

## YOUTHFUL VERNON STRATEGY – September 2018



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Background .....	3
Research.....	3
Policy Review and Assessment .....	3
Community Engagement .....	4
Purpose .....	4
Recommended Actions .....	5
Play in the Built Environment .....	5
Transportation .....	7
Local Government.....	8
Arts and Culture .....	10
Healthy Community Development .....	11
Child Care .....	12
Youthful Vernon Charter – A Commitment to the Rights of Children and Youth.....	13
Conclusions .....	14
Implementation .....	15
Youthful Vernon Steering Committee .....	17
Resources and Supporting Documents.....	18

# Introduction

The City of Vernon Official Community Plan guides the future of the community. One of its guiding principles is to be “a youth friendly city.” But what does that mean and how is it achieved? Over the last number of years, the City and partner organizations have explored these questions in depth. The Youthful Vernon Strategy aims to guide actions the City can take to better support children and youth to achieve this guiding principle.

## Background

In 2012, the City of Vernon endorsed and signed the Vernon Children’s Charter of Rights, making a commitment to honour and value young people as an integral part of the future and our community. In 2014, Vernon hosted the Cities Fit for Children Summit, bringing delegates from all over the province to hear internationally renowned speakers discuss how cities can support children, youth and families with concrete actions to help them thrive. Following the Summit, a collaborative working group, made up of representatives from the City of Vernon, Interior Health, the North Okanagan Early Years Council, Success by 6 and the United Way, has been exploring ways in which Vernon can better support children, youth and families to build a strong healthy future and support community economic development. With a boost from Healthy Communities Plan H funding and a City of Vernon discretionary grant, the working committee was enabled to conduct the necessary research and community engagement to develop the Youthful Vernon Strategy.



## Research

The committee explored the wide body of planning documents and research pertaining to child and youth friendly initiatives. The committee also worked with the University of British Columbia Okanagan Institute for Community Engaged Research. Fourth year research students conducted and reported on child and youth centric best practices regarding food security, edible landscapes, urban design, built environment and empowerment and healing through acknowledgement of truth and reconciliation. This body of work helped form the Strategy.

## Policy Review and Assessment

The City of Vernon has numerous planning documents and regulations that affect how child and youth friendly the city is. The Official Community Plan, including land use and the growth strategy, and supplementary plans, such as the Master Transportation Plan and Parks Master Plan, have numerous

policies pertaining to this subject. Assessments were conducted using resources from the Society for Children and Youth of British Columbia to evaluate existing policies and plans to see what Vernon was doing well, where there were gaps, how those gaps could be filled and where improvements could be made. The results of the evaluations form the Strategy.

## Community Engagement

Launching the project on National Child Day (November 17, 2017), a community celebration was held to mark the fifth anniversary of the signing of Vernon's Children's Charter. Community engagement began with over 300 people attending. They played, were entertained and expressed ideas for how Vernon could be more child and youth friendly. Attendants identified their favorite places in Vernon and places that needed improvement. Over the next few months numerous focus groups were held with children, youth, parents and service providers, all from a variety of backgrounds, to explore what steps Vernon could take to make a youth friendly city. The results, informed by the research, were then presented at a community forum, with 75 people in attendance. Local youth, elected officials and representatives from the public sector heard a presentation on Children's Rights and prioritized actions which now form the recommendations in this Strategy and its subsequent implementation.

## Purpose

Vernon is aiming to build a strong, healthy, playful, connected community where children and youth thrive and where policies are grounded in the rights of children and youth. 20% of the population in Vernon is aged 0-19 (2016 Census), and they are often the voices that are absent from civic participation. Evidence-based research indicates that one in four children in Vernon is vulnerable in one or more developmental domains upon kindergarten entrance (Early Development Instrument). One in five children in BC is growing up in poverty (First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition). Children with adverse early childhood experiences can suffer from toxic stress which has a lifelong impact on health, social engagement, educational attainment, and engaged citizenship (Harvard Centre for the Developing Child). There are numerous hard-to-connect families in Vernon, particularly with an increase in the refugee and immigrant population, as well as adjacent indigenous communities. We know that municipal policies and the built environment have an important role in supporting children's healthy development. Supportive environments provide strong mitigating influences (UNICEF, SCY). In this context, the purpose of the Youthful Vernon Strategy is to:



