

Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy

Building Safer Communities Program Update



May 2025

- 1. Overview of the Building Safer Communities Fund Federal Program**
- 2. The Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy: Vancouver's upstream approach to violence prevention**
- 3. BSCP Implementation Plan: Achievements, learnings, key deliverables and program updates for 2022-2026**
- 4. Final year of implementation and Sustainability Plan**



The primary objectives of the federal program (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada) include:

- a) to support municipalities to **develop community-based prevention** and intervention plans,
- b) to **increase the knowledge of the nature**, scope and challenges of gun and gang violence affecting youth including risk and protective factors
- c) to support recipients **to develop a plan to sustain successful prevention** and intervention models.

The City of Vancouver received \$4.2M over 4 years to coordinate program activities.



- **Development of a strategy** on gun and gang violence prevention
- Development and **delivery of prevention** intervention initiatives
- Development or enhancement of **data systems** to support data gathering/reporting
- Development of knowledge to fill gaps at the community/recipient level, including **research, and sharing of information** and/or best practices related to the prevention of gun and gang violence;
- **Outreach and recruitment** of preventative initiatives or intervention participants;
- Public **awareness** and education;
- **Collaboration** and integration of horizontal initiatives
- 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.

Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy: Vision & Focus Areas

Vision: A city where youth feel safe, supported, connected, healthy and free of violence.

1



Create safer and protective community environments and public spaces for youth

2



Identify and strengthen community-based supports for healthy child development in the middle years

3



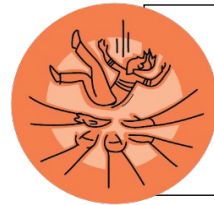
Strengthen the coordination and provision of positive youth development services and programs

