
NANAIMO YOUTH RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Building Safer Communities

DISCLAIMER

The *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* was prepared by the Canadian Municipal Network on Crime Prevention (CMNCP) for the City of Nanaimo. While care has been taken in the preparation of this document to ensure its contents are accurate, complete, and up to date, there are certain limitations with the data. The information presented in this report is based on a review of existing data and documents as well as consultations with various community members and groups. One challenge with qualitative data (focus groups, interviews, etc.) is the subjectivity of responses. Participants share their perspectives and opinions based on their own experiences and knowledge. As a result, the statements made by an individual may not reflect the perspectives of others. It is therefore important to recognize that the findings from this research must be considered in their own context. However, the findings do offer valuable insight for future planning as a thematic analysis.

Please note that this is a living document. New information, actions, and recommendations related to youth resilience as well as gun and gang violence prevention emerge regularly. This report reflects the data collected at the time of the strategy development.

Trigger Warning: This document includes discussion about sensitive topics related to violence, safety, and gang activity that could be triggering to some people. If you have any questions about the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy*, please contact communityplanning@nanaimo.ca.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the City of Nanaimo boundary lies within the Traditional Territory of Snuneymuxw First Nation who have many significant ancestral village sites throughout the city including Stlilnup (Departure Bay) and Sxwuyum (Millstone River). We recognize the Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854, a trade and commerce treaty that forever and always preserves and protects Snuneymuxw villages, waters, enclosed fields, harvesting and gathering sites, and the right to hunt and fish as formerly.

Why is this here? A land acknowledgment statement represents an act of reconciliation, honouring the land and Indigenous heritage and history that dates back thousands of years. To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have cared for this land for thousands of years. It is important that we understand our history that has brought us to reside on the land, and to seek to understand our place within history.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Developing the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* was a collective and collaborative effort. Thank you to Public Safety Canada for allocating funds to develop a strategy to improve youth resilience in Nanaimo. Furthermore, sincere gratitude is offered to the community members who attended the consultations and completed the survey questionnaire. Your participation will help ensure gun and gang violence prevention efforts are rooted in the experiences and context of Nanaimo residents. This Strategy is stronger because of your voices.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to the project team and steering committee who acted in advisory capacities from the following organizations:

- BGC Central Vancouver Island
- Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- City of Nanaimo
- Connective Support Society
- Island Health
- Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services
- Liaison Strategic Solutions
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Nanaimo RCMP
- Nanaimo Family Life Association
- Nanaimo Youth Services Association
- School District #68
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- WorkBC

We would like to thank local partners, stakeholders, organizations, practitioners, and service providers in Nanaimo for supporting and participating in consultation sessions. This includes:

- BGC Central Vancouver Island
- Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- CFSEU (Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit) / Nanaimo RCMP Street Crime/Intel
- Community Health Network
- Connective Support Society
- Island Health
- Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services
- Liaison Strategic Solutions
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Nanaimo City Council
- Nanaimo Family Life Association
- Nanaimo RCMP
- Nanaimo Youth Services Association
- Public Disorder and Homelessness Working Group
- Risebridge Project
- School District #68
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- United Way
- Volunteer Nanaimo
- WorkBC
- Youth 20/20 Can Project
- Youth Advocacy Network

Lastly, thank you to Dr. Irvin Waller for providing expert feedback to strengthen this strategy.



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“I wanted to be the real leader that my grandma and elders would be proud of.”

- Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy Participant

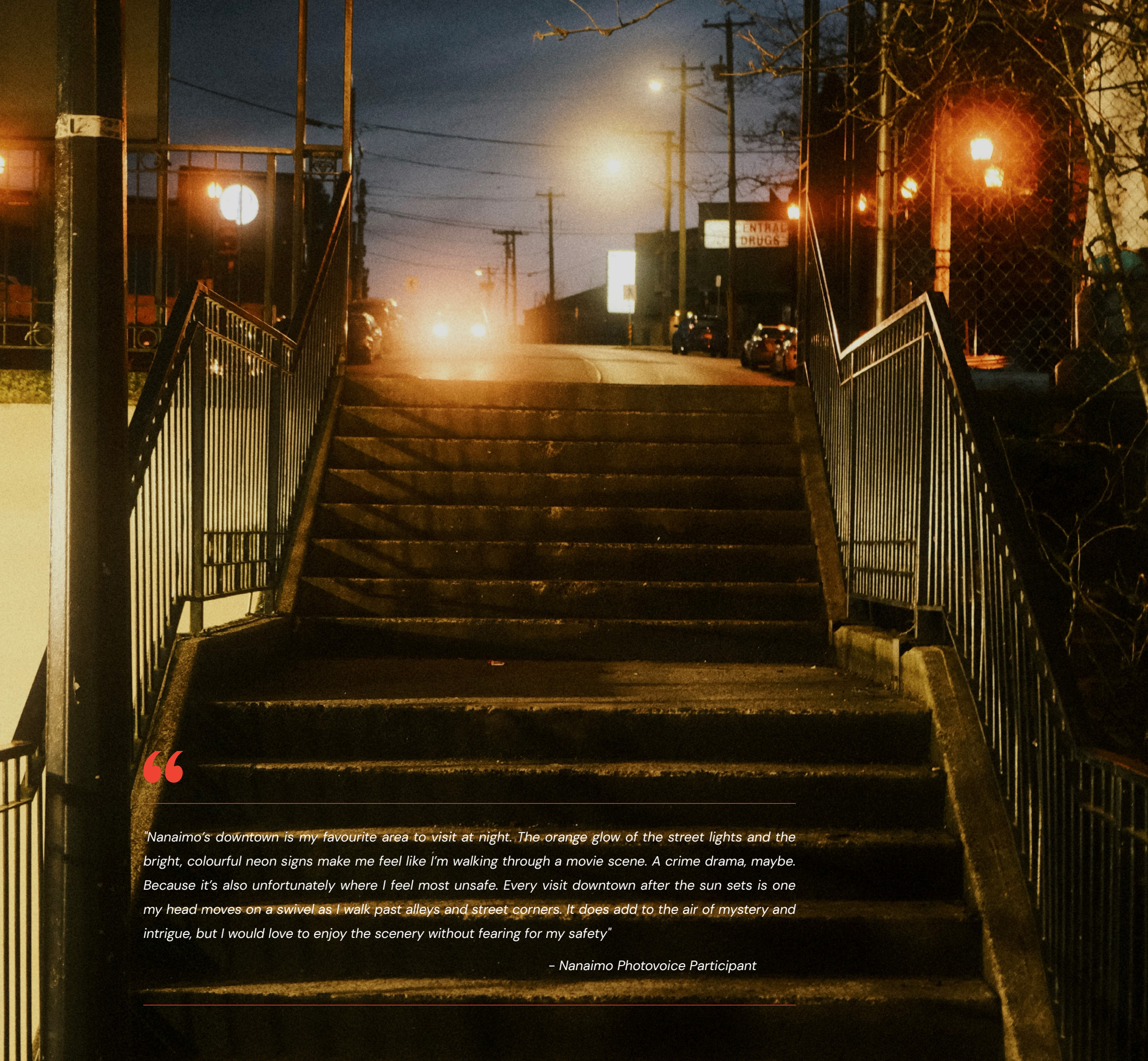


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"Nanaimo's downtown is my favourite area to visit at night. The orange glow of the street lights and the bright, colourful neon signs make me feel like I'm walking through a movie scene. A crime drama, maybe. Because it's also unfortunately where I feel most unsafe. Every visit downtown after the sun sets is one my head moves on a swivel as I walk past alleys and street corners. It does add to the air of mystery and intrigue, but I would love to enjoy the scenery without fearing for my safety"

– Nanaimo Photovoice Participant

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Safety Canada selected Nanaimo as one of 22 municipalities in British Columbia to develop and implement a gun and gang violence prevention strategy. The City of Nanaimo was charged with developing an approach to accomplish this task over the next three years. Through a fast-paced, but comprehensive consultation process with key community stakeholders and a review of existing data, factors were identified that put children and youth at risk for gang involvement.

A multi-disciplinary steering committee worked alongside City staff, Snuneymuxw First Nation, and consultants to design actions to address the identified risk factors and enhance protective factors. In total, this led to the establishment of six focus areas for funding. The proposed focus areas establish new and augment existing efforts in the community to meaningfully connect with and support youth, especially youth at risk. Finally, they speak to the need to address broader systemic issues and the importance of positive messages about the potential of prevention.

The recommended focus areas are supported by a series of additional recommendations, found in the Strategy Implementation Guide for the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy*, that

will support the implementation of the strategy. These span from the importance of community engagement, transparent communication, appropriate governance, to evaluation and monitoring and finally, the necessity of sustainability planning. Together, these elements support the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* and should be regarded as a road map towards a safer and more equitable community.

The existence of gun and gang violence is a serious concern for any community experiencing it. Nanaimo is not alone in this regard and the Strategy must be seen as part of a larger attempt to prevent violence and crime before it happens. As a result, the Strategy is not only based on local knowledge but is also evidence-informed and draws on promising practices in the prevention of crime, victimization, and fear of crime.

A focus on children and youth, especially those that are at risk, inevitably calls for a commitment to a more distant future while taking action in the here and now. The *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* relies heavily on the capacity to engage community and its key stakeholders and finally, children, youth, and their families. In that sense, the community has the opportunity to become the extended family of all children and youth living in Nanaimo.

FOCUS AREAS

The Strategy includes six focus areas to prevent youth from engaging in gun and gang violence and to address the significant youth related risk factors for Nanaimo. The focus areas are connected to evidence based outcomes and meet the required criteria under the Building Safer Communities (BSC) funding program. These focus areas provide a road map on how to reduce risk factors for youth, improve youth resiliency and will provide guidance on how funds should be prioritized and distributed between 2023 and 2026. The focus areas identified may interconnect and, more than one focus area may be addressed through implementing one or more program(s) or initiative(s). The six focus areas are:

SAFE YOUTH GATHERING SPACES

To establish safe, free, youth gathering spaces, within existing facilities.

YOUTH OUTREACH

To expand street outreach and related programs including service hours and locations to build relationships with youth at risk and to meet a wide range of their needs such as food, harm reduction, engagement in recreation, access to counseling, etc.

CONNECTING YOUTH TO LAND AND WATER THROUGH SNAWAYLTH (TEACHINGS)

Enhance existing and/or create new opportunities to connect youth to the land and water through Snawaylth to strengthen their mental, emotional, spiritual and cultural resilience.

YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM

To connect youth, especially youth at risk, with diverse role models and significant/caring adults (e.g. tutors, trades or vocational role models, mentors, teachers, coaches, etc.).

ENHANCING EXISTING PROGRAMS

To improve existing programs for youth by adding new components that fill gaps and build protective factors for children and youth-at-risk (e.g. sports, culture, education, health and wellness, life skills, socio-emotional learning, volunteering etc.).

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

To build relationships with media and develop key positive messaging to highlight successful youth programs and initiatives that counter repeated negative media attention that perpetuate discrimination and stigmatization against youth.

In addition to the above actions, some recommendations were out of scope for the Strategy. These recommendations fall under Scope Two (to be discussed further as additional capacities become available) or Scope Three (to be referred to appropriate community partners or sectors). Scope Two and Three recommendations are reflected in Appendix 4.



FOUNDATIONAL COMMITMENTS

It is recommended that the Steering Committee share with the community and its stakeholders the foundational commitments below and regularly monitor adherence to them.

Accessibility: Ensuring all children and youth have fair, equitable, and low-barrier access to services, spaces, and supports in Nanaimo.

Accountability: Directing resources toward increasing access and equity.

Anti-Oppression: Recognizing multiple forms of oppression (e.g. systems of supremacy, differential treatment due to discrimination, ideological domination, and institutional control) and seeking to mitigate their effects.

Knowledge and Evidence Informed: Ensuring that efforts are guided by evidence and community wisdom.

Capacity Building: Implementing approaches that build capacity within individuals and organizations.

Collaboration: Sharing responsibility, taking collective action, and avoiding siloed approaches.

Communication with the Public: Communicating with the public ongoingly for transparency and buy-in.

Cultural Awareness: Being sensitive to and respectful of differences and similarities between cultures.

Diversity: Acknowledging that differences between people (such as race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, religion, geography, physical or cognitive abilities, etc.) are valued assets and striving for diverse representation.

Equity: Committing to the pursuit of fairness and justice and recognizing diverse needs and histories.

Focus on Future Generations: Committing to an upstream approach to prevention.

Intersectionality: Accepting that multiple dynamics of privilege and oppression operate simultaneously in complex and compounding ways.

Neighbourhood Focus: Understanding and addressing local needs and challenges through a neighbourhood lens.

Reciprocity: Understanding that individuals using services have agency and the right to meaningfully contribute.

Reconciliation: Committing to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Calls to Actions with a focus on those related to children and youth (#1 to #66).

Trauma Awareness: Integrating how trauma can affect people in all aspects of the work.

BACKGROUND

In March 2022, Public Safety Canada announced new federal funding to address community safety through the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF). The objective of this fund is to help municipalities and Indigenous communities prevent gun and gang violence by addressing their root causes. Gang violence has become a growing concern in Nanaimo, after a shooting in January 2020 and a stabbing in February 2020, both believed to be connected to drug trafficking and local gang activity. Similarly, there was an increase in gun violence in Nanaimo in 2022, leading to multiple injuries. Since the beginning of 2023, there has been at least one stabbing and one shooting in Nanaimo, which have significantly impacted the community's sense of safety.

Service providers and front-line professionals have highlighted similar concerns, and school professionals have reported an increasing gang presence in elementary and high schools. In recent years, there has been an alarming trend of mainland gang members recruiting young people from Nanaimo, often through social media, resulting in increasing levels of youth involvement in gang-related activities, including drug trafficking and violent crime.

The City of Nanaimo received \$1.8 million from Public Safety Canada to develop and implement

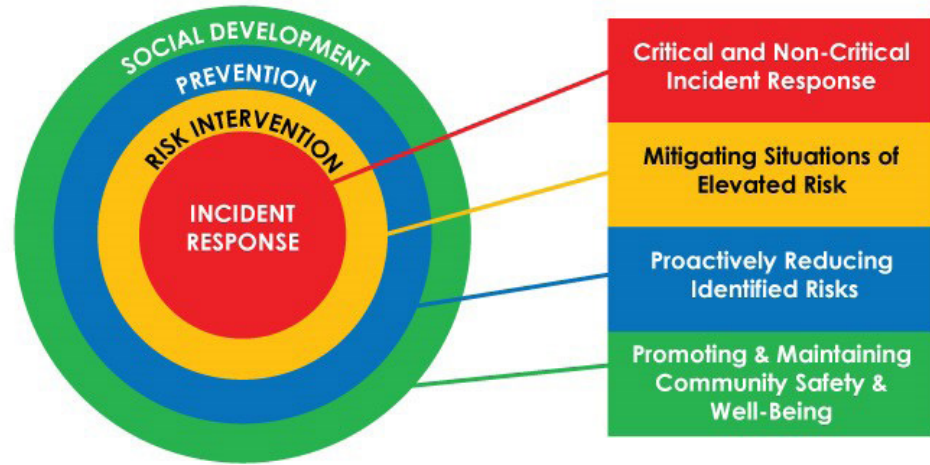
a strategic plan to address gun and gang violence through building youth resilience. Among other objectives, the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* brought together system leaders, organizations, and community members to co-create a vision and an actionable plan to increase youth resilience and safety in the community. It focuses on reducing risk, vulnerability, and harm by prioritizing a process to identify key risk factors as well as prevention and intervention measures to address them collaboratively.

The development of the Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy involved a rapid risk assessment using diverse quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and subsequent analyses. Gathering different data sources helped to build a comprehensive data set and provided the steering committee members and consultants with an understanding of risk and protective factors for youth in the local context. For more information on the assessment process, refer to Appendix 5.

The Strategy findings and focus areas are specific to the geographical boundaries of the City of Nanaimo and reserve lands governed by Snuneymuxw First Nation. The Strategy however recognizes that the impact and prevention of gun and gang violence does not happen in a vacuum and notes that the implementation of the Strategy may see programs and initiatives delivered in the general region of Nanaimo.



The Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General's Prevention Frameworkⁱ highlights the different levels of prevention/intervention.



Level	Description	Scope of Work
Social Development	Intervening to reduce risk factors and/or enhance protective factors in the general population.	Limited scope
Prevention	Identifying at-risk individuals or communities and intervening to reduce risk factors and/or enhance protective factors.	In scope
Risk Intervention	Responding to acutely elevated risk situations to mitigate harm and decrease the likelihood of (re) victimization.	In scope
Emergency Response	Immediate response to urgent incidents to stop harms, minimize victimization and hold individuals responsible.	Not in scope

The *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* focuses specifically on prevention and risk intervention to reduce the demand for incident response. The Strategy is grounded in the knowledge that social, economic, familial, and individual conditions and experiences (i.e. trauma) influence whether a young person turns to crime and/or is more likely to be victimized. Accordingly, it seeks to engage local leaders and the broader community to generate a shared vision and commit to actions that address local conditions to improve youth resilience and community safety. To be successful, the Strategy must inspire and enable an approach where a broad cross-section of organizations and people work collaboratively toward collective impact.

Importantly, this strategy is consistent with the social determinants of health¹ through a focus on decreasing risk factors and strengthening protective factors known to impact a young person's pathway. Risk² and protective factors³ are varied. Some require broad-based, long-term, sustained investment and commitment (social development), typically led by federal and provincial governments, to improve social inequities such as racism, poverty, and unemployment. Others are more readily achievable through localized consensus, leadership, and commitment to action.⁴

1. *Social Determinants of Health* refer to a specific group of social and economic factors within the broader determinants of health. These relate to an individual's place in society, such as income, education, or employment. Experiences of discrimination, racism and historical trauma are important social determinants of health for certain groups such as Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQ and Black Canadians.

