

Mississauga's Youth Friendly Application

**COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM
(INCLUDING LETTERS OF SUPPORT)**





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Summary of input from a cross section of Mississauga's youth as to why they feel Mississauga is youth friendly

Report prepared by:

Joanne Foote, City of Mississauga

Mariam Fares, City of Mississauga

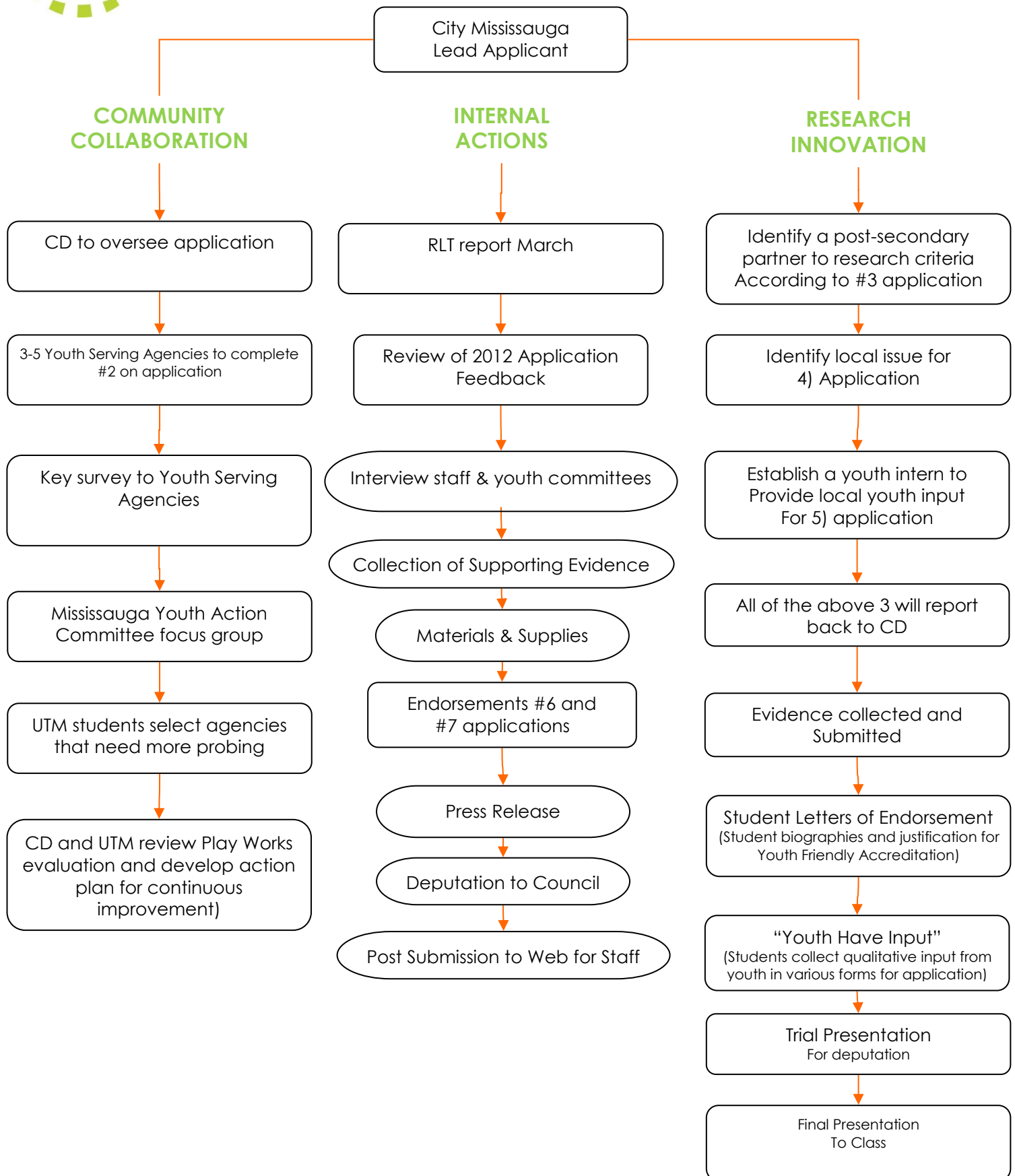
Jananee Savuntharanathan, UTM

Paula Maurutto, UTM

Desiree Kaunda-Wint, Jamilah Dei, Mona Karmi, Annabel Oromoni UTM



Mississauga's Approach



Please provide **3 (three) complete copies** of this application form and additional documentation (see question 3 for complete details of what to include). Please note: You will receive two copies of these materials back once the review process is complete. To learn more about how to apply, please contact Play Works directly at pwp@playworkspartnership.ca or at 416-426-7142.

1) Lead Applicant Group, Department or Organization (see "Who is Eligible to Apply" page 3)

Name of Group/Dept/Organization: City of Mississauga/Community Services/Recreation

Contact Person: Joanne Foote Position: Community Development Coordinator (Youth)

Address: 201 City Centre Drive Suite 900 City: Mississauga Postal Code: L5B 2T4

Phone: 905 615-3200 x 5319 Fax: 905 615 2T4

Email: joanne.foote@mississauga.ca Website: www.mississauga.ca/youth

2) Applicant Community Information

Name of Community: _____

Population ☐ less than 5,000 ☐ 5,001 - 12,000 ☐ 12,001 - 25,000 ☐ 25,001 - 50,000
☐ 50,001 - 100,000 ☐ 100,001 - 200,000 ☒ 200,001 and up

If the lead applicant is a municipality (township, etc.), please answer the following questions from the perspective of the municipality as provider of youth programs. If the lead applicant is not a municipality, the lead applicant should contact the municipality (township, etc.) to access and complete this information.

