

A Review of the MCFD Fraser Region Integrated Community-Based Youth Services Vision & Strategy

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	II
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	II
INTRODUCTION	1
REVIEW FRAMEWORK.....	1
LOGIC MODEL FOR THE 2003 SERVICE RE-DESIGN	2
SCOPE OF THE REVIEW.....	3
FOCUS OF THE REVIEW	3
REVIEW METHODS.....	6
REVIEW OF OUTCOME OF RE-DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION	6
REVIEW OF 2003 PLANNING PROCESS	7
FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW	8
OUTCOME OF IMPLEMENTATION - SURVEY OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	8
OUTCOME OF IMPLEMENTATION – STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUPS.....	32
PLANNING PROCESS – SURVEY OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	41
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	44
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....	44
SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS – SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY	45
SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS – HOLISTIC APPROACH.....	45
ADDITIONAL ISSUES TO CONSIDER	46
APPENDIX A.....	47
YOUTH SERVICES FEEDBACK SURVEY	47
APPENDIX B	50
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE: MCFD & CONTRACTED AGENCY STAFF	50
APPENDIX C	54
FEEDBACK SURVEY ON THE PLANNING PROCESS	54
APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP NOTES.....	55
SERVICE INTEGRATION	55
ACCESSIBILITY OF SERVICES	61
HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY.....	65
DEFINITIONS FOR ABBREVIATIONS USED IN APPENDIX D	67

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2002, the MCFD Fraser Regional Leadership Team initiated a community-based consultation process to gather input from community service partners in order to determine how available resources could be used to organize or re-design services for children, youth and families. This community consultation process resulted in the development of a common vision of an "integrated, holistic, accessible, culturally-responsive and relationship-based services" strategy for youth. A process was subsequently initiated to implement the new approach for youth services in the Fraser Region based on this common vision.

The idea for a review of the outcome of the re-design and re-contracting of youth services emerged out of an August 2005 meeting between the MCFD Regional Executive Director for Fraser and the Child and Youth Officer (CYO) for B.C. Resources for the review were allocated in November 2005 and the Youth Partnership Council joined MCFD Fraser Region and the Child and Youth Officer in a partnership to conduct the review. This document describes the process and the findings of this review.

In terms of the scope of this review, the principal focus for the review was on the three key objectives of the re-designed youth services: Integration of Services, Service Accessibility, and Holistic Approach. In order to assess the extent to which these objectives are being met, information was gathered from key stakeholders using two strategies. First, a survey questionnaire was distributed to staff from MCFD, contracted services, as well as, community service partners throughout the Fraser Region. Second, in order to explore the three key issues in greater depth, focus groups were conducted with MCFD staff, contracted agency and community partner staff, and youth.

A secondary focus of the review was on the 2003 community consultation and re-design process. The purpose of this component of the review was to determine how participants viewed the process, as a whole, and how such planning processes might be improved. A survey questionnaire designed for this purpose was distributed to members of the Community Tables across the Fraser Region in order to obtain their feedback.

Details of the results of this review are presented in the main body of this report. In general, the results of the review indicate that the key elements of the new vision and strategy including the integration of services, improvement of service accessibility, and support for the holistic approach have been achieved to a satisfactory degree. Nonetheless, there are still ample opportunities to make further improvements, especially in regards to service access, given that the needs of youth and the demand for service still exceed available resources.

Recommendations

Participants in this review provided many positive suggestions and insights for the further enhancement of the quality of services within the region. Their suggestions have been summarized and reorganized in the form of recommendations, and these are presented below.

General Recommendations

Form a Task Group: Form a Task Group to be charged with the responsibility to follow through on the recommendation of this review. This Task Group should be established as a standing committee with membership drawn from MCFD and contracted service agencies, as well as, other community service partners. The Task Group would have the mandate to set priorities and make recommendations to the MCFD regional executives regarding follow-up activities and other activities related to quality improvement.

Conduct Follow-up Reviews of Youth Services: Conduct periodic reviews of youth services in Fraser Region as part of a strategic quality improvement initiative.

Specific Recommendations – Service Integration

Open a dialogue regarding a model or models for co-location: In general, those who work in co-located environments believe in the benefits of co-location. In contrast, those who do not work in such environments tend to express more doubts about the merits of co-location. A variety of co-location models currently exist within the region and participants have indicated, based on their experience, that there are both advantages and disadvantages regarding the various options. A more detailed review of co-location strategies, identifying, in an explicit fashion, both advantages and disadvantages and the circumstances of each example may be beneficial for the continued successful implementation of the co-location strategy.

Improve the Integrated Case Management (ICM) Process: Integrated Case Management is generally recognized and supported as a good case management process. However, the ICM process has not been implemented in a uniform fashion across the Fraser Region. Some implementations appear to be more successful than others. One consistent message regarding ICM meetings is that more structure may be required to make the ICM process more effective and efficient. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that (1) there is meaningful involvement of the youth client in the meetings, (2) all key service providers are invited and present at the meetings, (3) meetings are held, preferably as part of the routine case management for the youth, and (4) staff have the necessary training and skills to facilitate an ICM meeting.

Improve Bilateral Information Sharing: Information sharing can sometimes be difficult, given confidentiality regulations and given that different agencies have different thresholds for the type of information they are willing to share. Nonetheless, whatever the motivation, information sharing, particularly by MCFD staff, can be improved. Thus, information sharing protocols and processes should be re-considered in view of this imbalance, keeping in mind statutes, legislations and professional practice issues. Habitual practices that impede information sharing not clearly based on statutes, legislations and professional practice issues should be re-shaped.

Encourage Meaningful Participation by Youth: Meaningful participation in planning processes that impact on youth is an issue raised by many youth. Clearly, there are few

opportunities available to youth to exert an influence over the community planning process in a meaningful way. At the same time, it can also be said that meaningful participation requires commitment. Perhaps, for those youth who demonstrate commitment, more opportunities for meaningful participation should be made available.

Specific Recommendations – Service Accessibility

Ensuring that services are optimally accessible to clients is a key element of the new youth services strategy. Most participants agreed that the demand for services far outstrips available resources and this has access implications. The simple approach would be to recommend increases in resource allocation. While resource allocation should, perhaps, be re-examined, given that there will certainly be limits to the availability of resources, review participants have also made a number of alternate suggestions.

Increase Outreach Services Where Appropriate: Within reason, more services should be provided on an outreach basis, where appropriate. When services can be provided on an outreach basis, participants have indicated that service accessibility can be enhanced.

Ensure that Services are Youth-friendly: Making services more youth-friendly by changing the physical space or setting, and improving the human interface can enhance accessibility. From the youth perspective, it is important that they are treated as individual persons and that their opinions are considered seriously. Thus, within reason, services should seek to improve their physical space, as well as, their human interface in order to make service more youth-friendly and enhance accessibility.

Streamline the Referral Process: Gating all referrals through MCFD, as is the practice in many communities, may make administrative sense and make case management more efficient, however some participants have indicated that this may prove to be a deterrent to some clients or family members who might not, for a variety of reasons, want to be gated through MCFD. Additionally, given the volume of cases, a single entry point is more likely to result in blockages in case flow. For these reasons, the gating process should, be re-examined.

Specific Recommendations – Holistic Approach

Enhance the Adoption of the Holistic Approach: Review participants identified general areas for improvement with respect to the holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth. For the holistic approach to be more fully adopted across the Fraser Region, the message about the holistic approach needs to be frequently stated, and restated. Staff education and training sessions may, therefore, need to be provided on a regular and continuing basis.

Additional Issues to Consider

Given the consensus among review participants that demand for services exceeds available services, participants also made a number of other recommendations concerning service elements that should be enhanced. These have been summarized below:

Enhance Funding of Youth Services: Given the current level of funding and the growing population of the region, youth services funding should be generally enhanced.

Extend Hours of Operation: MCFD offices are generally open only during regular business hours on weekdays. More flexible hours of operation, where justifiable, would enhance accessibility.

Improve Access to Housing Resources: Housing is a long standing, as well as, a continuing issue. Participants have indicated that, in many ways, stable housing is a necessary starting point for successful case management. Youth housing of all kinds is in short supply and this housing issue should be addressed.

Enhance Youth Support Worker Services: Youth support and youth outreach workers are needed to assist in a wide array of tasks. The number of youth support worker hours available is low in comparison to the demands for service. Youth service worker hours should be enhanced.

Enhance Counseling Services: The hours available for counseling and therapy services for both youth and family members are limited. These hours should be increased as part of the overall enhancement of youth services to meet service needs.

Counseling Services for Families: There is a shortage of counseling services for families. Family counseling is frequently indicated as part a holistic approach. More resources should, therefore, be made available for family counseling.

Addictions Services for Youth: There is a need to enhance addictions services. In particular, detox and residential treatment services should be enhanced since these services are generally not available within the Fraser Region.

Transition to Adult Services: Youth in transition from MCFD to the adult system often end up with no support. There is a need to improve the transition process and ensure that clients in transition do not lack needed services.

Introduction

In the fall of 2002, the MCFD Fraser Regional Leadership Team initiated a community-based consultation process to gather input from community service partners in order to determine how available resources could be used to organize or re-design services for children, youth and families. This community consultation process resulted in the development of a common vision of “integrated, holistic, accessible, culturally-responsive and relationship-based services” for youth. Contracts were eventually signed with 13 service providers across Fraser Region in 2004 to implement youth services based on this vision.

The idea of a review of the outcome of the Fraser Region’s re-design and re-contracting of youth services emerged out of an August 2005 meeting between the MCFD Regional Executive Director for Fraser and the Child and Youth Officer for B.C. Resources for the review were allocated in November 2005 and the Youth Partnership Council joined MCFD Fraser Region and the Child and Youth Officer in a partnership to conduct the review. The overall goals of the review were to examine (1) the implementation of new services based on this vision and strategy, and (2) the planning process that led to the new vision and strategy. More specifically, the review was to take into consideration two key issues:

1. “The outcome of the service re-design in relation to the vision” -- the purpose of this component was to capture the degree to which the goals of the re-design, and therefore, the expected outcome of the re-design have been achieved.
2. “How well the re-design planning process worked” – the purpose of this component was to obtain feedback from those involved in the community planning process in order to understand the strengths and limitations of this planning process so that lessons learned from this exercise can be shared with others in the future.

The intent of this review is to provide information to MCFD Fraser Region and the Youth Partnership Council for strategic planning purposes in order to enhance and to improve, where necessary, the current community-based youth services model.

Conversely, it is equally important to state what this review is not intended to achieve. This review is not intended to generate information for the purposes of future contracts processes. However, information may be used to improve services, where indicated.

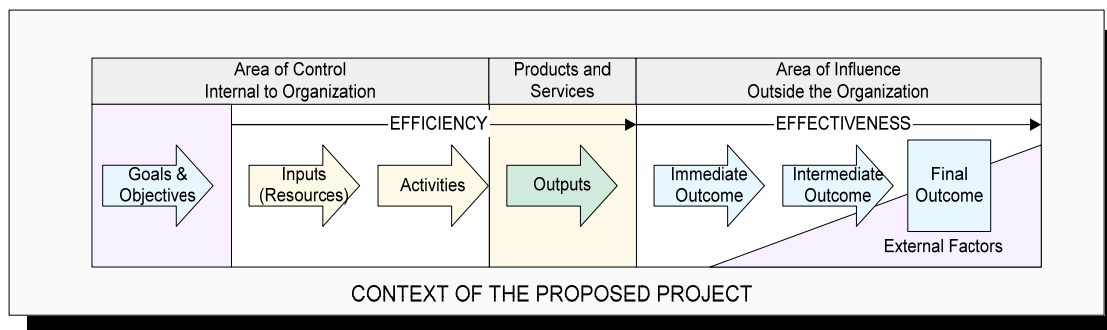
Review Framework

All evaluations or program reviews should begin with a consideration of the goals and objectives of the target program or initiative. This is because an initiative’s goals and objectives should logically guide the selection of program activities designed to achieve specific (expected) outputs and outcomes. Goals and objectives should, therefore, determine, in a large part, what should be assessed or measured in order to determine the impact of a program or initiative. This logical linkage between goals and objectives and activities and outcome is sometimes referred to as a “result chain”.

Program logic models can provide the ideal vehicle for program monitoring, evaluation or program review because it requires the “result chain” to be explicitly delineated in

advance. For example, the logic model representation (below) indicates that outcomes and outputs of a program are the direct results of activities that are made possible by specific inputs (resources). It is also clearly evident that the selection of activities and required resources are dictated, to a large extent, by project goals and objectives and expected outcomes.

The "Result Chain" Logic Model



Logic models clearly identify the individual steps of the "result chain" and thus conveniently provide both the focus and the criteria for measuring both program efficiency and program effectiveness. Using this framework, a system of indicators of inputs and outputs can be developed to measure efficiency and a set of measures can be developed or selected to measure outcome¹.

Logic Model for the 2003 Service Re-design

Since the service re-design process undertaken in 2003 was not explicitly articulated in a logic model format², an effort has been made to identify key elements of the "result chain" in order to provide a logical framework for this review process.

Goals, Objectives and Activities of the 2003 Re-design

Based on information provided as part of the background for this project, the goals and objectives of the 2003 re-design planning process can be reconstructed and framed in the following manner:

- ❑ To gather input from community service partners in order to determine how available resources could be used to organize or re-design services for children, youth and families throughout Fraser Region.

This goal was implemented through the use of community planning process, which in turn, resulted in the development of a common vision of an approach defined as an

¹ Note that there are a number of different types of evaluations. The focus of Figure 1, used for illustrative purposes, is on outcome (effectiveness) evaluation. A second type of evaluation, process evaluation, designed to assess whether programs have been implemented according to the original plan.

² It is assumed that a logic model has not been articulated until this juncture.

“integrated, holistic, accessible, culturally-responsive and relationship-based services for youth in the region”.

The objectives of this “integrated, holistic, accessible, culturally-responsive and relationship-based services” approach regarding the provision of youth services can be summarized in the following manner:

- ❑ To improve the “integration” of services for youth in communities across Fraser Region.
 - ❑ To enhance communication between service providers
 - ❑ To ensure coordination of efforts among service providers
 - ❑ To improve collaboration and cooperation between service providers
 - ❑ To enhance continuity of care/service between providers and agencies
- ❑ To improve the “accessibility” of services for youth in the Fraser Region, in terms of location of services, target client groups, when and how services are delivered.

- ❑ To promote a “holistic” approach to youth services in the Fraser Region.
 - ❑ To ensure a holistic approach to care is taken in the delivery of services to youth
 - ❑ To provide a full continuum of services for youth

Scope of the Review

The scope of this review was vetted by the Steering Committee and the Working Group that were established for the review. Additionally, decisions made at the regional MCFD executive level, and endorsed by the Steering Committee and Working Group during the consultation process, have also contributed to the definition of the scope of this review. These decisions have been the result of practical considerations, including resource availability and time constraints.

Based on these considerations, the decision was made that the scope and focus of this review should be limited to the following:

- ❑ The review is to primarily address outcome issues related to the objectives of the re-design, and review questions are to be derived primarily from the objectives itemized in the “Goals, Objectives and Activities of the 2003 Re-design” section of this document.
- ❑ To a lesser degree, a secondary focus is to review the processes used in the 2003 re-design. Accordingly, review questions focused on shedding light on the re-design process and how such processes might be improved.

Focus of the Review

In order to establish bounds for the scope of the project, the specific issues to be addressed by the review were also vetted by the Steering Committee and the Working Group. Issues identified by the Committee and the Working Group to be addressed by this review are articulated below

Review of the Outcome of Implementation

For this component of the project, the decision was made by the Steering Committee to focus on outcome of three key characteristics of the re-designed strategy:

- Integration of Services
- Service Accessibility
- The Holistic Approach

The review, therefore, focused on the degree to which the three characteristics of the new vision are reflected in the re-designed services.

Service Integration

Service integration is a key element of the new vision and strategy for youth services. For the purpose of this review, service integration is defined as:

“A process that involves establishing and maintaining common structures and procedures between service providers for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to address a range of services needs in an efficient, comprehensive and client-centered manner”.

Factors of this definition of service integration include the following:

- Coordination
- Communication
- Cooperation and Collaboration
- Case Management
- Service Planning
- Continuity
- Sharing of Values

Additional issues, including client-centeredness and the issue of co-location, were also examined. Service co-location is an important concept within the new vision and strategy for integrated youth services.

Service Accessibility

A second element of the new vision and service strategy relates to access to services. Accessibility is defined as “the ease with which a client is able to gain access to a needed service or program, without being impeded by physical, social, economic or system barriers.” A variety of issues or dimensions related to accessibility were examined.

Holistic Approach

A holistic approach to service delivery is another cornerstone of the new approach. For the purpose of this project, holistic is defined as “an approach to service delivery in which the service provider takes into consideration all key aspects or domains of a client’s life.”

In terms of issues relating to “holistic” services, the following were examined:

- Addressing all important domains of a client's life
- Availability of a range of services for key domains

Review of the 2003 Planning Process

Finally, the review touched on the 2003 "Community Tables" planning process, the process that led to the implementation of the new youth services strategy.

In terms of assessing how well the re-design planning process worked, the general issues that were examined for this component of the review included the following:

- Strengths of the process used for the re-design (what worked well).
- Limitations or problems associated with the process (were there fundamental flaws with the planning process)
- Whether or not similar planning processes can be improved in the future.

The specific issues examined included the following:

- How well stakeholders were informed concerning the purpose or aims of the consultation process.
- How well the consultation sessions were organized and facilitated.
- The adequacy or appropriateness of the mix of stakeholders involved in the process.
- The adequacy regarding the opportunities for stakeholders to have their voice heard in the process.
- How well the process addressed the key issues relevant to each community.
- Whether the number of consultation sessions was adequate to address the issues.
- Whether the principal aims or goals of the consultation process were achieved.
- The degree to which a community's expressed vision for youth services is reflected in the vision and service model that was eventually developed for the region.

Review Methods

The methodologies used for the review were vetted through the Review Steering Committee and Working Group and were based, in part, on the issues that needed to be addressed, the window period available for completing the review, and the available resources.

Review of Outcome of Re-design & Implementation

A combination of surveys and focus groups was used to capture the required information for this component of the review. Both the survey and the focus groups relied on the observations and the experiences of participants to provide their perspectives of the issues.

Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire consisted of a combination of close-ended questions, supplemented by a number of open-ended questions. The instrument was designed to cover the three key issues of service integration, service accessibility, and the holistic service approach, but also allowed respondents to offer their own perspectives concerning the key issues in more detail (see Appendix A).

Two perspectives of the issues were addressed by the survey. First, respondents were asked to provide their overall impressions of the current youth services relative to their experience with the youth services that existed prior to the 2003 re-design. Respondents were asked to indicate, based on their experience, in a global fashion, whether the current set of services is “much worse”, “worse”, “the same”, “somewhat improved” or “much improved” compared to services before the implementation of the new vision with respect to the key concepts of service integration, holistic approach, and service accessibility. Additional issues explored included the concepts of cultural responsiveness and program client-centeredness.