4



Connect youth to caring adults

5

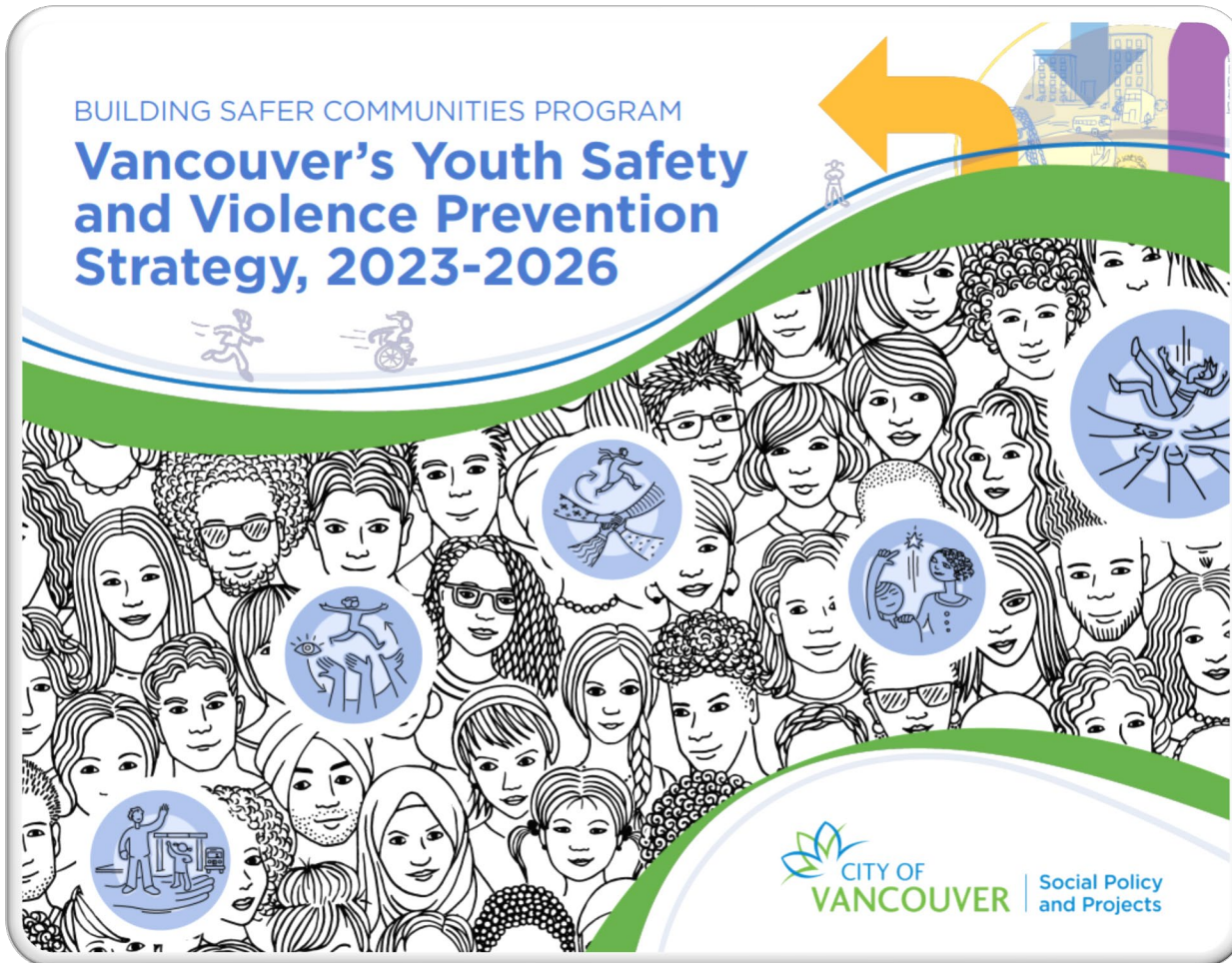


Lessen the impacts of serious violence and crime on children and youth

- BSCP Vancouver is a **youth violence prevention** initiative
- Promotes individual and **community well-being, safety, and belonging**
- Prevent and **address the root causes of youth violence, create safer spaces, and empower** young people and communities
- Primary focus on **early prevention** efforts
- **Mobilize partners to promote community collaboration** for violence prevention through social development initiatives.



Key program deliverable outlining the City's approach to enhancing the safety and wellbeing of youth in Vancouver.



1



Create safer and protective community environments and public spaces for youth

CityHive

2



Identify and strengthen community-based supports for healthy child development in the middle years

RedFox, YoBroYoGirl

3



Strengthen the coordination and provision of positive youth development services and programs

**Thunderbird CCA, Collingwood
NH, South Vancouver NH MOSAIC**

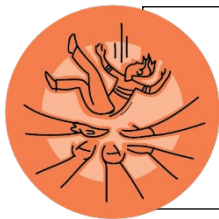
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Connect youth to caring adults

DUDES Club

5



Lessen the impacts of serious violence and crime on children and youth

**Progressive Intercultural
Community Services (PICS)**

10 Organizational and Youth Sector Capacity Building Projects: Enhanced the ability of community organizations to successfully address youth violence through staff development, strengthening collaboration and/or improving processes and systems to help ensure equitable access to early youth violence prevention services and programs

24 Youth-Led Violence Prevention Projects: Promoted a sense of safety and belonging among children and youth in the city through neighborhood-based action projects and events



the SAFE Minds program developed a workshop series for youth workers about teaching emotional regulation, empathy, communication, and boundaries that organizations can access and deliver to their youth.