- a) From a municipal government perspective:
- How many youth (ages 13 to 19) live in your community? (Refer to Statistics Canada or another credible research source) 76,850 Note: Population this age is down by 23% since 2010
 - How many individual youth participate in play programs run by the municipality? (youth only, ages 13 to 19; do not include statistics for children 12 and under) 9,204 Note: Population this age is down by 23% since 2010
 - What is the total budget spent on supporting all forms of recreation, sport, culture, leisure and volunteer programs for all age groups include (i.e. children, youth, adults, older adults)? 91 Million including infrastructure parks/CC/libraries/cycling
 - Of this total budget, what is the annual amount committed to support play programs for 13 - 19 year olds? 22 Million
- b) Please contact and list at least 3 and up to 5 other groups or agencies that provide services to youth and ask them to provide the following information:

Name of Provider (agency name)	\$\$ Spent on Youth Programs	# of Youth Served (ages 13 -19)
Mississauga Arts Council (Llmeight Youth)	\$103,841.00	25,617.00
The Dam	\$650,000.00	1,693.00
Erin Mills Youth Centre	\$348,883.00	214
Nexus Youth Centre	\$ 722,769	3,074
Newcomer Centre of Peel	\$19,823.00	over 400

Selection Guidelines:

- Play Works regrets that only submissions completed in full will be considered, and must be postmarked no later than January 4, 2017.
- Play Works reserves the right to withhold recognition.
- The decision of the Review Team is final.

Application continues next page... 5

- 3) **Youth Friendly Community Criteria** — Please check the criteria for which you are applying and upon which you are basing your application (a minimum of 10 criteria must be checked). *For each criterion, include a one to two-page description of how your community meets the criteria and provide additional tangible documentation of how your community meets the criteria. For more information on the kinds and quantity of tangible documentation to include, please request an orientation call (see page 4).* Tangible documentation can include minutes of meetings, council or board reports, terms of reference, policies that support youth friendly play, newspaper clippings, copies of flyers, videos, pictures, program statistics summaries, etc. Please include a USB with links to any URLs, pictures, videos or additional documentation that are not available in print copy.

✓ Please submit the 3 copies of the application form and the support materials as outlined in question 3 above. Include these in a binder format, beginning with the application form and then separating each criteria with numbered tabs so that the introductory page(s) for each criteria is immediately followed by the tangible evidence to meet that criteria, and before the next tab. Responses to Questions 4 and 5 below can be put in separate tabs at the back of the binder.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1) Youth have options for play. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10) The community has effective community partnerships that support youth play. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2) Youth are formally connected to the community. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11) Youth activism and advocacy for play is nurtured. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3) Facilities are dedicated to youth play. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12) Youth feel valued in their community. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4) It is easy for youth to find information about play activities in the community. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13) Youth can get to the play programs that are offered. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5) The community supports public youth events. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14) Schools support the youth friendly approach. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6) The community celebrates and recognizes youth. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 15) Adults champion the cause for youth play. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7) The community commits funding for youth play. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 16) Play is inclusive. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 8) The community supports positive youth development. | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9) The community supports youth volunteerism and leadership development. | |

- 4) **Local issue response** — Identify one issue in your community that is affecting youth's ability to play. In two pages or less, outline how your community has responded/is responding to that issue AND the results to date (i.e. how it has led to increased youth play in the community). Please include this information in a separate tab at the back of the binder.
- 5) **Local youth input** — To complete this application form, you must provide a summary of input received from a cross section of youth in your community as to why they feel your community is youth friendly. To gather this information, you may choose to have a youth focus group, have youth provide personal testimonials, do a random phone or written survey, and/or have youth create a video or some other media presentation. Every application must include the voice of youth: youth who are highly engaged in their community and those who may be less actively engaged. Please include this information in a separate tab at the back of the binder.

- 6) **Co-Applicant Endorsement** — Please have a representative of at least three other youth service providers in the community, that have contributed to the application, and that have reviewed and endorse the submission.

Name: <u>John Choi</u>	Organization: <u>Nexus Youth Services</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>
Name: <u>Terence Velox</u>	Organization: <u>Newcomer Centre of Rel</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>
Name: <u>Darcy MacCallum</u>	Organization: <u>Edwards Youth Centre</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>

- 7) **Youth Endorsement** — Please have at least two youth review and sign this application and provide a letter of endorsement as to why they feel their community is Youth Friendly.

Name: <u>Wali Shah</u>	Group represented: <u>VTM</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>
Name: <u>Arka Roy</u>	Group represented: <u>MYAC</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>

- 8) **Official Endorsement** — Please have the most senior elected official of the municipality, township or aboriginal community review and endorse this application.

Name: <u>Bonnie Chumble</u>	Organization: <u>City of Mississauga</u>	Signature: <u>[Signature]</u>
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Submit application by January 4, 2017 to:
Youth Friendly Community Recognition Program: Play Works

Tel: 416-426-7142 pwp@playworkspartnership.ca

#302 - 1 Concorde Gate, Toronto, ON M3C 3N6

Fax: 416-426-7371

www.playworkspartnership.ca



Bonnie Crombie, MBA, ICD.D

Mayor, City of Mississauga
T 905-896-5555 F 905-896-5879
mayor@mississauga.ca

City of Mississauga

300 City Centre Drive
MISSISSAUGA ON L5B 3C1
mayorcrombie.ca

Play Works
c/o 3302 – 1 Concorde Gate
Toronto, Ontario
M3C 3N6

Dear: Play Works

Subject: Youth Friendly Community Recognition

It is with great pleasure that we endorse the City of Mississauga as the lead applicant for the 2017 Youth Friendly Community Recognition Program. Mississauga is a youth and young adult friendly city that is respectful, inclusive and forward thinking; a city where youth are meaningfully engaged and thrive as equal members of the community.

The City's youth plan focuses on being "youth friendly" where policies, programs, services, facilities and partnerships with schools, community groups, businesses and individuals are inclusive and responsive to the needs and interests of youth.

Mississauga embraces youth everyday as a means to a healthier, vibrant and more engaged community where youth have opportunities, shared leadership, equality, respect, communication and a youth voice.