The second perspective addressed by the survey related to whether the current set of youth services is “poor”, “fair”, “good” or “excellent” with respect to the elements of the three key factors of the new re-designed youth services.

Both aspects of the questionnaire are important. For example, if respondents were to indicate that service integration in terms of coordination and communications is “good”, it may still be important to know whether “good” means “same as before”, “worse than before”, or “better than before”. Alternately, if respondents indicated that access is “better than before”, in absolute terms, does “better than before” mean access is “poor to fair” or “good to excellent”.

The survey targeted staff from the following categories of agencies for data collection:

- MCFD staff (P.O., SW, MH, CSM).
- Contracted Agency staff (youth service providers).
- Community Service Partners (selected personnel from the police, schools, parks and recreation, etc).

Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups were designed to provide the opportunity to probe the three key issues in greater depth and to find possible explanations for the findings of the survey (see Appendix B). The following groups were targeted for focus groups:

- MCFD Staff
- Contracted Agency Staff and Community Partners
- Youth

Review of 2003 Planning Process

In order to obtain feedback on the 2003 planning process, survey questionnaires were distributed by email to the members of the Community Planning Tables. The survey used both closed-ended questions directed towards specific issues, as well as, open ended questions. The purpose of the open-ended questions was to allow respondents to provide more detailed comments in relation to the 2003 planning process (see Appendix C).

Findings of the Review

Outcome of Implementation - Survey of Stakeholders

Survey questionnaires were distributed by email to MCFD staff, contracted agency staff, and community service partners throughout Fraser Region (approx. 350 surveys distributed). Reminders were subsequently sent to all stakeholders in order to increase the return rate. A total of 110 surveys were eventually completed and returned by fax. A breakdown of the responses by category of respondents is presented below in Table 1. Readers should note that the following is based on a return rate of approximately 31%. While this return rate may be considered for the analyses used in this report, the actual number of respondents was not large enough to allow for a community by community analysis.

Table 1
Number of Questionnaires Returned by
Each Agency

Type of Organization	Freq	Percent	Cumulative Percent
MCFD	43	39.09	39.09
Contracted Services	47	42.73	81.82
Community Partners	20	18.18	100.00
Total	110		

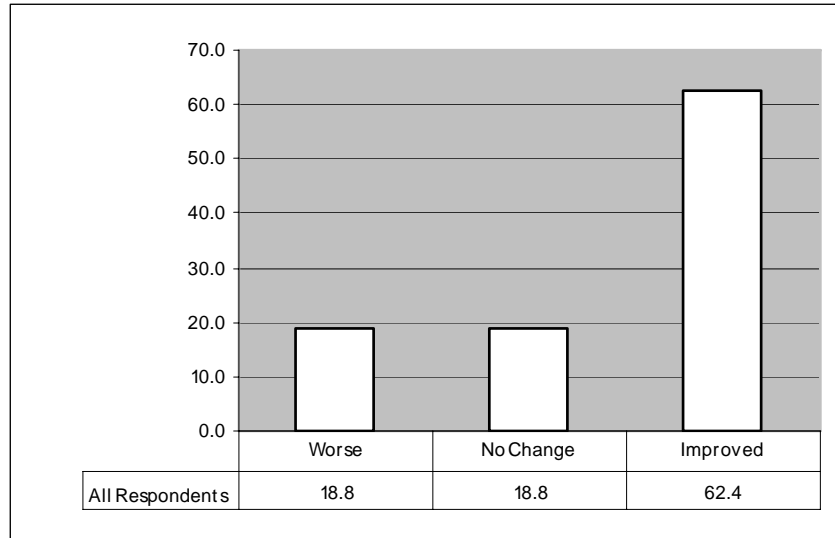
The respondents were reasonably evenly distributed. Thirty three (30%) were from Fraser North, 30 (27.3%) were from Fraser South and 40 (36.4%) were from Fraser East³. Seven (6.4%) did not record their work location.

Service Integration

In order to compare current youth services with services before the 2003 re-design, respondents were asked to consider the concept of service integration (as it was defined for this review) and indicate whether the new services were “much worse”, “worse”, “the same”, “somewhat improved” or “much improved” compared to the previous set of services. Based on this global assessment of service integration, a majority of staff indicated that service integration has either improved or much improved (62.4%). Only 18.8% of the respondents thought that the degree of service integration has not changed and an equal percentage felt that the degree of service integration is worse or much worse than before (see Figure 1). There were some differences between categories of respondents but the differences were not large enough to reach statistical significance.

³ Fraser North includes locations north of the Fraser River. Fraser South includes locations south of the Fraser River, up to but not including Langley, and Fraser East includes location south of the Fraser River beginning with Langley and location east of Langley.

Figure 1
 State of Current Integration Relative to Previous Services
 (% of All Respondents)



Various dimensions or characteristics of service integration were also examined as part of this review. These included the following:

- Coordination
- Communication
- Cooperation and Collaboration
- Case Management
- Service Planning
- Continuity
- Sharing of Values

Respondents from the three categories of agencies (MCFD, Contracted Services and Service Partners) were asked to rate the current set of youth services, in terms of each of the dimensions/characteristics of service integration, using the following rating scale: "Poor", "Fair", "Good", and "Excellent"⁴. Respondents were asked to rate each characteristic by first relating each characteristic to their own agency. Additionally, respondents were also asked to rate the same set of characteristics, based on their experience, by considering their relationships with the other categories of agencies. For example, MCFD personnel rated working relationships (service integration) within their own organization, but were also asked to rate, in turn, their relationships with contracted services and service partners. Thus, the results represent the individual perspectives of staff grouped according to three

⁴ See the Stakeholder Feedback Survey in Appendix A.

categories of agencies, (1) MCFD, (2) contracted services and (3) community service partners.

The data gathered from this component of the survey are presented below. The ratings of staff in relation to their own agency are presented first, followed by cross-agency ratings.

Coordination

The data relating to coordination of services is presented in Table 2. This table indicates that a majority of staff (between 73.7 to 83.9 percent) felt that coordination within agencies is “good to excellent”.

Table 2
Coordination Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excellent		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	9	23.7	29	76.3	38
Contracted Services	5	16.1	26	83.9	31
Service Partners	5	26.3	14	73.7	19

Staff were also asked to rate coordination with other agencies. Figure 2 through 4 indicate that while at least half or more of the staff indicated that coordination with other agencies is “good to excellent”, generally, over a third or more of staff felt that coordination is only “poor to fair”.

Figure 2
Coordination: MCFD with Other Agencies
(Respondents: MCFD Staff)

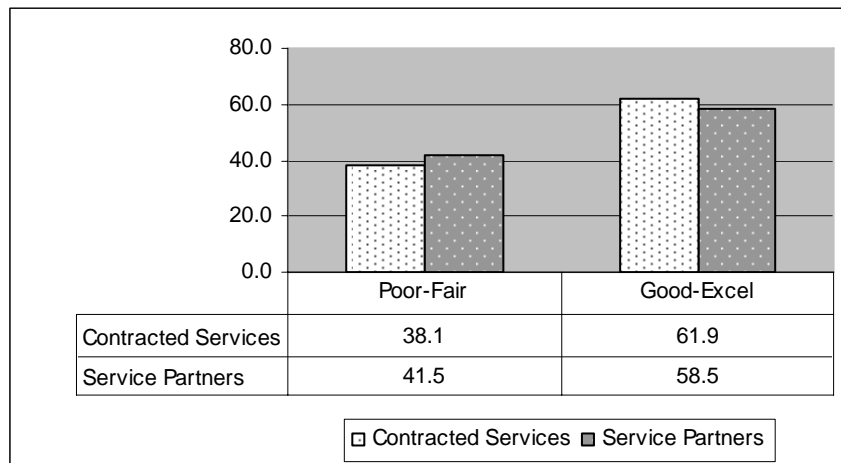


Figure 3
 Coordination: Contracted Services with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Agency Staff)

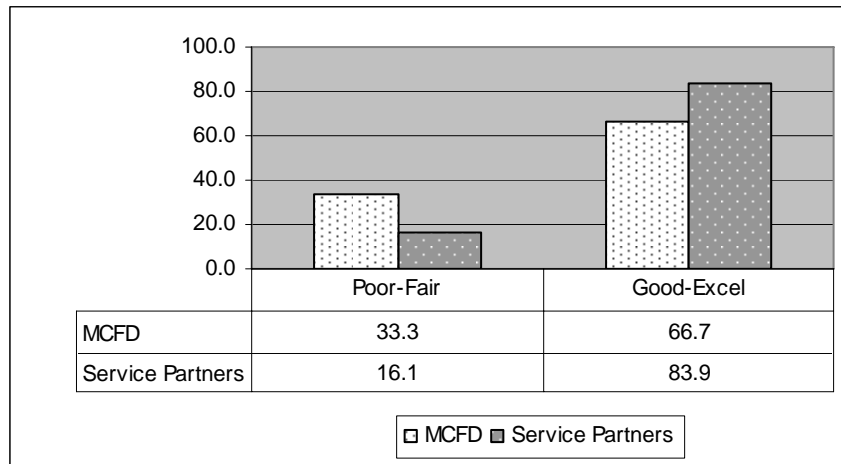
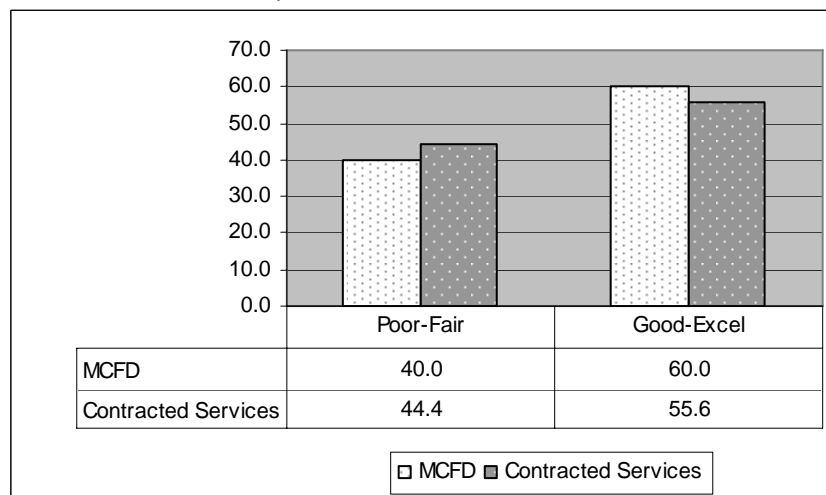


Figure 4
 Coordination: Service Partners with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partner Staff)



Communication

Good communication is said to be a characteristic of well integrated services and is a key element of the re-designed youth services. Survey data indicate that most staff believed that communication is generally good both within and across agencies. For example, a majority of staff indicated that communication within each agency is “good to excellent”. This ranged from 78.9% (MCFD and service partner staff) to 87.5 percent (staff from contracted services).

Table 3
Communication Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excellent		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	8	21.1	30	78.9	38
Contracted Services	4	12.5	28	87.5	32
Service Partners	4	21.1	15	78.9	19

Figures 5 through 7 indicate that communication between organizations is also generally good, although not quite at the same level as communication within each organization. Figure 5 represents ratings of MCFD staff regarding communication with contracted services and community service partners.

Figure 5
Communication: MCFD with Other Agencies
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)

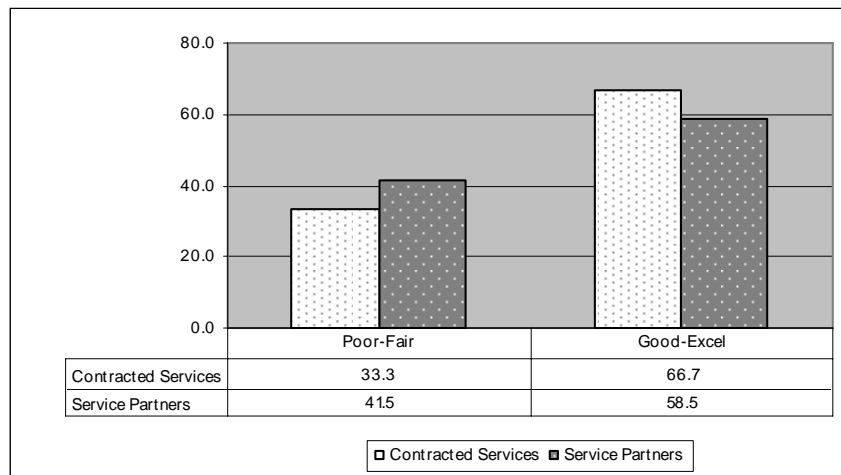


Figure 6
 Communication: Contracted Services with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

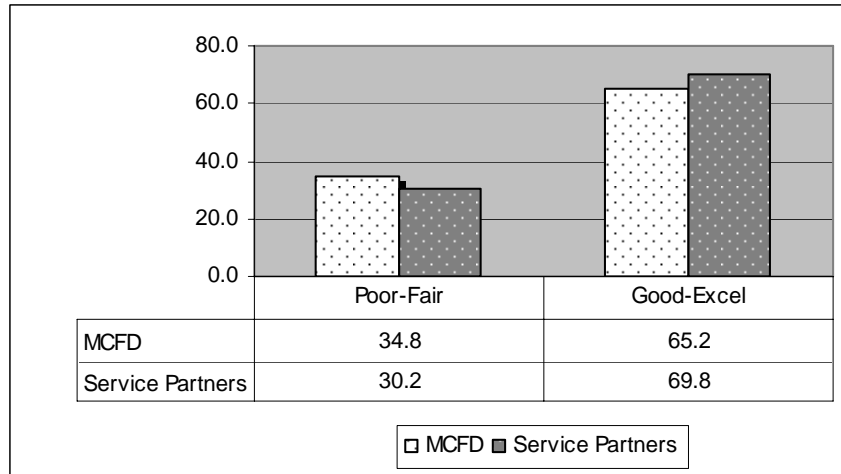
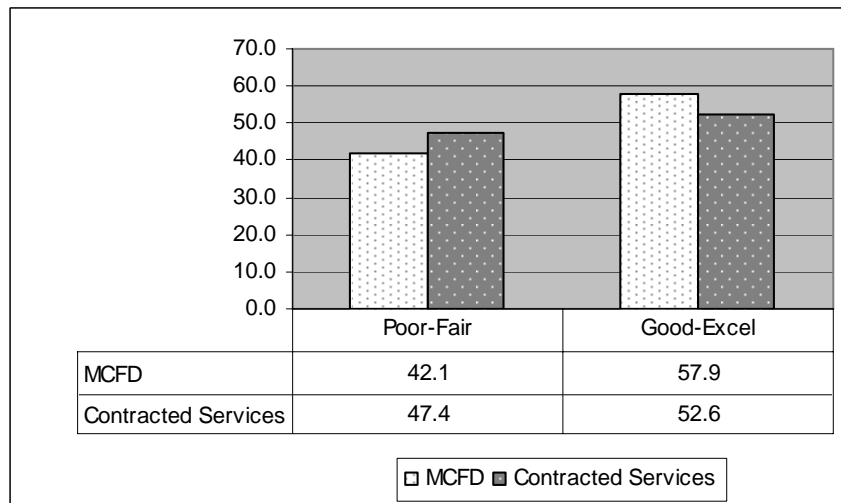


Figure 6 presents ratings of contracted services staff regarding communication with MCFD and community service partners, and Figure 7 presents ratings of community service partners regarding communication with MCFD and contracted services staff. These data show that while communication is generally good, communication within an organization tends to be slightly better than communication across agencies.

Figure 7
 Communication: Service Partners with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partner Staff)



Cooperation

Cooperation is yet another characteristic of the re-designed youth services intended to increase service integration. Survey respondents were asked to rate the quality of cooperation both within their own organization and across organizations. The resultant data indicate that cooperation tends to be generally good but like communication, cooperation within an organization appears to be better than cooperation across agencies.

Table 4
Cooperation Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excellent		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	10	26.3	28	73.7	38
Contracted Services	5	15.6	27	84.4	32
Service Partners	2	11.1	16	88.9	18

Table 4 indicates that a majority of staff, ranging from 73.7% (MCFD staff) to 88.9% (Service Partners), felt that cooperation within organizations is "good to excellent". The quality of cooperation between MCFD and contracted services and service partners from the perspective of MCFD staff is presented in Figure 8. The quality of cooperation between contracted services staff and MCFD, as well as, community service partners from the perspective of contracted services staff is presented in Figure 9, and cooperation from the perspective of service partners is presented in Figure 10. In general, not as many respondents rated cooperation across agencies as "good to excellent" compared to cooperation within agencies.

