating Youth Net Peel will not recommend this service to youth as youth friendly, but continues to inform youth about all services in Peel Region. This report is also available on our web site at www.youthnet.cmhapeel.ca

Some general findings from Youth Net Peel's focus group surveys in 2002 indicate that 48.6% of youth do not tell anyone when they have a problem that's really bothering them. Also, only 1.1% would talk to a "professional" if they were to disclose a problem that was really bothering them. Professional includes people such as psychologists, psychiatrists, counselors, guidance counselors, and family doctors.

Aggregate findings are reported to Youth Net Peel funders and the information is also used to encourage agencies to participate in a Youth Friendly Workshop. The goals of the youth friendly workshop are to:

- define and explore the concept Youth Friendly
- highlight the benefits of using a Youth Friendly approach for professionals who work with youth
- reflect upon an agency's current practices and work towards using a more Youth Friendly approach
- share important information gathered by Youth Net about the Youth in the Peel community

Details about the Survey

Based on a scale of 1 through 4, each agency was rated on the responses provided to the youth calling. The youth asked the following 10 questions:

1. What services do you offer?
2. Can you act as a referral agency if I have a problem your agency can't address?
3. Is there a cost for your services? If so, how much?

4. What are your hours of operation?
5. Where are you located?
6. Are you located on a bus route?
7. Is your staff trained in crisis intervention and risk assessment?
8. What demographic does your agency serve the most?
9. Are all conversations confidential? In what cases can information be shared with an outsider?
10. Am I required to give my name if I want help over the phone?

In rating the youth friendliness of the agency the youth took into consideration how accessible this service was to youth. In other words, is it easy to get to without having a car? Are they open after school and on weekends? Beyond accessibility the youth also rated how they were treated on the phone; were they treated with respect? Were their questions answered completely?

The top four weaknesses that callers noted about the agencies surveyed were:

- The agency worker on the phone was rude to the caller.
- The agency worker refused to answer some or all of the questions asked by the youth surveying.
- The agency worker did not seem to have adequate knowledge about the services available.
- The agency worker would not keep the caller's confidentiality and kept asking for their name and the location they were calling from.

Other complaints were that the person on the phone directed the youth calling to their website instead of answering their questions. Often the youth were put on hold for several minutes or hung up on. In a few cases the youth felt they weren't respected and that the person at the agency was difficult to understand because of an accent. Youth Net recommends that youth, in general, are provided with more information about the non-profit sector and human services, including the reality about limited resources. This may help put in to context, for instance, the suggestion that callers visit a web site for some basic information.

Approach to Surveying

During the months of January 2008 to June 2008 Youth Net Peel conducted its 5th annual "Youth Friendly Survey", assessing the youth-friendliness of 110 agencies within Peel Region. This number of agencies surveyed increased by a substantial 41 from 2006. This year the survey consisted of an information questionnaire completed over the phone for each agency by at least two surveyors.

Each agency was called at least two times by a cooperative education placement student or by Youth Net Peel's Staff Facilitator. The two scores each agency received were then averaged to get their final rating. By having two separate calls made by different youth at different times it provided varied feedback of an agency's youth friendliness. The agencies were not informed that they were being graded for their youth friendliness, rather most youth told the agencies they were collecting information for a school project or just looking for some general information.

For the majority of agencies the surveyors gave similar scores and comments. In a few cases the surveyors differed significantly in their responses to the same agency. This is possibly a result of speaking with different intake workers or receptionists.

Increasing the number of times an agency was called from one to two was done in an attempt to enhance the reliability of the survey results. Obviously, there are still limitations to the process as findings are based on opinions, which can differ from youth to youth. Their opinion, however, is what a youth uses to decide whether or not they would call an agency for service or suggest it to a friend.

In its first year the Youth Friendly Survey required the caller to role play a possible situation an agency may encounter, but youth found this difficult to do. As well, agencies were given the opportunity to decline participation and some did, citing that they were busy enough without knowingly handling a “mock” call. This practice was discontinued.

The survey approach was adopted at the time the Peel program was established, based on guidance from the originating Youth Net program in Ottawa. Little change has been made to the survey questions and already mentioned are changes to how the survey is done. While few Youth Net programs are still conducting the surveying, in Peel it is deemed a valuable activity given the information that is then shared with youth.

Any feedback on the survey questions is appreciated. Youth Net wants to be fair to agencies, ensure that the right information is collected, and ultimately, that youth are provided with relevant information. A blank survey is shown as Appendix B.