- Build on existing plans and policies.
- Identify and fill policy gaps where they exist.
- Implement best practices in becoming more child and youth friendly.
- Make actionable recommendations in a succinct strategy with a focus on implementation (See page 16).
- Ensure children and youth are included in decision-making processes.
- Foster pride in Vernon children and youth for where they call home.

Numerous recommendations came out of the engagement process which are already in the Official Community Plan, the Parks Master Plan, the Master Transportation Plan or other strategic City documents. These are referenced in the *Where We are Doing Well* sections in an effort to support those initiatives but not duplicate them here.

## Recommended Actions

### Play in the Built Environment

The built environment refers to human made places such as parks, streets and buildings and how these elements interact. This section is focuses on those places we build for play.

#### WHERE WE ARE LEADING

Vernon is fortunate to have an accessible parks system with most neighbourhoods having a park or trail within a ten minute walk. Beaches, urban spaces and larger parks, like Polson Park, serve the entire community. Vernon's Parks Master Plan (2015) was developed through extensive community consultation including young citizens and is being actively implemented. Play areas are regularly checked for safety and cleanliness. There is also a playground replacement plan that is being implemented and has committed funding. Playground improvement projects regularly incorporate Literacy in the Environment and Natural Play elements.



#### IMPROVING WHAT WE DO

##### Action 1:

Continue to improve existing parks and add new parks to the system as the density of residential development increases as the city grows. Ensure the parks system evolves and keeps pace with the growing population.



**Action 2:**

Continue to add natural play elements to parks developments and improvements, such as sand, logs, rocks, trees, and shrubs.

**Action 3:**

Continue and expand the Park and Play Program, where activity leaders visit neighbourhood parks to encourage structured play and games. Continue working with community partners, such as the Optimist Club, to provide play boxes in parks.

**HOW WE CAN DO BETTER**

Our parks can be more creatively enriched to enhance opportunities for play, particularly water, natural and interactive play. Whenever possible, parks should provide multiple features that attract different types of people and ages.

**Action 4:**

Make washrooms in parks more accessible for longer hours during the day and for longer seasons. This may mean winterizing plumbing in new or renovated facilities. All washrooms in community parks should provide access to potable water. Washrooms should provide change tables for all parent types and family compositions. Gender neutral washrooms should be considered.

**Action 5:**

Provide more shade trees or structures, such as sails, to protect people in public spaces from the sun.

**Action 6:**

Consider edible landscaping in public spaces.

**Action 7:**

Incorporate more play elements in parks that encourage interaction between children, youth and adults.

**Action 8:**

Explore more free and “risky” play opportunities in parks.

**Action 9:**

Work with community partners and associations to encourage community gardens to have space for children to grow their own food and flowers. Community gardens should incorporate play areas and social spaces. Encourage and support gardens at schools and daycares.

**Action 10:**

Create spaces in the City Centre where youth can hang out, where loitering is encouraged and where youth can feel ownership in a public space.

## Transportation

Neighbourhoods that support walking and cycling give children and youth greater independence and mobility. One way to measure walkability is to ask ‘could a child and a grandparent walk there together?’ If so, then the infrastructure is considered ‘8 to 80,’ meaning it is safe and easy for both an eight-year-old and an eighty-year-old to use.

### WHERE WE ARE LEADING

The City of Vernon’s Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan outlines planned improvements to the walking and cycling networks throughout the city. Vernon is building a strong network of sidewalks, trails, and pathways. Investments are being made to improve Vernon Regional Transit and a service expansion in April 2018 has added a new route and more hours. Children five and under ride the bus for free. Upcoming changes to our Traffic Bylaw will allow small wheeled transport, such as scooters and skateboards, on multi-use paths.