2. *Risk Factors* are negative influences in the lives of individuals or communities which may increase the presence of harm, victimization, or crime. They can occur at the individual, family/peer, community/school/organization, and/or societal levels.

3. *Protective Factors* are positive influences that can improve the lives of individuals or the safety of a community. They may decrease criminalization and victimization and can be found at the individual, family/peer, community/school/organization, and societal level.

4. Please refer to Appendix 11 for a list of guidelines for effective prevention approaches.

KEY FINDINGS

QUANTITATIVE DATA

The following section offers a high-level summary of local demographics and trends based on a review of research and available data/statistics. The full review of local data/statistics can be found in Appendix 2.

Local Demographics

Nanaimo's population has consistently grown in the past 5 years, reaching 99,863 in 2021.ⁱⁱ Based on future projections, strong population growth is expected to continue in the Nanaimo area. According to the 2021 Community Profile report, Nanaimo's population growth has resulted from migration. People move to new areas for a variety of reasons including employment opportunities and quality of life factors. There are three types of migrants: intra-provincial (within BC), inter-provincial (other provinces) and international immigrants (outside of Canada). Between 2015 and 2020, on average, over 3,000 net new migrants relocated to the Nanaimo region.ⁱⁱⁱ

The average family size in Nanaimo is similar to other locations in the province. Approximately 18% are one-parent families, with most lone parents being women. In Nanaimo, the average age of the population is slightly higher than that of the provincial average, with youth (15 to 29 years old) representing almost 17% of the population.^{iv}

Trends

One key risk factor related to preventing gun and gang violence is early childhood development, particularly adverse childhood experiences. In this regard, the Early Development Instrument (EDI) data provides insight into the healthy development of children by highlighting inequities and vulnerabilities. Based on the EDI instrument, vulnerable children are those who, without additional support and care, are more likely to experience future challenges in their school years and beyond. In Nanaimo, 37% of kindergarten children are vulnerable on at least one area of development measured by the EDI between 2016 and 2019. The highest level of vulnerability was related to emotional maturity (20%) as well as physical health and well-being (20%). Cedar-Wellington-Gabriola, South Nanaimo, and Townsite-Nanaimo Downtown have the highest rate of EDI vulnerability among children.^v

Police-reported crime statistics can provide insight into the most prevalent offences in Nanaimo. However, it is important to remember that not all crimes and experiences of victimization are reported to police. With regards to criminal charges, the overall rate of police-reported crime statistics in Nanaimo decreased slightly between 2019 and 2020 but increased between 2020 and 2021. The rate of youth aged 12 to 17 years charged (all violations combined) has increased since 2019, going from 1,117 to 1,518. With regards to violent crime, the rate per 100,000 population has increased consistently over the past five years, reaching 2,542 in 2021, which represents a 70% increase since 2017. The rate of youth (12 to 17 years) charged for violent Criminal Code violations was lower in 2019 and 2020 compared to 2018, but increased again in 2021, reaching 983.^{vi}

In 2020, the Homeless Hub published a Community Profile for Nanaimo which highlights statistics related to homelessness.^{vii} In total, 433 were identified as experiencing homelessness, of which almost 60% were experiencing chronic homelessness. Furthermore, 253 individuals were experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Among the people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo in 2020, 23% identified as youth (age 18-24), 33% identified as Indigenous, 26% identified as 2SLGBTQ+, and 68% identified as male.

Over 40% of tenants in Nanaimo spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, which is higher than the rest of the province (37%). Furthermore, over 10,000 individuals in private households in Nanaimo have a low-income status after tax and the rate of persons aged 65 years and older with low-income status (27.4%) is higher when compared to the province (19.6%).^{viii}

With regards to health and mental health, data collected by Island Health shows that the Greater Nanaimo region has a higher rate of youth in care than the rest of the province but has seen improvements in recent years. With regards to drug use, the rate of illicit drug toxicity deaths in Nanaimo almost tripled between 2019 and 2022.^{ix}

QUALITATIVE DATA

The following section offers a high-level summary of the themes identified during the community consultation process, including focus groups and questionnaires with community members and service providers, as well as a youth photography project. The consultation themes are organized into two categories: 1) strengths/resiliencies in Nanaimo and 2) challenges/concerns in Nanaimo.

Strengths and Resiliencies in Nanaimo

Positive Areas/Locations that Youth and Families Enjoy:

- Cinemas
- Library
- Faith organizations (churches, mosques)
- Gyms
- Restaurants, coffee shops
- At home (theirs or friend's)
- Beach, waterfront
- Hiking trails (e.g. Mount Benson)
- School (for many Indigenous youth, this is the only place they go)
- Parks:
 - » Neck Point Park
 - » Oliver Woods Park
 - » Maffeo Sutton Park
 - » Piper's Lagoon Park
 - » Bowen Park
 - » Diver Lake Park

What Makes Youth and Families Feel Safe and Happy:

- The youth-serving organizations, services, and service providers in the community.
- Spending time/doing activities with friends, family, loved ones.
- Spending time outside, in nature (e.g. parks, playgrounds, trails, oceanfront).
- Doing personal care activities (e.g. baths, journaling, reading, working out, music).
- Doing cultural activities (e.g. art, museums, libraries).
- Doing sport activities (e.g. basketball, volleyball, etc.).
- Taking safety precautions:
 - » Carrying pepper spray.
 - » Traveling in groups, having a buddy system
 - » Not walking alone downtown or after dark.

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“I found basketball and learned how to be part of a team.”

– Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy Participant

Challenges and Concerns in Nanaimo

- Organized crime (such as Hells Angels) recruits young people to sell drugs, etc.
- Peer pressure (e.g. wanting high end or designer clothes), wanting to fit in.
- Lack of parental supervision and accountability, bad adult influences.
- Lack of focus on arts and sports to divert children from bad activities.
- Lack of available low-barrier activities (peer-led).
- Poverty, living in families who struggle to make ends meet.
- Mental health, disability (e.g. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) and substance use.
- Lack of connection to something meaningful (connection to community, family, peers).
- Indigenous youth sometimes feel like they are not welcome anywhere.
- Lack of significant adults/role models in young people's lives other than parents (e.g. coach).
- Racism and discrimination with systems and agencies.
- Need more opportunities for hope, no matter the background or economic situation.
- Lack of resources to address barriers in children's lives.
- TV, media portraying gangs.
- Lack of education for youth.
- Isolation, boredom, loneliness – this was exacerbated by COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Exposure to violence in the home (important to break the cycle).
- Adverse childhood experiences.
- Lack of meaningful opportunities for pro-social engagements and accessible supports.
- Parents not working and not being actively involved in their child's life.
- Social determinants of health: income, housing, prenatal and early years, and food security
- Trauma (including inter-generational trauma).
- Having friends who are involved with gangs or criminal activity.
- Desire for power, fun, excitement, street cred, peer recognition.
- Lack of services for substance use and mental health among youth.
- School challenges: poor performance, bullying, drop-out.
- Experiencing insecure housing.
- Lack of trust within services, agencies, organizations.
- Lack of self-esteem, sense of belonging, sense of identity.

“

“The sad truth about happiness: Fences are an integral part of Nanaimo's downtown landscape. Knowing that these fences are there to prevent people experiencing homelessness from gathering and camping is the sad truth in attempting to make the City a happier and safer place.”

– Nanaimo Photovoice Participant



Who Participated?



229 Total participants



28% were 24 years of age or younger



11 stakeholder interviews



4 focus groups



34% identified as First Nations



74 service provider respondents

RISK FACTORS IN NANAIMO

Based on the analysis of data sets mentioned above, the steering committee identified several risk factors as significant for Nanaimo. These are presented below. Public Safety Canada has criteria for funding and the steering committee is responsible for developing and recommending focus areas that can reasonably reduce the identified risk factors and increase the corresponding protective factors within the time frame and within the resources and capacities available.

LAND & WATERS LEVEL

- » Limited or lack of access/availability to healthy lands & waters, including Indigenous sources of foods and medicines

SOCIETAL LEVEL

- » Large number of people living in poverty
- » Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression, such as racism
- » Lack of affordable, appropriate, and safe housing
- » Lack of adequate services (social, physical health, mental health, addictions, etc.)
- » High unemployment

COMMUNITY LEVEL

- » Presence of organized crime & human trafficking
- » Repeated negative media attention
- » Availability of street level weapons, including firearms
- » Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use)
- » Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- » Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood
- » Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents

SCHOOL LEVEL

- » Too few teacher role models
- » Lack of attention to bullying (including cyberbullying)
- » Negative labelling by teachers
- » Access to street level drugs within the school
- » Low educational aspirations

PEER LEVEL

- » Friends who are part of a gang
- » Friends with problematic substance use challenges
- » Interaction with peers in conflict with the law
- » Lack of meaningful peer connections

FAMILY LEVEL

- » Intimate partner and family violence
- » Abuse and neglect of children
- » Criminalized or incarcerated parents
- » Lone parent household with limited economic means



ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

In addition to the risk factors listed above, community members and local stakeholders identified several challenges related to the service system (not included above) that are also important to consider as part of the efforts to increase youth resilience and prevent gun and gang violence. They include:

- Struggles with rigid policies within programs and services.
- Lack of accountability for how resources are used within organizations and services (e.g. not providing equitable access to services).
- Organizations/sectors working in silos creating difficulties for youth in navigating services and systems.
- Lack of collaboration between services.
- Organizations lacking resources, staff, and funding.
 - » Several programs rely on one or two staff that champion programs, which is not sustainable.
- Lack of low-barrier, free services, and programs.
- Gaps in programming in certain geographic areas of Nanaimo (particularly Central and North Nanaimo).

FOCUS AREAS

SAFE YOUTH GATHERING SPACES

YOUTH OUTREACH

CONNECTING YOUTH TO LAND AND WATER THROUGH SNAWAYLTH

YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS

ENHANCING EXISTING YOUTH PROGRAMS

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

“

"The Vault Café is my favourite place downtown. I love coming here for a drink, meeting friends and listening to local artists. It is a place that makes me feel at home."

- Nanaimo Photovoice Participant

SAFE YOUTH GATHERING SPACES

Establish safe, free youth gathering spaces, within existing facilities, with the following elements:

- A flexible budget that includes transportation and access
- Community-level champions that are grassroots informed
- Hybrid approaches where some resource linkages are offered during the daytime (1 – 4 PM) and other youth programs carry into the evening (6 PM – 12 AM)
- Socio-emotional learning opportunities
- Partnerships between agencies and schools for wrap-around approaches
- The ability to meet youth where they are at (no agenda)
- Attractors such as sports, arts, culture, food, and leisure available on a drop-in basis
- Connection to local Indigenous culture
- Flexible age funding (11-25 years)
- Clearly identified recruitment and referral approaches with simple intake processes
- Other elements identified during implementation (ideally in collaboration with youth)

Evidence & Risk Factors

At-risk youth tend to have difficulty accessing health and social services, mostly due to barriers like age-related restrictions, abstinence requirements, limited-service hours, etc. To overcome this, studies suggest removing "blanket age restrictions", "establishing youth-centric social housing, and supporting peer-driven, low-threshold services". Consultation participants also identified the need for a safe, free, accessible, low barrier youth space that fills gaps in services.

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism
- Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic

- substance use, criminality)
- Intimate partner and family violence
- Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting
- Abuse and neglect of children
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Problematic alcohol and drug use
- Isolation, boredom

Implementation Considerations

Creating accessible spaces for youth also requires considerations such as physical accessibility (including those with disabilities), inclusivity (the space is welcoming for all youth regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.), and safety (clear guidelines and policies to address safety concerns or incidents).



YOUTH OUTREACH

Expand street outreach and related programs, along with service hours and locations, to build relationships with youth at risk and to meet a wide range of their needs such as food, harm reduction, engagement in recreation, access to counselling, etc.

Evidence & Risk Factors

Outreach programs that aim to offer supports and services (e.g. mentorship, skill-building, homework help, harm reduction, recreational activities, etc.) to at-risk youth have been proven to effectively prevent crime and increase youth resilience. For example, the United Kingdom's Youth Inclusion Program (YIP), provided outreach services to at-risk youth aged 13 to 16 years in several neighbourhoods and aimed to make them feel liked, valuable, and included within their community. Program evaluations found a 65% reduction in youth arrests, 27% reduction in youth removed from schools, and a 15% reduction in overall crime in the selected neighbourhoods.^{xi}

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use)
- High desire for status, recognition, and protection
- Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality)
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Problematic alcohol and drug use

Implementation Considerations

Data from the assessment process suggests certain locations/neighbourhoods in Nanaimo may be "priority areas" or "high risk areas" and therefore should be the focus of youth outreach programs. While this approach can help direct the Strategy's limited resources to areas facing the most challenges, targeted neighbourhood social policies/approaches have some limitations that should be considered.^{xii}

Specifically, neighbourhood-based programs may have limited reach since they only serve residents in a specific area. There is also a risk of stigmatizing certain neighbourhoods and their residents or implementing programs that do not meet the needs and realities of certain neighbourhoods. Some community members may resist the implementation of neighbourhood-based initiatives, particularly if they feel their needs or interests are not being adequately met or if they fear the program will negatively impact their safety.

If a neighbourhood-based framework is adopted for the implementation of youth outreach initiatives in Nanaimo, it is important to engage community members and stakeholders throughout the planning and implementation process. It is also important to be transparent about the goals and objectives of the program, and actively involve residents in decision-making and program evaluation.





CONNECTING YOUTH TO LAND AND WATER THROUGH SNAWAYLTH

Enhance existing and/or create new opportunities to connect youth to the land and water through Snawaylth (teachings) to strengthen their mental, emotional, spiritual and cultural resilience.

Evidence & Risk Factors

During community engagement, many Snuneymuxw and other youth identified being on the land or water as important to their happiness and wellness. Youth and those working with them also identified the importance of cultural belonging, connections with trusted adults in guiding / mentoring roles and having opportunities to give back.

Providing youth opportunities to reconnect to land, language and cultural practices by following a Snuneymuxw way of being through Snawaylth (teachings) and the Longhouse Learning and Healing Framework will help build strong positive cultural identity, connection, belonging and a sense of responsibility. These factors are essential for youth to be resilient and resist the challenges and stresses that draw them into gang involvement, substance use, crime, and violence.

Our Snawaylth are our Teachings – they govern and guide all aspects of our lives. Snawaylth are our laws, values, beliefs, spiritual guidance, and principles for action. They are comprehensive in that no aspect of our lives, and the actions and choices we make, can be understood apart from our Snawaylth.

At the heart of our Snawaylth is a worldview that sees the interconnected relationship between all living things in creation. Seeing this interconnectedness teaches us that all things must be honoured and respected, for they all have a spirit and purpose. This guides us in our daily lives, and in the decisions we make as a community. For example, from our worldview to speak of the “impact” of a decision, means to view the impacts holistically through a lens that recognizes the living spirit within all things, and how everything is connected and relates to one another.

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Limited or lack of access/availability to healthy lands & waters, including Indigenous sources of foods and medicines.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma
- Isolation, boredom
- Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism
- Too few teacher role models

Implementation Considerations

It is important that projects that connect youth to land/water, and teachings be developed, led, and implemented by Snuneymuxw First Nation (and as appropriate, partner organizations may also be involved). This allows the prioritization of cultural safety and respect for a Snuneymuxw way of being, including learning and practicing cultural protocols, language, and respectful ways of being on land and water.

Snuneymuxw Knowledge Keepers can provide valuable insights into the needs of youth and suggest ways to engage them in ways that support healing, build trust, and positive youth development.

It is recognized that potential projects under this focus area may interconnect and include several other focus areas such as youth mentoring, outreach, and safe gathering spaces. Regular evaluation and monitoring of projects chosen in this focus area are critical to ensure outcomes for youth are positive, culturally responsive and succeed in building youth resilience and resistance to involvement in gangs, violence and other related harmful behaviours. Connecting youth to land, and water through Snawaylth can effectively promote intergenerational healing, cultural revitalization, and positive youth development.



YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMS

Connect youth, especially youth at risk, with diverse role models and significant/caring adults (e.g. tutors, trades or vocational role models, mentors, teachers, coaches, etc.).

Evidence & Risk Factors

Evidence shows that youth mentoring programs (i.e. programs that connect them to significant/caring adults) can divert them from crime. For example, Big Brothers Big Sisters pairs children/youth, aged 6 to 18 years and living with a single parent, with an adult mentor and has resulted in a “statistically significant reduction in initiating drug and alcohol use and antisocial behaviour among mentored youth”.^{xiii} Participants have also experienced improved relationships with parents and better school performance. One study found that for every dollar spent on mentoring programs, communities could expect more than four dollars in net benefits.^{xiv}

During the consultations in Nanaimo, most service providers mentioned the need for programs that connect youth to role models (including those working in the trades), coaches, teachers, Elders, and other caring adults. This is consistent with research around promising practices to build youth resilience and prevent gang involvement.