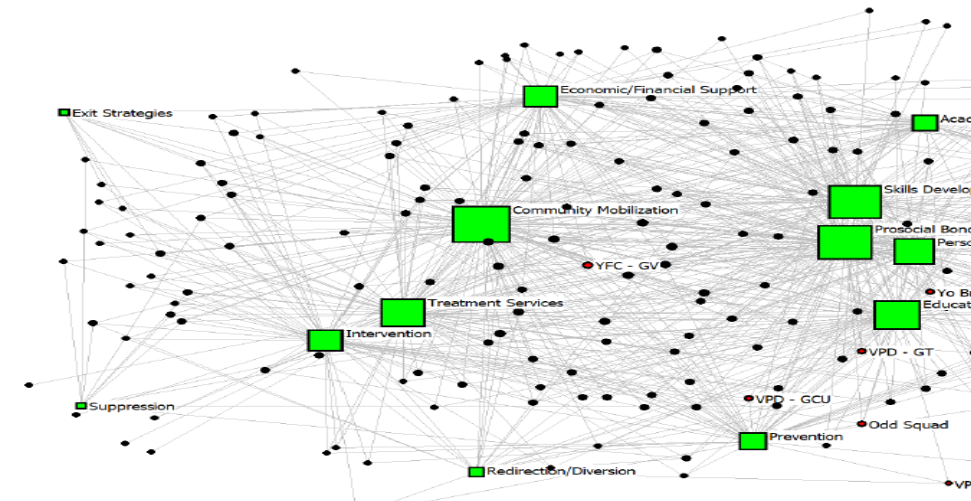
"One of the programs that had a big impact on me was Bloom. At Bloom, I wasn't just surrounded by supportive people, I was given real tools to stand up for myself. I got to ask caring adults the questions I was struggling with for so long. For the first time, I didn't feel alone. I had guidance, I had resources, and I had people who truly cared." – Youth Participant

Peer to peer youth engagement program to support outreach, raise awareness about youth violence prevention efforts and organize annual youth forum

From 2022-2025 a total of **15 youth community developers** have led the program with support of Equitas Vancouver. Key accomplishments include:

- Facilitated youth engagement dialogues that shaped the Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy
- Informed strategic priorities and adjudicated Youth Engagement Grant applications
- Hosted 3 annual Youth Forums
- Led youth research and evaluation activities with other youth to measure the impact of BSCP funded programs
- Created digital stories to share youth perspectives of violence, prevention, and what makes supportive communities





BSCP Vancouver Youth Collective Networks Project findings

- **195** community-based youth serving agencies located within the city boundaries.
- **25 networks and** interdisciplinary partnerships
- Majority address **acute elevated risk, operating in crisis response.**
- Neighborhood- based, city-wide and regional networks focus on **information sharing and policy and advocacy efforts**
- Community partnerships and **collaboration is a widely discussed challenge**
- Need and **urgency to support children in the middle years** and better coordination of services



Keeping Youth Matters on the Table Planning Process

- Interdepartmental visioning process
- **First time in two decades:** Vancouver Public Library, the Vancouver Park Board, Vancouver School Board, the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire and Rescue, Social Policy and Projects, Active Transportation, and the Sustainability office.
- Discussions on how the City could **embed safety and well-being into a youth-centered approach** and through the coordination of municipal planning, policy, services and programs
- BC Healthy Communities Child and Wellbeing Framework: **four protective factors: play, participation, safety and social connection and belonging.**



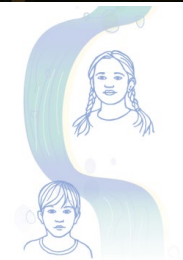
- **Reached over 33,000** children and youth in Vancouver through its grantees and direct engagement efforts over the last three years.



- BSCP program participants are showing **statistically significant better outcomes than youth in the broader community**, with regards to rates of sense of safety, belonging, ability to engage in different complex social situations, youth voice in decision making, and connection to positive role models and peer groups
- **Renewed focus on youth policy and planning**
- Tested prototype for a **citywide community safety approach** to addressing violence

Incorporate learnings and program achievements from BSCP, the current funding landscape and the role of the City in community safety and youth wellbeing.

- Explore **funding and financial sustainability** of current BSCP Programs within existing resources or with new external funding.
- Consider the **overarching context** for how the City plans and delivers programs, designs amenities, engages children and youth.
- Establish a **collaborative approach across** City departments and with external partners.



Recommendations:

- A. THAT Council receive this report that provides an update on the Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy and Building Safer Communities Program (BSCP) implementation plan 2023-2026 for information.
- B. THAT Council direct the Mayor to write a letter to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada requesting the extension of the Building Safer Community Fund contribution agreement to support the continuation of the Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy and implementation plan for 2026-2030.
- C. THAT Council approve the proposed approach to creating the required Building Safer Communities Program sustainability plan. This plan would prioritize using existing resources and incorporate an overarching approach for the City's work to engage and support children and youth in Vancouver.