### IMPROVING WHAT WE DO

**Action 11:**

Accelerate the implementation of the Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan by increasing annual capital investment in active transportation infrastructure, including projects located in residential neighbourhoods and near schools, parks, and recreational facilities. Ensure that active transportation infrastructure is convenient and attractive by increasing operational investment for maintenance, including snow clearing.

### HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

The majority of Vernon’s existing cycling routes are on-road bike lanes that may not be suitable for young children, and while annual investments are being made to build sidewalks and improve accessibility, gaps still exist. Families who cycle struggle to find secure bike racks that are suitable for non-standard cycles, such as cargo bikes or bikes with trailers and child seats. Since these bikes and accessories are costly, lack of security can be a major barrier.

Building great infrastructure takes time, but quick wins can be achieved by creatively harnessing existing spaces. Cities across North America have implemented temporary ‘open streets’ programs where streets are closed to non-resident vehicles for the day, often on Sundays or holidays, and used for recreation.

**Action 12:**

Aim to ensure that all new active transportation infrastructure meets ‘8 to 80’ design best practices.

**Action 13:**

Implement an annual traffic safety review and invest in safety improvements for existing active transportation infrastructure.



**Action 14:**

Update the Zoning Bylaw to include requirements for non-standard cycle parking suitable for bike trailers, cargo bikes and mobility bikes, and ensure all public buildings have bike parking suitable for non-standard bicycles.

**Action 15:**

Pilot an Open Streets program that temporarily converts streets into public spaces for walking, biking, play, events and socializing. Provide an easy and affordable permitting process for closing streets for block parties with a kit that includes street chalk and a large coffee urn.

**Action 16:**

Adopt the ‘Kids Ride Free’ program to provide free transit for children ages five to fourteen.

## Local Government

Local Government can have a significant impact supporting children and youth. Other assessment areas of the Youthful Vernon Strategy, such as transportation and parks, have significant local government involvement and warrant their own recommendations and assessment. Other domains, such as Housing, are addressed in depth through the Official Community Plan Land Use Plan where a variety of housing is encouraged within the city and aims to fulfill the housing needs of a diverse population. The items found below are more general in nature and tend to cross more than one local government domain.

### WHERE WE ARE LEADING

The Vernon Official Community Plan has had the guiding principle of “*Creating a youth friendly city*” for over a decade. The Vernon





Children's Charter of Rights was signed and endorsed in 2012 making a commitment to honour and value children as an integral part of the future and our community. In 2015, Vernon hosted the Cities Fit for Children Summit. Creative public participation is standard practice at the City which often includes targeted engagement activities for children and youth.

## IMPROVING WHAT WE DO

### Action 17:

Continue to actively engage a diverse cross section of young people in City projects, in planning processes and on Council Committees, including voting privileges for youth. Continue to evolve engagement methods to make providing feedback easy, fun and transparent and foster participation and advocacy for children and youth.

### Action 18:

Continue a commitment to sustainability through land use planning, asset management, climate change adaptation and energy reduction to ensure future generations have a city they can be proud of and thrive within now, and in the future.



### Action 19:

Continue to acknowledge National Child Day by supporting community celebrations and creating an annual awards program for youth engaged in the community and for those who support children and youth.

### Action 20:

Update the Vernon Attainable Housing Strategy to ensure diverse housing needs are met, both physically and financially.

## HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

From amending bylaws to creating standard operating procedures, the City of Vernon can update regulations and practices to put children and youth top of mind when conducting everyday tasks and when working on projects, big and small.

### Action 21:

Amend bylaw regulations to update outdoor amenity and play space requirements for multiple family developments (townhouses and apartments) to ensure children, youth and families have adequate outdoor space for health, wellness and social connection reasons. Ensure childcare regulations and references are up to date and enable childcare to be provided in all areas of the city.

### Action 22:

Declare Vernon a breastfeeding friendly community and ensure public spaces are signed appropriately and welcome breastfeeding.