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Abuse and neglect of children
- Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting
- High desire for status, recognition, and protection
- Low educational aspirations
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Too few teacher role models

Implementation Considerations

Mentoring programs that connect youth with significant/caring adults should be implemented in Nanaimo by adapting existing, evidence-based programs to the local context. This allows the community to implement effective elements in a way that best suits its needs and aligns with the Strategy’s budget.^{xv} Modifications should remain true to the evidence to ensure effectiveness.⁵

When developing youth mentorship programs, it is important to define the program’s goals, objectives, and the expected outcomes for mentors and mentees. To ensure mentors have the skills, knowledge, and experience to effectively support youth, various factors (e.g. age, gender, and cultural background) should be considered. A matching process that considers factors like shared interests, personality, and compatibility is key to the success of these programs. As well, providing comprehensive training (e.g. communication, youth development, cultural competence) to help mentors develop the skills and knowledge to effectively support youth is essential. Ongoing support and guidance for mentors helps ensure they feel equipped to effectively support their mentees. Regular program monitoring and evaluation is also necessary to ensure it is meeting its goals and objectives, and adjustments can be made as needed.



5. To learn more about local adaptations of crime prevention programs, refer to the following toolkit: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/2017-s019/index-en.aspx>.

ENHANCING EXISTING YOUTH PROGRAMS

Improve existing programs by adding new components that fill gaps and build protective factors for children and youth at-risk, including:

- Sports and recreation programs that build team identity.
- Opportunities to connect youth to the land.
- Educational, health, and wellness programming.
- Youth mentorship.
- Life skills and socio-emotional learning (e.g. conflict resolution, family violence prevention, prevention of early onset alcohol and drug use).
- Inclusion of family members of youth in provision of food, and other social services.
- Food security measures, including gardening, to connect with the land and Indigenous culture.
- Opportunities for youth engagement to foster a sense of belonging, value, and connectedness within the community (e.g. volunteering, mentoring, connecting peers to services).

Evidence & Risk Factors

The Building Safer Communities Fund does not permit the provision of resources to existing programs, but it does allow the enhancement of those that can decrease local risk factors identified as needing attention. As such, the steering committee suggested several changes to existing programs. Further, programs that build life skills, socio-emotional learning, healthy conflict resolution, and connections with mentors are deemed effective prevention approaches.^{xvi}

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism
- Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- Too few teacher role models
- Low educational aspirations
- Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality)
- Intimate partner and family violence
- Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting
- Abuse and neglect of children

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Problematic alcohol and drug use
- Isolation, boredom

Implementation Considerations

It is important to ensure the allocation of (limited) funding is guided by evidence (e.g. previous evaluations) and community feedback. When enhancing existing programs/services, peer-led approaches that offer employment opportunities (rather than volunteer or honoraria-based) should be prioritized. When working with Indigenous organizations, desired outcomes and criteria should be clearly communicated without dictating how to achieve them. Lastly, Nanaimo could consider implementing a system to monitor the impact of new program components.



MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Build relationships with media and develop key, positive messaging to highlight successful programs and initiatives that counter repeated negative media attention that perpetuates discrimination and stigmatization. Existing communication and marketing resources can be leveraged within the community and its organizations to share these key messages.

Evidence & Risk Factors

The media (newspapers, radio, social media, Internet, television, etc.) is a key source of information on crime and safety for a significant portion of the population. While no causal link has been demonstrated between media reporting and public perception of community safety, some studies have found that media on crime and social disorder can generate fear of crime generally and of and within certain populations (e.g. youth, newcomers) specifically.^{xvii}

When a community receives repeated negative media attention highlighting instances of crime, violence, and social challenges, public perceptions of safety and well-being are negatively impacted. This perception can result in people avoiding certain areas, making them vulnerable to neglect. During the consultation process in Nanaimo, several residents (including youth) indicated that despite having never experienced harm themselves, they feel unsafe in certain locations often mentioned in the news. The field study mentioned in Scope Two provides further important data in this regard and is also available as a standalone document.

While repeated negative media attention can lead to fear of social disorder, impact residents' sense of safety, and increase fear of certain locations/areas in the community, research suggests that media have the potential to also contribute to prevention and community safety by sharing positive messages and highlighting successful initiatives in the community.^{xviii} These messages can also be picked up by social media and repeated in more informal publications like community and organizational newsletters.

The risk factors this focus area seeks to address are:

- Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use)
- Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood
- Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents
- Repeated negative media attention
- Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism

Implementation Considerations

It will be important to implement these activities in a way that stays true to the local context and challenges (i.e. not discounting concerns highlighted by residents), while also including positive stories and successes in communication materials. Furthermore, it is important that positive messaging does not set unrealistic expectations and is part of a broader communication strategy to avoid having only limited impact.

Showcasing community-driven programs and events that work to address discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression can be used as a communication tool to educate the general community. An inventory and assessment of community events can be collected and any gaps identified can be included in communication planning.

Finally, changes in attitude towards a place or population are not accomplished quickly and there are setbacks in rolling out a communication campaign. The more the Youth Resilience Strategy can become seen as a distinct effort with a name (brand), look, and associated activities, the more likely that it will over time become embraced by Partners, key stakeholders and the community.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Strategy relies heavily on the capacity to engage overall community and its key partners to commit to addressing risk factors for youth upstream while taking action here and now. A steering committee was formed to support the development and implementation of the Strategy. The steering committee has met monthly since January 2023 and will continue to meet regularly over the next three years. The steering committee fulfills the following roles:

Partners with the City to provide leadership and oversight for Strategy implementation	Informs the community on the status of focus areas recommended in the Strategy	Helps ensure the foundational commitments are adhered to
Reviews the evaluation and monitoring results as they emerge to provide advice on changes to the Strategy as needed	Takes leadership in the implementation of the sustainability plan	Engages additional stakeholders as new needs arise
Communicates the plan priorities within their own spheres of influence	Seeks out new or existing resources to support Strategy implementation and thereby advancing sustainability	Facilitates connections to existing efforts that align with Strategy priorities
Provides supports and oversight to any action teams	Stays informed and shares knowledge regarding developments to the Strategy within Nanaimo and beyond	Guides the distribution of the BSC funds by developing grant criteria and making recommendations to the City for fund disbursement

The steering committee is a multi-disciplinary body comprised of representatives from the following sectors:

- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- City of Nanaimo
- Urban Indigenous Community
- Policing
- Indigenous Welfare
- Child Welfare
- General Health Care
- Justice
- Community Policing
- Business
- Youth
- Youth Services
- Youth Advocates
- Youth Shelter Services
- Youth Substance Use / Addiction
- Youth Employment
- Education
- People with Living / Lived experience

NEXT STEPS

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR THE NANAIMO YOUTH RESILIENCE STRATEGY

The Strategy Implementation Guide provides a step-by-step guide on how the steering committee, along with support from City staff, can best implement the Strategy. The guide also provides evaluation and sustainability frameworks on how to evaluate and monitor the impact of the Strategy, and how to maintain the momentum of the Strategy after the funding from Public Safety Canada has ended.

City staff are working with the steering committee to identify projects that address the focus areas identified in the Strategy. Funding received from the BSCF will provide financial support to these projects for the next 3 years. Development and implementation of projects is targeted to begin in the Summer of 2023.

While funding from Public Safety Canada is a crucial first step in these developments, the Strategy speaks more broadly to the opportunities to address root conditions and risk factors and enhance protective factors for all children and youth in Nanaimo.





APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: YOUTH GANG INVOLVEMENT – A REVIEW OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

KEY DEFINITIONS

One of the key challenges related to preventing or intervening in gang violence is the absence of a universal definition of “gangs”. There are multiple terms and definitions which vary according to the needs of the sectors/organizations that propose them (e.g. academia, criminal justice, community-based organizations). Furthermore, unique definitions often emerge through observations made in specific geographic, political, and cultural contexts. Despite the various potential definitions, there tends to be several key criteria or descriptors used to define gangs, including the number and age of individuals involved, duration, types of activities conducted, level of organization, use of certain symbols or brands, etc.

GANGS

For the purpose of this document, the following gang definition will be used: *A gang is a group of three or more individuals that has existed for at least one month and engages in criminal activity on a regular basis. Gang-related crime can be conducted within the group context or by individual gang members in isolation – as long as such criminal activity, directly or indirectly, benefits the gang.*^{xix} This definition, which is consistent with the Canadian Criminal Code definition of a criminal organization (section 467.1), allows one to distinguish between gang definers (three or more members, in existence for at least one month, involvement in criminal activity) and gang descriptors (personal characteristics of gang members, gang size, level of organization, type of criminal involvement, etc.). Such a definition would also allow the identification of different types of gangs, including adult vs. youth gangs, transient vs. permanent gangs, and specialized vs. opportunistic gangs. This definition further allows the classification of gangs according to the number of members, their level of organization (i.e. whether they have leaders and followers), their level of involvement in violence, and other gang characteristics (i.e. ethnic composition, gender composition, names and symbols, gang slang, informal and formal rules, etc.).

YOUTH GANGS

The *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* includes a specific focus on young people. To implement effective prevention and intervention strategies, it is important to define and understand the specific nature and scope of youth gangs. According to Public Safety Canada, “youth gangs consist of young people who self-identify as a group (e.g. have a group name), are generally perceived by others as a distinct group, and are involved in a significant number of incidents that lead to negative responses from the community and/or law enforcement agencies.”^{xx}

Youth gangs are active across the country in both urban and rural communities. Youth may become involved with gangs for different reasons, including a desire for excitement, prestige, a sense of belonging, protection, or money. It is also important to recognize that loose associations between one or more youth may not meet the criteria and definition of an organized gang, but they may be precursors for potential gang involvement, thus they should be included in the scope of preventative measures.

GANG VIOLENCE

Gang violence means “criminal and non-political acts of violence committed by a group of people who regularly engage in criminal activity, often for financial benefits.” The term may also refer to physical, hostile interactions between two or more gangs.^{xxi}

Some communities across Canada have recently observed an increase in gun and gang violence, with devastating impacts. In 2021, Canada saw the highest rate of gang-related homicides in 16 years. Gang-related homicides continue to account for nearly one-quarter (23%) of all homicides. Furthermore, of the 297 gun homicides in 2021, police believe 46% were gang related.^{xxii} The trauma of such violence not only affects victims but extends to their families and the communities in which they live. In Canada, gang violence is generally not focused on the public. In most cases, violence is the result of attempts to settle scores between rival gangs.^{xxiii} However, gang violence in a community severely impacts resident sense of safety and well-being.

ROOT CAUSES

To prevent crime and violence – including gang violence – it is important to understand their causes. Crime is primarily the outcome of multiple adverse economic, social, and family conditions. While individuals have an obligation to act responsibly and with respect for their fellow citizens, communities have a responsibility to address these conditions which hinder healthy development and can lead to delinquent behaviour.

The root causes approach is a way of thinking systemically and holistically about the complex, multiple, and interconnected roots of social problems such as gang violence. It calls for collaborative, comprehensive, and sustained efforts to transform these underlying conditions rather than focus solely on the symptoms. The goal is to prevent crime and victimization from occurring in the first place by building a society that supports the well-being of everyone.^{xxiv}

The root causes of crime and violence are well documented and researched. Gang violence prevention efforts should ideally focus on improvements in all three of these areas:

Economic Factors: includes lack of financial resources, lack of educational opportunities, lack of meaningful employment options, poor housing, lack of hope, and prejudice against persons living in poverty.

Social Environment: includes inequality, lack of support to families and neighbourhoods, real or perceived inaccessibility to services, lack of leadership in communities, low value placed on children, and individual well-being.

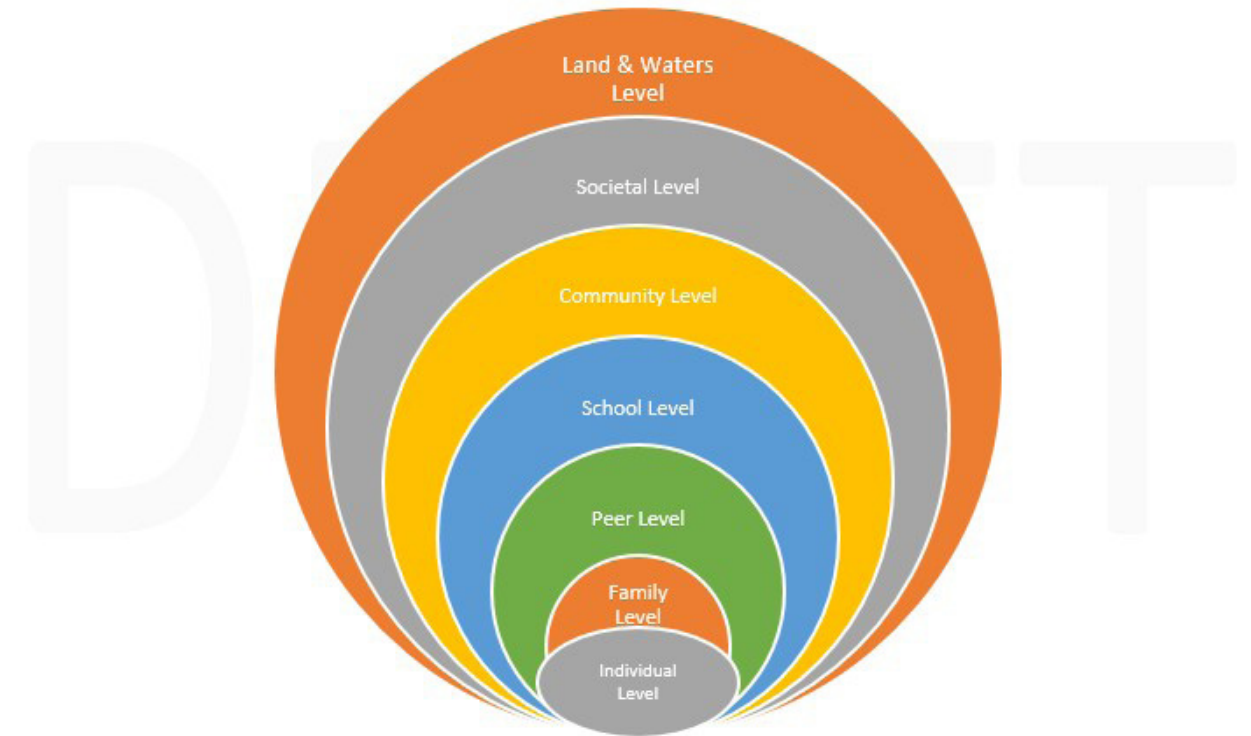
Family Structures: includes family conditions such as parental conflict, parental criminality, lack of communication, lack of respect and responsibility, abuse and neglect of children, and family violence.

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS^{xxv}

Much of what we know about why crime and victimization occur comes from a growing body of knowledge about risks and protective factors. This research provides an important understanding of what increases or decreases the likelihood of negative outcomes, such as gang violence.

Factors that lead to crime most often go beyond the individual, their family, and peers, to the heart of the community. Risk and protective factors combine to make the probability of crime, victimization, and fear of crime more or less likely. No one variable should be considered in isolation. Instead, crime and victimization are the outcomes of interactions between risk and protective factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. This is commonly referred to as the ecological framework.^{xxvi}

Ecological Framework



- **Land & waters level:** efforts focus on Indigenous teachings related to the importance of access to and availability of healthy lands and waters, including Indigenous sources of foods and medicines.
- **Societal level:** efforts focus on what increases the likelihood for positive outcomes for all, including value structures, services, and systems that advance equity and decrease “isms”.
- **Community level:** efforts focus on building capacity within the community at large and its neighborhoods to contribute to positive outcomes for children and youth and their families.
- **School level:** efforts focus on what the school can provide to increase the chances of healthy attachment to education and social endeavors. Schools are, for many children, the first place they receive guidance outside of the home and socialization beyond the family.
- **Peer level:** efforts seek to increase positive peer involvement and minimize exposure to negative peer environments. Healthy peer-to-peer connections have long been identified as significantly contributing to prevention of longer-term ill outcomes including coming in conflict with the law.
- **Family level:** efforts focus on the whole family as the main source of daily interaction for children and youth. Strengthening the family inevitably has positive outcomes for children. However, it is important to be cautious not to move from blaming the individual to blaming the family. The family, too, must be seen within the larger context in which it exists.
- **Individual level:** efforts most closely resemble traditional service approaches. A focus on prevention, however, means that the risk and protective factors go beyond any individual to the family, the community, and finally the whole society. Thus, noticing risk factors in the life of a child inevitably ought to raise questions about the larger context rather than limiting the focus to addressing these factors in isolation.

RISK FACTORS

Though the terms ‘risk factors’ and ‘root causes’ as well as social determinants of health are sometimes used interchangeably, there are important distinctions between them. While root causes focus on affecting large systems, changing cultural norms, and influencing policy change, risk factors are negative influences in the lives of individuals or a community that may increase the presence of crime, victimization, or fear of crime. The determinants of health refer to both. For example, not completing high school is a ‘risk factor’ that strongly predicts delinquency.^{xxvii} The more risk factors a youth experiences, the more likely they are to

join a gang. It is however important to note that by far not all youth that have multiple risk factors will come in conflict with the law. Rather it tends to be those youth who also lack protective factors, such as having one significant other in their lives outside of the family that they trust and rely on. Risk and protective factors relate in a complex manner. While some risk factors cannot be changed (e.g. learning differences due to FASD) by designing protective factors (e.g. providing opportunities for positive peer interactions) the negative impact of that risk factor can be decreased.

The table below presents an overview of known risk factors that influence youth gang involvement. It is essential to understand these risk factors and to be able to build prevention and intervention measures that address them.

