



Policy Name:	YOUTH TEAM		
Policy #:	OP 6.1.6	Last Updated:	2022-09-29
Issued By:	COMMUNITY POLICING BUREAU	Approved By:	SURREY POLICE BOARD
		Review Frequency:	AS REQUIRED

RELATED POLICIES

OP 4.52.1 *Trauma Informed Practices*

OP 6.1.2 *Indigenous Wellness*

OP 6.1.3 *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

1. PURPOSE

1.1. To share the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of Members who work in the Surrey Police Service (SPS) Youth Team.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This policy applies to all SPS Members.

3. POLICY

3.1. The role of the Youth Team is to promote a safe and healthy environment for youth and their families which supports growth, resilience, and personal success as defined by the individual.

3.2. Youth Team Members will work collaboratively with other youth-serving agencies to effectively triage and provide wrap-around services to vulnerable youth and their families.

3.3. Collaborating with youth, families, schools, and youth-serving agencies, Youth Team Members will develop and implement strategic initiatives in elementary and secondary schools and at other places where youth congregate. The goal is to build rapport and develop authentic and respectful relationships which will foster mutual trust and understanding while finding solutions to community issues involving young people.

- 3.4. Through a variety of programs, Youth Team Members will provide informal mentorship to youth in Surrey non-judgmentally, modelling pro-social behaviours and a willingness to meet youth “where they are at”.
- 3.5. When requested, Youth Team Members will participate in initiatives led by partner agencies, such as the Wraparound Team (WRAP), the Family and Youth Resource Support Team (FYRST), the Children and Youth At Risk Table (CHART), Yankee-30 (Ministry of Children and Family Development), and others.
- 3.6. The Youth Team is not the actual investigative unit for all youth-involved files but will assist front-line Members and other units and teams with investigations involving youth when required.
- 3.7. SPS supports the principles of youth justice outlined in the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. The Youth Team will collaborate with justice system partners, youth agencies, and Indigenous agencies to develop appropriate strategies to divert youth from the criminal justice system and refer youth to extrajudicial measures when appropriate, and they will assist front-line Members with this process.

4. PROCEDURE

Guiding Principles

- 4.1. The Youth Team will follow these guidelines when supporting youth and their families:
 - i. understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the resulting trauma on children and youth, and in particular how trauma from ACEs may affect a child’s or youth’s ability to manage stress (which may manifest behaviourally);
 - ii. providing services to youth and their families in a culturally safe manner;
 - iii. understanding and incorporating trauma-informed practices and crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques;
 - iv. understanding sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, and respecting the rights of children and youth to choose how they identify and express themselves;
 - v. understanding and incorporating best practices related to youth mental health, anti-bullying, harm reduction and substance misuse;
 - vi. recognizing that not all youth will be comfortable engaging with Members and respecting the needs of those who avoid contact;
 - vii. recognizing the importance of helping youth to build meaningful and healthy connections to their families, culture, spiritual community, elders, and peers; and
 - viii. choosing kindness, compassion, and patience when interacting with children and youth.

Youth Team Member Duties

4.2. Youth Team Members will:

- i. serve as an accessible point of contact between youth, parents, the Surrey School District and individual schools, youth-serving community agencies, and other investigative units within, or external to, SPS;
- ii. be available for consultation with other SPS Members for investigations involving youth. Assist on files involving youth who have frequent contact with police or who are frequently the subject of calls for service (e.g., missing persons);
- iii. be familiar with the dynamics of sexual exploitation and will look for indicators of exploitation/trafficking, especially for youth who are reported missing;
- iv. be familiar with and look for indicators of gang involvement or grooming by gang members and provide interdiction and prevention strategies to deter gang involvement;
- v. provide guidance regarding the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and assist front-line Members with referrals to youth programs such as restorative justice, FYRST, WRAP, and CHART;
- vi. provide learning opportunities for front-line SPS Members regarding best practices for interacting effectively with youth;
- vii. work collaboratively with individual schools to determine the school's needs regarding the presence of Youth Team Members in that school (e.g., frequency, wearing of police uniform vs. plain clothes, location within the school, etc.);
- viii. upon request from a school, facilitate or deliver age-appropriate educational presentations to students on topics such as cyber-crime, sexual exploitation and online safety, relationship violence and abuse, gang awareness, and other topics of interest;
- ix. when feasible and upon invitation, participate in youth-related activities and events at schools and in the community (e.g., sporting events);
- x. liaise with Members from the Community Engagement Unit and SPS Indigenous Wellness Unit to develop and deliver relevant programs for youth; and
- xi. fulfill other duties assigned by the Chief Constable or their designate, as well as other duties outlined in the Youth Team Unit's mandate.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

“Adverse Childhood Experiences” or “ACEs” are traumatic events that occur before a child is 18, and include all types of abuse and neglect, such as parental substance use, incarceration, domestic violence, a parent with a mental illness, or being part of a family going through divorce. In the 1990’s, a study identified a significant relationship between the number of ACEs a child experienced and a variety of negative outcomes in adulthood, including poor physical and mental health, substance use, and risky behaviours. (Source: Child Welfare Information Gateway, US Department of Health and Human Services)

“Gender” refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions, and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people.

“Gender expression” means how an individual presents their gender (typically as masculine or feminine) within a social context, typically through their actions, dress, and demeanor.

“Gender identity” means a person’s internal and individual experience and understanding of themselves as a man, woman, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum.

“Harm reduction” means evidence-based laws, policies, programs and practices that aim primarily to reduce adverse health, social and economic harms which are the result of the actions of an individual. Harm reduction is grounded in human rights and focuses on positive change and on working with people without judgement, coercion, discrimination, or other preconditions prior to receiving support.

“Member” means a sworn Police Officer appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“Sexual orientation” refers to an individual’s potential for attraction or sexual interest in another, whether based on emotional, intimate, or sexual interest.

“SPS” means Surrey Police Service.

“Trauma Informed Practice” means understanding the prevalence and effects of trauma in all aspects of service delivery and prioritizing the individual’s sense of safety, choice, empowerment, and connection. It is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma and emphasises physical, psychological, and emotional safety. Trauma Informed Practice means making sure that people feel safe around police and are not re-traumatized by their contact with police.

“Youth” means a young person aged 18 years or younger, typically over the age of 11 years but within the context of this policy may also mean a child aged 11 years or less.

“Youth Team” means the SPS team responsible for youth-related services in the Community Policing Bureau.

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (2020) *Equity & Inclusion Toolkit*.

Youth Criminal Justice Act, S.C. 2002, c. 1