**Action 23:**

Create an internal program at the City of Vernon where policy development and built environment projects are assessed through a child/youth lens. Develop and promote the youth lens as a Standard Operating Procedure.

**Action 24:**

All washrooms open to the public should include infant change tables. Private businesses where families are welcome should be encouraged to do the same. Family washrooms should be encouraged and provided. Explore creating inclusive family spaces and gender neutral washrooms in public parks and facilities.

**Action 25:**

Support playfulness and whimsy in everyday civic life through friendly signage, public art, pop-up installations and allowing street gatherings. Establish an affordable neighbourhood block party permit system to address insurance and supply kits.

## Arts and Culture

Access to arts and cultural programming is critical for young people because creative expression enriches our lives and tells our stories. Arts participation is associated with positive academic and social outcomes (National Endowment for the Arts) and students who attend live performances demonstrate greater levels of tolerance and empathy (University of Arkansas).

### WHERE WE ARE LEADING

Vernon has a rich and vibrant arts and culture sector. Children and youth can access a wide range of programs in different art forms including dance, visual arts, theatre, crafts and music. Our city is home to high quality professional arts organizations and a full suite of facilities including the Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. Free, live outdoor music events happen throughout the summer and Vernon's library and Recreation Centre offer many programs for children and youth.



### HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

Financial barriers can prevent children and youth from accessing arts and culture programming. Exploring ways to break down financial barriers and enable organizations to enrich their opportunities for youth could improve access. Local organizations offer music and theatre performances for young children, but there is a need for concerts and festivals aimed at teenagers. The community is also currently exploring the development of a new shared cultural facility to house the Greater Vernon Museum and Archives and Art Gallery as the current facilities do not adequately support the functions of both organizations.

**Action 26:**

Working with community partners, create opportunities for graffiti art installations and hire professional artists to run a workshop for young artists annually.

**Action 27:**

That the RDNO (through Greater Vernon Services and community partners) explore a grant program to invest in initiatives that improve arts and culture program accessibility for children and youth. Funding should be available for both professional arts and culture organizations to improve programs and to schools and community groups that need financial assistance to access programs.

**Action 28:**

Ensure that there are all-ages music venues and events programmed for teens with performers they want to see.

**Action 29:**

Make information related to arts and culture more accessible by working with local organizations to ensure that information about events, festivals and projects is available online, coordinated, and in child and youth-friendly language.

**Action 30:**

Support youth engagement in culture and heritage with a new multicultural festival that highlights the community's diversity.

## Healthy Community Development

Local governments play a pivotal role in providing leadership for health by designing communities that influence resident choices and lifestyles. Together, Interior Health and the City of Vernon work collaboratively to create public policy and healthy built environments that are supportive of all citizens. Creating change through planning and policy is an upstream approach that can reduce health inequities for children and youth.

### WHERE WE ARE LEADING

Interior Health has partnered with the City of Vernon to provide a 'health lens' for the Official Community Plan update (2008 and 2013) as well as the Parks Master Plan (2015), has participated in school travel planning (2009-2016), and supported the Plan H grant application for the Youthful Vernon Strategy (2017).

### HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

While the City of Vernon has developed strong existing policies and planning documents, there are opportunities to strengthen policies that can positively influence the health and well-being of children and youth.

**Action 31:**

Create smoke-free outdoor spaces by implementing signage and enforcement measures for places that children and youth frequent such as parks and beaches.

**Action 32:**

Given the health inequities faced by indigenous children and youth, follow and implement the Calls to Action identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

**Action 33:**

Engage with and support the coordination and collaboration of the various partners within the community that are working to increase food security.

**Action 34:**

Through zoning, explore a minimum distance that fast food outlets and fast food trucks can locate from child and youth orientated facilities such as schools and playgrounds.