Level	Risk Factors
Land and Waters	Limited/lack of access/availability to healthy lands and waters, including Indigenous foods and medicines
Societal	Large number of people living in poverty
	High level of inequity
	Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism
	Lack of affordable, appropriate, and safe housing
	Lack of adequate services (social, physical health, mental health, addictions, etc.)
Community	High unemployment
	Presence of organized crime (and human trafficking)
	Repeated negative media attention
	Availability of street level drugs
	Availability of street level weapons (including firearms)
	Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use)
	High transience in neighborhoods
	Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
School	Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighborhood
	Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents
School	School Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of dedicated educational supports to students with special needs Too few teacher role models Lack of attention to bullying (including cyber bullying) High number of suspensions and expulsions Negative labelling by teachers Undiagnosed learning disabilities Access to street level drugs within the school Classmates that are gang involved

	Relationship to School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low attachment to school Low educational aspirations Consistent underperformance
Peer Group	Friends who are part of a gang
	Friends with problematic substance use issues
	Interactions with peers who are in conflict with the law
	Lack of meaningful peer connections
	Tolerance of violence in peer group
	Discrimination of peers due to their race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, country of origin
Family	Pre-teen exposure to high stress
	Intimate partner and family violence
	Erratic, overly laissez-faire, or punitive parenting
	Tolerance of problematic substance use
	Abuse and neglect of children
	Violence between siblings
	Criminalized or incarcerated parents
	Lone parent household with limited economic means
	Family members (including in the extended family) that are gang involved
	Individual
Prior delinquency and criminalization	
Illegal gun ownership	
Involvement in trafficking drugs	
High desire for status, recognition, and protection	
Low sense of belonging	
Problematic alcohol and drug use	
Lack of attention to trauma	
Frequent displays of aggression and violence (including verbal violence)	
Early sexualization	
Isolation, boredom	
Low sense of self	

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Protective factors are positive influences that can improve the lives of individuals or the safety of a community by decreasing the likelihood that a person will engage in crime or become a victim. Drawing on research regarding gang prevention and youth resilience, the table below provides a list of protective factors.

Level	Protective Factors
Land and Waters	Access/availability of healthy lands & waters including Indigenous sources of foods and medicines
Societal	Social and economic policies and actions that encourage positive youth engagement
	Access to resources to meet basic needs for all
	Strong social safety net
	High level of equity in all regards
	Adherence to human rights
	Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation
	Visibly valuing children and having a commitment to the future
Community	High level of community engagement
	High level of volunteerism
	Access to and participation in traditional healing and cultural activities
	Availability of barrier free recreation
	Strong neighborhoods
	Strong leadership (both elected officials and “natural” leaders)
	Investment in community safety through social development
School	Effective connections between school and home environment
	Clear behavioral expectations and follow-through on infractions
	Attention to context in which the school exists
	School-neighborhood collaborations
	Knowledge and utilization of asset-based teaching
	Availability of diverse extracurricular activities
	High number of students that graduate

Peer Group	Positive and sustained peer relations
	Connections to peers who are actively engaged in the community in positive ways.
	High level of intolerance towards violence and problematic substance use
	Involvement in after school activities
Family	Peers that are engaged in recreational activities.
	Parents that are present and consistent
	Availability for family dialogues on challenging topics
	Shared activities between members of the family
	Parents modeling involvement in recreation
	Parents whose needs are met and who feel supported in the larger community.
	Multiple and healthy connections to the wider community
Individual	Sense of agency
	Positive self-regard
	Strong sense of belonging
	Regular positive acknowledgement from peers and family
	Conflict resolution skills
	Intolerance towards violence and coming in conflict with the law.
	Success in one or more significant areas of life (school, recreation, social connections)
	Access to one significant other outside of the family

APPENDIX 2: EXISTING DATA

REVIEW OF EXISTING QUANTITATIVE DATA

Youth gang violence does not happen in isolation from other local community safety and well-being challenges. Therefore, it is important to ground this strategy within the broader context in Nanaimo, including strengths and challenges that are related to crime, violence, and safety, as well as existing initiatives and programs that can inform or be leveraged as part of the youth resilience strategy. The section below provides an overview of local demographics, trends, initiatives, and organizations based on a review of research and existing data/statistics.

CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (EDI)

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a tool that collects data providing insights into the healthy development of children.^{xxviii} The EDI questionnaire was developed by Dr. Dan Offord and Dr. Magdalena Janus at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, but is used across jurisdictions, including in British Columbia. EDI data show that avoidable and persistent inequalities in children's developmental health and well-being exist in BC and have been sustained over time. Inequalities in children's well-being arise because of social inequity in the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

The section below outlines the data from EDI collected between 2016 and 2019 in the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District (SD68) and at the provincial level. The full report is available at https://earlylearning.ubc.ca/app/uploads/2022/03/edi_w7_communityprofile_sd_68.pdf.

DEMOGRAPHICS

	School District 68	British Columbia
Total EDI (kindergarten students)	1,053	43,377
Student Mean Age	5.66	5.64
# Males	531	22,260
# Females	522	21,117
# English Language Learners	52	8,356
# Special Needs	30	1,680

EDI VULNERABILITY SCALE

Based on the EDI instrument, vulnerable children are those who, without additional support and care, are more likely to experience future challenges in their school years and beyond. Vulnerability is determined using a cut-off for each EDI scale. At the provincial level, the current vulnerability rate for children Vulnerable on One or More Scales of the EDI is 33.4%. This means that 14,468 Kindergarten students in the province start school with vulnerability in one or more areas of their development. These vulnerabilities may have an influence on their future success and well-being. In Nanaimo – Ladysmith, 37% of kindergarten students are vulnerable on at least one area of development as measured by the EDI between 2016 and 2019. The table shows vulnerability rates and the corresponding number of children vulnerable, across each of the five scales of the EDI in Nanaimo and Ladysmith.

Category	% Vulnerable	Total # of Kindergarten Aged Children
Physical Health and Well-being Children's gross and fine motor skills, physical independence, and readiness for the school day such as motor control, energy level, daily preparedness for school and washroom independence.	20%	205
Social Competence Children's overall social competencies, capacity for respect and responsibility, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things.	18%	190
Emotional Maturity Children's prosocial and helping behaviours, as well as hyperactivity and inattention, and aggressive, anxious, and fearful behaviour.	20%	208
Language & Cognitive Development Children's basic and advanced literacy skills, numeracy skills, interest in math and reading, and memory.	14%	151
Communication Skills & General Knowledge Children's English language skills and general knowledge, such as their ability to clearly communicate one's own needs, participate in story-telling, and general interest in the world.	11%	112

The table below demonstrates a breakdown per neighbourhood of the percentage of children who are vulnerable on one or more scales of the EDI in School District 68. Cedar-Wellington-Gabriola, South Nanaimo, and Townsite-Nanaimo Downtown have the highest rate of EDI vulnerability among children.

Vulnerable on One or More Scales of the EDI			
Neighbourhood	# of Kindergarten Aged children	% Vulnerable	# of Children Vulnerable
Cedar – Wellington – Gabriola	92	53%	49
Ladysmith	93	34%	32
Long Lake – Departure Bay	147	25%	36
Nanaimo West	127	28%	36
North Nanaimo	237	40%	94
Northfield – Diver Lake	122	24%	29
South Nanaimo	108	47%	51
Townsite – Nanaimo Downtown	127	46%	58
TOTAL (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) – Kindergarten aged	1,053	37%	385

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND LIVABILITY

The Nanaimo City Plan (Nanaimo Reimagined) is a guide to move toward a future Nanaimo – a city that has the benefits residents enjoy today combined with new opportunities. A key component of the City Plan focuses on Community Well-Being and Livability. According to the plan, “a Healthy Nanaimo is about both the well-being of all our residents and the livability of our city. A healthy city means that all people have the opportunity to access and maintain a high standard of living – regardless of their life stage, family composition, abilities, or socio-economic status. Nanaimo envisions a city where a person can live an entire lifetime, finding comfort and happiness in a safe and secure community with access to affordable housing, recreation, culture, and wellness services, healthy food, parks, nature, and education. A Healthy Nanaimo is where people are securely housed, fed, and cared for. It is a city where we can all thrive.”

The focus areas, supporting data, and desired outcomes related to community well-being and livability are outlined in the table below. Several of these priorities align with efforts to prevent violence and build resilience at the local level.

Priorities	Supporting Data	Desired Outcomes
Community Safety and Security	69% of participants in a 2020 Statistical Survey* identified social challenges such as public drug use and crime as a top concern for the future of the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A caring, healthy, accessible, inclusive, and safe community that empowers its community members to realize their aspirations. A high degree of perceived and actual public safety and security where all people can equitably live, work, play, create, and learn. A safe Downtown with less instances of people encountering negative experiences in Downtown and throughout the community. Programs and services that address root causes, reducing points of entry or re-entry to experiencing poverty, mental health challenges, substance use, criminal activity, and violence. Continued use of best practices when reviewing design, land use, and space programming to consider community safety and security issues, including crime reduction, traffic safety, and emergency response. A wealth of safe, equitable, and inclusive public spaces where everyone can be present without discrimination or harassment. Safety and security in all parts of the city supporting a diversity of community members and businesses to thrive.

Affordable Housing	45% of participants in a 2020 Statistical Survey* identified affordability of housing and daily needs as a top concern for the future of the city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More affordable housing options of diverse types, tenures, affordability levels, and health supports to meet a variety of community needs. Ongoing leadership in identifying and removing barriers to maintaining existing, and delivering new, affordable housing Equitably distributed affordable housing options across all residential areas. Low to moderate income households continuing to succeed, even as housing prices and rental rates rise. Affordable housing innovations supported through emerging regulatory tools, funding, and initiatives. Strong community support and trust built through transparent and meaningful engagement on affordable housing. Leveraging of external resource opportunities, including senior government funding, programs, partnerships, and incentives, to generate affordable housing options.
Intergenerational Living	<p>34% of participants in a 2020 Statistical Survey* identified the need to accommodate an aging population and more seniors living in the community as a top concern for the future of the city.</p> <p>33% of participants in a 2020 Statistical Survey* identified accessible and affordable childcare as a top priority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to affordable childcare spaces with a variety of options available across the city. More accessible residential dwellings that offer adaptable or universally designed units for people of all ages and abilities. Spaces and programs that encourage intergenerational sharing of experiences and invite all generations to be together. Incentives that encourage incorporation of intergenerational features, services, and amenities into new development or redevelopment. Integrated services and supports for all life stages, with an emphasis on supporting periods of transition. Age-friendly, intergenerational considerations considered by City services, including decision making, communications, and engagement.

Food Security	In 2022, City owned lands were supporting 7 community gardens, 3 food forests, and 15 hectares of land to grow food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just and sustainable food systems that support self-determination, strengthen regional food systems, and recognize the importance of food from around the world. • Strong partnerships and relationships that support the creation, provision, distribution, and sharing of food between the City, Indigenous peoples, other levels of government, agencies, and local organizations. • Access to nourishing food for all residents, both in regular times and during emergency situations that impact people's access to food. • Healthy relationships to food that broaden understanding of food systems, support environments of choice, and invite residents' participation in food systems.
Recreation, Culture, and Wellness	In a 2020 Statistical Survey, 53% of participants reported having registered for a City led parks and recreation program in the past five years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An active community with many physical and social recreation, culture, and wellness opportunities, supporting a strong community that embraces preventative health. • A strong focus on equity and inclusion, providing quality recreation and wellness services and experiences for all. • Supportive environments and a network that enables individual capacity through recreation and health promotion. • Programs and services continuing to evolve to provide for the changing needs and aspirations of community members over time. • High quality City facilities that meet growing demands and are inclusive, accessible, and sustainable, providing environments that support physical, mental, and emotional wellness. • People connecting to nature and to each other through recreation and active living opportunities in a variety of forms, amenities, programs, and services.

CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION

The statistics presented in the following section are publicly available through Statistics Canada sources. Additional data related to gang and gun violence in Nanaimo will be provided by the Nanaimo RCMP later and will be reviewed by the steering committee to inform future directions of the strategy.

POLICE-REPORTED CRIME STATISTICS^{xxix}

The table below shows police-reported crime statistics in Nanaimo for all Criminal Code violations between 2017 and 2021. The overall rate of police-reported crime statistics in Nanaimo decreased slightly between 2019 and 2020 but increased between 2020 and 2021. The rate of youth charged (all violations combined) has increased since 2019, going from 1,116.51 to 1,517.50.

Total, All Violations, 2017 - 2021					
Violations	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Actual incidents	9,534	11,670	14,697	12,818	13,662
Rate per 100,000 population	9,890.35	11,909.50	14,642.09	12,619.87	13,344.40
Percentage change in rate	-7.46%	20.42%	22.94%	-13.81%	5.74%
Percent unfounded	10.48%	9.61%	9.38%	9.07%	7.14%
Total, adult charged	1,818	1,725	1,686	1,167	1,158
Rate, adult charged per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over	2,272.61	2,118.90	2,017.30	1,378.83	1,356.02
Total, youth charged	82	120	62	65	88
Rate, youth charged per 100,000 population aged 12 to 17 years	1,519.93	2,209.94	1,116.51	1,142.96	1,517.50

With regards to violent crime, the rate per 100,000 population has increased consistently over the past five years, reaching 2,541.51 in 2021, which represents a 70% increase since 2017. The rate of youth (12 to 17 years) was lower in 2019 and 2020 compared to 2018, but increased again in 2021, reaching 982.93.

Total Violent Criminal Code Violations, 2017 - 2021					
Violations	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Actual incidents	1,241	1,463	1,942	2,047	2,602
Rate per 100,000 population	1,287.38	1,493.02	1,934.74	2,015.36	2,541.51
Percentage change in rate	4.32%	15.97%	29.59%	4.17%	26.11%
Percent unfounded	12.85%	10.85%	16.00%	12.37%	8.15%
Total, adult charged	461	473	453	370	467
Rate, adult charged per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over	576.28	581.01	542.02	437.16	546.86
Total, youth charged	40	55	31	33	57
Rate, youth charged per 100,000 population aged 12 to 17 years	741.43	1,012.89	558.26	580.27	982.93

There were few incidents related to firearms in Nanaimo between 2017 and 2021. The lowest rate was recorded in 2018 (3.06) but increased significantly in 2020 and 2021 (15.75 and 12.70 respectively). No youth were charged for firearm-related offences in 2019 and 2021. One youth was charged in 2019 and 2020.

Total Firearms, Use Of, Discharge, Pointing, 2017 - 2021					
Violations	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Actual incidents	6	3	3	16	13
Rate per 100,000 population	6.22	3.06	2.99	15.75	12.70
Percentage change in rate	17.82%	-19.39%
Percent unfounded	14.29%	0.00%	0.00%	5.88%	13.33%
Total, adult charged	2	1	2	5	7
Rate, adult charged per 100,000 population aged 18 years and over	2.50	1.23	2.39	5.91	8.20
Total, youth charged	0	1	0	1	0
Rate, youth charged per 100,000 population aged 12 to 17 years	0.00%	18.42%	0.00%	17.58%	0.00%

CRIME SEVERITY INDEX

The Crime Severity Index in Nanaimo has decreased since 2019 for all types of crime (general, violent crime, and non-violent crime). The general Crime Severity Index in Nanaimo reached 142.51 in 2019 and decreased to 118.66 in 2020 and 129.70 in 2021.

Crime Severity Index, 2017 - 2021					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Crime Severity Index	97.78	118.18	142.51	118.66	129.70
Percent Change in Crime Severity Index	-7.89%	20.86%	20.59%	-16.74%	9.30%
Violent Crime Severity Index	76.91	85.44	101.41	101.35	146.01
Percent Change in Violent Crime Severity Index	18.38%	11.09%	18.69%	-0.06%	44.07%
Non-Violent Crime Severity Index	105.05	129.68	156.96	124.60	123.53
Percent Change in Non-Violent Crime Severity Index	-12.97%	23.45%	21.04%	-20.62%	-0.86%

DEMOGRAPHICS^{xxx}

AGE CHARACTERISTICS

In 2021, Nanaimo had a slightly older population than the province of British Columbia and the country. The average age was 44.8 in Nanaimo, compared to 43.1 in British Columbia and 41.9 across Canada. The median age in Nanaimo was 45.2, compared to 42.8 in British Columbia and 41.6 in Canada.

	Nanaimo	British Columbia	Canada
Age (average)	44.8 years	43.1 years	41.9 years
Age (median)	45.2 years	42.8 years	41.6 years
0 to 14 years	14,135 (14.1%)	716,900 (14.3%)	6,012,795 (16.3%)
15 to 29 years	16,535 (16.5%)	885,430 (17.7%)	6,636,740 (17.9%)
30 to 44 years	19,155 (19.1%)	1,031,675 (20.6%)	7,429,585 (20%)
45 to 59 years	18,305 (18.3%)	995,385 (19.9%)	7,319,850 (19.8%)
60 to 74 years	21,000 (21%)	946,900 (18.9%)	6,630,135 (17.9%)
75+ years	10,730 (10.7%)	424,595 (8.5%)	2,962,870 (8%)

DIVERSITY AND IMMIGRATION STATUS

In 2021 there was a lower percentage of immigrants in Nanaimo compared to British Columbia and Canada. Furthermore, 8.2% of Nanaimo residents identified as Indigenous, compared to 5.9% across the province and 5% country wide. Visible minorities represent over 13% of Nanaimo's total population. As the overall population grows, Nanaimo is seeing greater diversity in its population. The three largest minorities in Nanaimo are Chinese (2.9%), South Asian (2.3%), and Filipino (1%). The total visible minority population in Nanaimo is expected to increase by 7% by 2025.