Figure 8
Cooperation: MCFD with Other Agencies
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)

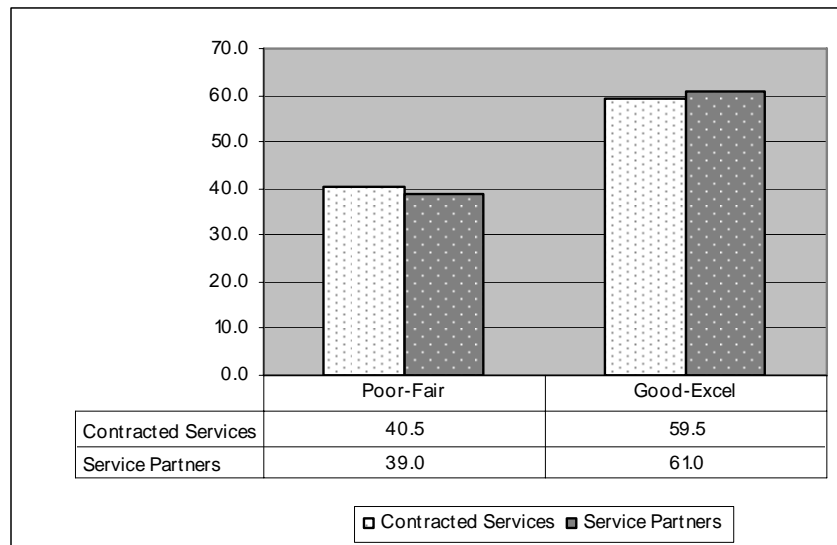


Figure 9
 Cooperation: Contracted Services with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

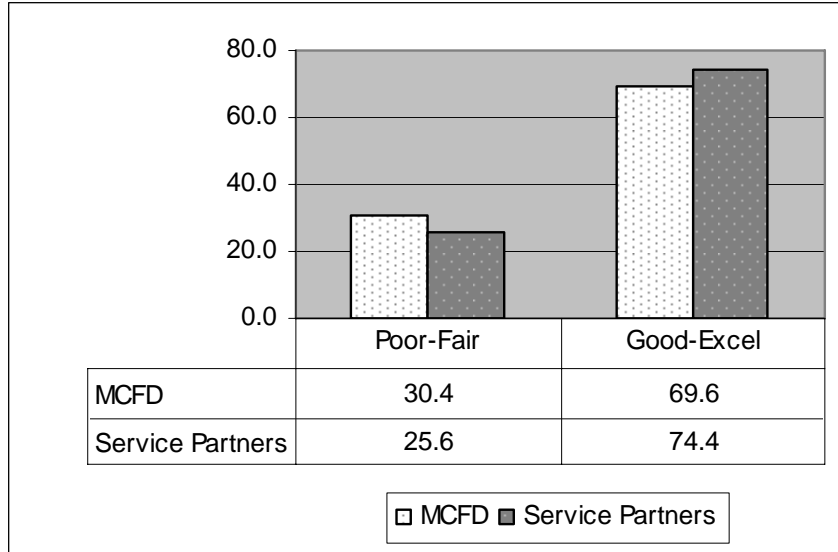
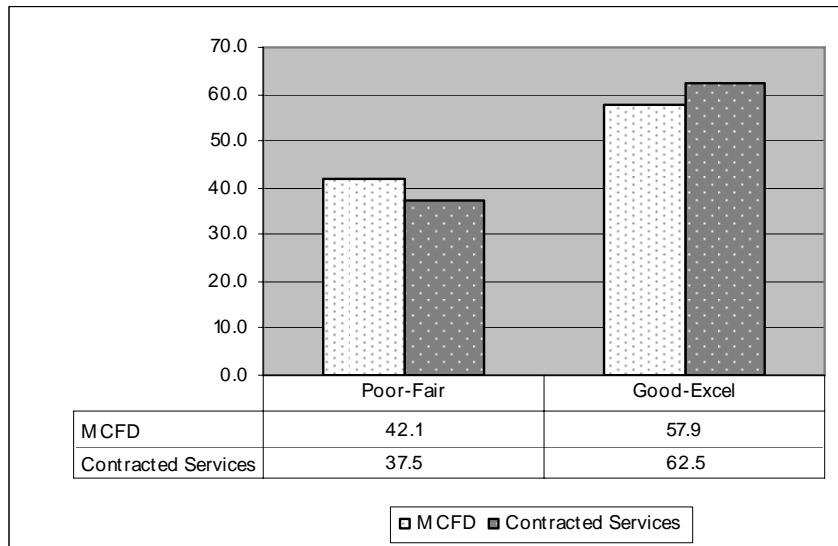


Figure 10
 Cooperation: Service Partners with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partners)



Joint Case Management

Joint case management is one of the key strategies used to enhance service integration in the re-designed youth services. Staff were, therefore, asked to provide their assessment of the quality of joint case management, both within their own organization and across agencies. This information is presented below.

Table 5
Joint Case Management Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excellent		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	13	34.2	25	65.8	38
Contracted Services	6	18.8	26	81.3	32
Service Partners	4	23.5	13	76.5	17

In comparison to contracted services and service partners, a smaller percentage of MCFD staff indicated that joint case management works well enough to be rated as “Good-Excellent” (see Table 5).

In terms of participation in joint case management across agencies, survey data indicate that except for staff from contracted services who believe that the process is working well enough to be rated as “Good-Excellent” (see Figure 12), almost half of MCFD personnel and staff from service partners thought that the joint case management process is only “Poor to Fair”.

Figure 11
Joint Case Management: MCFD with Other Agencies
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)

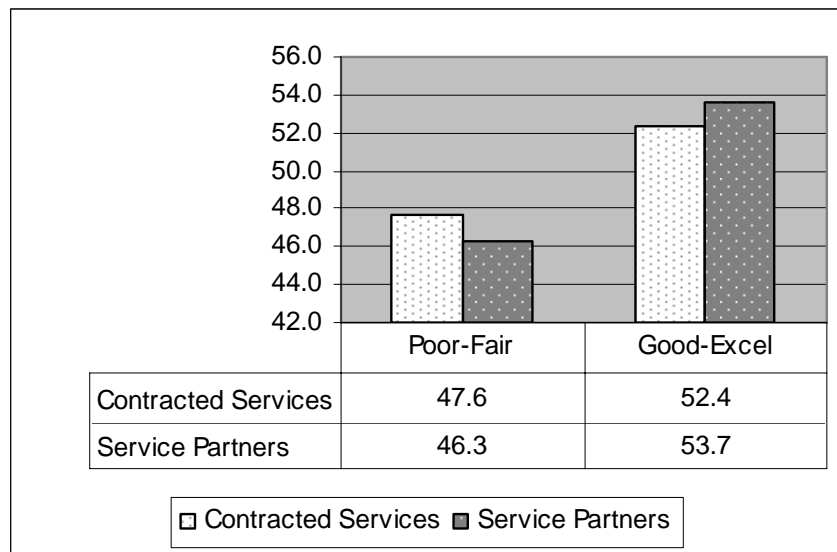


Figure 12
 Joint Case Management: Contracted Services
 with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

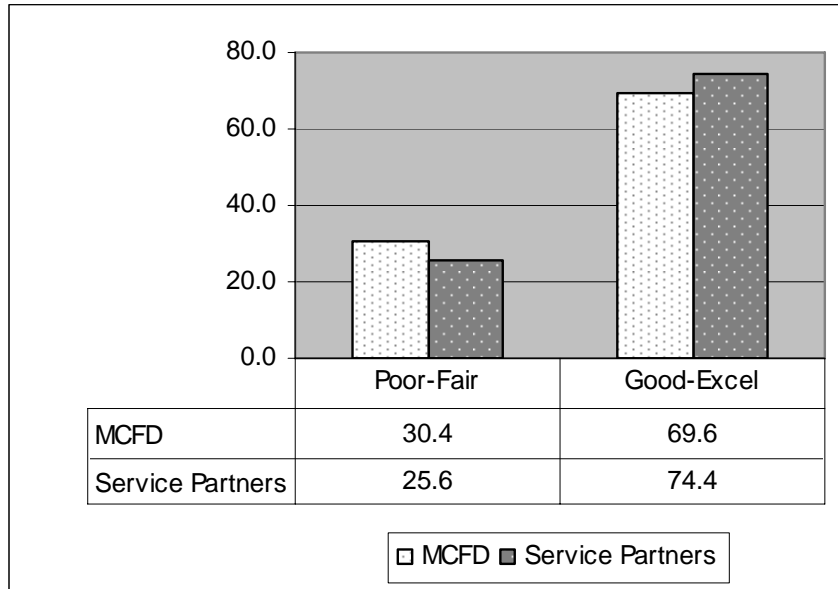
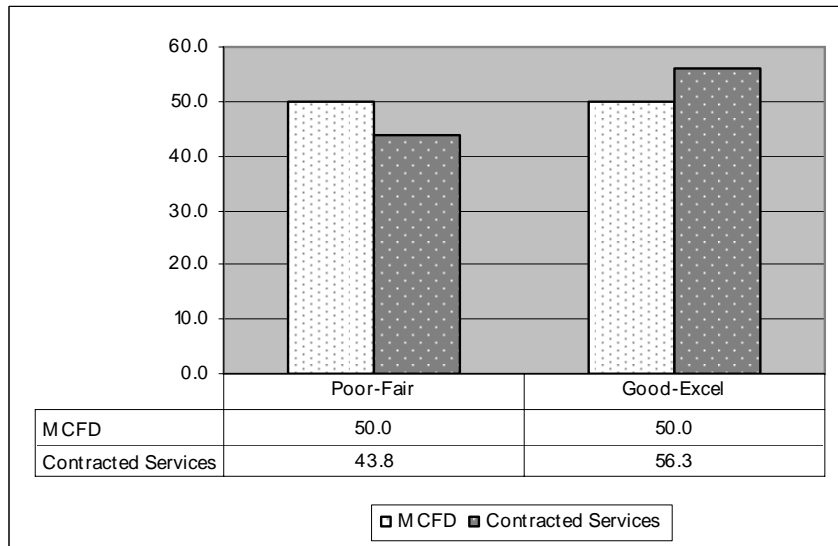


Figure 13
 Joint Case Management: Service Partners
 with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partners)



Joint Service Planning

Joint service planning is another strategy of the re-designed youth services to increase integration. Staff were asked to evaluate, based on their experience, the state of joint service planning both within their own organizations and across agencies and rate whether joint service planning is "Poor", "Fair", "Good", or "Excellent".

Table 6
Joint Service Planning Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excel		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	11	33.3	22	66.7	33
Contracted Services	7	21.9	25	78.1	32
Service Partners	3	17.6	14	82.4	17

A majority of staff rated joint service planning within their own organization as "Good to Excellent" (see Table 6), although about one third of MCFD staff rated joint service planning within their own organization as "poor to fair". The data regarding joint service planning across agencies are presented below.

Figure 14
Joint Service Planning: MCFD with Other Agencies
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)

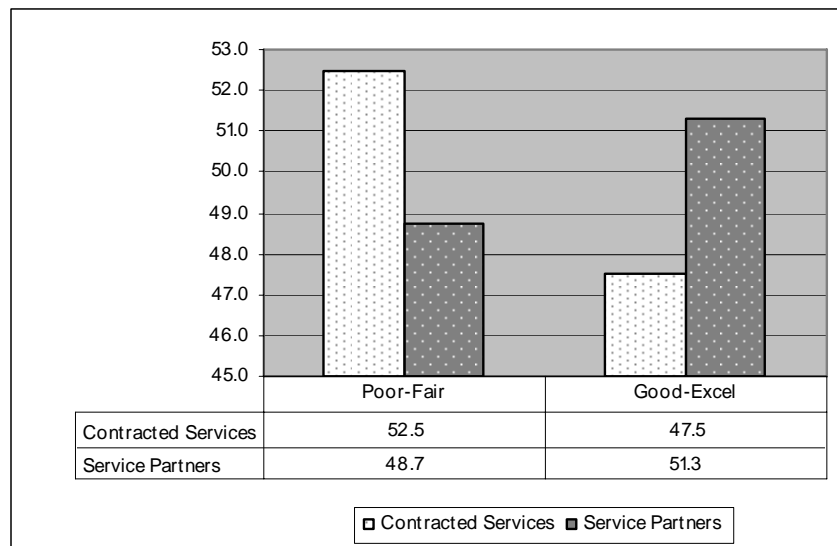
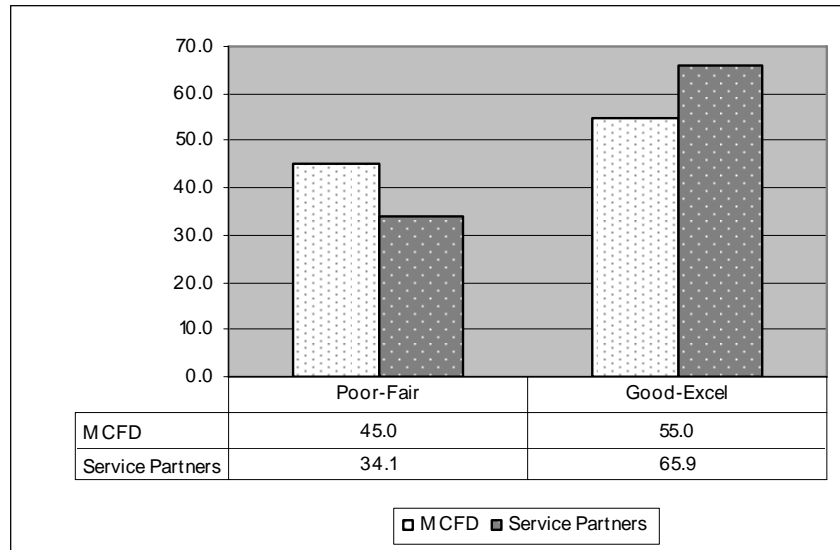


Figure 14 indicates that approximately half of the MCFD respondents rated joint service planning with contracted services as merely "Poor to Fair", and the percentages for joint

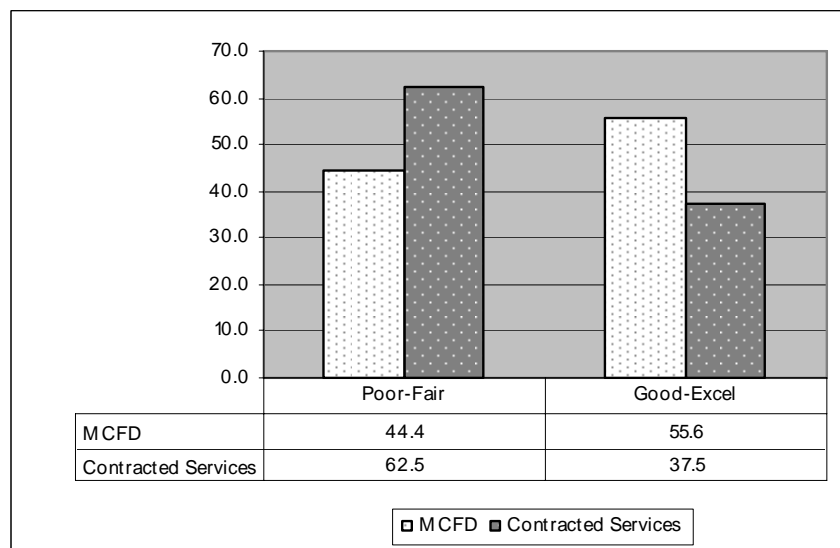
service planning with service partners are about the same as that for contracted services (see Figure 14).

Figure 15
 Joint Service Planning: Contracted Services with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)



The data also indicate that from the perspective of contracted services, there is room for improving joint service planning with both MCFD and service partners (see Figure 15). Only about half of contracted services staff indicated that joint service planning is “good to excellent”, although nearly two thirds felt that joint service planning with community service partners is “good to excellent”.

Figure 16
 Joint Service Planning: Service Partners with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partners)



The data from service partners also indicate that there is room for improvement regarding joint service planning. While a little over half of service partners respondents indicated that joint service planning with MCFD is “good to excellent”, about two thirds indicated that joint service planning with contracted services is only “poor to fair”.

Continuity

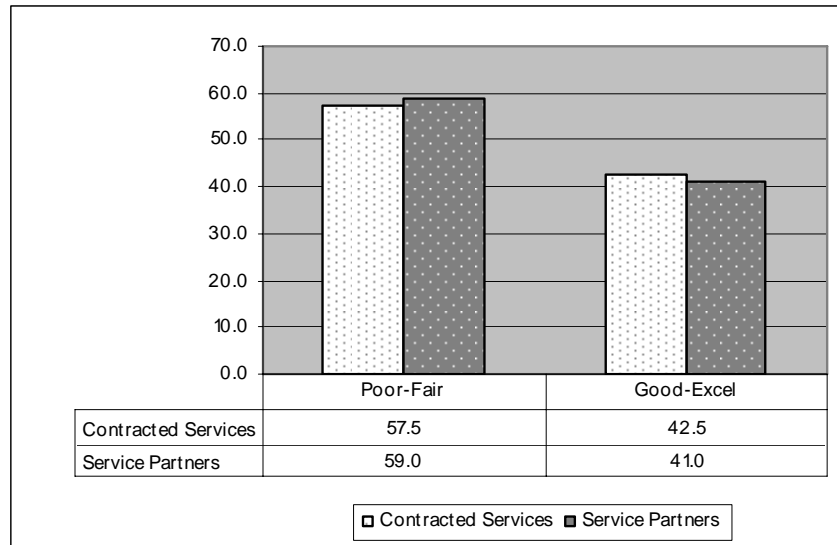
Continuity of care is an important element of the re-designed services for youth. Staff were asked to evaluate, based on their experience, service continuity both within their own organization and across agencies, and rate whether service continuity is “Poor”, “Fair”, “Good”, or “Excellent”.

Table 7
Continuity Within Each Agency

	Poor-Fair		Good-Excel		N
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
MCFD	20	60.6	13	39.4	33
Contracted Services	12	36.4	21	63.6	33
Service Partners	4	26.7	11	73.3	15

The data on continuity suggest that while nearly two thirds of the contracted services staff and nearly three quarters of community service partners rated continuity in the “good to excellent” range⁵ (see Table 7).

Figure 17
Continuity: MCFD with Other Agencies
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)



⁵ This issue was explored in focus groups, and it appears that one of the reasons is that MCFD serves a number of different mandates, such as, clinical treatment mandates, as well as, the youth justice mandate and the protection of children mandate. There can be instances where the differing mandates prevent the smooth flow of activities that may be perceived as blockages in continuity.

Staff were also asked to assess service continuity between agencies and this information is presented in Figures 17 through 19.

Figure 18
 Continuity: Contracted Services with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

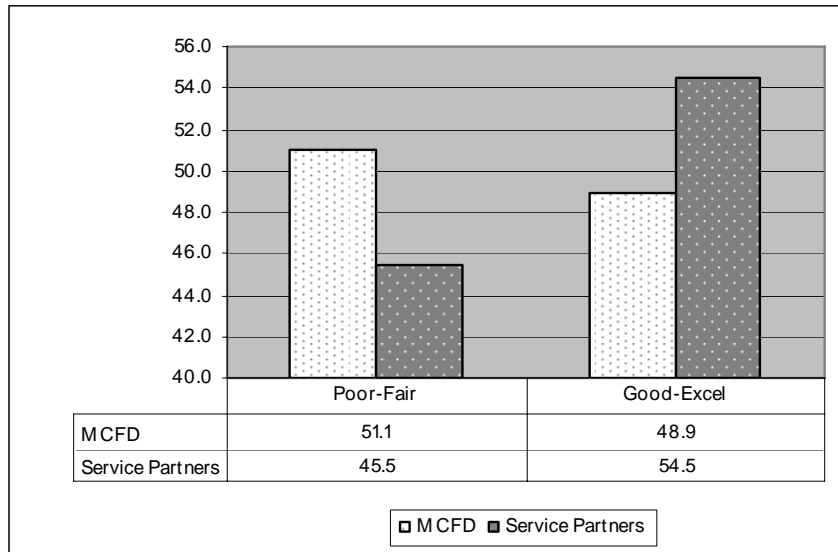
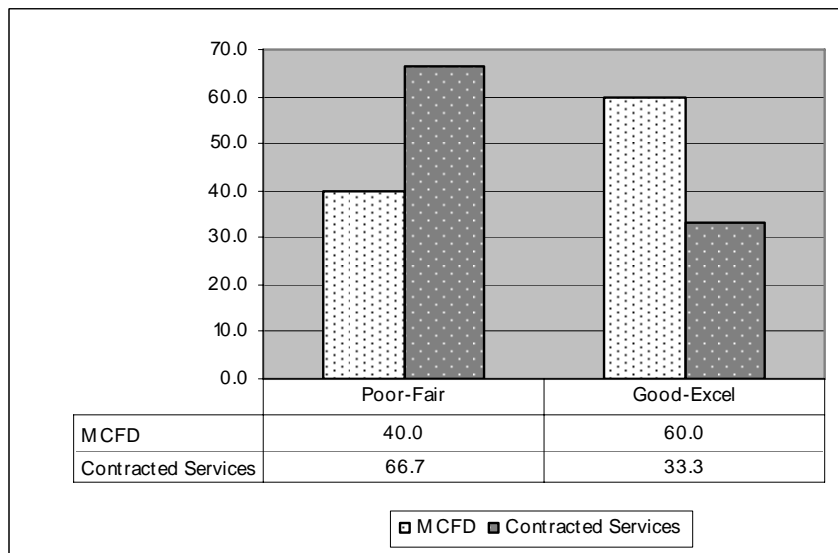


Figure 19
 Continuity: Service Partners with Other Agencies
 (% of Respondents: Service Partners)



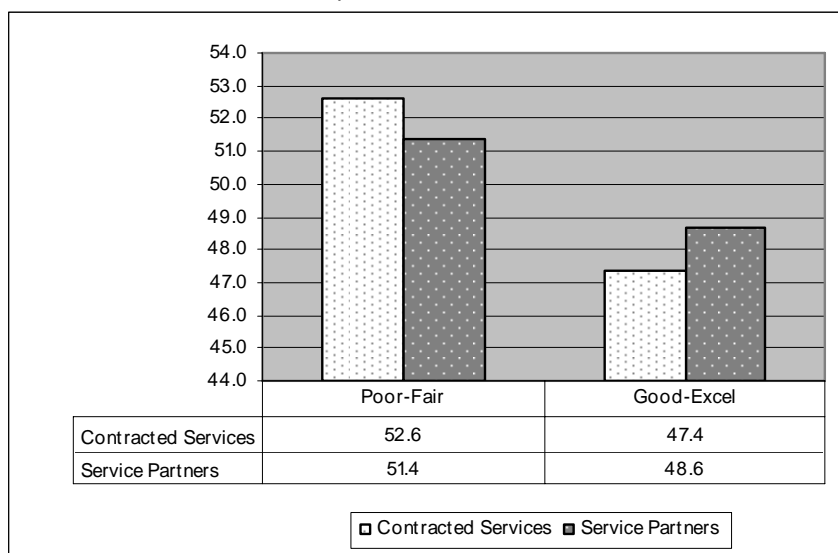
Service continuity, unlike coordination and communication, described earlier, was not rated quite as highly. That is, by comparison, fewer respondents placed service continuity in the “good to excellent” category.