The Mayor and Members of Council support an application to demonstrate that Mississauga acknowledges the 16 criteria in our everyday culture to be designated as a "youth friendly" community.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie Crombie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bonnie Crombie
Mayor, City of Mississauga



Dec 9, 2016

Mississauga often can be seen as synonymous as youth inclusive. Native to this city, I have spent the majority of my life in a handful of pockets of Mississauga able to experience every flavor and taste of this city. This was only possible because of the accessibility of all opportunities for the youth. As an avid athlete, I was fortunate to play competitive basketball and soccer for the Mississauga Monarchs and the Mississauga Falcons respectively. Not only were these organizations available in terms of distance, but they often provided accommodations to cater to my personal issues whether it was setting practice times or offering carpool services to help me get to my games and practices in a timely manner.

Even before I had gotten serious about sports, recreational activities were always familiar to me due to the emphasis Mississauga placed on youth involvement. Throughout the summers of my middle school years, I often went to many community centres to swim or simply join a pick-up game to have fun. With the help of the "Freedom Pass" I was able to travel to these community centres and engage in activities free of cost.

Now I am the Chairperson of the Mississauga Youth Action Committee; my position entails that I get exposure to the youth from all corners of this city. I take pride in looking for input from the students I do meet to see their perspective on our city and how they want to better it. I am in charge of relaying the collective voice of Mississauga to the municipal government and what the collective voice claims is that this city is for the youth. Through all the opportunities provided and the vast cultures and demographics encompassed by this city, it is clear why the youth of Mississauga can say that this city is youth friendly. I have been fortunate to serve this city and could not be happier in where I reside: the city that has helped me and thousands of other students reach their potential.

Arka Roy, Chairperson Mississauga Youth Action Committee

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is in support of the City of Mississauga in its endeavours to be titled as a Youth Friendly City. As a youth who was grown up in the Mississauga community, I have had the opportunity to be both a participant and a leader in the youth programming it offers. My first part-time job was at my local community centre, where I would coach and facilitate drop in sports programs for youth as a part of the free of charge, Wal-Mart At Play program. It was here that I developed my first customer service skills and began to take on a leadership role in my community, but also where I made friends and avoided after-school trouble as a participant.

Since then, I have seen Mississauga offer countless free youth incentives, such as the Freedom Pass. The pass allowed youth from 12-14 to take transit within the city for the duration of the summer, as an incentive to get involved and get active amongst a generation relying on an abundance of technology for their social experiences. My own younger brother utilized the Freedom Pass, and so did his friends. Another initiative I enjoy is REBEL week. It is youth focused week with arts and athletic activities all over the city. Youth are invited to perform at open mics, skateboard, and so on, free of cost. REBEL has been an opportunity for me to express myself as a participant, and now be a part of, for the past three years, as a leader in various REBEL events. I believe Mississauga is a city with amazing youth and equally amazing opportunities for those youth to be engaged, and would be very deserving of the Youth Friendly City title.

Respectfully,

Wail Shah
Canada's Top 20 Under 20
Student @ University of Toronto
647-717-6166
wali.shah@live.com
www.walifloshah.com

Criteria #1

YOUTH HAVE OPTIONS FOR PLAY IN THEIR COMMUNITY

Mississauga has an extensive mix of play options available through recreation/library not for profits and private business ; an impressive variety of parks and waterways where groups/individuals play baseball, football, soccer cricket, beach volleyball, tennis, skateboard , bike, canoe, row, stand up paddle board, fish, walk, run, exercise, walk dogs, swim, skate, fly kites, walk dogs, play with remote controlled airplanes, drones, boats and dune buggies, enjoy festivals/events and so on. Over 206 affiliated community not for profit groups deliver play through sport, dance, martial arts, gymnastics to name a few. We found over 250 youth serving groups such as Girls Guides that deliver an impressive array of play options. Schools, faith groups, newcomer, environment and social youth groups offer leadership, stewardship, life skills and volunteer opportunities. Businesses catering to teens are evident throughout this city such as inexpensive fitness clubs, martial arts and dance studios, badminton and table tennis businesses are packed with teens, gymnastics, ball room dancing, yoga soccer, swimming, trampoline, sky diving, movies, gaming, billiards, bowling, archery, paint ball, golf, roller-skating and many more.

In the Voices Report (Peel Children Youth Initiative, 2014), "Youth tell us they spend time with friends (69%); looking after siblings (24%); playing sports at school (22%); working for pay (33%); going to programs at community centres (23%); volunteering (28%); and participating in a range of non-athletic school based clubs (28%). "Not all youth are the same; there are differences in the types of activities that youth participate in based on their gender, grade (age), and to a lesser extent, their ethnicity."

In 2016, 94,374 youth were registered in recreation teen programs and 102,302 were accounted for in unstructured play. Established youth advisory committees have a lot of say in the type of play offered. Youth sports and activities are given priority bookings for sport fields, arenas, gyms and rooms. Here is a snap shot of play in Mississauga:

Teens in recreation and sports

City recreation programs 9,204 registered. Sport Leagues 283 in cricket, 1282 in baseball, 812 in hockey (50% girls), 812 in soccer, 2940 in tennis (18 clubs), 132 in ringette. Not for profit sport clubs with their own building exist for canoe, rowing, sailing, tennis, air cadets, baseball. Also not for profit sport clubs can deliver to sports for teens thanks to land/building agreements such as competitive swimming, figure skating, gymnastic, hockey, YMCA, There are 43 city run teen sport leagues. Sauga at Play drop in free gym programs attracts close to 43,000 teen visits. Private, faith groups and non-profit help meet demand.

Teens in arts, dance, drama

Today's teens are very interested in the arts. Phone devices make music, videography, photography, blogging and self-expression readily available to teens for free. Non-profits such as Limelight Youth Arts Council advocate for the arts and such as Cawthra SS and Loyola SS specialize in the arts; we found interesting private businesses such as Mississauga Rehearsal Factory who rent small individual studios that are fully set up for rock bands with stage, music instruments and lighting for very inexpensive hourly rate. We also found that open mic nights are popular with teens here in places like Boston Pizza, Living Arts Centre, Nexus Youth Centre all host open mic's regularly.

Civic Engagement

The City's Youth Plan ensures that planning for any kind of sport or park always involves youth input through focus sessions, key surveys and the youth councils. A recent public engagement exercise for a neighborhood involved youth from the local high school and youth centre who designed their vision for Cooksville which will be used by the consultant in the final recommendations. Peel Chinese Community Service Hub did a night specifically to help teens understand the roles and impact of elected officials on their city and even schools.

