**Survey Report**

**Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council Public Input Survey 2011**

**Introduction**

When the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) had its executive meetings for its 2011-2012 term it was clear that we needed to find some way to reach out to the community to see what needed to be done, and to gather youth input as to what they want us to do for them. Since the MYAC was created “To seek input from youth on important matters affecting youth via surveys, forums and workshops and to address these issues through presentations to city council, events or initiatives,” (MYAC Terms of Reference 2011-2012, 1) it was clear to us what needed to happen.

With this plan we created a survey. The survey included questions about what youth want to see in Welland, what is affecting them and focused on what skills youth possess. We also decided to create an almost identical survey to be directed toward adults asking the same questions about youth, just from their perspective. The surveys were distributed through hard copies and through the internet.

Some of the results were exactly where we thought they would be, but some were also very surprising. The resort below will first present all the numerical results from the survey, and general stats about the survey. After which there will be an analysis to try to determine why the results are the way they are. Lastly, there will be a conclusion which will state what the MYAC and City of Welland can do to solve some of the issues presented.

**Statistics**

* We collected a total of 235 surveys both through paper and through our online version
* The survey was offered to anybody thirteen years of age and older
* The survey responses were divided up into five separate age groups; 13-15, 16-18, 19-29, 30-49, and 50+
* Youth are considered 13-18 years old
* Adults are considered 19 years of age and older

**Question-by-Question Answers**

1. Have you heard about the MYAC prior to this survey?
   * More than 50% of the surveyors from all age groups knew about the MYAC
   * As age increased the number of surveyors who knew of the MYAC also increased
   * In age order this is the percent of people who knew about the MYAC: 56%, 68%, 75%, 81% and 94%
2. Have you or a youth you know attended a MYAC event?
   * Never went over 30%
   * 6% for 13-15 year olds
   * 5% for 16-18 year olds
   * Then 8%, 18% and 28% as you go up in age
3. Are there enough events for youth throughout the year?
   * 70% of 13-15 year olds believe there are
   * 57% of 16-18 year olds believe there aren’t
   * 60-70% of adults believe there are
4. Are youth regularly bullied?
   * 70-80% of youth say they weren’t bullied in the last year
   * 70-80% of adults believe youth are regularly bullied
5. Are youth accepted when youth are themselves?
   * 80-90% of youth say they are accepted
   * 70% of adults believe youth are accepted
6. Do youth regularly bully?
   * 80% of youth say they have not bullied in the last year
   * 70% or more adults believe youth bully regularly
7. What skills do youth possess?
   * Top three for 13-15:
     1. Sports and recreation skills (60%)
     2. Hands on skills (52%)
     3. Creative or artistic skills (51%)
   * Lowest three for 13-15:
     1. Problem solving skills (39%)
     2. Completing projects and tasks (38%)
     3. Possessing learning or teaching skills (30%)
   * Top three for 16-18:
     1. Responsibility (68%)
     2. Creative or artistic skills (65%)
     3. Communication skills (57%)
   * Lowest three for 16-18:
     1. Completing projects or tasks (32%)
     2. Problem solving skills (30%)
     3. Number and data skills (24%)
   * Top three for 19-29:
     1. Sports and recreation skills (92%)
     2. Creative or artistic skills (75%)
     3. Hands on skills (67%)
   * Lowest three for 19-29:
     1. Possessing learning or teaching skills (17%)
     2. Problem solving skills (8%)
     3. Number and data skills (0%)
   * Top three for 30-49:
     1. Sports and recreation skills (85%)
     2. Creative or artistic skills (60%)
     3. Hands on skills (52%)
   * Lowest three for 30-49:
     1. Problem solving skills (25%)
     2. Responsibility (24%)
     3. Number and data skills (15%)
   * Top three for 50+:
     1. Sports and recreation skills (81%)
     2. Creative or artistic skills (72%)
     3. Completing projects and tasks (66%)
   * Lowest three for 50+:
     1. Possessing learning or teaching skills (41%)
     2. Responsibility (24%)
     3. Problem solving skills (25%)
   * Average for all youth:
     1. Top three:
        1. Creative or artistic skills
        2. Sports and recreation skills
        3. Responsibility
     2. Lowest three:
        1. Tie between problem solving skills and completing projects and tasks
        2. Number and data skills
        3. Possessing learning or teaching skills
   * Average for all adults:
     1. Top Three:
        1. Sports and recreation skills
        2. Creative or artistic skills
        3. Hands on skills
     2. Lowest three:
        1. Tie between responsibility and possessing learning or teaching skills
        2. Problem solving skills
        3. Number and data skills
   * What youth and adults agree on:
     1. Youth possess:
        1. Creative or artistic skills
        2. Sports and recreation skills
     2. Youth do not possess:
        1. Problem solving skills
        2. Number and data skills
        3. Learning or teaching skills
   * What youth and adults disagree on:
     1. Youth believe they are responsible where adults do not believe so
     2. Adults believe youth possess hands on skills where youth do not believe so
     3. Youth believe they cannot complete projects or tasks where adults believe they can
8. Can youth use their skills in Welland?
   * 60-70% of 13-29 year olds believe they can
   * 70-80% of people 30 years of age and older believe youth can
9. Do youth face issues such as addiction, peer pressure, self-esteem, bullying, stereotypes and boredom?
   * 50-60% of 13-15 year olds believe youth do
   * 70% or more of 16-49 year olds believe youth do
   * 90% or more of 50+ year olds believe youth do
10. What do youth want to see in Welland?
    * Jobs
    * Concerts and bands
    * Shopping opportunities
    * Sports and recreation opportunities
11. What does Welland rank, from a youth perspective, rank on a 10 point scale?
    * 50-60% of 13-15 year olds and 50+ year olds believe it ranks 6 or more
    * 50-60% of 16-49 year olds believe it ranks 5 or less
12. What do people view as possible solutions?
    * Increased law enforcement
    * Lowered cost for activities
    * More education on issues
    * More parental involvement