	Nanaimo	British Columbia	Canada
Non-immigrant	79,545 (81.9%)	3,319,230 (67.5%)	27,042,120 (74.4%)
Immigrant	15,620 (16.2%)	1,425,710 (29%)	8,361,505 (23%)
Non-permanent resident	1,850 (1.9%)	171,000 (3.5%)	924,850 (2.5%)
Non-Indigenous	89,110 (91.8%)	4,625,735 (94%)	34,521,230 (95%)
Indigenous	7,905 (8.2%)	290,210 (5.9%)	1,807,250 (5%)
Visible minority	13,300 (13.7%)	1,689,490 (34.4%)	9,639,205 (26.5%)

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

In 2021, Nanaimo had a similar average family size (2.7) than British Columbia (2.8) and Canada (2.9). Furthermore, the number of lone parent families is similar between Nanaimo (18%), British Columbia (15%), and Canada (16%). In all three locations, most lone parents are women.

	Nanaimo	British Columbia	Canada
Total number of families	27,840	1,399,405	10,262,925
Average size of families	2.7	2.8	2.9
Total couple families	22,900 (82%)	1,190,405 (85%)	8,576,585 (84%)
Total one-parent families	4,940 (18%)	208,475 (15%)	1,686,340 (16%)
Woman	3,830 (78%)	161,820 (78%)	1,302,670 (77%)
Man	1,110 (22%)	46,655 (22%)	383,670 (23%)

POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH

While both the provincial population and the population of Nanaimo increased slightly between 2016 and 2021, the increase was higher in Nanaimo (10.3) compared to British Columbia (7.6). Based on future projections, strong population growth is expected to continue in the Nanaimo area. Population growth is driven by two factors: natural increase and migration. According to the 2021 Community Profile report, Nanaimo’s population growth has resulted from migration. People move to new areas for a variety of reasons including employment opportunities and quality of life factors. There are three types of migrants: intra-provincial (within BC), inter-provincial (other provinces) and international immigrants (outside of Canada). Between 2015 and 2020, on average over 3,000 net new migrants relocated to the Nanaimo region.^{xxxix}

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Population, 2021	99,863	5,000,879
Population, 2016	90,504	4,648,055
Population percentage change, 2016 to 2021	10.3	7.6

DOWNTOWN NANAIMO

In recent years, “Nanaimo has experienced a rise in levels of visible homelessness, open drug use, conflict, vandalism, filth, and overall social disorder in the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods. Residents, business owners, and workers have become increasingly frustrated with conditions in the core, as have those in community service organizations who work to improve the lives of people in need. The perception that Downtown Nanaimo has become an unsafe and unruly part of the community has become widespread.”^{xxxix}

The issues that are so apparent in Downtown Nanaimo are manifestations of social problems with deep roots in poverty, income inequality, racism and discrimination, colonialism, food insecurity, mental health challenges, abuse and trauma, addiction, and other causal factors. In an effort to make Downtown Nanaimo safer and healthier for all, Nanaimo City Council in late 2021 commissioned the development of a Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan with specific measures for the City to take beginning in 2022.

The table below provides an overview of the desired outcomes identified in the Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan. These desired outcomes related to community safety are in alignment with efforts to prevent and reduce gun and gang violence in Nanaimo.

Desired Outcomes	
Improved perceptions of Downtown	One desired outcome of the Action Plan is a significantly improved perception of Downtown Nanaimo as an appealing and welcoming place to visit, shop, work and live.
Tangible decrease in social disorder	A tangible decrease in incidents of problematic behaviour, conflict, property damage, litter and filth, and other examples of social disorder is an expected and desired outcome of the Plan.
Support for businesses and neighbourhoods	When the Action Plan is implemented, businesses and neighbourhoods will have new connection points to City Hall and will feel supported in their efforts to prosper in Downtown Nanaimo.
Support for service providers	The non-profit service agencies that are active in the city centre provide essential services to persons in need. The staff and governing bodies of these agencies will, similar to businesses and residents, have new connection points to the City, and will feel supported in the critical work they do.
Connection to services	Persons in need in the downtown core will be assisted in connecting to available social services and supports. The addition of Community Safety Officers, assigned to interact with people Downtown Nanaimo, will help to achieve this outcome.
Compassion-based approach	All persons in need in Downtown Nanaimo will be approached and treated with compassion, respect, and dignity, even in difficult circumstances.
Expectations and responsibilities understood	As a result of measures in the Action Plan, all persons in Downtown Nanaimo accept that rights are balanced by responsibilities –in particular, responsibilities related to social order and behaviour. All persons understand, strive to meet, and are supported in their efforts to meet the community's expectations on conduct.

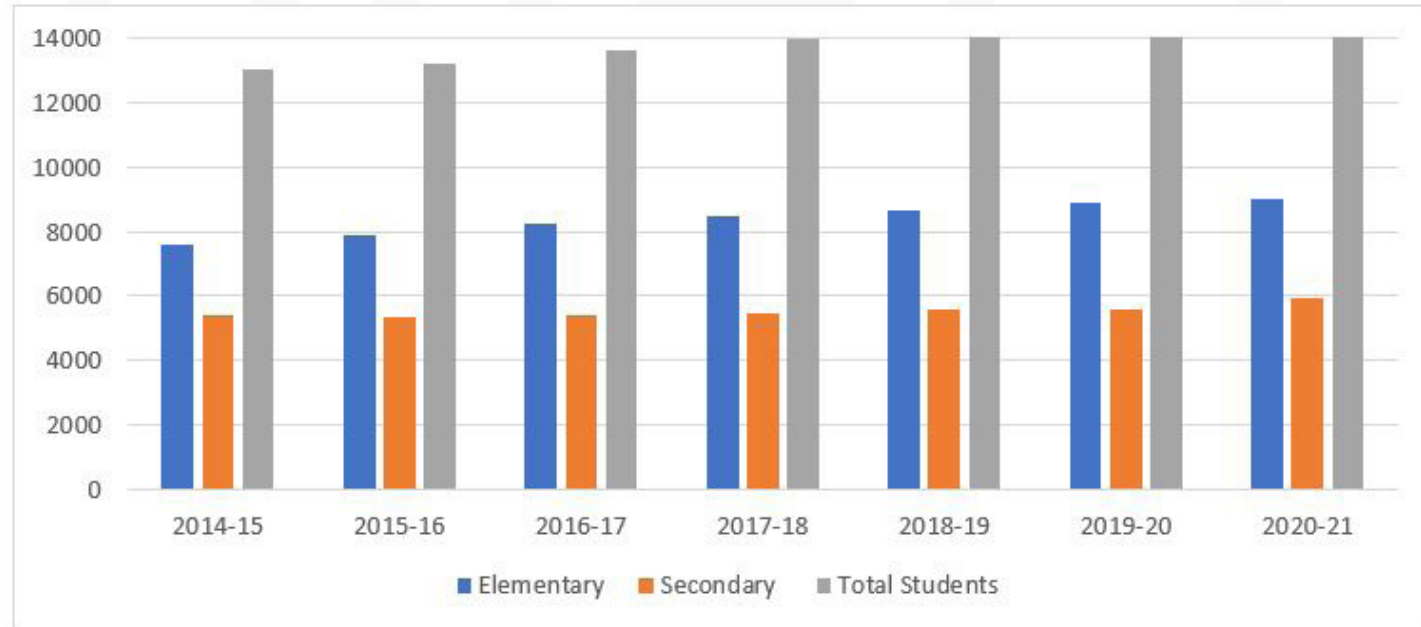
The Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan consists of three groups of measures, all of which are designed for implementation in the short term.

1. Tiered response: Effective, timely and flexible response to behavioural issues and their impacts in the downtown core and surrounding neighbourhoods, using resources that are best suited to the specific types of incidents. Examples include hiring community safety officers, parks ambassadors, and a downtown ambassador program.
2. Public Spaces and Assets: City of Nanaimo programs aimed at keeping public spaces and infrastructure clean, safe, and accessible. Examples include creating permanent community clean teams, creating a vandalism relief grant, implementing additional downtown parkade cleaning, and conducting a crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) assessment of public spaces.
3. Action Plan Governance: Coordination of the City's implementation efforts, development of new additional measures, and support for and alignment with measures taken by other agencies.

EDUCATION

Nanaimo's public schools are administered by School District 68 (SD68) which serves Nanaimo and Ladysmith. There are currently 29 elementary schools (kindergarten to grade 7) and six secondary schools (Grades 8 to 12). French immersion programs are offered at four elementary schools and one secondary school. The school district is one of the largest employers in the region employing approximately 2,000 staff. The School Board's annual operating budget is approximately \$162M. In addition to the provincial government curriculum, SD68 has a number of special programs, including an outstanding music program, work experience and career preparation, a modern languages program which includes French and Japanese and computer lab facilities. For further information visit www.sd68.bc.ca.

The graph below shows enrolment rates in School District 68 between 2014 and 2023. Enrolment levels have continuously increased, which is consistent with the growing population in Nanaimo.



With regards to education levels, in 2021, 55.8% of Nanaimo residents had a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree compared with 57% of the province.

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
No certificate, diploma, or degree	11,200 (13.5%)	565,665 (13.5%)
Secondary/High school diploma/Equivalency	25,285 (30.4%)	1,238,000 (29.5%)
Apprenticeship or trade certificate or diploma	7,770 (9.3%)	323,635 (7.7%)
College, CEGEP, or other non-university diploma	15,115 (18.2%)	711,810 (16.9%)
University certificate or diploma or degree below bachelor level	4,150 (5%)	161,600 (3.8%)
Bachelor's degree level or above	19,390 (23.3%)	1,199,710 (28.6%)

HOMELESSNESS

The Homeless Hub published a Community Profile for Nanaimo in 2020 which highlights statistics related to homelessness. Among the people experiencing homelessness in Nanaimo in 2020, 23% identified as youth (age 18-24), 33% identified as Indigenous, 26% identified as 2SLGBTQ+, and 68% identified as male. The table below shows a breakdown of the number of people experiencing homelessness and types of homelessness.

Homelessness (2020)	Number
Total number of people experiencing homelessness	433
Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness	59.5%
Individuals experiencing episodic homelessness	10.3%
Individuals experiencing sheltered homelessness	84
Individuals staying in a facility setting	4
Individuals in transitional housing	29
Individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness	253
Number of hidden homeless	17

HOUSING^{xxxiii}

British Columbia is facing a housing crisis and severe housing affordability challenges. Data gathered from the 2021 census show that British Columbia rates as the most unaffordable province for housing in Canada.

COST OF SHELTER

In Nanaimo, the average monthly cost of shelter is slightly lower than the provincial average. The most common rule of thumb to determine how much individuals can afford to spend on housing is that it should be no more than 30% of their gross monthly income. In 2021 approximately 16.3% of owner households and 40.7% of tenant households spent 30% or more of their income on shelter costs, compared to 19.3% and 37.8% in the rest of the province.

Average Cost of Shelter (Monthly)	British Columbia	
	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Owner	\$1,382	\$1,668
Renter	\$1,328	\$1,494

The number of people who own their dwelling was similar in Nanaimo (66.7%) and in the province (66.8%) in 2021. There was a slightly lower percentage of individuals who lived in band housing within Nanaimo (0%) compared to the province of British Columbia (0.5%).

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Owner	28,780 (66.7%)	1,363,190 (66.8%)
Renter	14,385 (33.3%)	669,450 (32.8%)
Band Housing	0 (0%)	9,190 (0.5%)

HOUSING STARTS AND STOCK

Housing starts, like building permits, are a leading indicator of economic activity. In 2020, new housing starts dropped by 45%, to 690 compared with 1,259 starts in 2019. This is due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic as consumers postpone building decisions considering financially uncertain times. The trend towards denser forms of housing continues due to overall rising real estate values. Single-detached homes still make up most of the housing, representing 62% of all built housing. As the city grows the mix of housing has been changing, with apartments and low/high rise buildings making up 35% of all housing and other dwelling types making up 2%.^{xxxiv}

Housing Stock, 2020	
Type of Dwelling	Number of Dwellings in Nanaimo
Houses	25,994
Apt. Building Low/High Rise	14,777
Other Dwelling Type	916
Total Households	41,687

INCOME

In 2020, over 65% of households in Nanaimo earned a total income of less than \$100,000. The largest number of households in Nanaimo (6,915 or 16%) report household income between \$20,000 and \$39,999 per annum. In 2020, the median household income in the City of Nanaimo was \$71,711. This is a 15.7% increase in the last five years. By 2025, Nanaimo's median household income is projected at \$83,215, a growth of 16%. In 2020, the average household income in the City of Nanaimo was \$88,338 an increase of 21.7% in the past five years. Average household income is projected to reach \$104,248 by 2025. The per capita income in 2020 was \$30,990, an increase of 18.6% in the past five years. Projected per capita income for 2025 is \$43,584.

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Total number of private households	43,165	2,041,835
Under \$5,000	430 (1%)	30,080 (1.5%)
\$5,000 to \$9,999	195 (0.5%)	13,160 (0.6%)
\$10,000 to \$14,999	365 (0.8%)	19,290 (0.9%)
\$15,000 to \$19,999	960 (2.2%)	41,735 (2%)
\$20,000 to \$24,999	1,965 (4.5%)	82,340 (4%)
\$25,000 to \$29,999	1,510 (3.5%)	63,830 (3.1%)
\$30,000 to \$34,999	1,630 (3.8%)	64,895 (3.2%)
\$35,000 to \$39,999	1,810 (4.2%)	75,105 (3.7%)
\$40,000 to \$44,999	1,955 (4.5%)	73,975 (3.6%)
\$45,000 to \$49,999	2,025 (4.7%)	73,180 (3.6%)

\$50,000 to \$59,999	3,610 (8.4%)	144,895 (7.1%)
\$60,000 to \$69,999	3,435 (8%)	139,140 (6.8%)
\$70,000 to \$79,999	3,020 (7%)	131,840 (6.5%)
\$80,000 to \$89,999	2,780 (6.4%)	122,530 (6%)
\$90,000 to \$99,999	2,505 (5.8%)	112,775 (5.5%)
\$100,000 and over	14,965 (34.7%)	853,065 (41.8%)

The table below shows that in 2020, a total of 10,720 individuals in private households had low-income status after tax in Nanaimo. Among those individuals, 52% of residents were aged 18 to 64 years which is lower than the provincial rate (62%). The rate of low-income status among individuals aged 65 years and over was higher in Nanaimo (27.4%) compared to the province (19.6%).

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Total number LIM low-income status population – after tax	10,720	4,915,940
0 to 17 years	2,155 (20.1%)	866,210 (17.6%)
18 to 64 years	5,625 (52.4%)	3,085,015 (62.7%)
65 years and over	2,940 (27.4%)	964,710 (19.6%)

LABOUR FORCE

The labour force is composed of those 15 years of age and older who are either employed or actively seeking work. Changes in the labour force are the result of changes in population and economic opportunities. A growing economy attracts workers from other areas and induces people to enter the labour force. When the economy slows, people leave in search of opportunities elsewhere or withdraw from the labour force.^{xxxv}

Nanaimo is home to a labour force consisting of approximately 60.3% of the population. As illustrated in the table below, this is slightly lower than the provincial value of 63.3%. The unemployment rate in Nanaimo (8.4%) is the same as the rate of province (8.4%).

	Nanaimo	British Columbia
In the labour force	49,970 (60.3%)	2,657,275 (63.3%)
Employed	45,770 (91.6%)	2,433,600 (91.6%)
Unemployed	4,200 (8.4%)	223,675 (8.4%)
Not in the labour force	32,935 (39.7%)	1,543,145 (36.7%)
Unemployment Rate	8.4	8.4

The table below provides a breakdown of Nanaimo's labour force (60.3%) by occupation. Nanaimo's largest segment of the labour force is employed in sales and service (29.5%). Relatively, British Columbia's largest segment of the labour force (25.1%) is employed in a sales and service occupation. Nanaimo has a greater proportion of its labour force in health occupations (9.8%) than the province (7.5%), as well as a greater proportion in natural resources, agriculture and related occupations (3.9%) than the province (2.7%).

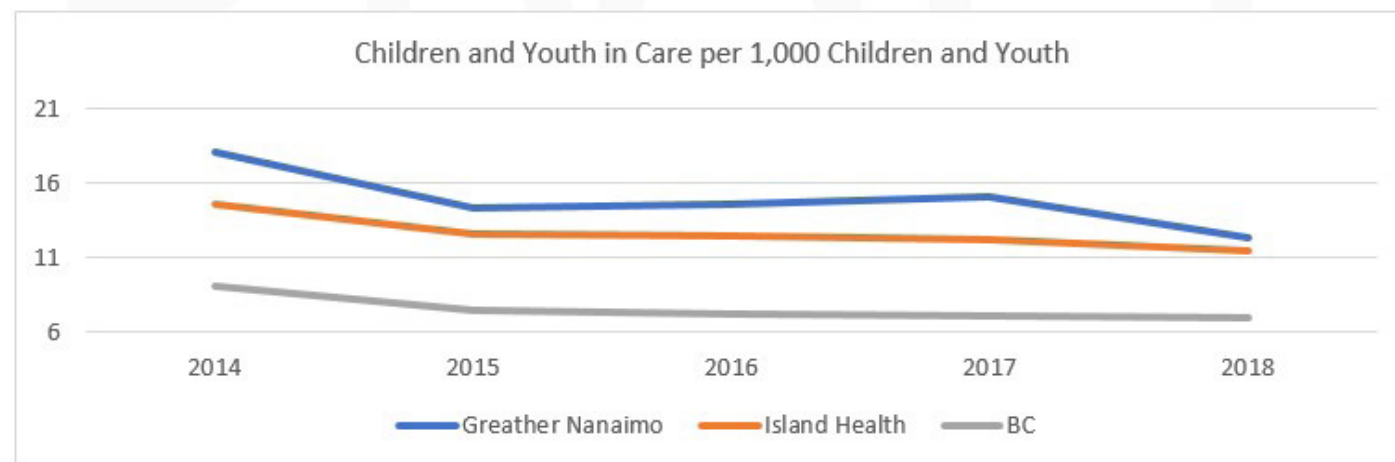
	Nanaimo	British Columbia
Management	415 (0.8%)	32,255 (1.2%)
Business, Finance, Administration	7,090 (14.2%)	446,160 (16.8%)
Natural, Applied Sciences, and Related	3,145 (6.3%)	209,185 (7.9%)
Health	4,885 (9.8%)	199,185 (7.5%)
Education, Law, and Social, Community, and Government Services	5,985 (12%)	309,360 (11.6%)
Art, Culture, Recreation, Sport	1,530 (3.1%)	110,585 (4.2%)
Sales and Service	14,775 (29.5%)	666,705 (25.1%)
Trades, Transport, Equipment Operators, and Related	8,805 (17.6%)	469,450 (17.7%)
Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Related	1,170 (3.9%)	72,075 (2.7%)
Manufacturing and Utilities	1,135 (2.3%)	88,155 (3.3%)

HEALTH

The Island Health region is divided into local health areas (LHAs) – geographic areas defined by the Ministry of Health. Each year, Island Health publishes LHA profile reports which provide information about the area's population, health status, and how often health services are used. The section below outlines some relevant health-related data for the City of Nanaimo.