**Action 35:**

Encourage community involvement and adoption of LIVE 5-2-1-0 messaging; a Sustainable Childhood Obesity Prevention program that encourages enjoying 5 fruits and vegetables, no more than 2 hours of screen time, 1 hour of playful activity and 0 sugary drinks each day. LIVE 5-2-1-0 provides consistent public messaging about healthy lifestyle choices for children and families.



## Child Care

The North Okanagan Early Years Council is committed to community development and capacity building to meet the needs of families with children aged 0-6. This is part of larger regional and provincial initiatives funded and supported through Success by 6 and Children First. Stakeholders include family-serving agencies, the school district, local government, businesses, faith groups, the health authority, parents, grandparents and others.

Quality licensed affordable child care is in high demand in Vernon with long waitlists at most licensed care providers. When child care options are unavailable, parents are often forced to choose unregulated care or simply not participate in the workforce and put career goals on hold. The benefit of having affordable quality child care includes increased parent participation in the economy through increased employment which helps increase economic growth and stability. For the children, research shows that early childhood education provides benefits throughout a child's life, allowing them to be more prepared when entering the public education system and requiring less support services. The following actions identify what local government can do to support child care.

## WHERE WE ARE LEADING

The City of Vernon is a key partner on the North Okanagan Early Years Council. Child care services are allowed in most areas of the City regardless of whether an area is residential or commercial.

## HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

The child care shortage in the community is currently only understood anecdotally by long waitlists for licensed care. Regulations regarding child care licensing and locations need to be evaluated and updated. A thorough review of the system is desired.

### **Action 36:**

Work with community partners to access funding to conduct a Child Care Needs Assessment to understand and address the needs in the community and to support economic development.

### **Action 37:**

Encourage larger businesses, employers and residential subdivisions to consider including child care provisions in new development.

### **Action 38:**

Encourage School District #22 to consider including child care provisions in new builds and facility expansions to co-locate related services. Recognize that School District #22 is currently at 104% capacity which puts early years/child care programs at risk and explore providing other options in the municipality.



### **Action 39:**

Working with licensing partners, evaluate and update business license and zoning bylaw regulations related to child care. Working with early childhood education partners, lobby for increased enforcement of unregulated, illegal childcare.

### **Action 40:**

Promote child care resources on the Welcome to Vernon website.

## Youthful Vernon Charter – A Commitment to the Rights of Children and Youth

In 2011, the Early Childhood Educators of BC partnered with the North Okanagan Early Years Council to develop a charter recognizing children's rights as active citizens in our community. Focus groups,



committees and awareness-raising activities helped to develop the Vernon Children's Charter. In 2012, it was adopted by the City of Vernon, signed by many key partners, and distributed widely in the community.

## WHERE WE ARE LEADING

The endorsement of the Vernon Children's Charter was a significant step in showing a commitment to the rights of children and identifies key items that the City agreed to support. National Child Day (NCD) is recognized annually and a large community gathering was held in 2017 to recognize the fifth anniversary of the Charter on NCD. The City of Vernon has included the voices of children and youth in numerous planning documents including the Official Community Plan, Parks Master Plan and the Child and Youth Friendly Vernon initiative.

## HOW WE CAN DO BETTER

### Action 41:

Implement the Youthful Vernon Strategy as a way to support the rights of children and youth with a review of the document at Council strategic planning sessions.