The stakeholder feedback survey was not designed to tease out the reasons why respondents chose the rating categories they did. However, the focus groups conducted as part of this review did attempt to capture additional information⁶.

Awareness of Mandate and Service Options

Awareness of each agency’s mandate and knowledge of service options are thought to contribute to well-integrated services. Staff were, therefore, asked about their knowledge concerning each others’ mandate. The data relating to this section of the survey are presented below:

Figure 20
Awareness of Each Other’s Mandate: MCFD Perspective
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)



Interestingly, about half of all staff indicated that their knowledge of each other’s mandate falls in the “poor to fair” category. If awareness of each other’s mandate and knowledge about each others service options contribute to service integration and continuity, then it would appear that there may be a need to improve staff knowledge through education and in-service training.

⁶ Focus groups data are presented separately in this report. However, for now, it may be sufficient to observe that a number of things can impact on service continuity and limitations in resources can be reflected in lack of service continuity.

Figure 21
 Awareness of Each Other's Mandate: Contracted Services' Perspective
 (% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

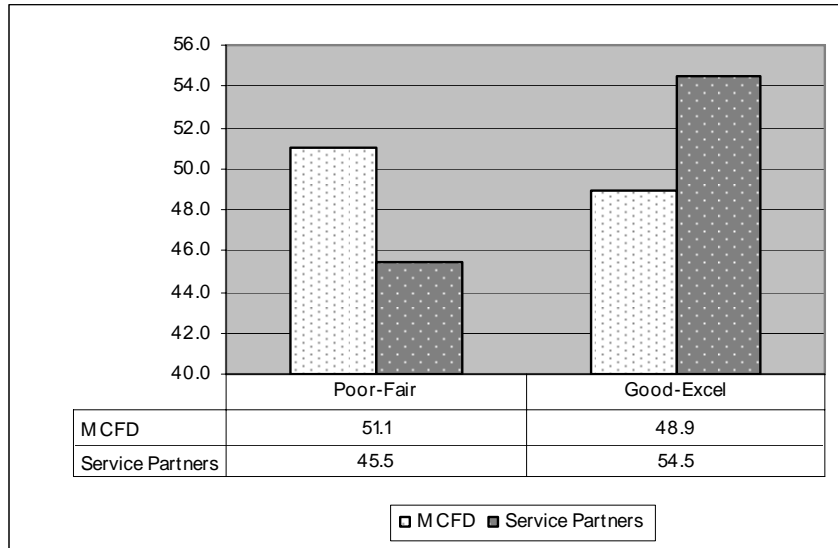
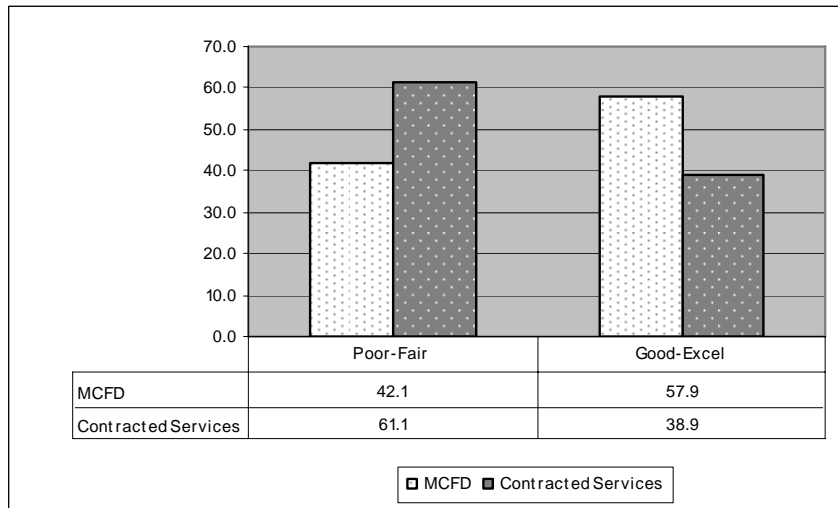


Figure 21
 Awareness of Each Other's Mandate: Service Partners' Perspective
 (% of Respondents: Service Partners)



Sharing of Values and Philosophy

Sharing of values is one characteristic of the definition of integrated services used in this review. The data relating to sharing of values is presented in Figures 22 through 24. These

data show that a majority of staff across all three categories of agencies feel that they share many of their values or that their values are in common with the other agencies.

Figure 22
Sharing of Values: MCFD Perspective
(% of Respondents: MCFD Staff)

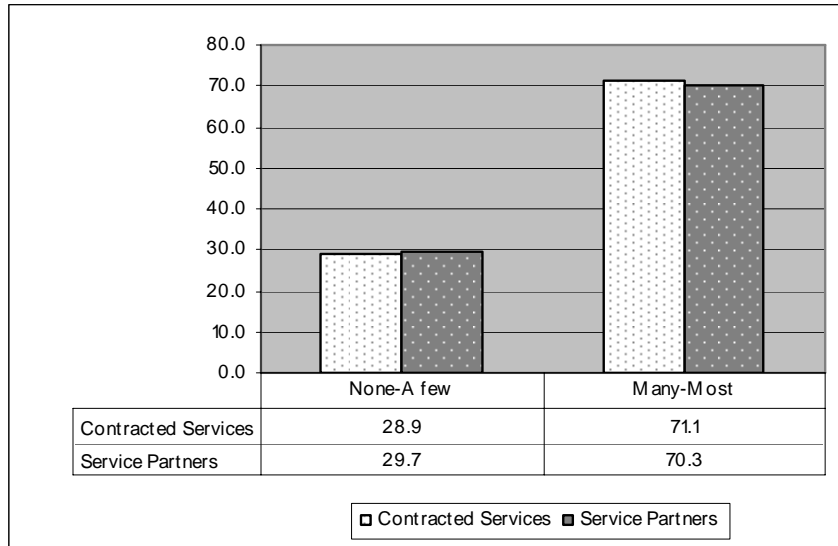


Figure 23
Sharing of Values: Contracted Services' Perspective
(% of Respondents: Contracted Services Staff)

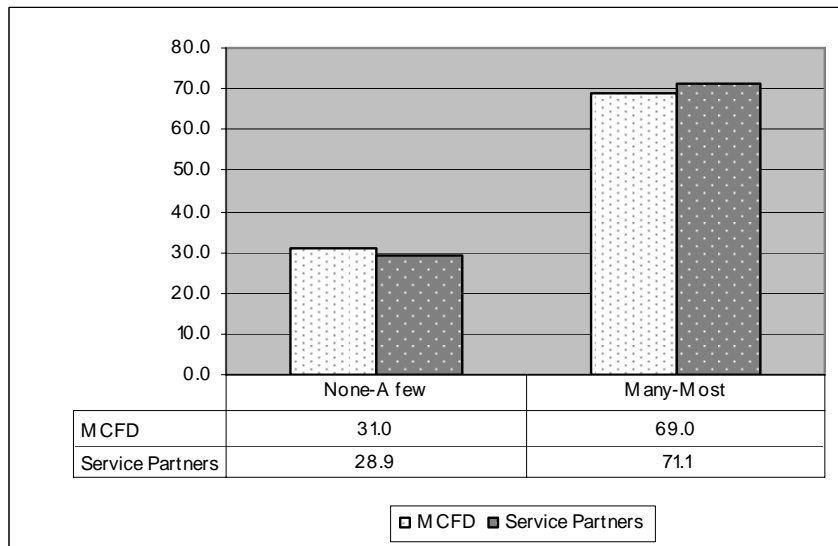
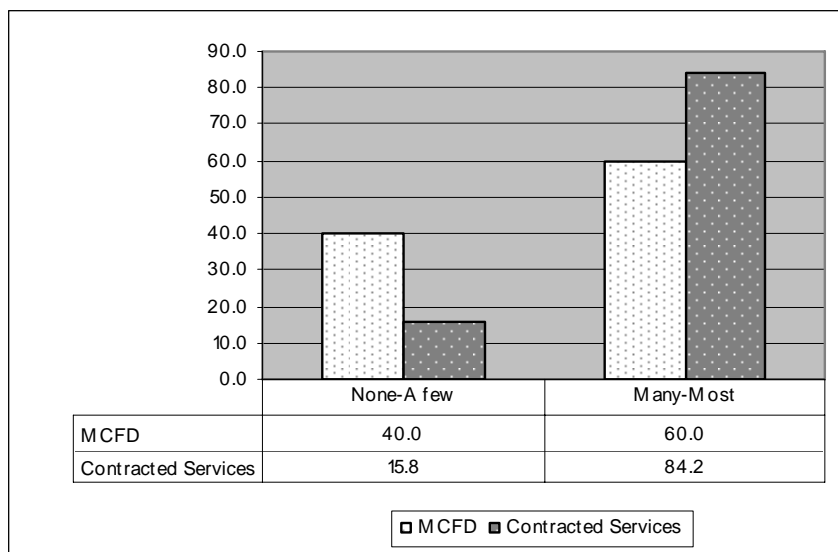


Figure 24
 Sharing of Values: Service Partners' Perspective
 (% of Respondents: Service Partner Staff)



Holistic Approach

For the purpose of this report, a serviceable definition for holistic approach can be stated in the following manner:

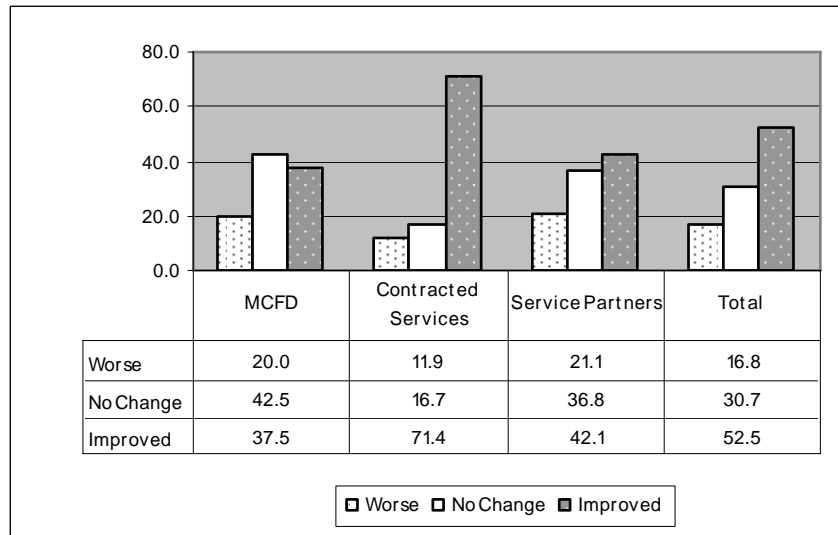
“A holistic approach is an approach to service delivery in which the service provider takes into consideration all key aspects or domains of a client’s life” .

Thus, in practice, holistic can mean an approach that has flexibility to deal with a variety of issues and has a range of services to meet the needs of clients.

Given this definition of holistic approach, respondents were asked, based on their experience with the current set of youth services, whether there has been any change with regard to a holistic approach in comparison to the services that existed prior to the 2003 re-design.

The responses indicate that approximately half of the personnel surveyed believed that there has been an improvement in services in terms of the adoption of a holistic approach. However approximately 31% of the respondents thought that there has been no changes and about 17% believed instead that current services are less holistic than before.

Figure 25
Holistic Approach
(% of Respondent by Agency)



A more detailed breakdown of the responses is presented in Figure 25, where it can be seen that a higher percentage (71.4%) of staff from contracted service providers believe that current youth services are more holistic compared to either the MCFD staff (37.5%) or staff of community service partners (42.1%). This difference is statistically significant (n= 101, Chi Square= 10.7, p < .05)

In order to assess whether a range of options are considered in order to meet the needs of clients, respondents were provided with a list of domains and were asked whether the domains are routinely considered in individual service planning and delivery. These data are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Personal Domains Considered in Service Planning

	Never-Sometimes	Most of the time-Always	N
Family	4.6%	95.4%	108
Peers	32.4%	67.6%	108
Health	10.2%	89.8%	108
Mental Health	3.7%	96.3%	108
School/Work	9.3%	90.7%	108
Cultural/Spiritual	31.8%	68.2%	107
Recreation	28.0%	72.0%	107
Community	18.7%	81.3%	107
Other	37.6%	62.4%	85

Table 8 indicates that a majority of respondents consider the listed domains in the service planning and delivery process. However, when respondents were asked if the right types of services are available, and whether the available services respond readily to the changing need of clients, two thirds of the respondents chose the category “Never or some of the time” (see Table 9).

Table 9
Services Available and Responsive to Changing Needs

	Never-Sometimes	Most time-Always	N
Services Available	66.7%	33.3%	108
Responds to Needs	69.2%	30.8%	107

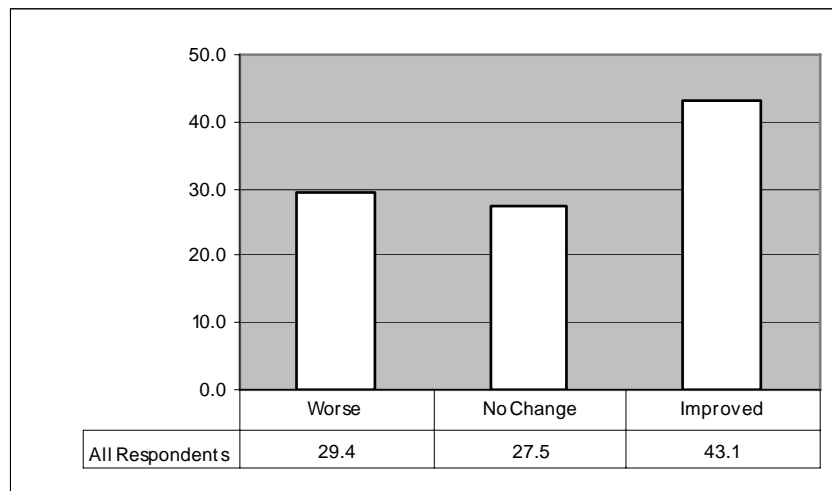
Service Accessibility

Accessibility is another key element of the vision for the re-designed youth services. For the purpose of this review, accessibility was defined as:

“The ease with which a client is able to gain access to a needed service or program, without being impeded by physical, social, economic or system barriers”.

Given this definition of accessibility, respondents were first asked to consider whether, broadly speaking, the accessibility of the current set of youth services is “worse”, “unchanged”, or “improved” compared to services prior to the implementation of the re-design. Approximately forty three percent (43.1%) of the survey respondents indicated that accessibility to services has improved, but a significant percentage of those surveyed indicated that there has either been no change (27.5%) or that accessibility is now worse than before (29.4%).

Figure 26
Accessibility of Youth Services
(% of All Respondents)



Respondents were also given a list of characteristics that represent accessibility (see Appendix A) and were asked to rate each item on the list with the use of the following scale: “Never”, “Some of the Time”, “Most of the Time”, and “Always”. These ratings are presented in Table 10.

Table 10
 Characteristics Representing Accessible Services
 (percent of respondents)

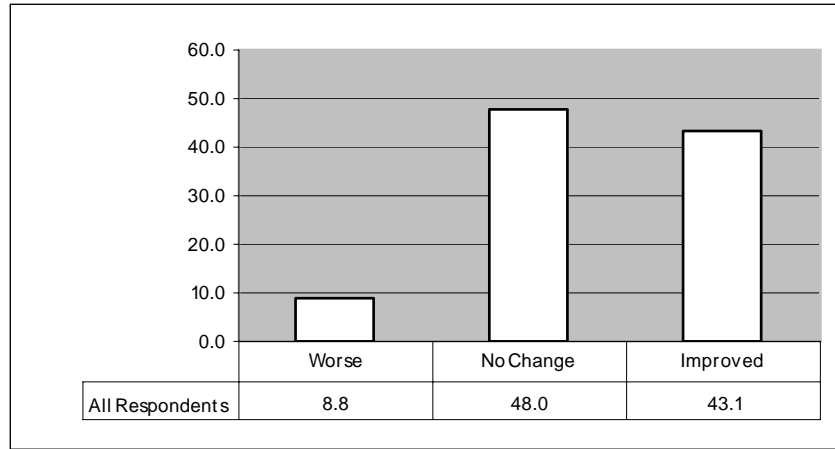
	Never-Sometimes	Most time-Always	N
Services are community-based	49.5	50.5	109
Youth assisted to access service elsewhere if not locally available	60.4	39.6	106
Services are outreach-oriented	54.1	45.9	109
Services are flexible (re: admission criteria & eligibility)	56.9	43.1	109
Services are accessible in a timely manner	67.9	32.1	109
Services have flexible hours of operation	63.0	37.0	108
Services are provided in youth-friendly settings	55.6	44.4	108
Services are responsive to needs of multicultural community	58.9	41.1	107
Services are responsive to youth with multiple problems	69.2	30.8	107

In general, the ratings of respondents in relation to the accessibility of youth services were not high. The dimension of service accessibility that received the highest rating was “services are community-based”, although just half of the respondents felt this was the case most or all of the time. The dimensions of accessibility that had the lowest ratings related to the ability to access services in a timely manner, the hours of operation of services, and the responsiveness of services to youth with multiple problems.