Youth Activism

There are numerous youth groups in schools, non-profits and faith organizations who advocate for a cause or change. Peel Environmental Youth Alliance has 700 action-oriented students concerned about environmental issues, ACCESS is an organization of youth social innovators and activists, who educate, empower, inspire such initiatives as Shoes to End Poverty. Mississauga City Youth Council mimics Mississauga's Mayor and Council by having youth councilors who represent the same ward as their adult counter parts. Ink Movement is youth-led and advocate through poetry. inSauga is a strong youth driven on line media source that expresses preferences and views of youth

Volunteerism

With over 250 youth serving agencies and numerous youth committees Mississauga shows a strong volunteer force. Volunteering Peel operated by high school students is still going strong after 10 years matching youth to volunteer opportunities.

Service Clubs and Faith Groups

Groups such as Girls Guides, Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Rotaract, Solel Church, Portico Church attract teens and provide play in many different forms from leadership to outdoor adventures, to study groups, life skills, fundraising, events, LGBTQ and socializing.

Criteria #2

YOUTH ARE FORMALLY CONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY

Mississauga has formal and publicly recognized ways in which youth can have their voices heard. There are numerous councils, committees, forums and youth positions in government, school and not for profit agencies. In addition focus groups, key surveys and twitter reach outs ensure that youth are genuinely engaged in municipal policy and future direction.

The Mississauga Youth Plan principle #3: states that the contribution of young people in community decision-making, program development and public policy is valued and reflective of the diverse youth population. 12 recommendations under this principle are ingrained in our youth friendly culture including a city wide youth council, local youth councils, opportunities for youth on boards, committees and planning focus groups. Mississauga has a vast array of youth structures that have been created that serve as catalysts for the youth voice in a meaningful way, here are just a few examples:

- Youth Advisory Councils (YAC) at 11 Community Centres
- Teen Advisory Groups (TAG) at 18 Libraries
- Peel Environmental Youth Alliance <http://peyalliance.ca/>
- Peel Children and Youth Initiative Youth Council <http://pcyi.org/>
- Museums Youth Task Force
- Peel Students President Council <http://www.thespc.com/#home>
- Mississauga City Youth Council <http://mississauga.thecyc.ca/>
- Mississauga Youth Action Committee <http://www.myacmississauga.com/>
- Mississauga Streetsville Youth Council <https://gsikand.liberal.ca/news-nouvelles/join-the-mississauga-streetsville-constituency-youth-council/>
- Constituency Youth Council <https://pfonseca.liberal.ca/page/youth-council/>
- Mississauga Centre MP Youth Council <https://oalghabra.liberal.ca/news-nouvelles/mcycLaunch/>
- Mississauga Arts Council Limelight Youth Council <http://www.mississaugaartscouncil.com/maclimelight-youth-council-positions-now-available/>
- Citizens for the Advancement of Community Development

Youth are involved formally in master plans through focus groups and surveys when planning a new community centre, park, recreation strategies, and neighborhood visioning sessions. The city wide youth advisory group and community centre/library advisory groups play a vital role in helping to create focus groups for these departments as well as local not for profit youth serving

agency's youth councils: Cooksville Visioning Sessions, InSauga, MiWay, Union Gas Skateboard focus, Park 459 Youth focus group.

Transportation department engages MiWay youth ambassadors in 26 high schools along with yearly co-op post-secondary placement students who promote and solicit feedback on active transportation in the schools, public events, neighborhood visioning sessions related to transportation such as the Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit systems being built. These young people truly have their voices heard, are involved and have a place at the table on transportation which is a high priority for youth.

Over 150 Mississauga youth serving not for profit agencies majority have youth councils or youth representation on their boards. Groups such as Ink Movement use the arts as a powerful tool for social change through their book publishing projects and experiential events which empower youth and allow creative outlets. <http://www.inkmovement.org/>

The Canadian Youth Think Tank partnered with United Way, India Rainbow, Lions Club to hold a one of a kind Leadership and Policy Conference for motivate young leaders to strengthen and mobilize change <http://mobilizing22.strikingly.com/>. We were impressed that 10 of the 25 keynotes were youth leaders in their own ranks from diverse backgrounds ethnically, socially, economically and experientially. Similarly we found that the faith groups we surveyed or spoke with all had youth groups, ministries or other types of dedicated youth meet ups that allowed for youth to make change, have input , feel involved.

Social media is a very popular way that youth express their voice and in the last 5 years it have become the communication tool of choice whether it be through tweets, posts on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube. Most not for profits, businesses, government in Mississauga have social media accounts such as Facebook or Twitter which is very public therefore issues are more readily acknowledged, for example a teen created an online face book petition to advocate the need for more outdoor fitness bar equipment in public parks to give youth free, accessible places to work out and socialize. The City was able to take advantage of a grant and plan for 6 additional outdoor fitness bar equipment stations throughout Mississauga at park locations known to teens. Our research students all use Uber to get to places and really like the fact that they can evaluate the service and also read other users feedback on the service. This is the reality with businesses and services now, youth can readily express their dissatisfaction or satisfaction through social media in a way that is transparent and allows youth to make decisions as consumers about the service, recommend to friends etc.

Criteria #3

FACILITIES ARE DEDICATED TO YOUTH PLAY

Mississauga has a wide variety of places and spaces that youth residents own and where they feel they belong. Mississauga is ranked 3rd out of 30 of Canada's largest cities for satisfaction with municipal services. (By Forum Research Inc.) 96% of residents are satisfied with Mississauga as a place to live. (EnviroNics 2015). With 2,900 hectares of parks and forests, 63,000 businesses, 70 Fortune 500 companies, 420,000 jobs and a population that has grown by 6% since 2011, Mississauga is a place where youth want to be. The future success of our city depends on Mississauga remaining competitive with other major urban cities, maintaining infrastructure, reclaiming and protecting natural areas, being progressive and innovative to meet the needs of our diverse and changing city.