### Action 42:

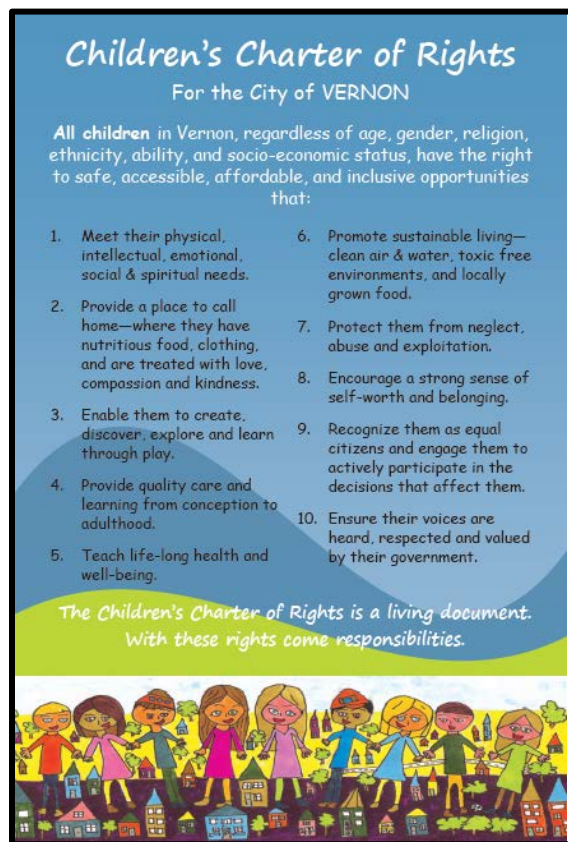
Update the Vernon Charter to better reflect and include the voice and rights of youth (ages 12-18).

### Action 43:

Educate elected officials and staff on the existence and importance of the Children's Charter. Create a culture where the rights of young people are considered as a part of daily operations.

### Action 44:

Promote the Children's Charter within City facilities and on the City website. Promote the Youthful Vernon Strategy to ensure inclusiveness of all ages and a city that is a fun youthful place to live, work and play.



## Conclusions

The City of Vernon has many responsibilities to its constituents and taxpayers. While children and youth do not pay taxes, they are important constituents and are highly valued by our community. Our hope is that this initiative will result in a stronger voice for children and youth in local decision making, more opportunities that help children and youth to develop into healthy, engaged citizens that are proud of

their community, and that Vernon will be recognized as a community that cares for the needs of children and youth. The recommendations support the vital role they play in healthy social and economic development and the goal of a youthful Vernon – a community for all.

## Implementation

Provided below are the top ten recommended actions across the Youthful domain subjects. The provided list is based on stakeholder and public engagement prioritization results and the anticipated capacity and resources required for success. Since this Strategy was drafted, two actions have already been implemented. What a great start!

Action	Resources and Comments	Timeframe
#11. Accelerate the implementation of the Pedestrian and Bike Master Plan by increasing annual capital investment in active transportation infrastructure, including projects located in residential neighbourhoods and near schools, parks, and recreational facilities. Ensure that active transportation infrastructure is convenient and attractive by increasing operational investment for maintenance, including snow clearing.	City Administration - Community Infrastructure and Development to propose capital funding and operational maintenance costs for projects that include active transportation elements.	Ongoing and annually proposed through the budgeting process
#5&6. Provide more shade trees or structures, such as sails, to protect people in public spaces from the sun. Consider edible landscaping.	Also supported by the Parks Master Plan. Any new park design should contemplate these elements. Improvements to existing parks should also be considered.	Ongoing and annually proposed and included in the budgeting process
#4. Make washrooms in parks more accessible for longer hours during the day and for longer seasons. This may mean winterizing plumbing in new or renovated facilities. All washrooms in community parks should provide access to potable water. Washrooms should provide change tables for all parent types and family compositions. Gender neutral washrooms should be considered.	The Parks Master Plan identifies four washroom upgrades expected between 2019-2027. Each washroom upgrade should contemplate the identified child and youth friendly elements. Increased operational costs to service washrooms over a longer season would also need to be considered.	Ongoing and annually proposed through the budgeting process