Cultural Responsiveness

Given the cultural diversity of the Fraser Region, services/programs are needed that are responsive to the needs of this multi-cultural population. The survey, therefore, included one question aimed at assessing, in a global fashion, whether there has been any change in the cultural responsiveness of current youth services. Almost half of the respondents (48%) indicated that there has been no change regarding the characteristic of cultural responsiveness, while an almost equal number (43.1%) felt that there has been some improvement in cultural responsiveness compared to past services. The remainder (8.8%) felt that current services are in fact less culturally responsive.

Figure 27
 Cultural Responsiveness of Youth Services
 (% of All Respondents)



Relationship-based Client Centeredness

“Client centeredness”, as it is used in this review, can be conceptualized in terms of a bipolar service continuum. One end of this continuum represents services that can be tailored to the needs of each client (client-centered), while the opposite end of the continuum represents services that are essentially static where the clients are made to fit the service (program-centered). In general, services do not fall at either end of the continuum but are more likely to fall in a range somewhere in the middle of continuum. Respondents were asked to think about this continuum and indicate, based on their experience whether current youth services are “much worse”, “worse”, “the same”, “somewhat improved” or “much improved” compared to services before the implementation of the new vision and strategy.

Nearly half of the respondents (47.5%) indicated that, in terms of client centeredness, the current complement of services has improved over previous youth services, although about a third (33.7%) felt that there had been no change. Approximately 18.8% felt that in terms of client centeredness, current services are worse compared to previous services (see Figure 28).

In terms of where current programs can be placed on the program-centered and client-centered continuum, the data indicate that the opinions of the respondents can be distributed almost equally into three categories “program centered”, “both”, and “client-centered”, reflecting, perhaps, that current programs are equally likely to fall into one of the three categories (see Figure 29).

Figure 28
 Client-Centeredness of Youth Services
 (% of All Respondents)

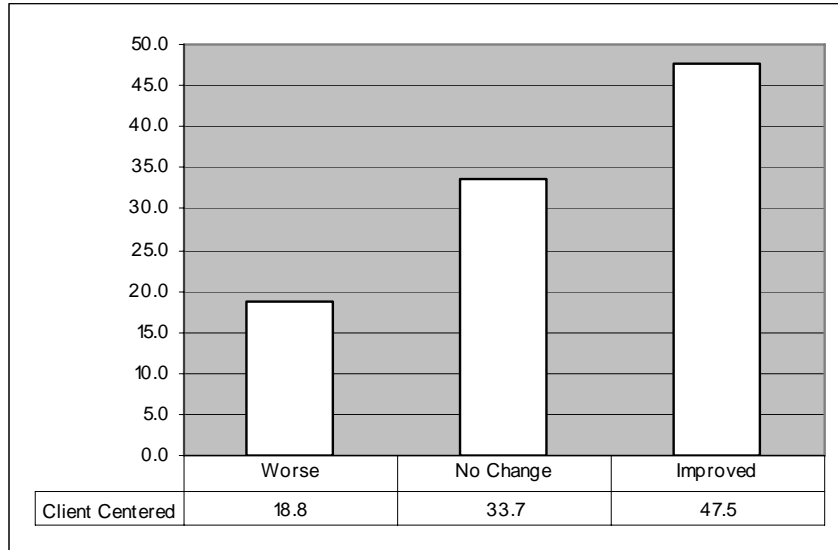
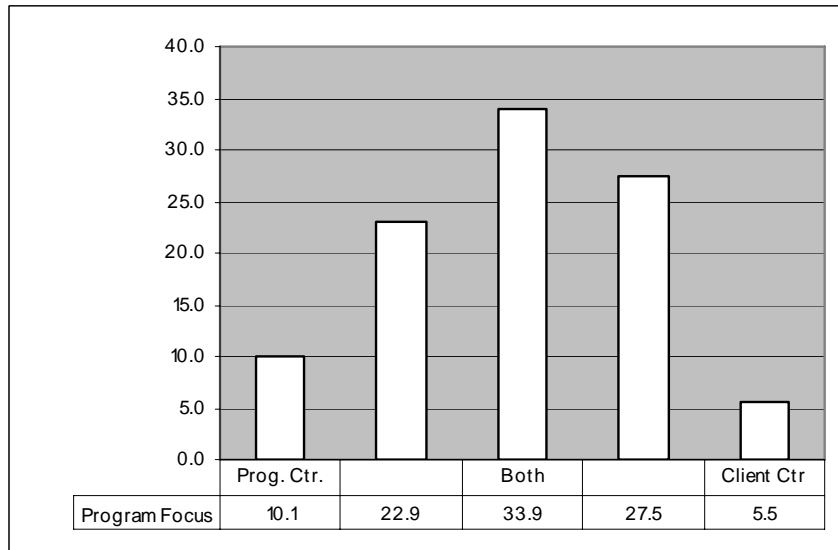


Figure 29
 Program Focus
 (% of All Respondents)



Youth Involvement in Planning

In terms of youth involvement, survey data show that youth do not have many opportunities to be directly involved in their own care or service planning and they have fewer opportunities still to be involved in service planning at the broader community level. These data are presented in Figure 30 and Figure 31.

Figure 30
Opportunities for Youth Involvement
in their Own Care Planning
(% of All Respondents)

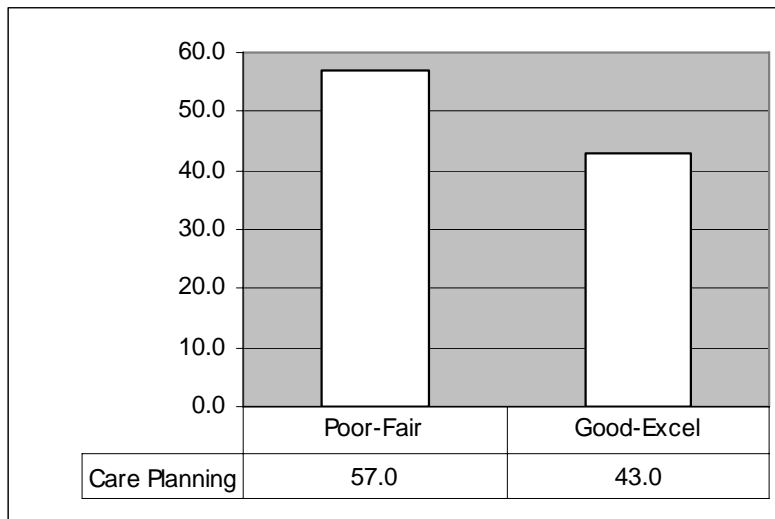
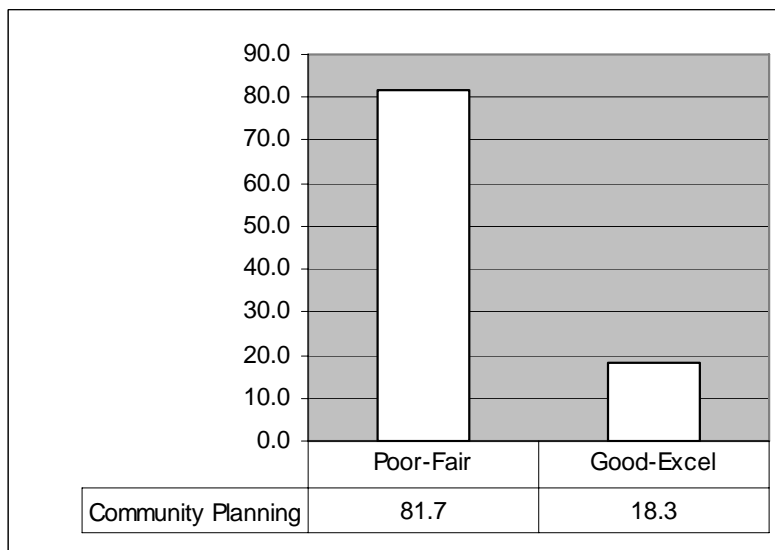


Figure 31
Opportunities for Youth Involvement
in Service Planning at the Community Level
(% of All Respondents)



Outcome of Implementation – Stakeholder Focus Groups

The principle purpose of the focus groups was to explore, in more detail, the issues addressed by the Stakeholder Feedback Survey and to provide some insight regarding the survey responses. The focus groups, therefore, covered the same categories of issues, including:

- Service Integration
- Service Accessibility
- Holistic Approach

A total of 23 focus groups were conducted during the data collection period. Of those, 6 (26.1%) were conducted with MCFD staff, 8 (34.8%) with Contracted Services and Community Partner staff, and 9 (39.1%) with youth. The total number of participants from each of the three groups is tabulated in Table 11.

Table 11
Number Focus Groups & Number of Participants
by Staff Category

	# of Groups	Total # of Participants
MCFD	6	36
Contracted Services/Partners	8	57
Youth	9	54
Total	23	147

Key issues that were identified by focus group participants are summarized in this section of this report. More detailed descriptions of the proceedings of the focus groups are summarized in Appendix D in the form of working notes.

Service Integration - Strengths

Service integration is a key concept of the re-designed youth services and focus group participants were, therefore, asked to (1) comment on service elements within their community that promotes or enhances service integration, as well as, (2) comment on areas where service integration can be further enhanced.

Focus group participants identified a number of factors that contribute to or promote service integration in their community. These are:

Knowledge of Each Others Mandate

In the survey questionnaire, half of the respondents reported that their knowledge of one another's mandate is "good to excellent". The focus group data also indicate that staff are aware of the importance of knowing each other's mandate and that such knowledge

“helps to ensure that there are realistic service expectations, that in turn can reduce potential conflicts among providers and makes for effective working relationships”. This goes to the heart of service integration.

Commitment to Collaboration

Staff from all agencies are committed to the establishment of good working relationships in order to meet the needs of clients. Indeed, there is a sense among staff that there is a greater willingness to collaborate and work among all agency staff and staff from community services.

Integrated Case Management (ICM)

ICM meetings bring together service providers, collaterals and the youth to address the needs of clients. They provide the opportunity for participants to offer their perspectives and have input into the identified goals and the plan for the youth. Additionally, ICM meetings promote communication and collaboration between providers. However, such meetings are most effective when all involved providers attend, and the youth is able to effectively participate in the meeting.

Co-location of Service Providers

The models of co-location vary from community to community across the Fraser Region. In some communities, MCFD teams are co-located in the same office or building (Surrey, Abbots, New West, etc). In other communities, MCFD teams, such as the Youth Services Team (YST), are co-located with contracted agency staff in the same office or building, while in other communities, the organization (MCFD or Contracted Agency) makes an office available for staff of the other organization to use as required. While co-location may not guarantee service integration, participants agree on some of the identified benefits of co-location, including the following:

- ❑ **Communication:** Co-location facilitates communication among service providers. It is much easier to “get connected with” other providers, often on an ad hoc, informal basis because of their close proximity. The turnaround times for exchanges of information can be significantly reduced and make the case planning process more efficient.
- ❑ **Coordination and Collaboration:** Close proximity can promote coordination, collaboration and continuity of service. Co-location can provide both formal and informal opportunities for service providers to consult and “troubleshoot” on cases in a more efficient manner.
- ❑ **One stop shopping:** Clients are able to access their service providers at one location (e.g., social worker and youth support worker). They can meet with their workers, without having to travel to multiple service locations.

Given the multiple models of co-locations that currently exist, most participants still felt that careful consideration needs to be given regarding the optimum format for co-location of service providers. Participants have indicated that there may be both advantages and disadvantages regarding the various options. For instance, having staff co-located in the same building has advantages, however, it may be likely that not all teams or groups of

workers should share the same office building, given privacy issues and the differing mandates that exist even within MCFD. For example, some have suggested that the mixture of different types of clients (justice, social services, mental health) in the waiting room of an office is not appealing to some youth. The situation is also seen by some MCFD staff as less than ideal under certain circumstances. Additionally, clients may be discouraged from attending the office to meet with their agency support worker if their probation officer or MCFD social worker is in an office just down the hall.

Service Integration – Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants identified a number of areas for improvement with regard to service integration. These are summarized below.

Working Relationships

- ❑ **Relationships between MCFD Teams:** The emphasis, over the past few years, has been on improving working relationships between MCFD staff and the contracted agencies. Having made substantial progress in this area, there is a need to consider the relationships between the various MCFD teams. Comments were made by participants specifically regarding the working relationship with the Mental Health Teams and the Aboriginal Teams.
- ❑ **Mental Health Team:** The Mental Health teams and Youth Services teams have started to build closer working relationships. However, access to the services of the Mental Health teams continues to be a challenge (lengthy wait lists, restrictive admission criteria, etc., although this can equally be the result of fixed resources). There seems to be some indication that, from the perspectives of Youth Services Teams, the services provided by the Mental Health Teams do not fully meet the needs of clients. The Mental Health team primarily provides assessment and “consultation” services, whereas the Youth Services Team needs to refer clients for counseling or therapy services. This situation may be a complicated one, involving a number of factors including resource allocation and may require further consideration.
- ❑ **Aboriginal Team:** The relationship between the MCFD teams and the Aboriginal teams are not strong. Numerous participants have expressed the thought that the working relationship between Aboriginal teams and other MCFD teams should be better integrated.

Integrated Service Management (ICM)

Integrated Case Management is generally recognized and supported as a good case process. However, the ICM process has not been implemented across the Fraser Region in a uniform fashion. Some implementation appears to be more successful than others. A number of the challenges associated with ICM meetings are itemized below:

- ❑ **Attendance by Key Providers:**
 - ❑ **MCFD Staff:** Attendance by MCFD staff is hit and miss for ICM meetings called by agency or school staff.
 - ❑ **School Staff:** It is often a challenge to get school staff to attend ICM meetings.

- ❑ **A&D Workers:** It appears that A&D workers are generally not invited to attend ICM meetings.
- ❑ **Family Participation:** Getting parents to attend ICM meetings can be a challenge.
- ❑ **Youth Participation:** Meaningful involvement of youth in the ICM process varies from worker to worker, and community to community.
- ❑ **Preparation for ICM:** In general, clients ought to be better briefed and prepared to participate more meaningfully.
- ❑ **Input into Decision-Making:** Clients do not generally feel that they have a real voice in the decision process and they have indicated that they often feel that they are not “heard” by the adults at the meetings.
- ❑ **Focus on Problems/Deficits:** From the youth perspective, ICM meetings tend to primarily focus on the problems and deficits of the youth. The strengths or assets of the youth are discussed in a limited way or not at all. Hence, the ICM meetings tend to be a very negative experience for the youth.
- ❑ **More Regular ICM Meetings:** Participants have expressed the wish that ICM meetings be scheduled more proactively. It appears that currently ICM meetings tend to be called infrequently and often called to deal with a crisis.
- ❑ **More Structure and Guidelines for ICM Meetings:** One consistent message regarding ICM meetings is that more structure may be required to make the ICM process more efficient. For example, assigning responsibility for calling meetings and setting guidelines for the coordination of meetings may be important, since apparently, meetings are sometimes not scheduled because no one individual has that specific responsibility and opportunities for timely case management may be missed.
- ❑ **ICM Training:** Participants have indicated that while initial training was provided to staff, there is a need for additional training to ensure (1) greater consistency in the ICM process, and (2) staff have the necessary skills to facilitate an ICM meeting.

Information Sharing

Information sharing can sometimes be difficult, given confidentiality regulations and given that different agencies have different thresholds for the type of information they are willing to share. Nonetheless, whatever the motivation, information sharing, particularly by MCFD staff, can be improved. Contracted Services staff are expected to share and report regularly to MCFD. However, participants observed that MCFD staff are often not as forthcoming as they could be with information that might assist Contracted Services staff in service planning and delivery. The issues of information sharing should be re-considered in view of this imbalance, keeping in mind statutes, legislations and professional practice issues. Habitual practices that impede information sharing not clearly based on statutes, legislations and professional practice issues can be re-shaped.

Co-location of Service Providers

Co-location is an important element of the current vision and strategy for youth services. A number of different models of co-location have been implemented across the Fraser Region. However, the topic of co-location is still under active debate and a clear winner, in term of a model, has yet to emerge. Discussions at the focus groups indicate that perhaps

the issue is not to endorse a single model but rather that the model ought to be tailored to the setting by taking advantage of elements that are likely to work in a particular setting, and information that has been acquired so far should be collated and analyzed and made available so that future implementations can benefit.

Service Accessibility - Strengths

Accessibility is a key element of the re-designed youth services and focus group participants were, therefore, asked to (1) comment on service elements within their community that promotes accessibility, as well as, (2) comment on areas where accessibility can yet be further enhanced.

In general, the focus groups highlighted the fact that contracted agencies have made every effort to make their services as accessible to youth as possible, within the limitations of their resources, and a variety of strategies have been used successfully to enhance access. While different communities may have slightly different approaches, most have made use of similar strategies. Thus, in general, many of the strategies are common to all communities. Some of these strategies are described below.

Service Location

Participants indicated that several strategies seem to work and outreach and community-based offices are among the strategies that they think have been the most effective. Examples of outreach services include those supported by contracted services in which contracted services staff (youth workers, parent-teen mediation) routinely connect with youth out in the community, rather than at the agency office. The workers will pick the youth up from home or school, or will meet them at a mutually convenient location in the community. Participants agree that this is a very effective strategy for engaging youth. Similarly, MCFD Youth Services Team (YST) members will also make every effort to get out of the office and see youth and families in the community. YST members may meet with youth in the community, and may arrange ICM meetings at locations in the community.

In terms of community-based offices, MCFD and contracted offices have often been intentionally located in buildings in or near public transportation routes in the "downtown" or urban areas. In some cities such as New Westminster, offices are located close to the other youth serving agencies in the community. These strategies have the support of participants who believe that they ultimately contribute towards improved access for clients.

Youth Friendly Services

Making services accessible can mean more than improving physical access or choice of location. Participant indicated that making a service youth-friendly is equally important. There are a variety of characteristics that make a service youth friendly. Some of these characteristics relate to the nature of the physical space, such as, an open layout, a lounge area, comfortable furniture, youth-relevant art on walls. Other characteristics relate to activities. These may include, for example, social and recreational activities, television, etc. Yet another category of characteristics relates to staff, and staff who are youth-friendly,

responsive to youth needs and flexible in their approach may, according to the participants, enhance the youth-friendly nature of a service.