Municipal has a vast variety of assets worth \$8.3 billion of which many are used by teen youth including;

- 3rd largest municipal transit system in Ontario, with 468 fully accessible buses
- 486 open parks, 38 picnic areas, 2 golf courses, 2 marinas, 3 beaches, 9 leash free zones, 12 photography sites, Celebration Square, Streetsville Square
- 229 kilometres of cycling lanes and multi-use trails, 9 toboggan hills, 71 natural ice rinks, 3 outdoor artificial ice rinks
- 4 museums, 6 art/theatre complexes, 1 indigenous sweat lodge
- 11 major community centres and 18 libraries provide dedicated youth chill zones, gym space in critical lunch and after school times, 1 multi-sport complex, 3 baseball clubhouses, 11 indoor pools, 7 outdoor pools, 5 therapeutic pools, 25 splash pads, 1 interactive water feature
- 71 basketball hoops, 10 skateboard parks, 4 bike parks, 132 ball diamonds, 136 tennis courts & 4 tennis clubhouses, 11 outdoor fitness equipment spots, 7 cricket pitches, 2 football fields, 2 lacrosse, 21 bocce courts, 9 volleyball including new beach volleyball court from Pan Am legacy
-

Schools in Mississauga provide a wide variety of places and spaces for students, youth serving community groups, recreation youth programs and the neighborhoods. The Peel Board considers schools as hubs for community and recreation groups providing a place to come together, volunteer, build skills, access programs, become physically active and build healthy, strong communities. Community groups are encouraged to utilize school space by having low cost rental rates during the week averaging \$45/day. Most schools have dedicated space for youth clubs, media, arts, drama, youth lounges.

Peel school playing fields add to the list of spaces for youth play such as:

- 36 football fields (City maintains 33), 1 multi court, 1 lit artificial lit football field, 10 soccer/football fields (City maintains all 4), 15 soccer fields (City

maintains 9), 13 ball diamonds(City maintains 9), 4 public tennis courts, several track and fields and basketball hoops.

Peel Board budgeted \$800k in 2016 for additional extra-curricular activities, athletics, arts and school clubs providing space and time that is convenient and suitable for youth-- where they are at!

Dufferin Peel Catholic School Board also adds to the compliment of play fields especially track and fields and artificial turf football/soccer fields which are jointly operated by Board and City. In 2015 DPCSB approved a Community Planning and Partnership Policy whose main purpose is to share facilities for the benefit of boards, students, community and to optimize public assets owned by school boards. Currently Mississauga Recreation has a shared school agreement with 4 high schools whereby the community centre and school buildings are connected so that amenities are shared such as, libraries, gymnasiums, pools, multi-purpose rooms, meeting rooms, track and fields, football fields, tennis and basketball courts. This kind of arrangement makes play activities accessible and timely for teens who attend the school and benefit the surrounding neighborhood teens by providing access to play after school hours.,

Youth Serving Agencies in Mississauga provide unique places and spaces that are youth centric, located where the youth are, in priority neighborhoods with convenient operating hours. For example; Merge 180 is a dedicated youth drop centre in Sheridan Mall, The Dam's 2 locations Meadowvale and Cooksville are across from high schools . Newcomer Centre of Peel in re-purposed office building with dedicated youth centre, The Hub 2 dedicated spaces Miss Valley CC and Civic fitness studio evenings, Nexus Youth Centre dedicated space in Central library plus various rooms are used in Civic Centre, Studio 89 is dedicated youth social enterprise in industrial plaza beside high school. Peel Youth Village dedicated facility in priority neighborhood, Creditmills in support housing complex after school. All these places provide space that is comfortable, free, drop in, unstructured, where youth can choose what they want to participate in or simply hang out. YMCA has free Friday night Teen Nights where all the amenities, spaces, activities are dedicated for the teens.

Service Clubs such as Girls Guides Scouts, Air Cadets, Rotaract, Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers and Sisters add further to the wide variety and diversity of spaces in Mississauga that youth can choose from many of which are offered in local schools convenient to where youth live and are familiar. Vic Johnston Arena is a not-for-profit offering affordable grass roots hockey and programming.

Private Businesses flourish in Mississauga fulfilling youth demand that not for profits and municipal cannot fulfill alone such as; gymnastics, martial arts, yoga, badminton, indoor sky diving, arts, music, dance studios, trampoline, indoor soccer, volleyball and floor hockey, gaming, go carting, rock climbing, fitness, indoor swimming, roller skating movie theatres, bowling alleys, billiards, indoor mini golf, laser quest, paint ball, horseback riding. The private providers not only add to the range of locations for play but also the variety and level of play for Mississauga youth. Shopping malls and café's are abundant and popular places that are easy for youth to get to, where youth meet up and hang out on comfortable furniture, where youth feel welcome.

Faith Centres over 120 locations in Mississauga, providing various youth clubs, groups and play activities in their own buildings, in rented space in community

centres, industrial plazas and re-purposed buildings and in some parks contributing to a vast array of youth friendly facilities in Mississauga.

Criteria #4

IT IS EASY FOR YOUTH TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT PLAY ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

Youth in Mississauga have a variety of media and communication methods to connect and learn about opportunities in the community. Mississauga has adapted quickly over the past few years to the ever changing technologies and social media channels available to promote and share play opportunities; free Wi-Fi is readily available in parks, coffee shops, schools, libraries, community centres. Searching for play is a simple “google search” or clicking on to service provider web sites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snap Chat, social media making communication more accessible than ever.

The City of Mississauga website provides access to all of the community centres/libraries in Mississauga with phone numbers, locations, amenities, registered programs, drop in pay as you go programs and calendars of free drop in activities at every centre. Recreation division has a well-established twitter and Instagram account and there is a dedicated Youth webpage with @SaugaYouth Twitter, FB, and Instagram accounts are active and well used to learn about events, drop ins and cross promotion of other youth serving groups and individuals play activities. These accounts are shared among partners such as Peel District School Board twitter account, youth serving agencies such as Newcomer Centre of Peel twitter account, Nexus Youth Centre twitter and Instagram accounts, TD Seed Bank Branch twitter account, MYAC twitter and Instagram accounts, Mayor Bonnie Crombie and several Councilors' have twitter accounts and follow the @Sauga youth social media. Every community centre has a youth advisory group who has their own Facebook page promoting events/activities and recruiting volunteers. Library teen groups channel their social media centrally.