**Analysis**

**Question 1: Have you heard about the MYAC prior to this survey?**

It is comforting to know that 50% or more of the surveyors knew about the MYAC prior to the survey; however this also means there are a lot of people who know nothing about the MYAC.

**Question 2: Have you or a youth you know attended a MYAC event?**

These low numbers are very concerning. Something must be done by the MYAC to increase the amount of people who come to the events we run.

**Question 3: Are there enough events for youth throughout the year?**

These results show that we have to focus more on events for the age group of 16-18 because they feel that there are not enough events for them to attend.

**Question 4: Are youth regularly bullied?**

These stats are very concerning because they demonstrate a large difference in opinion between the two age groups. Perhaps parents hear more about bullying than youth do, or parents believe the messages displayed by the media.

**Question 5: Are youth accepted when they are themselves?**

This data could mean one of two things. One, that youth are accepted for themselves or two, that we did not reach out the youth who are indeed excluded by their respective peer group.

**Question 6: Do youth regularly bully?**

Once again there is a large difference between the opinion of youth and of adults. Adults could believe the number is so high because either there are that many people who do indeed bully. Or once again that they tend to believe that the media accurately represents youth’s lives.

**Question 7: What skills do youth possess?**

We feel that the skills that the youth do possess are all important in the youth’s day-to-day lives. However, it is very concerning the skills that youth feel that they do not have.

**Question 8: Can youth use their skills in Welland?**

It is great that such a large amount of people in general believe that Welland will allow them to use their skills and grow. With us being a small town it would be impossible for us to have jobs for all different skill types. This means that Welland is doing a great job in this area, due to the fact that this many people still feel they can use their skills in Welland.

**Question 9: Do youth face issues such as addiction, peer pressure, self-esteem, bullying, stereotypes and boredom?**

It is concerning that so many people feel that youth have all of the problems listed. We as a council feel that we have to find some way to address all of these issues.

**Question 10: What do youth want to see in Welland?**

These results show that we are creating events that youth do indeed want to attend. This means that we need to promote our events with a better degree of accuracy that way our events are better attended by the city’s youth.

**Question 11: What does Welland rank, from a youth perspective, on a 10 point scale?**

These results are much lower than that of what we would want people to believe about Welland. To try to increase these numbers, at least among youth, we can create events that will inspire and motivate them but also allow them to have a good time. We can also try to further publicise Youth Innovations within the Seaway Mall.

**Question 12: What do people view as possible solutions?**

We believe that the four solutions stated are very accurate and would definitely make an impact on those who do need help with the problems that they are facing.

**Conclusion**

We knew that when we were starting this survey that we would bring up issues that could not be solved over night or just by the MYAC. But we will do our part in trying to solve and fix some of these issues that youth are facing on a daily basis. We believe the main issues within Welland are low self-esteem, bullying and boredom. And now that we have a better understanding of what the youth want to see we can move forward with making the city more youth friendly.

To accomplish this we will attempt to better advertise the events that we already run. Once this is complete we will begin to formulate events that coincide with the things that youth want to see in Welland. We will also begin to create events that incorporate motivational speakers, positive messages, and positive role models. We believe that this three step plan will accomplish what we set out to do with this survey.

This survey allows us to conclude three things. The first is that we are doing well with what we have. Our council takes the opportunities that we are given and do positive things for youth and the community. Next, we can do more. This survey has helped us recognize what areas we can focus on, for example, events for ages 16-18. Lastly, it seems that adults and youth do not seem to be on the same page. This inspires us to showcase what we can do in the city. The goal going forward is to give youth the opportunity to prove their dedication and commitment to the community through new events and initiatives.

It is our hope that through our continued dedication to the Welland youth that we will help them to strive to become the best that they can ever become. This transformation will not occur over night, and we have accepted this. But we hope that with the help of the City of Welland and various organizations throughout the city that we will make considerable progress in the years to come.