Service Hours

Participant made it quite clear that making services available to youth during peak youth-activity times is important. This means that services should be available, for example, in the evening and on the weekends. Where such extended hours of service exist, participants have indicated that they have enhanced service accessibility.

Service Accessibility – Areas for Improvement

Ensuring that services are optimally accessible to clients is important and one must assume that enhancing accessibility, incrementally if necessary, may always be possible, given the willingness to do so. Participants have made a number of suggestions that ought to be given serious consideration. These are described below.

Focus on Outreach Services

Within reason, more services can be provided on an outreach basis. When appropriate outreach services can be provided, participants have indicated that service accessibility can be enhanced.

Delivering Youth-Friendly Services

Making services youth-friendly can enhance accessibility. This can be especially true for services provided by MCFD, although it can apply to those provided by contracted services, as well as, those provided by service partners. Making services youth-friendly does not just mean changing the physical space or setting, although physical space is important, the human interface is just as important, if not more so. From the youth perspective, it is important that they are treated as individual persons and that their opinions are considered seriously. Thus, within reason, services should seek to improve their physical space, as well as, their human interface in order to make the service more youth-friendly and enhance accessibility.

Referral Process

Gating all referrals through MCFD, as is the practice in many communities may make administrative sense and make case management more efficient, however some participants indicated that this may prove to be a deterrent to some clients or family members who might not want to have any official dealings with MCFD. The gating process should be re-considered.

Cultural Issues

Cultural barriers can impact negatively on service access. Much work may need to be done to remove cultural barriers, especially in communities where there is a large ethnic population.

Enhancing Services to Improve Accessibility

Most participants agreed that the demand for services far outstrips available resources and many needs, consequently go unmet. Participants have pointed to examples that highlight this fact. In many communities, contracted service staff have to fulfill many roles and consequently they have little time to devote to any one single role. In these situations, staff time is in short supply and this can create service gaps and ultimately impacts directly on accessibility.

In their discussion of enhancing service access to meet client needs, participants have identified a number of gaps to target for enhancement. These have been summarized below (see appendix D for more detail accounts of these and other services gaps and suggested enhancements).

Participants indicated that contracted services and programs currently operate with levels of funding that place significant constraints on the type and duration of services that they can provide to youth and families. They also indicated that youth services funding and resources had been significantly reduced as part of the 2003 service re-design process. Consequently both the levels of service and range of available services had been impacted, and to this date have not fully recovered. Moreover, the growing population of the region has made matters worse. Given this situation, participants have suggested a number of solutions to address this growing issue:

- ❑ **Enhance Funding of Youth Services:** Given the overall reduction of funding, and the growing population, youth services funding should be generally enhanced.
- ❑ **Reduce Staff Caseloads:** MCFD staff are not as available and cannot spend as much time with youth and families as necessary due to their large caseloads.
- ❑ **Extend Hours of Operation:** MCFD offices are generally open only during regular business hours on weekdays. More flexible hours of operation would enhance accessibility.
- ❑ **Improve Access to Housing Resources:** The housing issue is a long standing, as well as, a continuing issue. Youth housing of all kinds is in short supply and this housing issue should be addressed.
- ❑ **Enhance Youth Support Worker Services:** The number of youth support worker hours available is low in relation to the demands for these services. Youth support or outreach workers are needed to assist (1) youth who are attempting to transition to independent living ("Next Step" workers); (2) youth in foster homes (non-adjudicated), (3) youth on Youth Agreements, (4) youth living on the streets (Re-connect workers)
- ❑ **Enhance Counseling Services for Youth:** Counseling and therapy services available to youth are very limited. Participants indicated that the types of counseling that are needed include general counseling, anger management counseling (for non-adjudicated youth), sexual abuse counseling, etc.
- ❑ **Counseling Services for Families:** There is a lack of counseling services for families. Agencies are not able to serve the number of families who require counseling.

Additionally, for those who are able to get counseling, the maximum number of weeks of service is inadequate.

- ❑ **Addictions Services for Youth:** There are limited addictions services available for youth. In particular detox and residential treatment are generally not available within the region.
- ❑ **Youth Resource or Drop-in Centre:** Many region have the need for a youth drop-in or resource centre, a place where they can “hang out”, as well as, receive needed services.
- ❑ **Services for Complex Cases:** There is a general lack of community resources for youth with multiple problems or needs.
- ❑ **Services for Youth 16-18 years:** There is a dearth of services for youth between 16 to 18 years. The youth in this age group tend to be difficult to manage. This group may be composed of a higher proportion of youth with multiple needs, who have limited daily living skills and have access to few resources.
- ❑ **Services for “At Risk” Youth:** “At risk” youth who are not involved with MCFD or are not justice-related cases have access problem since they do not fall into one of the highest categories.
- ❑ **Transition Cases:** Youth in transition from MCFD to the adult system often end up with no support. There is a need to improve the transition process and ensure that clients in transition do not lack needed services.

Holistic Approach - Strengths

A holistic approach is also a key concept of the re-designed youth services and focus group participants were also asked to (1) comment on services elements within their community that represent the holistic approach, and (2) comment on areas where the holistic approach can be further enhanced.

Focus group participants identified a number of factors that contribute to or promote a holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth. These are:

Service Philosophy and Approach

Participants indicated that the approach of contracted service agencies has traditionally been a very holistic one. They indicated that service staff, particularly youth support workers, will attempt to identify all service needs of a client and adapt service delivery accordingly. The processes that are used to enhance this approach include the following:

- ❑ **Inter-Agency Meetings:** Local inter-agency committees have been established to discuss issues relating to youth and youth services in the community. These committees help promote a holistic approach to service delivery, and a holistic system of services in the community. All youth related needs and domains are discussed by the providers at these forums.

- ❑ **Building Strong Service Partner Relationships:** Participants indicated that strong, longstanding relationships promote collaboration and collaboration necessary for meeting the needs of the client in a holistic fashion.
- ❑ **Integrated Case Management:** The ICM process promotes a holistic approach to the delivery of care to clients. All involved service providers, including the youth, can bring forward their perspectives on the strengths and assets, as well as, the needs and problems of the client. All pertinent domains can then be considered and addressed in a holistic fashion.

Holistic Approach - Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants identified general areas for improvement with respect to the holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth in their community. For the holistic approach to be more fully adopted across the Fraser Region, the message about the holistic approach needs to be frequently stated, and restated. Staff education and training sessions may, therefore, need to be provided on a regular basis.

On a more practical note, while the philosophy of adopting a broad, all-encompassing approach makes logical and clinical sense, it can be difficult to undertake in reality, given the service pressures and constraints on resources, including staff time. Participants indicated that the reduction of funding for some services since the 2003 re-design makes it difficult when the focus is on crisis intervention and crisis management. The holistic approach is the right approach but it is also one that requires sufficient resources to support.

Planning Process – Survey of Stakeholders

This component of the review was intended to focus on how well the 2003 re-design planning process worked, and the issues that were examined included the following:

- Strengths of the process used for the re-design (what worked well).
- Limitations or problems associated with the process (were there fundamental flaws with the planning process).
- Whether or not similar planning processes can be improved in the future.

The specific issues examined included the following:

- How well stakeholders were informed concerning the purpose or aims of the consultation process.
- How well the consultation sessions were organized and facilitated.
- The adequacy or appropriateness of the mix of stakeholders involved in the process.
- The adequacy regarding the opportunities for stakeholders to have their voice heard in the process.
- How well the process addressed the key issues relevant to each community.
- Whether the number of consultation sessions was adequate to address the issues.
- Whether the principal aims or goals of the consultation process were achieved.
- The degree to which a community's expressed vision for youth services is reflected in the vision and service model that was eventually developed for the region.

In order to obtain feedback on the planning process, survey questionnaires were distributed to the participants of this process -- the members of the Community Planning Tables. For a variety of reasons, including the fact that the planning process took place in 2002-2003 and many of those who were involved have moved on to do other things, only a total of seven surveys have been returned by participants. Nonetheless, their responses have been summarized in this document in order to show respect for the process and respect to those who came forward with comments. The following is based on only seven responses and readers are cautioned to be careful not to over generalize.

Ratings of Planning Process

In the first section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate a number of aspects of the planning process (see Table 12). Based on the ratings, thus far (7 responses), most respondents felt the consultation sessions were well organized and facilitated, there was adequate opportunity for participants to express their opinions, and the number of sessions was adequate to address the issues. Few respondents, however, held the view that the principal aims or goals of the consultation process were achieved, or that the community's vision for youth services was well reflected in the vision and service model.

Table 12
Stakeholder Feedback on Planning Process

	Not at all	Yes, Somewhat	Yes, Fully or Definitely
1. Was the purpose or aims of these consultations clearly articulated at the outset of the process?	---	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
2. Were the consultation sessions well organized and facilitated?	---	---	7 (100%)
3. Was the right mix of stakeholders involved in the consultation process? Were the key service providers or agencies represented at the table?	---	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
4. Was there adequate opportunity for participants to express their opinions and have their voice heard in the process?	1 (14%)	---	6 (86%)
5. How well did the process address the key issues relevant to your community?	---	6 (86%)	1 (14%)
6. Was the number of consultation sessions adequate to address the issues?	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	5 (71%)
7. Were the principal aims or goals of the consultation process achieved?	3 (43%)	4 (57%)	---
8. Was your community's vision for youth services adequately reflected in the vision and service model that was eventually developed for the region?	2 (29%)	4 (57%)	1 (14%)

Comments on Planning Process

Strengths of the Process

Survey respondents were asked to comment on the strengths or the aspects of the planning process that worked well. Their comments are paraphrased below:

- The process promoted community wide involvement, collaborative and innovative thinking, and alliance building.
- The facilitator ensured that there was diverse representation at the table and there were opportunities for all participants to contribute to the process.
- The process allowed a diverse group of community service providers to become more familiar with each other and to collaborate.
- The process provided the opportunity for discussion and consultation with other service providers and organizations in the community.
- The Community Planning Table became an ongoing planning committee to address services for children, youth and families in this community.

Limitations/Challenges with the Process

Survey respondents were also asked to comment on the limitations or problems associated with the planning process. These are also paraphrased below:

- ❑ Stakeholders did not trust the government or the ministry to deliver community based governance.
- ❑ The scheduling of the meetings and the time commitment for the process were challenges for participants.
- ❑ The process started late and there was sporadic attendance from committee members.
- ❑ The facilitator did not provide enough leadership for the group, and as a result the process was hijacked by a few members of the committee.
- ❑ The primary problem was not with the consultation process but with the subsequent decision not to use the consultation information to guide devolution to community based governance. This created a sense of betrayal among the agencies that participated in the process.

Suggestions for the Future

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were asked to put forward any suggestions for how such planning processes might be improved in the future. Their responses can be described in the following manner:

- ❑ MCFD needs to maintain active ongoing participation in the Community Planning Committee in order to take advantage of ongoing consultation and feedback with community partners, as this will help to ensure that Ministry contracted services continue to respond to the needs of the community.
- ❑ There is a need to ensure that such planning groups have strong leadership and facilitation.
- ❑ Planning groups need to have intermediate goals and milestones that are to be achieved at identifiable points during the planning process (rather than just a single longer term goal that is achieved at the conclusion of the process).
- ❑ MCFD needs to deliver on key promises and believe in the community's ability to act responsibly.
- ❑ Committee members should be paid to participate and should be held accountable for their participation (rather than doing this on a volunteer basis off the edge of their desk).

Recommendations

Participants in this review provided many positive suggestions and insights for the further enhancement of the quality of services within the region. Their suggestions have been summarized and reorganized in the form of recommendations, and these are presented below.

General Recommendations

Form a Task Group: Form a Task Group to be charged with the responsibility to follow through on the recommendations of this review. This Task Group should be established as a standing committee with membership drawn from MCFD and contracted service agencies, as well as, other community service partners. The Task Group would have the mandate to set priorities and make recommendations to the MCFD regional executives regarding follow-up activities and other activities related to quality improvement.

Conduct Follow-up Reviews of Youth Services: Conduct periodic reviews of youth services in Fraser Region as part of a strategic quality improvement initiative.

Specific Recommendations – Service Integration

Open a dialogue regarding a model or models for co-location: In general, those who work in co-located environments believe in the benefits of co-location. In contrast, those who do not work in such environments tend to express more doubts about the merits of co-location. A variety of co-location models currently exist within the region and participants have indicated, based on their experience, that there are both advantages and disadvantages regarding the various options. A more detailed review of co-location strategies, identifying, in an explicit fashion, both advantages and disadvantages and the circumstances of each example may be beneficial for the continued successful implementation of the co-location strategy.

Improve the Integrated Case Management (ICM) Process: Integrated Case Management is generally recognized and supported as a good case management process. However, the ICM process has not been implemented in a uniform fashion across the Fraser Region. Some implementations appear to be more successful than others. One consistent message regarding ICM meetings is that more structure may be required to make the ICM process more effective and efficient. Additionally, there is a need to ensure that (1) there is meaningful involvement of the youth client in the meetings, (2) all key service providers are invited and present at the meetings, (3) meetings are held, preferably as part of the routine case management for the youth, and (4) staff have the necessary training and skills to facilitate an ICM meeting.

Improve Bilateral Information Sharing: Information sharing can sometimes be difficult, given confidentiality regulations and given that different agencies have different thresholds for the type of information they are willing to share. Nonetheless, whatever the motivation, information sharing, particularly by MCFD staff, can be improved. Thus, information sharing protocols and processes should be re-considered in view of this imbalance, keeping in mind

statutes, legislations and professional practice issues. Habitual practices that impede information sharing not clearly based on statutes, legislations and professional practice issues should be re-shaped.

Encourage Meaningful Participation by Youth: Meaningful participation in planning processes that impact on youth is an issue raised by many youth. Clearly, there are few opportunities available to youth to exert an influence over the community planning process in a meaningful way. At the same time, it can also be said that meaningful participation requires commitment. Perhaps, for those youth who demonstrate commitment, more opportunities for meaningful participation should be made available.

Specific Recommendations – Service Accessibility

Ensuring that services are optimally accessible to clients is a key element of the new youth services strategy. Most participants agreed that the demand for services far outstrips available resources and this has access implications. The simple approach would be to recommend increases in resource allocation. While resource allocation should, perhaps, be re-examined, given that there will certainly be limits to the availability of resources, review participants have also made a number of alternate suggestions.

Increase Outreach Services Where Appropriate: Within reason, more services should be provided on an outreach basis, where appropriate. When services can be provided on an outreach basis, participants have indicated that service accessibility can be enhanced.

Ensure that Services are Youth-friendly: Making services more youth-friendly by changing the physical space or setting, and improving the human interface can enhance accessibility. From the youth perspective, it is important that they are treated as individual persons and that their opinions are considered seriously. Thus, within reason, services should seek to improve their physical space, as well as, their human interface in order to make service more youth-friendly and enhance accessibility.

Streamline the Referral Process: Gating all referrals through MCFD, as is the practice in many communities, may make administrative sense and make case management more efficient, however some participants have indicated that this may prove to be a deterrent to some clients or family members who might not, for a variety of reasons, want to be gated through MCFD. Additionally, given the volume of cases, a single entry point is more likely to result in blockages in case flow. For these reasons, the gating process should be re-examined.

Specific Recommendations – Holistic Approach

Enhance the Adoption of the Holistic Approach: Review participants identified general areas for improvement with respect to the holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth. For the holistic approach to be more fully adopted across the Fraser Region, the message about the holistic approach needs to be frequently stated, and restated. Staff education and training sessions may, therefore, need to be provided on a regular and continuing basis.

Additional Issues to Consider

Given the consensus among review participants that demand for services exceeds available services, participants also made a number of other recommendations concerning service elements that should be enhanced. These have been summarized below:

Enhance Funding of Youth Services: Given the current level of funding and the growing population of the region, youth services funding should be generally enhanced.

Extend Hours of Operation: MCFD offices are generally open only during regular business hours on weekdays. More flexible hours of operation, where justifiable, would enhance accessibility.

Improve Access to Housing Resources: Housing is a long standing, as well as, a continuing issue. Participants have indicated that, in many ways, stable housing is a necessary starting point for successful case management. Youth housing of all kinds is in short supply and this housing issue should be addressed.

Enhance Youth Support Worker Services: Youth support and youth outreach workers are needed to assist in a wide array of tasks. The number of youth support worker hours available is low in comparison to the demands for service. Youth service worker hours should be enhanced.

Enhance Counseling Services: The hours available for counseling and therapy services for both youth and family members are limited. These hours should be increased as part of the overall enhancement of youth services to meet service needs.

Counseling Services for Families: There is a shortage of counseling services for families. Family counseling is frequently indicated as part a holistic approach. More resources should, therefore, be made available for family counseling.

Addictions Services for Youth: There is a need to enhance addictions services. In particular, detox and residential treatment services should be enhanced since these services are generally not available within the Fraser Region.

Transition to Adult Services: Youth in transition from MCFD to the adult system often end up with no support. There is a need to improve the transition process and ensure that clients in transition do not lack needed services.

Appendix A



Youth Services Feedback Survey

A survey is being conducted to obtain feedback on the integrated community-based service strategy for youth services in the Fraser Region. This survey targets MCFD staff, contracted agency staff, and other community service partners across the region. Your input is important for this feedback process to work, please take a few minutes to complete and return this survey.

“Integrated” Services

Service integration is a key element of the new vision and strategy for youth services. For the purpose of this survey, service integration is defined as “a process that involves establishing and maintaining common structures and procedures between service providers for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to address a range of services needs in an efficient, comprehensive and client-centered manner”. With this in mind, please rate youth services within your community on the following dimensions:

Rating scale: 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent	MCFD Staff	Contracted agency staff	Community partners*
When you are working on a case, how would you rate:			
1. Coordination between you and:			
2. Communication between you and:			
3. Cooperation and collaboration between you and:			
4. Case management and planning between you and:			

* Community partners includes schools, police, health, parks and recreation, etc.