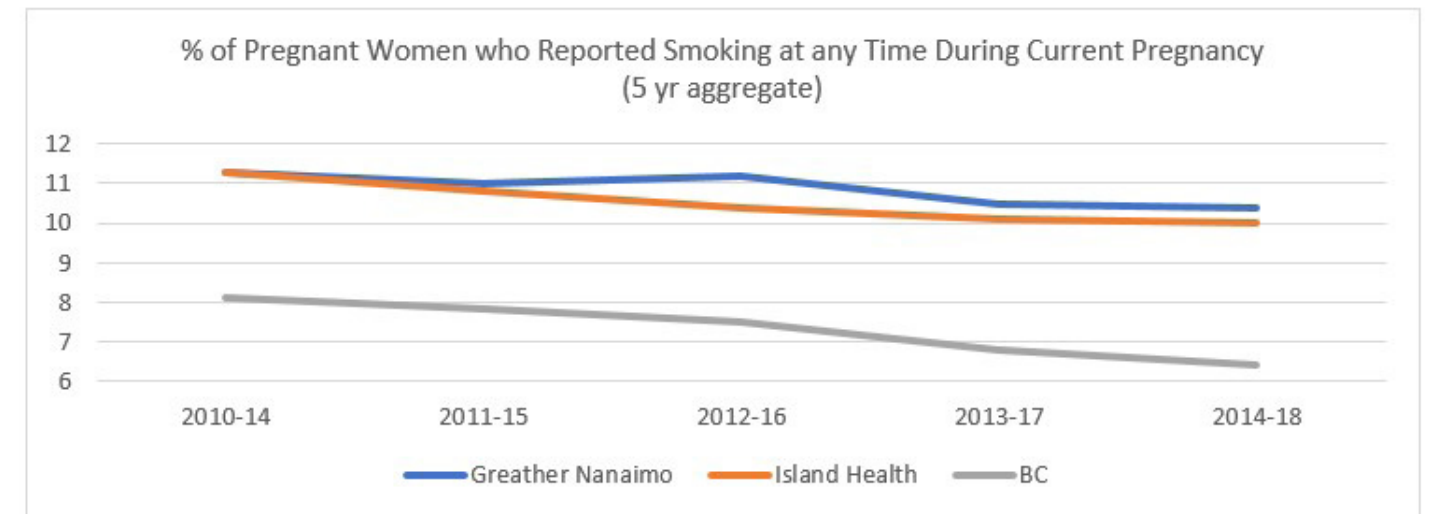
CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

Rates of children and youth in care have decreased over the past five years. Across Island Health overall, rates have been higher than for British Columbia. Greater Nanaimo has a higher rate of children and youth in care than Island Health and BC but has improved in recent years.



MOTHERS SMOKING DURING PREGNANCY

Mothers smoking during pregnancy has demonstrated negative effects for both mother and baby. Rates of smoking during pregnancy have been decreasing over the past eight years. However, across Island Health overall rates have been higher than BC. Greater Nanaimo has rates higher than BC and slightly higher than Island Health overall.



BIRTH STATISTICS

The health status of the population is measured with several indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, prevalence of chronic disease, mortality, and premature mortality.

The overall birth rate for Greater Nanaimo is lower than the rate for BC, but higher than Island Health. There are proportionately fewer births to older (35 years and over) mothers and more to younger mothers (under 20 years). While the rate of low-birth-weight babies is similar to Island Health, and lower than BC, the rate of pre-term births (those born at less than 37 weeks) has moved to a lower level compared to previous years. The rate of caesarean sections is also lower in Greater Nanaimo.

Birth	Greater Nanaimo	Island Health	British Columbia
Infant Mortality	4.1	4.0	3.5
Stillbirths	8.6	10.0	11.4
Mothers Under 20 Years	31.3	26.2	17.8
Low Birth Weight	53.1	53.8	57.8
Pre-Term Births	76.8	82.7	77.1
Cesarian Sections	257	291.8	331.3
Mothers 35 Years and Over	187.9	227.9	252.9

MENTAL HEALTH

Although many chronic diseases have a higher prevalence in Greater Nanaimo in comparison to Island Health and BC, conditions related to mental health vary when compared to BC and Island Health rates. The most notable conditions are schizophrenia and delusional disorders, where Greater Nanaimo prevalence is higher than BC and Island Health overall. Prevalence in all the other mental health conditions for Greater Nanaimo sits between BC and Island Health.

Mental Health Conditions	Greater Nanaimo	Island Health	British Columbia
Depression	258.6	278.3	246.0
Episodic Depression	80.2	85.8	72.2
Mood & Anxiety Disorders	335.1	342.7	301.9
Episodic Mood & Anxiety Disorders	115.8	122.1	101.6
Schizophrenia & Delusional Disorders	12.1	11.6	11.0

SUBSTANCE USE

Greater Nanaimo substance-related death rates have been similar or higher than Island Health and BC however, the alcohol-related death rate now sits below the Island Health rate.

Substance-Related Death Rates, Greater Nanaimo (2016)	
Alcohol-Related Deaths	Tobacco-Related Deaths
89.1	144.4

Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths (per 100,000), Nanaimo			
2019	2020	2021	2022
27	39	54	74

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF ACTIONS IDENTIFIED BY STEERING COMMITTEE

AREA 1: CHANGES TO PRACTICES AND POLICIES

Proposed Actions	Risk Factors	Effort-Impact Ratings
To build relationships with media and develop key messaging with a positive tone to highlight successful programs and initiatives to counter repeated negative media attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents Repeated negative media attention 	Low effort – High Impact
To build capacity and empower neighbourhoods to encourage ongoing property maintenance in order to increase sense of pride and belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood 	Low effort – Low Impact
To help ensure that community organizations’ policies and practices (e.g. SD68, City of Nanaimo, Island Health) include food, movement, and culture that resonates with youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) Low sense of belonging and self-esteem 	Low effort – High Impact
To encourage organizations to review their policies and practices with a view to anti-discrimination, anti-stigmatization, and anti-oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism 	Low effort – High Impact
To leverage existing communication and marketing resources within the community and its organizations to share key messaging that highlights successful programs and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated negative media attention Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) 	Low Effort – High Impact
To help ensure that programs and services that support family resiliency and cohesion do not stigmatize by recommending that they establish universal access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism 	Low Effort – High Impact

AREA 2: ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Proposed Actions	Risk Factors	Effort-Impact Ratings
To augment programs that connect youth to land, and teach mental, emotional, and spiritual respect (e.g. Snuneymuxw, Tillicum Lelum, Kw'umut Lelum, SD68, faith-based organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma Isolation, boredom Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) Low sense of belonging and self-esteem Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism Too few teacher role models 	Medium Effort – High Impact
To identify gaps and opportunities in the elimination of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression by conducting a community-driven inventory of programs and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood Low sense of belonging and self-esteem Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism 	Low Effort – Medium Impact
To expand street outreach and related programs and services to build relationships with youth and to meet a wide range of their needs such as food, harm reduction, engagement in recreation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) High desire for status, recognition, and protection Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality) Low sense of belonging and self-esteem Problematic alcohol and drug use 	High Effort – High Impact

To improve upon existing programs by adding new components or focus areas that fill gaps and build protective factors for children and youth at-risk, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports and recreation programs that build team identity Opportunities to connect youth to the land and water through Snawaylth Educational programming Health and wellness programming Youth mentorship Life skills and socio-emotional learning (e.g. healthy conflict resolution, family violence prevention, prevention of early onset alcohol and drug use) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) Too few teacher role models Low educational aspirations Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality) Intimate partner and family violence Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting Abuse and neglect of children Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma Low sense of belonging and self-esteem Problematic alcohol and drug use Isolation, boredom 	High Effort – High Impact
To connect youth to diverse role models and significant/caring adults (e.g. tutors, trades or vocational role models, mentors, teachers, coaches, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abuse and neglect of children Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting High desire for status, recognition, and protection Low educational aspirations Low sense of belonging and self-esteem Too few teacher role models 	Medium Effort – High Impact
To encourage schools to create opportunities for their surrounding communities to connect with them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood Low educational aspirations Low sense of belonging and self-esteem 	Low Effort – Medium Impact
To ensure that early diagnosis and psychologist involvement is available to all children (not just boys)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abuse and neglect of children Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) 	High Effort – High Impact

AREA 3: IDENTIFICATION, ADAPTATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROMISING PROGRAMS

Proposed Actions	Risk Factors	Effort-Impact Ratings
<p>To establish safe and free community gathering place(s)/ hub(s) for youth by leveraging existing facilities with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a budget that includes transportation and access • a budget that is flexible so that programs can be responsive to emerging needs • community level champions that are grassroots informed • hybrid approaches where some resource linkages are offered during daytime (1 – 4 PM) and other youth programs carry into evening (6 PM – 12 AM) • socio-emotional learning opportunities • partnerships between agencies and schools for wrap-around approaches • the ability to meet youth where they are at (no agenda) • attractors such as sports, arts, culture, food, leisure on a drop-in basis • connection to local Indigenous culture (e.g. utilizing a Longhouse Learning and Healing Framework) • flexible age funding (11-25) • without the need to sign too many forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism • Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) • Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality) • Intimate partner and family violence • Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting • Abuse and neglect of children • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma • Low sense of belonging and self-esteem • Problematic alcohol and drug use • Isolation, boredom 	High Effort – High Impact
<p>To establish multi-generational safe space(s) (e.g. safe house) offering co-location for elders, families, and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) • Too few teacher role models • Lack of meaningful peer connections • Abuse and neglect of children • Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma 	High Effort – High Impact

<p>To create a sub-committee to review the recommendations from the field study related to placemaking and environmental design.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) • Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents • Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood 	Medium Effort – Medium Impact
<p>To explore the establishment of a one stop model to facilitate access to services and supports (e.g. mental wellness, gender identity questions, at risk situations, etc.) and to reduce barriers through system navigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational) 	High Effort – High Impact
<p>To communicate to appropriate community partners general community safety challenges that impact perceptions and feelings of safety in Nanaimo, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property crime • Harassment in public spaces • Dangerous driving • Unsafe public transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) • Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood 	Medium Effort – Medium Impact
<p>To develop and implement placemaking activities to activate public spaces, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a Youth Placemaking Network in collaboration with a youth-serving organization • Organizing a street piano initiative downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use) • Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents • Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood 	Low Effort – Medium Impact

APPENDIX 4: FULL FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCOPE ONE, SCOPE TWO, AND SCOPE THREE

FULL FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

The steering committee members participated in a sorting process to identify actions to address the risk factors identified in the data collection process. Ideally, there would have been more time for members of the steering committee to examine the risk and protective factors in greater detail and to specify their connection to project opportunities. Since time constraints did not allow for that process, the project team and steering committee agreed upon a reduced list of risk and protective factors become the basis of the discussion about recommended actions.

SORTING RISK FACTORS

Some of the key risk factors identified as rising to the top in Nanaimo were out of scope for this project. An initial sorting process was conducted to identify the risk factors that can reasonably be addressed through a project of this nature. The sorting process was completed based on the following questions:

1. Is it possible, through a project of this nature, to change this risk factor?
2. Can this risk factor reasonably be accomplished within the available time frame (4 years) and resources (\$1.8M)?
3. Is there momentum (something to build on) in the community to change this risk factor?
4. Is it in someone else's wheelhouse?

This sorting process allowed to create the final list of risk factors that the steering committee approved and then designing actions for. These risk factors are the following:

- Limited/lack of access/availability to healthy lands and waters, including Indigenous foods and medicines.
- Significant prevalence of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression such as racism
- Repeated negative media attention
- Large number of residents reporting feeling unsafe in their neighbourhood
- Lack of adequate services (cultural, recreational)
- Fear of social disorder (e.g. homelessness, public drug use)
- Neighbourhoods that show neglect and lack of sense of ownership and pride by residents
- Too few teacher role models
- Low educational aspirations
- Lack of meaningful peer connections and high level of interaction with negative peer groups (e.g. gang involved, problematic substance use, criminality)
- Intimate partner and family violence
- Erratic, overly lenient, or punitive parenting
- Abuse and neglect of children
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lack of attention to trauma
- High desire for status, recognition, and protection
- Low sense of belonging and self-esteem
- Problematic alcohol and drug use
- Isolation, boredom

IDENTIFICATION OF ACTION AREAS

Based on the above key findings and an agreement on the main risk factors the steering committee utilized a matrix to develop actions in three inter-related areas:

1. Changes in policies and practices: This area is designed to include actions to stimulate changes in existing approaches that can reasonably be expected to support prevention and early interventions (e.g. policies that exclude youth from programs to manage challenging behavior). The expectation would be that the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* can be a catalyst for different ways of thinking and doing with regards to longer standing issues and to create changes in the service landscape and the community.

2. Enhancement of existing programs and services: This area allows for actions that can augment existing efforts by incorporating new and innovative approaches to services and programming. Nanaimo already has programs and services for children and youth at risk that can be part of the solution and build youth resilience and prevent gang and gun violence.
3. Identification, adaptation, and implementation of promising practices: Actions in this area have been identified in research and community practice to have promise when it comes to the prevention of gang and gun violence. To access the review of promising / evidence-based practices related to gun and gang violence prevention, see Appendix 6.

RATING OF EFFORT AND IMPACTS

Through this process, the members of the steering committee identified 22 actions falling into the three types of interventions noted above. Following this, steering committee members examined these actions with a view to capacity and potential outcomes and rated each action for effort needed to accomplish it as well as likely impact. The rating options for both effort and impact ranged from low to high.

OUTCOMES FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE PROCESS

Below is a list of all proposed actions identified by the steering committee.

Area 1: Changes to Practices and Policies

- To build relationships with media and develop key messaging with a positive tone to highlight successful programs and initiatives to counter repeated negative media attention.
- To invest in prevention through having adequate and sustained funding categories within existing budgets.
- To build capacity and empower neighbourhoods to encourage ongoing property maintenance in order to increase sense of pride and belonging.
- To help ensure that community organizations' policies and practices (e.g. SD68, City of Nanaimo, Island Health) include food, movement, and culture that resonates with youth.
- To encourage organizations to review their policies and practices with a view to anti-discrimination, anti-stigmatization, and anti-oppression.
- To leverage existing communication and marketing resources within the community and its organizations to share key messaging that highlights successful programs and initiatives.
- To help ensure that programs and services that support family resiliency and cohesion do not stigmatize by recommending that they establish universal access.
- To increase capacity building in existing city programs and grant opportunities with a focus on gun and gang violence prevention.

Area 2: Enhancements to Existing Programs

- To augment programs that connect youth to land, and teach mental, emotional, and spiritual respect (e.g. Snuneymuxw, Tillicum Lelum, Kw'umut Lelum, SD68, faith-based organizations)
- To identify gaps and opportunities in the elimination of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression by conducting a community-driven inventory of programs and events
- To increase street outreach and related programs and services to build relationships with youth and to meet a wide range of their needs such as food, harm reduction, engagement in recreation, etc.
- To improve upon existing programs by adding new components or focus areas that fill gaps and build protective factors for children and youth at-risk, including:
 - Sports and recreation programs that build team identity.
 - Opportunities to connect youth to the land and water through Snawaylth.
 - Educational programming.
 - Health and wellness programming.
 - Youth mentorship.
 - Life skills and socio-emotional learning (e.g. healthy conflict resolution, family violence prevention, prevention of early onset alcohol and drug use).
 - Opportunities to include family members of youth (e.g. caregivers, siblings, parents) served in provision of food, treatment, and other services).
 - Food security measures, including gardening with a view to connecting to the land and Indigenous culture.
 - Opportunities for youth to be engaged and reciprocate in their communities in a way that fosters a sense of belonging, value, and connectedness (e.g. volunteering, mentoring, connecting peers to services).
- To connect youth to diverse role models and significant/caring adults (e.g. tutors, trades or vocational role models, mentors, teachers, coaches, etc.).
- To encourage schools to create opportunities for their surrounding communities to connect with them.
- To ensure that early diagnosis and psychologist involvement is available to all children (not just boys).
- To encourage the development of safe and healthy built environment.