#31. Create smoke-free outdoor spaces by implementing signage and enforcement measures for places that children and youth frequent such as parks and beaches.	City Administration, Parks and Bylaw Compliance	BYLAW ADOPTED, implementation commencing with signage and enforcement
#27. That the RDNO (through Greater Vernon Services and community partners) explore a grant program to invest in initiatives that improve arts and culture program accessibility for children and youth. Funding should be available for both professional arts and culture organizations to improve programs and to schools and community groups that need financial assistance to access programs.	RDNO, City of Vernon (Recreation), School District and local arts organizations to creatively explore program accessibility.	2019 and beyond
#26. Working with community partners, create opportunities for graffiti art installations and hire professional artists to run a workshop for young artists annually.	Youth, Greater Vernon Services, Recreation Services, Downtown Vernon Association and local arts organizations to explore opportunities.	By 2020
#21. Amend bylaw regulations to update outdoor amenity and play space requirements for multiple family developments (townhouses and apartments) to ensure children, youth and families have adequate outdoor space for health, wellness and social connection reasons. Ensure childcare regulations and references are up to date and enable childcare to be provided in all areas of the city.	City Administration to provide Zoning Bylaw amendments.	By 2020
#36. Work with community partners to access funding to conduct a Child Care Needs Assessment to understand and address the needs in the community and to support economic development.	City of Vernon, Social Planning Council and Early Childhood Education stakeholders and partners to collaborate to secure funding to facilitate the project.	2019-2020
#15. Pilot an Open Streets program that temporarily converts streets into public spaces for walking, biking, play, events and socializing. Provide an easy and affordable permitting process for closing streets for block parties with a kit that includes street chalk and a large coffee urn.	Transportation, Operations and Greater Vernon Recreation to explore and promote potential programs.	2019 and beyond

#16 Adopt the ‘Kids Ride Free” program to provide free transit for children ages five to fourteen.	City of Vernon and BC Transit	COMPLETE with ongoing monitoring
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## Youthful Vernon Steering Committee

Leola McMillan, Chair, Early Childhood Educators of BC, North Okanagan Branch

Trina Devine, Program Director, Okanagan Boys and Girls Clubs

Tracy Williamson, Early Years Community Development Coordinator, United Way/FRC

Juliette Cunningham, Councillor, City of Vernon

Carson Armitage, Youth Ambassador, Vernon Community School, School District #22

Lynne Reside, Coordinator, Youthful Vernon Project/Regional Coordinator Success by 6

Janelle Rimell, Healthy Communities Environmental Health Officer, Interior Health

Angela Broadbent, City of Vernon, Active Transportation Coordinator

Cleo Corbett, City of Vernon, Long Range Planner



# Resources and Supporting Documents

<https://bchealthycommunities.ca/>

<https://bernardvanleer.org/app/uploads/2017/10/BvLF-8-80-Cities-Report-Final.pdf>

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/top\\_13\\_things\\_municipalities.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/top_13_things_municipalities.pdf)

<http://still1in5.ca/report-card/>

<http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/maps/edi/sd/22/>

<http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/maps/mdi/nh/>

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/>

<http://www.childfriendlycommunities.ca/>

<https://www.childinthecity.org/>

<https://www.live5210.ca/>

[http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

[https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/New\\_Westminster\\_Child\\_and\\_Youth\\_Friendly\\_Community\\_Strategy\\_Reduced\\_Size.pdf](https://www.newwestcity.ca/database/files/library/New_Westminster_Child_and_Youth_Friendly_Community_Strategy_Reduced_Size.pdf)

<http://www.campbellriver.ca/your-city-hall/advisory-committees-commissions/youth-action-committee>

<https://planh.ca/take-action/healthy-society/inclusive-communities/page/age-friendly-and-child-friendly-communities>

<http://www.scyofbc.org/>

<https://www.880cities.org/>

Elpus, K. (2013) Arts education and positive youth development: Cognitive, behavioural and social outcomes of adolescents who study the arts. National Endowment for the Arts <http://www.artsedsearch.org/summaries/arts-education-and-positive-youth-development-cognitive-behavioral-and-social-outcomes-of-adolescents-who-study-the-arts>

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. "Major benefits for students who attend live theatre, study finds." ScienceDaily, 16 October 2014 <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141016165953.htm>

***We gratefully acknowledge that we are working, living and playing on the traditional Okanagan and Secwépemc (Secwépemcúl'ecw) territory.***

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***Thank you to the many individuals and organizations who contributed to this project!***