Rating scale: 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent	MCFD teams**	Contracted agencies	Community partners*
At the agency level, how would you rate:			
5. Service planning (joint) between your agency and:			
6. Continuity of service between your agency and: (seamless movement of clients across services/agencies)			
7. Your awareness of the mandate and services options of:			

** MCFD teams includes Intake teams, Youth teams, and C&Y Mental Health teams.

Rating scale: 1=No common values, 2=Share a few values 3=Share many values, 4=Values are completely in common	MCFD teams	Contracted agencies	Community partners*
8. Sharing of values and service philosophy between your agency and:			

From your perspective, how would you rate:	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
9. Youth involvement in their own care/service planning	1	2	3	4
10. Youth involvement in service planning for their community	1	2	3	4

	Program Centered			Client Centered	
11. In terms of a client-centered approach (programs have to fit the client) versus a program-centered approach (client has to fit the program), where do you think the services currently available in your community lie on this continuum?	1	2	3	4	5

12. What has promoted or facilitated **service integration** in your community? _____

13. What are the barriers or challenges in relation to **service integration** in your community? _____

14. What steps could be taken to improve **service integration** in your community? _____

“Holistic” Services

A holistic approach to service delivery is another cornerstone of the new approach. For the purpose of this survey, holistic is defined as an approach to service delivery in which the service provider takes into consideration all key aspects or domains of a client’s life. With this in mind, please rate the following:

Personal Domains

1. As part of the service planning and delivery process, indicate the degree to which you take the following into consideration:	Never	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always
a. Family	1	2	3	4
b. Peers	1	2	3	4
c. Health	1	2	3	4
d. Mental Health	1	2	3	4
e. School/Work	1	2	3	4
f. Cultural/Spiritual	1	2	3	4
g. Recreation	1	2	3	4
h. Community	1	2	3	4
i. Other domains	1	2	3	4

Range and Types of Services

2. The right types of services are available to meet the needs of youth in the community.	1	2	3	4
3. Services are able to respond to the changing needs of youth as they move through their stages of development.	1	2	3	4

4. What has promoted or facilitated a **holistic approach** in your community? _____

5. What are the barriers or challenges to a **holistic approach** in your community? _____

6. What steps could be taken to promote a more **holistic approach** in your community? _____

“Accessible” Services

A third objective of the new vision and service strategy relates to access to services. Accessibility is defined as the ease with which a client is able to gain access to a needed service or program, without being impeded by physical, social, economic or system barriers. With this in mind, please rate following:

	Never	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always
1. Services are community-based and located where the youth live (locally delivered).	1	2	3	4
2. When not locally available, youth are assisted in accessing services outside their community.	1	2	3	4
3. Services are outreach-oriented rather than office-based (delivered where youth are found).	1	2	3	4
4. Services are flexible in terms of admission/eligibility criteria.	1	2	3	4
5. Youth are able to access services in a timely manner (no wait lists).	1	2	3	4
6. Services are flexible in terms of their hours of operation (evenings, weekends).	1	2	3	4
7. Services are provided in settings and environments that promote youth access (youth friendly)	1	2	3	4
8. Services are responsive to the needs of the various cultural groups in the community, including Aboriginal youth (culturally sensitive and appropriate)	1	2	3	4
9. Services are responsive to the needs of youth with multiple problems (complex cases).	1	2	3	4

10. What has promoted or facilitated **service accessibility** in your community? _____

11. What are the barriers or challenges in relation to **service accessibility** in your community? _____

12. What steps could be taken to improve **service accessibility** in your community? _____

General Impressions

One purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether services for youth have improved since the establishment of the new vision and service strategy (2004). Please rate the extent to which the new integrated community-based service model has improved youth services in your community:

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	No change	Somewhat improved	Much improved
1. Integration of services	1	2	3	4	5
2. Holistic approach to services	1	2	3	4	5
3. Accessibility of services	1	2	3	4	5
4. Cultural responsiveness of services	1	2	3	4	5
5. Client-centeredness of services (relationship-based)	1	2	3	4	5

In order to better understand the responses to this survey, in terms of the opportunities for improvement brought forward by communities across Fraser Region, could you please tell us:

1. Which community do you work in? _____

2. Who do your work for? MCFD Contacted Service Agency Community Partner Agency
 (e.g., school, police, parks & rec, etc.)

Thank-you for completing the survey!
Please fax it to InfoWest Consulting at 604-944-2332
 (No fax cover sheet is needed)

Appendix B

Focus Group Interview Guide: MCFD & Contracted Agency Staff



Ministry of Children and
Family Development

Introductory Remarks

My name is Derek Wilson and this is my partner, George Tien, and we have been asked by MCFD to undertake an evaluation of youth services in Fraser Region.

To provide you with the background for this project, in 2004, MCFD community-based services for youth were re-organized in the communities across Fraser Region. With this service re-design, a new vision was developed that calls for youth services to be “**integrated, holistic, accessible, culturally-responsive and relationship-based**”.

In order to assess the extent to which the elements of this new vision for youth services have been achieved, the MCFD Regional Leadership Team, in partnership with the Child and Youth Officer for B.C, have directed that an evaluation be undertaken. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify strengths, as well as opportunities for improving the current community-based youth services model. The evaluation involves gathering information from MCFD staff, contracted agency staff, youth and parents across the region through the use of surveys as well as focus groups.

Diagram of Youth Services in Your Community

To begin our session today, we would like to start by talking about how services or service components are organized in this community (MCFD services and Contracted Agency services). We would like to develop a basic diagram of what services are in place, and how they link with one another. Using this diagram as a reference, we would then like to obtain your impressions regarding the extent to which you feel youth services in your community are “integrated”, “accessible”, and “holistic”.

[DIAGRAM THE SERVICE COMPONENTS AND LINKAGES]

“Integrated” Services

Based on the service model in your community, let's talk for a few minutes about service integration. For the purposes of today's discussion, service integration refers to “a process that involves establishing and maintaining common structures and procedures between service providers for the purpose of coordinating their efforts to address a range of service needs in an efficient, comprehensive and client-centered manner”. With this in mind.....

1. What are the strengths in your community, in terms of ***service integration***? What works well?
2. What has promoted or facilitated ***service integration*** in your community?
3. What are the barriers or challenges in relation to ***service integration*** in your community?
4. What steps could be taken to improve ***service integration*** in your community?

Aspects of service integration to be examined during discussion:

Integration at the Service Provider Level

- a. Coordination between providers
- b. Communication between providers
- c. Cooperation and collaboration between providers
- d. Case management and planning between providers (integrated case management)
- e. Involvement of youth in their own care/service planning (both goals and services)
- f. Focus of providers: (i) client-centered rather than program-centered, and (ii) focus on strengths/assets, rather than deficits/problems.

Integration at the Agency Level

- g. Continuity of service between agencies
- h. Awareness of the mandate and services options of agencies
- i. Sharing of values and service philosophy between agencies
- j. Local service planning between agencies
- k. Involvement of youth in the planning of youth services in their community

“Accessible” Services

I would now like to discuss “accessibility” of youth services. For the purpose of our discussion, accessibility can be defined as “the ease with which a youth is able to gain access to a needed service or program, without being impeded by physical, social, economic or system barriers”. With this in mind...

1. What are the strengths in your community, in terms of **service accessibility**? What works well?
2. What has promoted or facilitated **service accessibility** in your community?
3. What are the barriers or challenges in relation to **service accessibility** in your community?
4. What steps could be taken to improve **service accessibility** in your community?

Aspects of service accessibility to be examined during discussion:

Where Services are Delivered

- a. Services are community-based and located where the youth live (locally delivered).
- b. Services are provided in settings and environments that promote youth access (youth friendly).
- c. Services are outreach-oriented rather than office-based (delivered where youth are found).

When Services are Delivered

- d. Services can be accessed by youth in a timely manner (no wait lists).
- e. Services are flexible in terms of their hours of operation (evenings, weekends).

How Services are Delivered

- f. Services are flexible in terms of admission/eligibility criteria
- g. Services are responsive to the needs of the various cultural groups in the community, including Aboriginal youth (culturally sensitive and appropriate)
- h. Services are responsive to the needs of youth with multiple problems (complex cases).

“Holistic” Services

A holistic approach to service delivery is another element of youth services we would like to discuss. For the purpose of our discussion, holistic is defined as “an approach to service delivery in which the service provider takes into consideration all key aspects or domains of a client’s life”. With this in mind.....

1. What are the strengths in your community, in terms of service providers taking a **holistic approach** to service delivery? What works well?
2. What has promoted or facilitated a **holistic approach** in your community?
3. What are the barriers or challenges to a **holistic approach** in your community?
4. What steps could be taken to promote a more **holistic approach** in your community?

Aspects of “holistic” to be examined during discussion:

Holistic Approach to Care

a. Services are planned and delivered based upon a comprehensive (holistic) assessment of the youths’ needs. All domains of a youth’s life taken into consideration (family, peers, health/mental health, school/work, cultural/spiritual, etc.).

Holistic System of Services

- a. The right types of services are available to meet the needs of youth in the community.
- b. Services are able to respond to the changing needs of youth as they move through their stages of development.

General Impressions of Service Strategy

1. In general, how are things going in your community, in terms of moving forward with and implementing the vision and service strategy?
 - a. Are things on track? Going in the right direction?
 - b. To what extent has the vision been implemented or achieved?
2. What additional improvement opportunities are there that should be addressed?

Appendix C

MCFD Youth Services Strategy Evaluation Feedback Survey on the Planning Process



Ministry of Children and
Family Development

In late 2003 and early 2004, the MCFD Fraser Regional Leadership Team initiated a community-based consultation process which involved using "Community Planning Tables" to gather input from community service partners in order to determine how services throughout the region could be re-organized or re-designed to better serve children, youths and their families. We would like your feedback on this "Community Planning Tables" consultation process. The purpose of the survey is to understand the strengths and limitations of that planning process so that lessons learned can be shared with others in the future. Your input is important, please take a few minutes to complete and return this survey!

Please rate the "Community Tables" consultation process on the following:

Not at all	Yes, Somewhat	Yes, Fully or Definitely
0	+1	+2

1. Was the purpose or aims of these consultations clearly articulated at the outset of the process? 0 +1 +2
2. Were the consultation sessions well organized and facilitated? 0 +1 +2
3. Was the right mix of stakeholders involved in the consultation process? Were the key service providers or agencies represented at the table? 0 +1 +2
4. Was there adequate opportunity for participants to express their opinions and have their voice heard in the process? 0 +1 +2
5. How well did the process address the key issues relevant to your community? 0 +1 +2
6. Was the number of consultation sessions adequate to address the issues? 0 +1 +2
7. Were the principal aims or goals of the consultation process achieved? 0 +1 +2
8. Was your community's vision for youth services adequately reflected in the vision and service model that was eventually developed for the region? 0 +1 +2
9. In your opinion, what were the strengths of this process? What worked well? _____

10. What were the limitations or problems associated with this process? _____

11. What steps could be taken to improve such processes in the future? _____

In order to better understand the responses to this survey, in terms of the opportunities for improvement brought forward by communities across Fraser Region, could you please tell us:

1. Which community do you work in? _____
2. Who do your work for? MCFD Contacted Service Agency Community Partner Agency
(school, police, parks & rec, etc.)

Thank-you for completing the survey!
Please fax it to InfoWest Consulting at 604-944-2332
(No fax cover sheet is needed)

Appendix D: Focus Group Notes

The following focus group notes are summaries of statements made by participants. As much as possible, they represent the sentiments of participants as they were expressed during the focus group sessions.

Service Integration

Strengths

Focus group participants identified a number of factors that contribute to or promote service integration in their community. These are:

Service Philosophies and Approaches

- ❑ **Understanding of Service Mandates and Roles:** there is mutual understanding of the service mandates of the ministry/agency, as well as a clear understanding and respect for the roles and responsibilities of the respective service providers. This helps ensure there are accurate, realistic service expectations, which in turn reduces potential conflicts among providers and makes for effective working relationships. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Abbots, Agency Surrey, MCFD New West, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Agency NW/Burn)
- ❑ **Commitment to Collaboration:** there are good working relationships between MCFD and agency staff. Every effort is made to collaborate and work together to address the needs of youth. MCFD and agency staff routinely get together to discuss and formulate plans for cases. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Abbots, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chilli, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD New West, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Approach of MCFD Staff:** in past few years, there has been a more open and flexible philosophy and approach by MCFD staff. There is a greater willingness to collaborate and work with agency staff and other community services. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Abbots, Agency NW/Burn)
- ❑ **Approach of Agency Staff:** agency staff are very flexible and responsive. They “go above and beyond the call of duty” to respond to the identified needs of youth and MCFD staff. They look to establish and maintain effective working relationships with MCFD staff, as well as with other youth serving agencies in the community. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Abbots, Agency Chilli, Youth Delta, Agency Delta)
- ❑ **Experienced Staff:** staff have worked in the ministry/agency and the community for a number of years. This experience promotes understanding, trust, mutual respect, and good communication between service providers. (Agency Abbots, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD New West, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Lang)

Co-Location of Service Providers

The models of co-location across Fraser Region vary from community to community. In some communities, MCFD teams are co-located in the same office or building (Surrey,

Abbots, New West, Chilliwack, Langley, Delta,). In other communities, MCFD teams, such as the Youth Services Team (YST), are co-located with contracted agency staff in the same office or building (T-C, R-M). While in other communities, the organization (MCFD or agency) makes an office available for staff of the other organization (agency, MCF) to use as required (New West, Chilliwack). While this strategy does not guarantee service integration, some of the identified benefits of co-location include:

- ❑ **Communication:** co-location facilitates communication among service providers. It is much easier to “connect with” the other involved providers around a case, as they are in the same office or building. The turnaround times for exchanges of information are significantly reduced, which make the case planning process much more efficient. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Surrey, MCFD Abbots, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M)
- ❑ **Coordination and Collaboration:** where service providers are working in close proximity, it promotes coordination, collaboration and continuity of service. Co-location provides opportunities, both formal and informal, for service providers to consult and “troubleshoot” on cases in an efficient manner. (MCFD T-C, MCFD R-M, MCFD Surrey, MCFD Abbots, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M,)
- ❑ **One stop shopping:** youth are able to access their service providers at one location (e.g., social worker and youth support worker). Youth can meet either individually and jointly with their workers, without having to travel to multiple service locations. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Abbots, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chilliwack, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency T-C/R-M)

In terms of the model for co-location viewed as optimal, most respondents felt that careful consideration needed to be given regarding how the co-location of service providers is configured, as there are advantages and disadvantages to the various options. For instance, having staff co-located in the same building has a number of upsides (see above), but it may not be optimal to have all teams or groups of workers sharing the same office in a building.

- ❑ **Co-Location of MCFD Teams:** the mixture of different types of clients (justice, social services, mental health) in the waiting room of an office is not appealing to some youth, and is seen as less than ideal by some MCFD staff.
- ❑ **Co-Location of MCFD and Agency:** youth may be discouraged from attending the office to meet with their agency support worker if their probation officer or MCFD social worker is in an office just down the hall.

Integrated Case Management (ICM)

- ❑ **Integrated Case Management:** ICM meetings bring together involved service providers, collaterals and the youth to discuss the strengths/assets as well as the needs/problems of the youth. There is the opportunity for participants to offer their perspectives and have input into the identified goals and the plan for the youth. ICM meetings promote communication and collaboration between providers, and meet the needs of providers on a number of levels. Such meetings are viewed as most effective (successful) when: all involved providers attend the meeting, and the youth is able to effectively participate in the meeting. (Agency Abbots, Youth

Abbots, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Youth Chilli, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Lang)

- ❑ **Youth Participation:** youth are given the opportunity to provide input into the goals and the plans that were developed through the ICM meeting. (Youth Abbots, Youth Delta, Youth T-C, Youth Chilli, Youth Burnaby, Youth R-M)

Inter-Agency Meetings

- ❑ **Inter-Agency Committees:** local inter-agency committees have been established in communities across Fraser Region (CYC, Youth Specific, Youth Matters, ICCP, ECC). MCFD team leaders, agency managers, and other youth serving agencies participate on these committees. In terms of their focus, these committees may discuss specific youth in their community and attempt to “troubleshoot” and formulate plans for these youth, and/or may focus on youth services in the community in general. The committees offer the opportunity to share information and build relationships between service providers. (MCFD Surrey, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Inter-Agency Managers Meetings:** the MCFD team leader (or CSM) and agency manager meet on a regular basis to discuss general service delivery issues, as well as specific clients. In some communities, MCFD team leaders/staff meet regularly with representatives from other youth serving agencies (e.g., school, hospital, etc.). (MCFD Abbots, Agency Abbots, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency T-C/R-M)
- ❑ **Inter-agency Line Staff Meetings:** line staff meet on a monthly basis to discuss and plan around specific youth. (Agency T-C/R-M)

Service/Work Processes

- ❑ **Integrated Intake/Screening Process:** MCFD and agency staff hold a joint intake meeting on a weekly basis to present and discuss all new referrals. At this intake/screening meeting, decisions are made as to the types of services that best “fit” or address the needs of the referred youth. This forum prioritizes and expedites new referrals, and promotes communication and collaboration between service providers. (MCFD New West, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn)
- ❑ **Electronic Referral Process:** the agency has established an online referral form/process. This has proven to be a quick, efficient mechanism for MCFD staff to make client referrals to agency programs and services. (MCFD T-C, MCFD R-M)

Youth Involvement in Planning

- ❑ **Youth Advisory Groups:** youth advisory groups have been established as part of the development of new youth resources/services in some communities (i.e., project specific). (Agency Abbots, Agency NW)

Organizational Change

- ❑ **Service Re-design:** the re-design has benefited the community, in that there is reduced fragmentation of services and less competition between agencies for service dollars. Each agency is able to focus on their strengths and deliver the types of services that they do best. In addition, there is a closer relationship and better

collaboration between MCFD and the lead agency. (Agency Surrey, Agency T-C/R-M)

Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants also identified a number of problems or areas for improvement relating to service integration in their community. These are:

Working Relationships

- ❑ **Relationships between MCFD and Agency:** there is a need to continue to work on the relationships between MCFD staff and agency staff. There can be real differences between the priorities and approaches of staff, as well as a lack of communication and collaboration between staff. (Agency Chillli, MCFD Lang)
- ❑ **Relationships between MCFD Teams:** the emphasis, over the past few years, has been on improving working relationships between MCFD staff and the contracted agencies. Having made substantial progress in this area, there is a need to work on the relationships between the various MCFD teams. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD New West)
- ❑ **MCFD Mental Health Team:** the Mental Health teams and Youth Services teams, in the past couple of years, have started to build closer working relationships. However, access to the services of the Mental Health teams is a continuing challenge (lengthy wait lists, restrictive admission criteria, etc.). Additionally, the types of services provided by the Mental Health Teams are not meeting all of the needs of the Youth Services Teams. The Mental Health team primarily provides assessment and “consultation” services, whereas the Youth Services Team needs counseling or therapy services for youth. There is a reluctance by the Mental Health team to work with or “take on” clients for any period of time. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Surrey, Agency Abbots, MCFD Chillli/Fraser)
- ❑ **MCFD Aboriginal Team:** the relationship between the MCFD teams and the Aboriginal teams are not strong. The Aboriginal teams tend to work independently, and are not well connected to or integrated with the other MCFD teams. (MCFD Surrey, MCFD New West, MCFD Lang/Delta)
- ❑ **Relationships with Community Living B.C.:** MCFD staff continually struggle in their efforts to work with CLBC staff around gaining access to CLBC resources for youth with developmental disabilities. (MCFD T-C, MCFD R-M, MCFD Chillli/Fraser, MCFD Lang/Delta)

Integrated Case Management (ICM)

In general, the ICM process is recognized and supported as a good concept for case planning for youth. The ICM process, however, is working with varying degrees of success from community to community. In some instances it is working very well, but in many instances opportunities for improvement exist. MCFD staff, agency staff, and youth all identified concerns or problems with the ICM process.