Area 2: Enhancements to Existing Programs

- To establish safe and free community gathering place(s)/hub(s) for youth by leveraging existing facilities with:
 - a budget that includes transportation and access
 - a budget that is flexible so that programs can be responsive to emerging needs.
 - community level champions that are grassroots informed
 - hybrid approaches where some resource linkages are offered during daytime (1 – 4 PM) and other youth programs carry into evening (6 PM – 12 AM)
 - socio-emotional learning opportunities
 - partnerships between agencies and schools for wrap-around approaches
 - the ability to meet youth where they are at (no agenda)
 - attractors such as sports, arts, culture, food, leisure on a drop-in basis
 - connection to local Indigenous culture (e.g. utilizing a Longhouse Learning and Healing Framework)
 - flexible age funding (11-25)
 - without the need to sign too many forms
- To establish multi-generational safe space(s) (e.g. safe house) offering co-location for elders, families, and youth.
- To create a sub-committee to review the recommendations from the field study related to placemaking and environmental design.
- To explore the establishment of a one stop model to facilitate access to services and supports (e.g. mental wellness, gender identity questions, at risk situations, etc.) and to reduce barriers through system navigation.
- To communicate to appropriate community partners general community safety challenges that impact perceptions and feelings of safety in Nanaimo, including:
 - Property crime
 - Harassment in public spaces
 - Dangerous driving
 - Unsafe public transportation
- To develop and implement placemaking activities to activate public spaces, such as:
 - Building a Youth Placemaking Network in collaboration with a youth-serving organization
 - Organizing a street piano initiative downtown

SCOPING STRUCTURE

The actions to address the key risk factors and challenges in Nanaimo were developed based on the feedback and ideas proposed by community members (including young people), local stakeholders and service providers, as well as members of the project steering committee. Each action has the potential to improve youth resilience and contribute to the prevention of gun and gang violence in Nanaimo. However, the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* implementation operates within certain funding parameters, including a specific time frame and budget provided through Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund. While some actions fit directly within those parameters, the Strategy may only be a catalyst for others. Additionally, some actions identified during the assessment process are not in scope for this project altogether. To ensure that all proposed actions are reflected in the Strategy the list of actions was sorted into:

Scope One	Strategic actions that will be resourced through the funding provided by Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund.
Scope Two	Strategic actions for which the Youth Resilience Strategy is a catalyst. These actions will not be resourced through the funds available from Public Safety Canada, but rather by leveraging existing resources and building on existing momentum.
Scope Three	Strategic actions that were identified during the data collection process but are out of scope for the Youth Resilience Strategy. They may however be within the mandate of community partners or sectors and will be communicated to existing organizations and sectors.

SCOPING CONSIDERATIONS

The *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* has limited dedicated resources and funding the implementation of all actions designed by the steering committee would result in dispersal of resources, and likely decrease the impact of these efforts. For that reason, the actions were placed into either scope one, two, or three (as described above).

SCOPE ONE

Actions in this area were identified by the steering committee as having a high impact. They also meet the criteria of serving youth at highest risk in conjunction with youth at lesser risk but on the trajectory of becoming high risk. They are likely to yield the highest return on investment for the resources available and meet the criteria for funding from Public Safety Canada. These eligibility criteria include:

- Development of a strategy on gun and gang violence.
- Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skill development, and recreational opportunities.
- Development or enhancement of data systems to support data gathering/reporting on gun and gang crime or on results achieved.
- Development of knowledge to fill gaps at the community/recipient level, including research, and sharing of information and/or best practices related to gun and gang violence.
- Outreach and recruitment of preventative initiatives or intervention participants.
- Public awareness and education.
- Collaboration and integration of horizontal initiatives related to gun and gang violence.
- Development of a plan to sustain successful preventative initiatives or intervention activities beyond the end of the contribution agreement.
- Any other prevention and intervention initiatives as developed in consultation with the program authority.

The table below presents the proposed scope one actions (i.e. the core strategic actions to be proposed to Public Safety Canada for funding) and the eligibility criteria they fall under.

Proposed Scope One Actions	
Strategic Actions	PSC Eligibility Criteria
<p>1. To establish safe and free community gathering place(s)/hub(s) for youth by leveraging existing facilities with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a budget that includes transportation and access • a budget that is flexible so that programs can be responsive to emerging needs. • community level champions that are grassroots informed • hybrid approaches where some resource linkages are offered during daytime (1 – 4 PM) and other youth programs carry into evening (6 PM – 12 AM) • socio-emotional learning opportunities • partnerships between agencies and schools for wrap-around approaches • the ability to meet youth where they are at (no agenda) 	<p>Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skills development and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Collaboration and integration of horizontal initiatives related to gun and gang violence.</p>

Strategic Actions	PSC Eligibility Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attractors such as sports, arts, culture, food, leisure on a drop-in basis • connection to local Indigenous culture (e.g. utilizing a Longhouse Learning and Healing Framework) • flexible age funding (11-25) • without the need to sign too many forms • clearly identified recruitment and referral process 	
<p>2. To expand street outreach and related programs and service hours and locations to build relationships with youth at risk and to meet a wide range of their needs such as food, harm reduction, engagement in recreation, access to counselling, etc.</p>	<p>Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skills development and recreational opportunities.</p>
<p>3. To augment programs that connect youth to land, and teach mental, emotional, and spiritual respect (e.g. Snuneymuxw, Tillicum Lelum, Kw'umut Lelum, SD68, faith-based organizations).</p>	<p>Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skills development and recreational opportunities.</p>
<p>4. To connect youth, especially youth at risk, with diverse role models and significant/caring adults (e.g. tutors, trades or vocational role models, mentors, teachers, coaches, etc.).</p>	<p>Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skills development and recreational opportunities.</p>
<p>5. To improve upon existing programs by adding new components or focus areas that fill gaps and build protective factors for children and youth at-risk, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sports and recreation programs that build team identity Opportunities to connect youth to the land and water through Snawaylth Educational programming Health and wellness programming Youth mentorship Life skills and socio-emotional learning (e.g. healthy conflict resolution, family violence prevention, prevention of early onset alcohol and drug use) Opportunities to include family members of youth (e.g. caregivers, siblings, parents) served in provision of food, treatment, and other services Food security measures, including gardening with a view to connecting to the land and Indigenous culture Opportunities for youth to be engaged and reciprocate in their communities in a way that fosters a sense of belonging, value, and connectedness (e.g. volunteering, mentoring, connecting peers to services) 	<p>Development and delivery of prevention intervention initiatives addressing risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, including but not limited to mentoring, counselling, skills development and recreational opportunities.</p>

<p>6. To identify gaps in the elimination of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression by conducting an inventory of community-driven programs and events and to address the identified gaps through existing or new opportunities.</p>	<p>Development of knowledge to fill gaps at the community/recipient level, including research, and sharing of information and/or best practices related to gun and gang violence.</p>
<p>7. To build relationships with media and develop key messaging with a positive tone to highlight successful programs and initiatives to counter repeated negative media attention; and to leverage existing communication and marketing resources within the community and its organizations to share key messaging that highlights successful programs and initiatives.</p>	<p>Public awareness and education.</p>

APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING SCOPE ONE ACTIONS

The resources provided by Public Safety Canada through the Building Safer Communities fund can be directed towards promising practices and/or towards enhancements to existing programs. Local organizations, community members, or service providers who propose a program or initiative to contribute to the action items identified in scope one can do so through RFPs, EOs, grant programs, etc.

The decision-making about the distribution of funding will be guided by the project steering committee. The steering committee will be charged with making recommendations to the City of Nanaimo Council for the distribution of funds. This decision-making process needs to avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest by excusing members of the steering committee that may directly or indirectly benefit from the outcome of the decision.

Criteria were developed to guide the funding distribution deliberations based on feedback from community members, stakeholders, and steering committee members. A project should meet most of the following criteria to be selected for funding:

- Focuses on children and youth at risk (as per risk factors)
- Fosters positive peer to peer interactions and connections
- Ensures that children and youth living in poverty are included in services and recreation (e.g. arts, culture, sports, and food distribution)
- Increases opportunities for integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous services
- Includes a focus on anti-discrimination, anti-stigmatization, and anti-oppression (e.g. youth phobia)
- Provides opportunities to connect youth to the land
- Increases socio-emotional learning opportunities
- Offers services during peak hours for youth activity (e.g. 6 PM to 12 AM and weekends)
- Provides opportunities for youth to connect to diverse role models or significant/caring adults (e.g. trades role models, tutors, teachers, coaches)
- Includes trauma-informed practices and cultural awareness
- Works to remove barriers to access (transportation, costs, etc.)
- Focuses on culture, healthy relationships, and pro-social activities
- Includes supports for family members of youth participants
- Advances opportunities for wraparound approaches
- Clearly identifies the recruitment and referral process

SCOPE TWO

Actions in this area were identified by the steering committee as having a high or medium impact. They are strategic actions for which the Youth Resilience Strategy is a catalyst, but they do not align directly with the Public Safety Canada eligibility criteria. The steering committee will work to identify synergies and opportunities within the community to support the implementation of these actions.

1. To invest in prevention through having adequate and sustained funding categories within existing budgets.
2. To build capacity and empower neighbourhoods to encourage ongoing property maintenance in order to increase sense of pride and belonging.
3. To help ensure that community organizations' policies and practices (e.g. SD68, City of Nanaimo, Island Health) include food, movement, and culture that resonates with youth.
4. To encourage organizations to review their policies and practices with a view to anti-discrimination, anti-stigmatization, and anti-oppression.
5. To help ensure that programs and services that support family resiliency and cohesion do not stigmatize by recommending that they establish universal access.
6. To establish multi-generational safe space(s) (e.g. safe house) offering co-location for elders, families, and youth.
7. To create a sub-committee to review the recommendations from the field study related to placemaking and environmental design.

SCOPE THREE

Actions in scope three are out of scope for the Youth Resilience Strategy because they focus on community safety and well-being more broadly. They may also already be within the mandate of community partners or sectors (e.g. law enforcement).

1. To increase capacity building in existing city programs and grant opportunities with a focus on gun and gang violence prevention.
2. To encourage schools to create opportunities for their surrounding communities to connect with them.
3. To ensure that early diagnosis and psychologist involvement is available to all children (not just boys)
4. To encourage the development of safe and healthy built environment
 - a. Delivering Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) curriculum in schools
5. To explore the establishment of a one stop model to facilitate access to services and supports (e.g. mental wellness, gender identity questions, at risk situations, etc.) and to reduce barriers through system navigation.
6. To communicate to appropriate community partners general community safety challenges that impact perceptions and feelings of safety in Nanaimo, including:
 - a. Property crime
 - b. Harassment in public spaces
 - c. Dangerous driving
 - d. Unsafe public transportation
7. To develop and implement placemaking activities to activate public spaces, such as:
 - a. Building a Youth Placemaking Network in collaboration with a youth-serving organization
8. Organizing a street piano initiative downtown

APPENDIX 5: ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN NANAIMO

The assessment of risk and protective factors aims to understand key risk and protective factors, root causes, safety concerns, and available services/resources for youth at the local level. While research has identified several general risk factors that can impact youth gang involvement, such as poverty, lack of social supports, and the need for a sense of belonging, each community has its own unique circumstances resulting in some challenges being more prevalent than others. As a result, collecting data to understand these community-specific challenges is a vital step to ensure the Strategy is evidenced-informed and addresses local concerns.

EXISTING QUANTITATIVE DATA

As part of the assessment of risk and protective factors in Nanaimo, a review of existing statistics and quantitative data was conducted, in addition to a review of existing reports and strategies related to community safety and youth resilience in Nanaimo. This involved collecting and analyzing data related to various categories, including demographics (population, family characteristics, age characteristics, diversity, and immigration), childhood development, community well-being and livability, crime and victimization, education, social challenges, housing, homelessness, labour force, health, and substance use.

The quantitative data is presented in Appendix 2.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The development of the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* included the collection of qualitative data through community consultations. This information provides a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges highlighted in the quantitative data and sheds light on the experiences of various groups within the community. Qualitative data from consultations helps provide a richer understanding of the how and why of issues related to youth violence and gang involvement. Engaging the community is important for (re-) shaping social cohesion, increasing community buy-in and accountability, and strengthening protective factors.

Community engagement sessions were held with several groups in the community and surveys were sent out to local organizations. During each consultation, participants were asked questions related to three community safety topics: positive aspects about Nanaimo; concerns and risk factors in Nanaimo; and opportunities to improve challenges.

A core principle for conducting community consultations is to provide opportunities for all (with a specific focus on those that are marginalized) to participate in a meaningful, safe, and inclusive manner. As a result, engagements were organized in partnership with local leaders and organizations. The community consultations were divided into two categories:

1. **General Consultations:** General consultations were held in a hybrid format. The invitation was extended to local stakeholders from various sectors, including municipal representatives, businesses, community-based organizations, youth services, health and social service agencies, recreation and wellness agencies, etc.
2. **Specific Consultations:** To ensure that the voices of individuals who face increased marginalization and oppression were heard, specific consultations were organized with various groups, including youth (in partnership with schools), Indigenous communities, and newcomers/immigrants.

Sessions were conducted in the following formats:

1. Hybrid consultations with local leaders present
2. Community-led consultations facilitated by local leaders
3. Consultation questionnaires distributed to stakeholders and community members

The following organizations/groups participated in community consultations:

- BGC Central Vancouver Island
- Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society
- CFSEU (Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit) / Nanaimo RCMP Street Crime/Intel
- Community Health Network
- Connective Support Society
- Island Health
- Kw'umut Lelum Child and Family Services
- Liaison Strategic Solutions
- Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Nanaimo City Council
- Nanaimo Family Life Association
- Nanaimo RCMP
- Nanaimo Youth Services Association
- Public Disorder and Homelessness Working Group
- Risebridge Project
- School District #68
- Snuneymuxw First Nation
- Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- United Way
- Volunteer Nanaimo
- WorkBC
- Youth 20/20 Can Project
- Youth Advocacy Committee

Consultation	Format	Sectors Represented	# of Participants
Council Engagement	Council Meeting	Mayor and Council	9
Stakeholder Interview	Virtual interview	Business community	1
Stakeholder Interview	Virtual focus group	Public Disorder and Homelessness Working Group	5
Stakeholder Interview	Virtual interview	Indigenous Youth Outreach Worker	1
Stakeholder Interview	In-Person Interview	Policing / enforcement	4
General Consultation	In-Person	School district, child welfare, youth services, City, recreation, restorative justice, mental health and substance use services, health, people with lived experience	23
General Consultation	Virtual session	Adult probation, Indigenous services	2
Community-Led Consultation	Survey	CVIMS Language Class Students (newcomers)	54
Community-Led Consultation	Survey	KL Parent Workshop Participants (Parents)	9
Community-Led Consultation	Survey	Nanaimo Youth Services Association (Indigenous and non-Indigenous Youth)	11

Community-Led Consultation	Survey	Neutral Zone Drop In (Indigenous Parents and Youth)	25
Community-Led Consultation	In-Person Interview	Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from Alternative Learning Program who are/were criminally entrenched/part of a gang/carry weapons	10
Community-Led Consultation	Online Survey	Service providers, agencies, stakeholders, people with lived experience	74
Youth Consultation	Photovoice	Youth	4
Total			229

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (COMMUNITY MEMBERS)

What is your gender?

Gender	Responses	Percent
Woman	59	60%
Man	36	36%
Non-Binary	2	2%
Prefer not to say	0	0%
Prefer to self-describe: - Trans curious - Transmasculine	2	2%

What is your age?

Age	Responses	Percent
17 or younger	17	17%
18-24	11	11%
25-34	17	17%
35-44	31	31%
45-54	15	16%
55-64	4	4%
65-74	3	3%
75 or older	1	1%
Prefer not to say	0	0%

What is your racial or ethnic identity?

Race/Ethnicity	Responses	Percent
First Nation	35	34.3%
Métis	4	3.9%
Inuk (Inuit)	0	0%
Black	1	1%
Arab	11	10.8%
Asian (East, Central, or South)	23	22.5%
Roma	0	0%
Latinx	2	2%
White	19	18.6%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
None of the above: Turkey Ukraine Chinese	1 1 3 1	1% 1% 2.9% 1%

OVERVIEW OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS (SERVICE PROVIDERS)

What sector do you represent?

Sector	Responses	Percent
Business community	1	0.7%
Child welfare	6	4.4%
Community corrections	3	2.3%
Education	36	26%
Family services	8	5.8%
Health	5	3.7%
Indigenous community	4	2.9%
Indigenous welfare	2	1.4%
Mental health services	14	10.2%
Person with lived or living experience	9	6.5%
Policing/enforcement	0	0%

Recreation services	6	4.4%
Restorative justice	1	0.7%
Services for immigrants/ newcomers	1	0.7%
Substance use services	8	5.8%
Victim services	1	0.7%
Youth services	23	16.7%
Other (please specify):		
- Employment services	3	2.2%
- Youth probation	2	1.4%
- Food security	2	1.4%
- Person with disabilities	1	0.7%
- Homelessness	2	1.4%

FIELD STUDY

In addition to the community consultations, Rethink Urban Inc. was engaged to conduct a field study in Nanaimo to identify challenges and provide recommendations based on principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). The field study was conducted between February 7th and 10th, 2023. As part of this field study numerous areas were visited with a particular focus on downtown Nanaimo. This was done during a variety of times, both day and night. Every effort was made to stagger times of arrival/departure and remain covert. The site visits also included informal discussions with residents and business owners. The full report from the field study will appear under separate cover.

It is recommended to create a sub-committee to focus specifically on the findings and recommendations from the field study and identify avenues for implementation.

YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

While there was a desire to seek input from local youth for *Nanaimo's Youth Resilience Strategy*, it was decided that a more meaningful way to engage them would be through a youth photography project, rather than a consultation. The project team partnered with Youth 2020 Can to conduct a youth photography project and develop a website to showcase the results. The site includes submissions from local youth who were asked to take photos of places or aspects of Nanaimo that make them feel happy and safe, areas they like to spend with their friends, as well as spaces that make them feel unsafe. This gave them an opportunity to share their view on the local strengths and challenges in Nanaimo and contribute to the identification of risk factors and resiliencies for young people in the community. This information was then analyzed thematically and included in the data analysis.

To access the results from the Youth Photography Project: [visit www.NanaimoYouthPerspectives.com](http://www.NanaimoYouthPerspectives.com).

ANALYZING DATA

Following the data collection, a review of the findings was conducted to identify key risk factors, protective factors, concerns, and themes. The project steering committee participated in a sorting process to sort the risk factors and develop actions in scope for this project (please refer to the Key Findings section for more details).

APPENDIX 6: PROMISING AND BEST PRACTICE REVIEW

This section is an overview of promising and evidence-informed practices related to crime prevention, gun and gang violence prevention, and increasing youth resilience. It includes a list of evidence-based programs highlighted by various sources and experts, as well as an overview of existing gun and gang violence prevention or intervention initiatives in Canada and beyond.

DATA BASES FOR EVIDENCE-INFORMED PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS

Information on the evidence and knowledge behind various programs and practices is available via several data bases developed by governmental and academic bodies. Such data bases include:

- **Public Safety Canada Crime Prevention Inventory:** The Canadian government developed an online repertory of programs funded under the National Crime Prevention Strategy, by Canadian provinces/territories, or non-governmental organizations. For each program, a description is provided, alongside information on the program goals, clientele, core components, implementation information, cost information, and evidence / evaluation results: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/crm-prvntn/nvntr/index-en.aspx>
- **Crime Solutions:** The US National Institute of Justice developed CrimeSolutions, a web-based repertory of programs and practices and a process for identifying and rating them: <https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/>
- **Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development:** Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development provides a comprehensive registry of scientifically proven and scalable interventions that prevent or reduce the likelihood of antisocial behavior and promote a healthy course of youth development and adult maturity: <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
- **Washington State Institute of Public Policy:** the WSIPP developed a 3-step process to draw conclusions about benefit-cost of certain programs. The goal is to provide a list of well-researched policies and programs that can lead to better outcomes coupled with a more efficient use of financial resources: <https://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>
- **Youth Endowment Fund:** The Youth Endowment Fund developed an online tool that provides an overview of existing research on approaches to preventing serious youth violence. It provides information on the program description, cost, evidence quality, and estimated impact on violent crime: <https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit/>







EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION APPROACHES







International crime prevention expert and criminology professor Irvin Waller compiled an extensive list of evidence-based programs and interventions in his most recent books *Smarter Crime Control* (2014) and *Science and Secrets of Ending Violent Crime* (2019). The table below provides a snapshot of the interventions proven to reduce youth violence by addressing key risk factors.

Type of Intervention	Examples	Description of Intervention	
Outreach services to young men	Cure Violence; Youth Inclusion Program	Street workers outreaching to young men to interrupt gang affiliations and mediate violent conflict	50%
Hospital-based interventions	Emergency room and epidemiology with victims	Works with victims of violence in emergency wards to deal with trauma and abandon violence	80%
Parenting and early childhood	Multi-systemic therapy; positive parenting; enriched childcare	Therapists work in home, school, community 24/7 to provide parents tools to transform lives of at-risk youth	63%

School curricula	Life Skills Training; Becoming a Man; Stop Now and Plan	Develops self-management skills such as decision-making, problem-solving, goal setting, and coping with anxiety	50%
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To help municipalities track the existence of various evidence-informed interventions locally, Dr. Waller developed a Safety Monitor Tool on key evidence-based programs. Several of the programs listed above could be implemented as part of the Safety Monitor Tool.

Prevention Tackling Causes		
	1	Engage and support young men
	2	Support positive parenting and early childhood
	3	Strengthen anti-violence social norms
	4	Mitigate financial stress
	5	Improve physical environment
	6	Use “logic model”, but avoid solutions proven ineffective

Using Policing Smartly		
	1	Reduce harmful effects of the legal system
	2	Focus on alcohol
	3	Focus on firearms
	4	Orient to solving problems and hotspots
	5	Focus deterrence
	6	Avoid policing strategies proven ineffective or harmful

The Youth Endowment Fund is an organization based in the United Kingdom whose mission is to prevent children and young people from becoming involved in violence. To do so, they do research on effective approaches and are building a movement to put that knowledge into practice. The Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit^{xxxvii} identifies a list of programs that have an estimated high impact on youth violent crime. They are outlined below.

Program	Description
A and E Navigators	Case work in hospital emergency departments to support young people with violence rated injuries.
Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy	Talking therapy to help people manage negative behaviors.
Social Skills Training	Develop social skills to regulate behavior and communicate effectively.
Sports Programs	Engage youth in organized sport and activity.
Trauma-Specific Therapies	Support individual recovery from trauma.

Mentoring	Provide youth with guidance and support.
Multi-Systemic Therapy	Family therapy for youth at risk.
Pre-Court Diversion	Divert youth who have started offending from criminal legal system.
Restorative Justice	Help someone communicate with victims, understand impact, and find positive way forward.

EXAMPLES OF GUN AND GANG VIOLENCE PREVENTION/INTERVENTION INITIATIVES

The table on the next page provides an overview of existing gun and gang violence prevention and intervention initiatives in Canada and in the United States. For each program, the table provides information on the name of the initiative, its key audience, the program elements and outcomes, the level of evidence, as well as implementation considerations.

Location	Name of Program	Type of Program	Key Audience	Program Elements	Overall Outcomes	Specific Outcomes (Risk Factors)	Specific Outcomes (Protective Factors)	Level of Evidence	Implementation Considerations (Resources)
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	STR8 UP	Intervention	Individuals in gangs, those suffering from addictions, and those with criminal street lifestyles; provincial and federal correctional facilities; communities across Central and Northern Saskatchewan.	Educational supports, workforce development, mental health and substance management support, management and cultural programming, and personal development.	To assist individuals in mastering their own destiny and liberating themselves from gangs, addictions, and criminal street lifestyles.	N/A	N/A	Reasonable evidence that program is effective – however recommendations and documentation of specific details would be beneficial.	Funding is provided by the United Way; the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development's Urban Aboriginal Strategy; and John Howard Society.
Brampton, Ontario	Gangs 4 Tuition	Intervention	Youth in the Greater Toronto Area	Education on gang resistance; help with housing, employment, immigration, education, and health sector; training with soft-skills and micro-credentials; learning coping, communication, leadership, and financial planning skills.	Provides individuals with necessary support for a successful transition to a more positive lifestyle through acquisition of transferable skill sets and training.	Support for youth who have been in contact with the criminal justice system.	Create non-judgmental spaces so people have a voice and are listened to; learning coping, communication, interpersonal, leadership, and financial planning skills.	N/A	Program supported by the City of Brampton and Peel Regional Police.

Location	Name of Program	Type of Program	Key Audience	Program Elements	Overall Outcomes	Specific Outcomes (Risk Factors)	Specific Outcomes (Protective Factors)	Level of Evidence	Implementation Considerations (Resources)
Regina, Saskatchewan	11 and Under	Prevention	Children under the age of 11	School personnel identify children at risk and refer them to the Early Intervention Officer (EIO) of the Regina Police Service. The EIO does an assessment, and program personnel work with families to develop a plan and refer the child to appropriate services and programs.	The goal is to optimize the children's health, safety and development, and to improve communication and collaboration among service providers to strengthen the early identification of challenges faced by children and their families.	Youth are more involved in positive social activities. At-risk families have been connected with professional social services.	School attendance and engagement have increased, with more children staying in school. Better coordination of services has reduced service gaps and reduced the number of children in care and the number of families needing social assistance of effective parenting, safe and stable home environments, and stronger family structures.	A formal external evaluation of this initiative is planned but has not yet taken place; however, the Regina Police Service has received anecdotal feedback and compiled statistical data. With this initiative in place, youth are less involved with the criminal justice system, and anti-social and criminal behaviour have been reduced.	Financial contributions, including the salaries of one Regina Police Service constable for five months, one full-time constable and one coordinator, came from the Regina Police Service, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Services and totaled approximately \$260,000. Community groups provided in-kind contributions such as personnel time for members of the Working and Steering committees, office and meeting space and administrative support.
Toronto, Ontario	One by One Movement Inc.	Prevention and Intervention	Youth aged 6-29 and 29+	Prevention; intervention; reduction in recidivism; anti-bullying; negative lifestyle exit strategies; direct mentorship; development of training & workshops; fundraising and bringing awareness events.	Create a process for seamless referrals to the appropriate service providers.	N/A	N/A	Promising	N/A

Location	Name of Program	Type of Program	Key Audience	Program Elements	Overall Outcomes	Specific Outcomes (Risk Factors)	Specific Outcomes (Protective Factors)	Level of Evidence	Implementations Considerations (Resources)
Hamilton, Ontario	Liberty for Youth	Prevention and Intervention	At-risk youth	Innovative mentoring program model; basketball team with at-risk youth and mentors; character development program.	Strives for permanent behavioural change by building inner character, developing life and leadership skills, and inspiring at-risk youth to become active members of the community.	Open to disadvantaged, marginalized and at-risk youth, regardless of their faith, ethnicity, or nationality – who face any number of negative social circumstances and challenges.	Working on getting youth back into education; focused on leadership and strengths.	Promising	N/A
Edmonton, Alberta	WrapED	Prevention and Intervention	Young people affected by violent crime (ages 12–24)	Strength-based support	Support prevention and intervention programs in the community that target youth and their families by using a strength-based approach, addressing root causes of social disorder, and preventing youth involvement in gangs.	Wish to address root causes of social disorder, including supports for young people affected by high-risk lifestyles.	N/A	Evidence-based	N/A
York Region, Ontario	Leadership Engagement Gang Intervention Team (LEGIT)	Prevention and Intervention	Youth 12–20 years old who are at-risk of gang involvement and/or with history of involvement with criminal justice system.	Work 1:1 with youth from outreach perspective to go where youth are, identifying and assisting with immediate needs; prevention-focus.	Intervention and prevention with at-risk youth	Focused on individuals who have previous involvement with criminal justice system.	N/A	Promising	N/A
Surrey, BC	Female Youth Gang Intervention Program	Intervention	Females at risk of becoming involved in gangs.	Culturally appropriate support and referrals are given when needed. Participants are engaged through one-to-one outreach and are supported to make positive relationship choices. Participants can attend drop-in nights held at one of the Surrey Youth Centres and participate in activities and groups that focus on youth engagement.	Provide intensive individualized trauma and relationship-based support to young females, ages 12–19, who are in unhealthy relationships, exhibit negative behaviours or are at risk of being involved in gangs, and who primarily live in Surrey.	Focused on females who are more vulnerable due to unhealthy relationships.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lower Mainland, BC	END GANG LIFE	Intervention	High-risk individuals (over age of 13) who are engaged in gang-related activities and wish to exit the gang life.	Provide outreach, safety planning, and resources in an empathetic and non-judgemental manner; outreach and intervention strategies.	Engage the public about gangs; provide material that educates the public about gangs; prevent youth and young adults from joining gangs; encourage those involved in gang life to exit.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Surrey, BC	Surrey Anti-Gang Family Empowerment Program	Prevention and Intervention	SAFE is made of 11 programs that are designed to address program gaps with innovative new services; build on effective existing programs; coordinate support for families across agencies; and evaluate programs for continuous improvement of services.	SAFE is made of 11 programs that are designed to address program gaps with innovative new services; build on effective existing programs; coordinate support for families across agencies; and evaluate programs for continuous improvement of services.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Evidence-Based	Funding provided by Public Safety Canada; 7.5 million provided over 5 years.
Calgary, Alberta	Youth at Risk Development Program (YARD)	Intervention	Youth aged 10 to 17 that are currently at risk, affiliated with a gang, or involved in gang activity.	Provides a clinical for clients with acute mental health needs; develops individualized case plans for each client based on circumstances.	Improving interpersonal relationships, improving mental health and wellness, increased life skills and increased prosocial activities.	N/A	N/A	Promising	N/A
Waterloo Region, Ontario	inREACH	Prevention	Youth between ages of 13–24	Provided supports in the area of mental health, substance use, education, employment and family support.	Interventions at a neighbourhood level also provided mentorship programs and recreation supports as alternatives for youth-at-risk of being involved in gangs.	N/A	N/A	Final Process and Monitoring Evaluation Report available here.	Program delivered through a collaborative partnership. inREACH worked with many social service organizations across Waterloo Region. Funded by Federal government.
USA and Canada	Cure Violence	Prevention and Intervention	16 – 25 year olds living in areas of high violence levels.	Program focuses on community mobilization, conflict resolution, job employment, leadership and youth development, skills training, truancy prevention, gang prevention, violence prevention	Reduce of violence by working with the government and community. Increase the perceived risks of involvement in violence among high-risk youth, and create effective prevention programs.	Adds risk factors at the individual, family, school, community, and peer levels (list of factors on website).	Changes the social norms in areas of high violence through public education, community-building activities, and motivational interviewing with high-risk individuals.	Has been implemented in a few cities and is a promising guide.	Cost of resources depends on the specific adaptation each chapter develops. Need funding for staff, community initiatives, counselling, and other services.

APPENDIX 7: KEY PROJECT SUCCESS FACTORS

The International Center for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC) and United Nations (UN)–Habitat Safer Cities Programme, among others, have repeatedly identified the key factors that need to be in place for implementation of crime prevention initiatives to be successful. These are:

PERMANENT POSITION

The coordination of efforts across multiple stakeholders is relationship and labour intensive and cannot be accomplished as an ad hoc addition to existing positions. Therefore, creating a permanent position to guide the work through facilitation, coordination, managing project-related activities, communicating on behalf of the collective, stimulating ongoing engagement of key players and keeping the community and its organizations informed of emerging trends is vital.

ADEQUATE AND SUSTAINED FUNDING

Coordinating efforts across multiple stakeholders while staying abreast of community events and relevant data that impact project implementation is a more complex and concentrated effort than it might appear to be at first sight. Promising practices have shown that projects with secure funding, that do not need to raise funds on an ongoing basis to sustain their momentum, are far more likely to realize their goals than projects that attempt to provide support to longer term plans on short term or insecure resources.

EVIDENCE AND GOOD INFORMATION

The body of knowledge about what keeps communities safe is growing and becoming more solid. Such knowledge should ideally be multi-disciplinary and focused on gun and gang violence and their multiple causes, as well as promising and proven practices in prevention. While implementation inevitably needs to be grounded in the community context and wisdom, there are many well established data sources available that can guide implementation activities. Such as: CrimeSolutions.Gov, Public Safety's Canada Crime Prevention Inventory and Statistics Canada victimization surveys. The more local communities can ground their decisions in existing data sources the more likely they are to generate solutions that work.

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT

The engagement of the public is an important factor throughout the lifespan of the strategy from its development to its final days of implementation. It is therefore critical that the governing body design mechanisms for not only keeping the public informed but also to provide opportunities for active participation. This may include:

- Participation in projects, workshops, events
- Engaging with community leaders, practitioners, and other community members
- Availing themselves to opportunities as part of an established network
- Supporting and advocating for prevention, innovation, and collaboration

Especially at the level of geography the engagement of members of the public can be a crucial element of forward momentum and aid to decrease fear of crime and enhance a sense of agency rather than overreliance on formal systems.

CHAMPIONSHIP

When local leaders such as the mayor, city councillors, elders, ministers etc. advocate for prevention approaches and community projects, they have exceptional capacity to generate support. Championship has been identified as a key element in advancing a tipping point towards positive change.

MULTI-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Gun and gang violence prevention, as well as youth resilience, are complex areas and no one system has all the solutions. Establishing an ongoing round table of key partners with capacity and motivation is vital for the successful implementation of a strategy. Such tables also allow leaders in their fields to align efforts to maximize local resources.

SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

For projects to succeed in creating change they need to have: a compelling case, a vision, a strategy, resources, capabilities, motivation, and feedback. If any one of the elements is missing, the outcomes will not be as successful.

APPENDIX 8: GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE PREVENTION

Research from public health and other bodies with long-standing investments in prevention shows that, to be effective, prevention work needs to adhere to the following:

- Efforts need to be intensive, not ad hoc. Prevention is not accomplished through multiple unrelated projects, but instead through the integration of approaches towards a common goal. The steering committee will need to monitor the degree to which actions remain connected and integrated.
- Programs are ideally located in natural settings such as neighbourhoods or existing community organizations rather than establishing new ones. This is recognized in the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* through the inclusion of several actions building on existing efforts, including efforts concentrated in geographies of concern. While mostly in scopes two and three, the recommendations from the field study provide further opportunities in this regard.
- While interventions that start as early as possible and enhance protective factors are ideally suited for successful prevention work, the *Nanaimo Youth Resilience Strategy* is more selective by focusing on children and youth at risk. This is mostly due to funding criteria limiting certain actions and the timeframe for which funding is available. Nonetheless, research shows that when children grow up in caring families, safe and healthy communities, and in equitable and inclusive societies, their chance of living fulfilled, and peaceful lives is exceedingly better than when these conditions are not met. In this regard, the steering committee has a role in helping generate knowledge about how involvement in gangs might have been prevented in the first place. This knowledge can lead to changes to existing practises and policies such that over time, the community goes further upstream in its prevention efforts.
- Leaders in prevention that inevitably place a high value on the well-being of future generations. The community of Nanaimo, by investing in the Youth Resilience Strategy, is clearly doing just that.

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