This past year @SaugaYouth created a hashtag to capture all the talk over twitter about National Youth Week (named Rebel Week in Mississauga). Here is an example of the words captured from seven days of celebrating youth in Mississauga. This week is youth-led, for youth, by youth – 35,000 impressions (youth engagement), 205 retweets, in 7 days.



The City has an e-maps link that allows the user to search and locate all kinds of play such as basketball courts, skateboard parks, outdoor pools, and outdoor fitness equipment. Other departments such as Active Transportation, MiWay, Culture, Communications, and Finance also have social media channels that provide information on getting around the city, events, media even an interactive budget tool where residents can input and calculate how they would spend tax dollars. There are also video messages to residents from the Mayor, City Manager and department Commissioners. Word mouth “word of heart” and texting continues to be primary mode that youth use to access and share information individually or on mass with friends, businesses, schools, parents, families, youth groups and services that they might otherwise not have known about. Youth in Mississauga are sharing information through word of mouth and most schools allow students to make regular announcements.

Youth reporters are active with Mississauga News, Snap, Spirit of Mississauga Magazine, Mississauga Road magazine, Rogers TV, inSauga to name a few. High schools and post secondary have their own youth reporters, bloggers, social media, newsletters and bulletin boards to get the word out. By visiting local community centres within Mississauga, youth can easily find out about different programs and events directed to them. Information can readily be found through an array of **brochures, catalogues, LED reader boards, posters, and displays and dedicated youth bulletin boards** in community centres, libraries, bus stops, and street LED signs.

Criteria #5

COMMUNITY SUPPORTS PUBLIC YOUTH EVENTS

In order for youth to contribute and feel valued, the community must support the ideas, planning and leadership from youth. Youth are involved with large scale events across the Mississauga such as; Rebel – National Youth Week, Sauga Block Party, Rock the Coliseum, and Mayor's Youth Speaker Series to name a few of the most popular ones.

Rebel Week takes place from May 1-7 celebrating youth every year. Youth events are organized for youth by youth across Mississauga with the support of resources such as facility bookings, marketing materials and guidance is available from city staff to ensure an event is smoothly run. Rebel kicks off with a deputation by youth to Mayor and Council which is televised, a media release to all local media and an event sponsored by the elected Ward Councilor. In 2016, over 200 youth led celebrations took place during this week that included; arts and culture, recreation and sport, volunteerism, activism, leadership and opportunities to make a difference in the community. Take a look at #Rebel16 on twitter to see the highlights through a youth lens.

Sauga Block Party has been an annual event that takes place at Celebration Square in June, kicking off the summer for youth in Mississauga. Various local media including Virgin radio, SNAP, insauga provide media coverage and lots of social media hype from attendees and youth organizers. The event is coordinated by city staff in collaboration with young people across Mississauga. Various youth groups like The Mississauga Youth Action Committee volunteer and participate in this event as a fun, playful way to transition their out- going board of directors with the newly elected board of directors, Youth Advisory teams from community centres, Libraries and many youth serving agencies such as Nexus, Citizens For Advancement of Community Development, Peel Environmental Youth Advisory, contribute to ideas, planning and hosting stations the day of the event. The event itself consists of live entertainment on the main stage showcasing local youth artists, street sports, unplugged artists, graffiti art, mural painting, hip hop/break dancing, etc. In fact The Hub is a FREE urban arts drop-in program that lead the DJ dance bubble pavilion at Sauga Block Party, a partnership between Nexus Youth Centre (operates out of Central Library same property of Celebration Square) and Unity Charity and The City of Mississauga. In 2016, Mississauga celebrated with community organizations, local youth artists, secondary students, post-secondary students and passersby's that were curious of the youth culture flowing through the grounds of City Hall. Take a look through a youth lens on Twitter #SaugaBlock16.

Rock the Coliseum hosts an annual free music festival on Celebration Square organized by and for youth in the 13-19yr group as part of the Canadian

Community Arts Initiative. Rock the Coliseum all music genres, dance battles, poetry slams, very popular.

Mayor's Youth Speaker Series kicked off with Amanda Lang in January of 2016 targeting grade 12 and post-secondary youth. Mayor Bonnie Crombie personally promoted the event through her popular twitter feed, newsletter to all residents and website. Her leadership on this initiative demonstrated her commitment and belief in youth engagement providing youth with the opportunity to hear from industry leaders, entrepreneurs on struggles and successes. Each event is free of charge and accessible in a central location to meet youth where they are at.

Mississauga has many diverse events such as:

- Mobilizing 22 in July 2015 organized by the Canadian Youth Think Tank Youth Leadership and Policy Conference 90-100 attendees Civic Centre 25 presenters from youth leaders, academics, elected officials, community activists
- Capture Clarkson – local high school students showcase their photography in the lobby of Clarkson Community Centre where public and youth peers vote to select winners based on creativity.
- Skateboard competitions by Evolve Skateboard Camps and Zumiez Skateboards held every year at skate parks where hard to reach youth are at, where they can showcase their skateboard skills and tricks with DJ music, prizes, and food.
- Carassauga is Ontario's largest Multicultural festival engages teens through volunteerism, participation, organizers of festival weekend, opening ceremonies (dancing, singing, speaking, cutting of the ribbon), presenting awards and galas that take place throughout the entire year not just festival weekend
- Legends Row was started by a local business man who believed Mississauga should celebrate the achievements of its residents, it is funded by the private sector and grants. Youth Action Committee are recruited to help screen and judge who will be inducted and they attend high profile induction ceremony at Living Arts Centre which gives them exposure to sport, music, science legends that grew up in Mississauga.
- UTM Get Experience provides youth 17-19 an opportunity to engage and connect with peers within the school to enhance learning and school experience
- Dancing with the Stars was Mississauga's version of the popular TV show with local officials and notables participating to raise funds for Mississauga Community Foundation who provide small grants to strengthen

neighborhoods. Mississauga Youth Action Committee recruited youth to help judge, greet and attend .