- ❑ **Youth Involvement:** the meaningful involvement of youth in the ICM process varies from worker to worker, and community to community. In general, there are a number of areas where youth involvement could be improved:
 - ❑ **Preparation for ICM:** youth are often not briefed or adequately prepared with respect to the process or the issues that will be discussed at the meeting. Therefore, they are often not sure how and when to participate, and are not able to contribute to the discussion. (Youth Burnaby, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Surrey)
 - ❑ **Input into Decision-Making:** youth do not feel like they have a “real voice” in the meeting, and in the eventual decision-making around their goals and case plan. Even if they are able to articulate their needs, concerns or wishes, they feel they are not “heard” by the adults at the meeting. (Agency Chilli, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Surrey)
 - ❑ **Support or Advocacy:** youth feel they do not have anyone at the meeting to assist them in bringing forward their views (e.g., advocate). (Agency Chilli, Agency Delta, Youth Chilli, Youth Burnaby, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Surrey)
 - ❑ **Focus on Problems/Deficits:** the ICM meetings tend to primarily focus on the problems and deficits of the youth. The strengths or assets of the youth are discussed in a limited way or not at all. Hence, the ICM meetings tend to be a very negative experience for the youth. (Youth Abbots, Agency Chilli, Youth Delta, Youth Burnaby, Youth R-M)
 - ❑ **Number of Participants:** the ICM meetings often have a large number of participants, some of whom may be strangers to the youth (unknown service providers, students, etc.). This can be very uncomfortable and intimidating for the youth, and impacts on their ability to speak up during the meeting. (Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Burnaby, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Service Provider Participation:** it can be a challenge to have full representation and participation in the ICM process. In some communities, key service providers may not attend the meetings, while in other communities some key providers may not be invited to attend the meetings.
 - ❑ **MCFD Staff:** attendance by MCFD staff is hit and miss for ICM meetings called by agency or school staff. (Agency Delta)
 - ❑ **School Staff:** it is a challenge to get school staff to attend ICM meetings. (MCFD Surrey, Agency Chilli, Agency T-C/R-M)
 - ❑ **A&D Workers:** A&D workers not invited to attend ICM meetings in all cases. (Agency Chilli)
 - ❑ **Family Participation:** getting parents to attend ICM meetings is a challenge. (Agency Abbots)
- ❑ **Frequency of Meetings:** in general, ICM meetings are not held on a regular basis as part of the routine case management for the youth. ICM meetings are conducted sporadically, and are often crisis driven. (Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Burnaby, Youth Surrey, Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **ICM Training:** while initial training has been provided to staff, there is a need for additional training to ensure (1) there is greater consistency in the ICM process, and

(2) staff have the necessary skills to facilitate an ICM meeting. (Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency T-C/R-M)

Information Sharing

- ❑ **Information Sharing:** Information sharing by MCFD staff could be improved. Agency staff are expected to regularly share and report information about clients to MCFD staff. However, MCFD staff are not as forthcoming as they could be with information that could assist agency staff in service planning and delivery. (Agency Chilli, Agency Surrey)

Youth Involvement in Planning

- ❑ **Youth Input into Planning:** at present, there are no formal mechanisms for youth to be involved in a meaningful way and to provide input into the types and direction of youth services in the community. Mechanisms need to be established to obtain youth input into planning initiatives. (MCFD Abbots, MCFD Chilli/Fraser)

Organizational Change and Staff Turnover

- ❑ **MCFD Organizational Changes:** the constant change within the ministry has been hard on MCFD and agency staff, and hard on the working relationships between service partners. In particular, the service re-design process pitted agencies against one another, and many relationships were damaged and have still not fully recovered. (MCFD Surrey, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **MCFD Staff Turnover:** staff turnover within the ministry is a continuing challenge, as new staff have to be oriented/educated, and new working relationships have to be developed. This turnover has a negative impact on the relationships with other service providers and with clients. (MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn)
- ❑ **Agency Staff Turnover:** the turnover of agency staff has been problematic, in terms of continuity of relationships between service providers. In recent years, much of the turnover has been associated with the service re-design process, which resulted in the loss of workers and the re-assignment of workers. (MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang, MCFD Surrey, Agency Lang)

Service/Work Processes

- ❑ **Case Closures:** at present, MCFD refers cases to the agency for service, and then closes their file relatively quickly after the referral. If the referral is inappropriate or the case needs additional services, then the case ends up getting referred back to the Intake Team. In the past, cases referred by MCFD to the agency for service would be kept open for a longer period of time. This promoted more collaboration around ensuring that the case received the appropriate services. (Agency Surrey)

Accessibility of Services

Focus group participants identified a number of strengths with regard to the accessibility of youth services in their community. These are:

Strengths

Where Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Agency Approach:** in general, contracted agencies have made every effort to make their services as accessible to youth as possible, within the limitations of their funding/resources.
- ❑ **Outreach Oriented – Agency Staff:** agency staff (youth workers, parent-teen mediation) routinely connect with youth out in the community, rather than at the agency office. The workers will pick the youth up from home or school, or will meet them at a mutually convenient location in the community. This is seen as a very effective strategy for engaging youth. (MCFD Surrey, Youth Abbots, Agency Abbots, Agency Chilli, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth T-C, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Chilli, Youth Burnaby, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, AgencyLang)
- ❑ **Outreach Oriented – MCFD Staff:** Youth Services Team members make every effort to get out of the office and see youth and families in the community. YST staff may meet with youth in the community, and may arrange ICM meetings at locations in the community (e.g., agency office, youth’s home). (MCFD Abbots, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Youth Delta, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Community-Based – MCFD and Agency Offices:** the MCFD and agency buildings are located on or near public transportation routes in the “downtown” or urban area of the communities (bus, Sky Train, etc.). In some cities (New West, Chilli, R-M), the offices are located close to the other youth serving agencies in the community. (Agency Abbots, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chilli, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD New West, Agency Delta, Agency R-M, Youth Chilli, Youth Burnaby, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Lang)

How Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Youth Friendly – Agency Staff:** agency staff are welcoming and accepting of youth (non-judgmental), and genuinely care about the welfare of the youth. The youth workers are very creative, flexible and responsive to the needs of youth. They spend time with the youth and work hard to ensure that the youth gain access to the services that they need. (MCFD T-C, MCFD R-M, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth T-C, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Chilli, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Youth Friendly – Agency Office:** the agency’s office or youth centre is a youth friendly environment. The features of these settings that make them “youth friendly” include an open layout, a lounge area, comfortable furniture, youth art on walls, and social and recreational activities (games, TV, etc). (Youth Abbots, Agency Abbots, Agency Surrey, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth Chilli, Youth Burnaby)
- ❑ **Youth Friendly -- MCFD Staff:** in general, MCFD staff try to help youth as much as they can with their problems, and with gaining access to services/programs that address their needs. Youth appreciate that MCFD staff are limited in the ways they

can assist youth by their service mandate/role and their caseloads. (Youth T-C, Youth Chillli, Youth Surrey)

- ❑ **Admission/Eligibility Criteria:** the agency and its programs are very flexible, in terms of the types of youth they will serve. (MCFD T-C/R-M , MCFD Surrey, Youth Delta)

When Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Availability – Agency Staff:** – agency staff, (youth support workers, parent-teen mediation) make every effort to be available and meet with the youth when it works for the youth. Workers meet with the youth around their school or work schedule, and are available on short notice should a crisis arise. This may mean connecting with a youth in the evening or on a weekend. (Youth Abbots, MCFD Chillli/Fraser, Agency Surrey, MCFD Lang/Delta, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth T-C, Youth Burnaby, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Availability -- Agency Office:** – the agency building is open for youth to drop-in during the evenings on some weekdays. Group work is provided to youth and families on some weeknights. There may be limited service or programming on weekends. (Youth Abbots, Agency Chillli, Agency Surrey, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth Chillli, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey)

Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants identified several areas for improvement with regard to accessibility of services by youth in their community. These are:

Where Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Outreach Oriented – MCFD Staff:** – MCFD staff getting out of the office and seeing youth and families in the community varies from office to office and worker to worker. It is very much dependent upon the philosophy of managers and workers, and the caseloads of the workers. (Agency Chillli, MCFD New West)

How Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Youth Friendly -- MCFD Staff:** the experience of youth with MCFD staff varies from worker to worker. Some youth have good relationships with their social worker or probation officer. In general, though, attending the MCFD office to see their worker was not viewed as a positive experience by youth. MCFD staff are not considered warm and welcoming, and are not seen as genuinely caring about the youth. As some youth remarked:
 - ❑ “Staff treat you like you are a number, rather than a person.
 - ❑ “It’s just their job. They don’t really care.”
 - ❑ “When I really needed help, they weren’t there for me”.
 - ❑ “They read the file and think they know everything about you. They don’t spend any time trying to get to know you as a person.”

- ❑ Given this, many youth tend to stay away from their MCFD worker. As one youth noted, “If I needed help, I wouldn’t go there first”. (Youth Abbots, Youth Delta, Youth Chillli, Youth R-M, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Youth Friendly – MCFD Offices:** the setting and atmosphere of MCFD offices are not considered youth friendly. This opinion is based on a number of features of these offices, including (1) the bland, sterile environment (no colour, no art); (2) the uncomfortable waiting room (plastic chairs); (3) the security features (reception behind glass, secure door to access offices, bars on windows). As one youth remarked, “it feels like its more about the protection of workers that it is about providing services to youth”. (Agency Chillli, MCFD New West, Youth Delta, Youth Chillli, Youth R-M, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey)
- ❑ **Referral Process:** with services being “gated” through MCF, some youth and families are deterred from accessing services as they do not want to contact or connect with the MCFD office/staff. (Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Culturally Responsive:** youth services are not effectively engaging youth from the Indo-Canadian community. There is a need to work with the leaders of this community to develop new services and/or promote access to existing services. (MCFD Abbots, Agency Delta)

When Services are Delivered

- ❑ **Availability -- MCFD Staff:**
 - ❑ **Staff Caseloads:** MCFD staff are not as available and cannot spend as much time with youth and families as they need or want, due to their large caseloads. Additionally, when youth or agency workers try to contact MCFD staff by phone, it might be days before the call is returned, if at all. (Youth Abbots, MCFD New West, Youth R-M, Agency Surrey)
 - ❑ **Hours of Operation:** MCFD offices are open during regular business hours on weekdays. More flexible hours of operation would enhance accessibility. For instance, evening hours on one or two weeknights would (1) assist some clients and families with accessing their MCFD workers, as they work or go to school during the day; (2) allow for ICM meetings to be held in the evening, as required; (3) allow agency staff to link and consult with MCFD staff. (MCFD Abbots, Agency Chillli, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Burnaby, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Availability -- Agency Staff:** agency services and programs operate with levels of funding that place significant constraints on the type and amount of services that can be provided to youth and families (e.g., parent-teen mediation, counseling, support workers). For instance, agency staff are limited in the number of hours they can see a youth, number of sessions or weeks they can see a family, etc.
- ❑ **Youth Workers:** youth support workers face significant service demands and have limited service hours available, and many have more than one service role (ISSP, outreach, etc.). Given this, the workers are not able to see youth as frequently as the case calls for, particularly for non-adjudicated youth (as justice-related work is mandated and takes precedence over other types of work/cases). Furthermore, the workers operate with very limited resources: (1) travel - they are not able to travel with the youth outside of their community, as

this is not covered in the budget; and (2) incidentals – they have little money to cover costs associated with working with the youth (e.g., coffee money, etc.). (Agency Chilli, MCFD New West, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Youth R-M, Agency Lang)

- ❑ **Availability -- Agency Services:** agency services and programs, with the exception of youth support workers, are still very limited on evenings and weekends. There is a need to continue to work on developing services outside of regular business hours. (MCFD Abbots, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Chilli)

What Services are Available (Limited/Lack of Resources)

- ❑ **Youth Services in General:** youth services funding and resources were reduced significantly as part of the service re-design process. Both the levels of service and range of programming/services were impacted, and have not fully recovered. The available resources are very limited in comparison to the growing population and service demands of many communities. Youth, therefore, continue to face a number of barriers in terms of accessing needed services in a timely manner. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Surrey, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Housing Resources:** it is a continuing challenge to find housing for youth in their own community. In most instances, youth have little or no choice around where they will live. While there is a shortage of housing for youth in general, the types of housing needed include safe house beds, transition beds, foster homes, supported housing, and affordable rental housing. The types of youth who have particular difficulty accessing housing include: (1) youth on Youth Agreements, (2) youth with multiple needs or challenging behaviours, and (3) youth in crisis. The lack of housing resources has a number of negative impacts: (1) youth are placed in homes outside of their community, which means switching some of their providers (one-to-one worker); (2) youth are placed in inappropriate or unsafe environments; or (3) youth end up homeless. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Surrey, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chilli, Agency Surrey, MCFD New West, Youth T-C, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Youth Support Worker Services:** the number of youth support worker hours available is low in relation to the demands for these services. There is a need for support or outreach workers to assist (1) youth who are attempting to transition to independent living (“Next Step” workers); (2) youth in foster homes (non-adjudicated), (3) youth on Youth Agreements, (4) youth living on the streets (re-connect workers). (MCFD Surrey, Agency Abbots, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chilli, MCFD Chilli/Fraser, MCFD New West, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Counseling Services for Youth:** the counseling and therapy services available for youth are very limited. The types of counseling needed includes general counseling, anger management counseling (for non-adjudicated youth), sexual abuse counseling, etc. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Chilli, Agency Surrey, MCFD Surrey, Agency Delta, Youth Burnaby, Agency NW/Burn)
- ❑ **Counseling Services for Families:** there is a lack of counseling services for families. Agencies are not able to serve the number of families who require counseling.

Additionally, for those who are able to access counseling, the number of weeks of service is too limited. (MCFD Surrey, Agency Abbots, Agency Lang)

- ❑ **Addictions Services for Youth:** there are no addictions services available for youth, in particular detox and residential treatment. (MCFD Abbots, MCFD Chillli/Fraser, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Surrey, Agency Surrey, Agency Lang)
- ❑ **Youth Resource or Drop-in Centre:**– there is a need for a youth drop-in or resource centre. A place where youth can “hang out”, as well as receive needed services. (Agency South Surrey/WR)
- ❑ **Services for Complex Cases:** there is a lack of community resources for youth with multiple problems or needs (i.e., mental health, developmental disabilities, substance use, etc.) (MCFD Abbots, Agency Surrey, Agency Delta, Agency T-C/R-M)
- ❑ **Services for Youth 16-18 years:** youth 16-18 years are able to access very few services, particularly if they are not on a youth agreement. This is a group, however, that often has multiple needs, limited daily living skills, and few resources. (Agency Abbots, MCFD Lang/Delta)
- ❑ **Services for “At Risk” Youth:** “at risk” youth who are not “ministry involved” or “justice involved” have a real challenge accessing any type of services, as ministry clients consume all service/programming spaces of the contracted agencies. (Agency NW/Burn, Agency Lang)

Transition from Youth to Adult

- ❑ **Transition from Youth Services:** there is a lack of transition for clients leaving the youth system of care. Youth who have been receiving MCFD services are essentially cut off when they turn 19 years of age. There is a need to improve the process of transition and the resources dedicated to youth who are moving onto the adult system. As one former foster child noted, “The ministry is good about taking kids into care, but not good about moving kids off of care”. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chillli, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Burnaby, Youth Surrey)

Holistic Approach to Service Delivery

Strengths

Focus group participants identified a number of factors that contribute to or promote a holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth. These are:

Service Delivery Approach/Philosophy

- ❑ **Approach – Agency Staff:** the approach/practice of community service agencies has traditionally been a very holistic one. “We don’t set barriers around the needs of youth and families”. Agency staff, particularly youth support workers, examine and attempt to address all identified needs. Whatever need is identified for the youth or by the youth, workers will make efforts to shape the services and respond to the needs. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Surrey, Youth Delta, Agency Delta, Youth T-C, Agency T-C/R-M, Youth Chillli, Youth Burnaby, Agency Lang)

Inter-Agency Meetings and Working Relationships

- ❑ **Inter-Agency Meetings:** local inter-agency committees have been established to discuss issues relating to youth and youth services in the community (CYC, Youth Specific, etc.). These committees help promote a holistic approach to service delivery, and a holistic system of services in the community. All youth related needs and domains are discussed by the providers at these forums. (MCFD T-C/R-M, Agency Abbots, MCFD New West)
- ❑ **Service Partner Relationships:** the relationships among service partners in the community is excellent. These strong, longstanding relationships promote collaboration and working together to address all of the needs of the youth. (Agency Abbots, Agency T-C/R-M, MCFD Abbots, Agency Chillli)

Integrated Case Management (ICM)

- ❑ **Integrated Case Management:** the ICM process promotes a holistic approach to the delivery of care to youth. All involved service providers and collaterals, together with the youth, bring forward their perspectives on the strengths/assets as well as the needs/problems of the youth. All pertinent domains are considered and addressed in the goals and the plan for the youth. (MCFD T-C/R-M, MCFD Surrey, MCFD Abbots, MCFD Chillli/Fraser, MCFD Lang/Delta, Youth Chillli)

Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants identified several areas for improvement with respect to the holistic approach to the delivery of services to youth in their community. These are:

Service Delivery Approach/Philosophy

- ❑ **Service Provider Approach:** taking a holistic approach to the delivery of service to youth and families can vary from office to office and worker to worker.
 - ❑ **Approach – MCFD Staff:** while MCFD staff may look at the “big picture” (all domains of a youth’s life), they appear to be selective regarding the identified needs/problems they attempt to work on with the youth. They tend to focus on the youth’s problems/deficits, rather than their strengths/assets (youth perspective). (Agency Chillli, Youth Burnaby, Agency NW/Burn, Youth Delta, Youth Chillli, Agency Surrey)
 - ❑ **Approach – Agency Staff:** it is a challenge for agency staff to take a holistic approach and attempt to meet all of the identified needs of youth, as staff have limited time and resources available for working with youth and their families. (Agency Abbots, Agency Chillli, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn, Agency Surrey)
- ❑ **Focus of Efforts:** with the budget reductions associated with the service re-design, many ministry and agency services/programs were downsized or eliminated. There was a loss of many prevention and early intervention programs. The focus of efforts

now tends to be crisis intervention and management, rather than “prevention”.
(Agency Abbots, Agency Chilli, MCFD Lang/Delta, Agency Delta, Agency NW/Burn)

Definitions for Abbreviations Used in Appendix D

Abbots = Abbotsford and Mission

Burn = Burnaby

Chilli = Chilliwack, Hope and Agassiz

Delta = Delta and White Rock

Lang = Langley

MCFD = Ministry of Children and Family Development

NW = New Westminster

R-M = Ridge Meadows

T-C = Tri-Cities