About Youth Net

Youth Net Peel is a mental health promotion program run by youth, for youth, the brochure for which is shown as Appendix C. Program goals are to:

- decrease stigma
- increase awareness
- respect and value youth experiences
- listen without judging
- connect youth with one another as well as with youth friendly professionals

Youth Net Peel's activities include:

- hosting 1.5 hour discussion groups
- providing skill-building opportunities for youth through volunteering, student placements, and paid group facilitation
- supporting youth-initiated projects
- conducting agency surveying
- participating in displays, including completing stress surveys
- conducting mental health and stress presentations
- offering a Youth Friendly workshop
- participating on youth-focused interagency committees
- summarizing data collected and sharing with agencies

Youth Net Peel was developed and guided in its early years as a collaborative effort of:

- Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch

- Mobile Crisis of Peel (affiliated with Distress Centre, St. Elizabeth Health Care, and William Osler Health Centre)
- Peel Children's Centre Crisis Response Service
- Peel District School Board (Social Work)
- Region of Peel Health Department
- Youth in Peel

Youth Net is sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association/Peel Branch (CMHA/Peel) and is funded by the United Way of Peel Region and The Region of Peel. The mission of CMHA/Peel is to enhance the well being of all people in our community by promoting and supporting good mental health. The Branch is a multi-service, community-based mental health agency serving Peel Region since 1962.

Contact Information

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Appendix A

Agencies Surveyed
Alateen (Alanon)
Arch Advocacy Resource Centre
Armagh
Assaulted Women's Hotline
Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT)
Associated Youth Services of Peel
Bellwood Health Services
Bereaved Families of ON Halton/Peel
Bombay Connexion Social Club
Brampton Multicultural Community Centre
Caledon Dufferin Victims Services
Caledon Food Bank
CAMH - Concurrent disorders Service
Catholic Cross Cultural Services
Catholic Family Services
Child & Adolescent Program (Peel)
Community Care Access Centre
Crisis Outreach & Assessment Support Team (COAST Peel)
CVH - Adolescent Services
CVH - Alcohol & Drug Treatment
CVH - Child & Family Services
CVH - Eating Disorders Program
CVH - Schizophrenia Program
CVH - Start Program
Dam Youth Drop In
Distress Centre Peel
Drug & Alcohol Registry Treatment Info
Eating Disorders Clinic
Eclipse Youth Resource Centre
Eden Place Drop in Centre
Eden United Church Food Bank
Employment Resource Centre
FAME
Family Life Resource Centre
Family Services of Peel

Family Transition Place
Food Path
Friends & Advocates of Peel
Gerstein Centre - Crisis Intervention
Halton Recovery House
Homewood Community Alcohol & Drug Services
Homewood Health Centre
Hope Place Women's Treatment Centre
Hospice Caledon
Hospice Of Peel
India Rainbow Community Services
Inter cultural Neighbourhood Services
Interim Place 1 (women & children)
Interim Place II
Interim Place I (South)
Interim Place North
Job Connect
John Howard Society of Peel
Knights Table meals for \$1
Legal Aid Ontario
Ministry of Health - Mental Health Program
Mississauga Assertive Community Treatment
Mobile Crisis Of Peel
Multicultural Inter-agency group
Muslim Community Services
Narcotics Anonymous
Nexus Youth Services
Ontario Council of Alternative Business
Ontario Works (Region of Peel)
Our Place Peel I
Our Place Peel II
Parents for Children's Mental Health
Peel Career Assessment Centre
Peel Children's Aid Society
Peel Children's Centre
Peel Children's Centre Crisis Response
Peel Collaborative C&A Sexual Abuse...
Peel HIV/AIDS Network
Peel Youth Substance Abuse Program
Peel Youth Village - employment resource centre

Phone Friend (Telecare)
Problem Gambling Program
Rapport Youth & Family Counseling
Regional Women's Health Centre
Saint Elizabeth Health Care
Salvation Army
Salvation Army - Financial Counseling
Schizophrenia Society of Ontario
Schizophrenia Society of Ontario (Mississauga)
Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centre
Short Term Residential Crisis Support (safe bed)
Square One Youth Centre
Ste Louise Outreach
Street Haven
Street Haven at the Crossroads
Street Helpline Peel
Supportive Housing in Peel
Telehealth
THC - Community Treatment Orders
THC - Inpatient Psychiatry
THC Child & Adolescent Services
THC Community Treatment Orders
THC Crisis Intervention
The Learning Disabilities Association
The Open Door
Victim Services of Peel
Warm Line for Consumers
Wilkinson Road Shelter
WO - Addiction Counseling Services of Peel
WO - Addiction Services of Peel
WO - Child & Adolescent Mental Health Clinic
WO - Community Mental Health Clinic
WO - Mental health Urgent Care Clinic
YMCA - Youth Substance Abuse Program
Youth Employment Services

Appendix B

Youth Friendly Agency Survey

Agency:
Phone #:

Your Name: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____

1. What services do you offer (support groups, counseling, etc.)?
2. Can you act as a referral agency if I have a problem your agency can't address?
3. Is there a cost for your services? If so, how much?
4. What are your hours of operation?
5. Where are you located?
6. Are you located on a bus route? (Keep in mind you don't have a car)
7. Is your staff trained in crisis intervention and risk assessment?
8. What demographic (age, gender, race, religion) does your agency serve the most?
9. Are all conversations confidential? In what cases can information be shared with an outsider?
10. Am I required to give my name if I want help over the phone?