- LGBTQ community groups like BIPOC, host and plan events including their large Pride parade on Celebration Square

Criteria #6

THE COMMUNITY CELEBRATES AND RECOGNIZES YOUTH

Through our research we found that Mississauga has numerous and meaningful ways that youth contributions are recognized whether it is through National Youth Week (REBEL Week in May), Volunteer Week in April, Pride Week or awards banquets, Council deputations, award/recognition at large events/festivals/sport competitions. Local government, service clubs, schools, businesses and community agencies are enthusiastic about sharing accomplishments of young people in Mississauga along with a variety of media sources and social media who willingly promote and celebrate these highlights on an ongoing basis such as insauga, SNAP, Mississauga News, @saugayouth, councilor newsletters, social media, and Ontario Community Newspaper Association who have over 300 member newspapers and award the Junior Citizen Awards.

Schools

In addition to high school formal graduation ceremonies, award nights and special assemblies, Peel Board dedicates a web page called "Spot light on Schools" that promote/celebrates many diverse types of achievements and provides links to where you can find more information.

UTM Student Union/office of registrar offer volunteer award scholarships up to \$2K application process with demonstrated volunteer participation and references.

Youth Agencies

- Nexus Youth Centre features youth in regular blogs, social media and newsletters. Honorariums for youth and recognition events for volunteers occur every year.
- Volunteer MBC includes youth certificates/awards in their Annual Report which reaches a wide audience of funders, local government and media.
- Girls Guides provides a variety of scholarships/awards including Girl Greatness Awards, Lady Baden Powell Challenge, Chief Commissioner's Award, Canada Cord, Girl Recognition Awards in addition to providing opportunities for members to participate in international programs/travel
- YMCA recognizes contributions of volunteers through reference letters, appreciation certificates, sport leadership certification programs.

Community groups

- Mississauga Italfest awards the Louis Jannetta Mississauga Youth Heritage Award for youth residents who promote Italian culture and demonstrate community support through philanthropic or volunteer work.
- Mississauga Youth Action Committee (MYAC) is a city wide youth group affiliated with City of Mississauga since 1982 host annual Youth Achievement Awards. Youth apply for 4 award categories; TD sponsored Citizenship award, Library Jim Wilde award, Young Volunteer Award and the Mayor's Youth Award for leadership. Local politicians, directors and business champions present the awards along with the MYAC board of directors with good coverage from insauga electronic news, Mississauga News, SNAP magazine and MYAC's social media.
- Mississauga Youth Film Festival annually awards young up and coming film makers that are high school aged, their work is showcased during REBEL Week (National Youth Week) at Living Arts Centre and beautiful awards are presented
- Mississauga Arts Council has annual Emerging Artist Award many recipients have become famous such as amputee Adrian Anatawan a former Clarkson SS student

Other

- Living Arts Centre's annual volunteer awards banquet recognizes youth who have volunteered at Living Arts Centre.
- Mayor and Council regularly assist service clubs in formally presenting awards in Council Chambers with photo opportunities with elected officials
- Bell Canada Youth Awards, Mississauga Safe City Youth Hero Award
- Drew Hildebrand Teen Benefit Fund awards \$4K scholarships in recognition and to reward positive change
- Microsoft has many youth scholarships, recently awarded Wali Shah spoken word artist/educator/mentor towards UTM tuition
- Peel Police Scholarships to 4 students per year that show positive attitude, enthusiasm, persistence and integrity
- Scouts Mississauga has Queens Venturer Award to top scouts
- Canada's top 20 under 20 recognizes youth under 20 yrs. old who have positively influenced their community a Mississauga youth received it in 2014
- Islamic Development Bank Scholarship awards \$7K to students who are academically strong but financially weak

- Youth In Motion's RBC Top 20 Under 20 Award for outstanding achievements in leadership, innovation and environmentalism, in 2014 4 Mississauga students awarded
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award- Mississauga high school enrolls their students
- <http://www.holynameofmarycollegeschool.com/duke-edinburghs-award>

Criteria #7

THE COMMUNITY COMMITS FUNDING FOR YOUTH PLAY

Mississauga has a variety of funding sources that support youth play. Recreation's 2016 budget was 22.6M operations and \$13.M capital (2.5M from development charges, 5.5M cash in lieu, 4.7M tax). Meadowvale Community Centre underwent \$39M Reno with youth friendly amenities; double gymnasium, library, youth room, teaching kitchen, fitness equipment, accessible/gender neutral change rooms, outdoor basketball court, lounge hang out spaces in lobby, roof top deck, free Wi Fi, recharging stations. Parks 2016 budget was \$31.8M operations and 23.7M capital increasing youth friendly facilities such as 2.5M in new bike trails, 1.2M for artificial football field and 64K to new basketball court. Mississauga's strategic pillar **Belong** ensures Youth Plan operations are funded annually \$380K to support Youth coordinator, Youth assistant; part time youth drop in leaders and youth engagement mentors at all 11 community centers' for free, unstructured drop in play opportunities for youth 12-24 years old.

Sauga At Play (formally Walmart At Play) has supported youth play for the last 10 years through a yearly donation from Walmart \$54K (increased to \$75K for 2017) and Pepsi \$15K. Funds support free, drop in, after school and lunch hour program at 12 community centers' and 5 off sites at schools and a fitness centre.

City of Mississauga Corporate Grant Program – Supports the following youth serving agencies through multi -year agreements to deliver “recreation opportunities”.

- **Nexus Youth Centre** \$40,115 annually supports accredited youth mental health agency through dedicated youth centre space and 5 additional satellite locations used for youth play including The Hub, Girls Circle, Guys Code, Fitness Weight Room Program, Art and Writers Group reaching over 1,800 youth
- **Safe City Mississauga** \$235,789 annually supports programs that enhance feeling of safety in our communities which is important for youth (it takes a village to raise a child) 236 Neighborhood Watch programs, 1,446 high school participants in Cross Road Crime Prevention Program, 532 participants in Aspire Tutoring Program where 75% parents say they are spending more time with their child as a result of this program
- **Mississauga Sports Council** \$85K annually, some goes to positive youth development training for coaches/mentors from over 40 sport groups who

attend annual sport summit, a Rogers TV "Sauga Sports" show that recognizes and celebrates local youth athletes/sport groups, a new sport series gears towards keeping young athletes healthy and safe; Concussions 101 and Taping Techniques and sports award banquet recognition of athletes and teams.