Please rate the youth friendliness of the person you spoke with from 1-4.

1 Very Youth Friendly

- * You felt respected
- * The service is accessible and confidential
- * You were given clear information
- * You would highly recommend this service to another youth

2 Youth Friendly

- * Overall you felt well served
- * They may be missing one key element – please be sure to list it

3 Okay but

- * There are two-three things that could be improved
- * List anything that made you feel uncomfortable

4 Not Youth Friendly

- * You would not recommend this service to another youth
- * There are numerous reasons you did not like this agency – list them

Appendix C



SEE FLIPSIDE FOR YOUTH VERSION

YOUTHNET PEEL

Serving 12 to 20 years olds
www.youthnet.cmhapeel.ca

The Youth Advantage

- youth connect more readily to their peers and seek their help first
- youth trust that they won't be judged by other youth
- staff and volunteers range in age from 16 to 30 years
- college placement students are part of the service delivery team
- our youth leaders are more likely than adults to elicit honest and candid participation

Our Services to Youth

Surveys, workshops, creative art discussion groups, and focus groups on various topics that affect mental health:

- stress
- violence
- self-esteem
- diversity
- depression
- substance use and good choices
- body image
- relationships
- identity
- mental illness awareness

Our Approach

- participation is voluntary
- confidentiality is respected
- peer support is valued
- builds on capacities and competencies
 - strengthens people's sense of control
 - fosters resilience and the ability to cope

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Service to the Community

The general perceptions and views of youth are shared with agencies that serve youth, social planners, and human service funders so that they become more attuned to what youth are coping with and what kind of help youth want and value.

Youth conduct surveys of agencies that serve youth and the results are summarized and published in a report each year. The intent of the surveying and the report is three-fold:

- for youth to share their views with agencies and youth about how youth friendly agencies are
- to help enhance the youth-friendliness of services, anticipating agencies will take action based on the report
- to increase the likelihood that youth will seek help from services that their peers have said are youth-friendly

Build on Strengths

Youth Net focuses on both what youth have in themselves and what family, friends, and community add to their healthy development. This is based on the "developmental assets" research as promoted by Thrive Canada.

Mental Illness Strikes As Young as 18

Serious mental illness typically strikes people aged between 18 and 30 years. It's important to recognize it and intervene early for the best possible outcome.

For this reason, some of our services assess suicidal and risk behaviours and attempt to intervene early. It's up to youth to decide if they want this kind of help.



CHANGING MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION DES CHANGEMENTS
PEEL LA SANTÉ MENTALE

Region of Peel
Working for you

United Way

YOUTH NET PHILOSOPHY

- serves youth between the ages of 12 to 20 with staff and volunteers aged 16 to 30
- every chance we get, Youth Net gives you the opportunity to speak your mind and let your ideas be heard

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

You join our youth leaders who conduct focus groups, workshops and creative art discussion groups about:

- stress - body image
- violence - relationships
- self-esteem - diversity
- identity - depression
- substance use and good choices
- mental illness awareness

WHAT CAN YOU GET OUT OF US?

- connect better with other youth
- see differences in others and be non-judgemental
- be more honest with other youth
- be respectful of the experience of others
- ideas for a positive lifestyle
- be open to new experiences

WHAT YOU SAY IS IMPORTANT

When Youth Net sees you, we record what you and other participants have to say. Without identifying any one in any way, we tell adults:

- if youth are having a hard time coping with issues in their life
- what is stressing youth out
- what will encourage youth to decide to get help when they need it

WHAT IF THERE'S A PROBLEM?

If a youth leader thinks that you need help with stress or something more serious, they'll ask you privately...

- what's going on, and
- if you want them to go with you to get support from a crisis worker

DID YOU KNOW...?

- 77% of youth feel totally stressed out at least once a month (YN Peel, 2004)
- One in five individuals have a mental illness
- Serious mental illness like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder typically strikes people aged 18 and 30 years.
- getting help early makes a big difference in how long it can take to get well

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