- **Riverwood Conservancy** \$131,859 annually goes partly towards Mississauga's key expectations for group to further develop/ deliver educational programs with particular emphasis on youth in horticultural, stewardship, heritage, environmental programs and volunteer engagement.
- **Volunteer MBC** \$35K annually fosters/ develops volunteerism in Peel. Mississauga's key expectations are increase awareness/participation in Youth Volunteering Empower Program and Youth to Create Community Change Program.
- **Global 180** \$5K is a dedicated youth centre at Sheridan mall for 14-19 years old who come after school to play video games, foosball, billiards, table tennis, air hockey and hang out with friends in the lounge. Global 180 used the \$5K to develop a volunteer leadership training that resulted in 12 high school students becoming peer mentors to over 80 younger youth.
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel** \$10K to create 7 new recreation partnerships that will reach over 100 youth in priority neighborhoods.
- **Erin Mills Youth Centre** \$5K to support free recreation drop in programs at new multi-use court at Ridgeway. Local youth trained as leaders to shape the activities offered and oversee operations of the court.
Note: 2.75M capital investment through Peel Region, City of Mississauga, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Canadian Tire Jump Start, West Rotary Club
- **Mississauga Friendship Association** \$10K to support a home-stay student exchange program between Kariya Kita High School in Japan and Stephen Lewis High School in Mississauga to share culture, sports and friendship.
- **Cruisers Sports for the Physically Disabled** \$10K to develop marketing strategy to increase participation of Mississauga youth with physical disabilities by 50% in sport and recreation activities by 2017. Note: City of Mississauga purchased a fleet of sport chairs and sledges to make participation more readily available at all community centers'.
- **The Dam** \$10K support drop in sports basketball, soccer, volleyball, football, table tennis and fitness with qualified staff and volunteers. Youth

appreciate the drop in structure of the sports without the pressure to commit to daily/weekly participation.

- ***New* Neighborhood Action Grant** \$100K will support up to 19 resident-driven initiatives that can help advance the City's vision that we will have more people connected more often through programs and services that reflect our community's needs.

Active Assist- \$275 per person in low income category. This year 12,583 youth 13-19 accessed registered recreation/memberships valued at over 1M. Active Assist experienced increase in participation from 10,000 to 12,500.

Jerry Love Children's Fund \$84K+ annual fundraising gives access for youth who do not qualify for other subsidies to participate in City recreation/culture programs/ free supervised playgrounds. 30-45 teen recipients in 2016 which is 10-15% of overall.

United Way of Peel \$7.2M supports network of 54 human service agencies and 89 programs whose goal to reduce and prevent poverty so that kids can be all that they can be through investment. Mississauga youth service recipients include Malton and Dixie Neighborhood Services, Erin Mills Youth Centre, Peel Children/Youth Initiative, East Mississauga Health Services, Nexus Youth Centre, Our Place Peel, Punjabi Health Centre, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Peel Boys/Girls Club of Peel, Associated Youth Services of Peel, Mississauga YMCA and Safe City to name a few.

- **United Way Youth in Action Grants** \$15K for 8 youth-led initiatives that focus on addressing community issues in Peel Region. 6 out of the 8 YOF recipients in 2015 were Mississauga based youth groups. Girls Empowerment Movement, Ink Movement, Aspiring Youth, Cipher, Post-Secondary 101 and Mississauga Youth Film Festival

Ontario Trillium Foundation \$100M in Ontario to over 942 grants for the Human/Social services, Sport/Recreation, Arts/Culture/Environment. 14 Mississauga youth serving agencies awarded 2.3M in 2014 including Streetsville Figure Skating Club, Youth Troopers for Global Awareness, Boys and Girls Club, Dixie Bloor Drop in Centre, Unity Charity's Hub.

City of Mississauga District CD Funds- \$50k annually for community based initiatives for recreation such as Evolve Skateboard series that visited 6 sites and hosted competitions, prizes, music.

Ontario Summer Games 13-18 years old: \$1.6M operating budget with \$522K contribution from municipal for Mississauga to host the games in August 2016, 3,500 participants.

Mississauga Hockey League Play- More Program since 2013 a total of 59 teens received financial assistance through this program allowing them to participate in hockey

Tim Hortons Free Holiday Skate and Swim sponsors rent and staff cost at city wide community centers on New Year's Eve/ Day attracts 2,000 teens

Festivals support for youth initiatives - i.e. Southside Blues and Jazz Festival donated over \$45 000 to high school music programs within the community.

Schools, Church and Cultural Centers donate space, equipment and staff resources to support youth play and/or provide low cost rental rates.

Service Clubs - 45 active service clubs in Mississauga help fund various youth play initiatives.

Criteria #8

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

We discovered over 150 training opportunities that contribute to positive youth development through sports and recreation, youth advocacy groups/councils, community groups, social enterprises, City, elected officials and independents. It was encouraging to learn that Mississauga cares and has such an interesting variety of training opportunities for volunteers and staff that work with teens.

City of Mississauga is currently in the process of becoming fully accredited in High Five and have trained hundreds of full time and part time staff including staff who work with the older teens because the City believes the same competencies apply. High Five is a requirement for employment in recreation/culture and Active Assist and partnerships with CAS ensure access for youth with financial barriers.

“I have been working with PEEL CAS over the last 3 years. We offer 3 free spots in each of our LIT classes for Children in Care which also included PHCD. By offering these children in care free registration into our Leader in Training course we are absolutely supporting the community with positive youth development. The participants learn valuable tools (Interview skills, how to apply for a job, programming skills, leadership skills, behavior management, bullying awareness etc.)” – Casey Oliveira, Standards and Training Consultant, City of Mississauga

Leader in Training (LIT) offered by recreation department, over 624 youth 14-17 years old complete the training since 2012 and 66 youth were from Peel Children's Aid. LIT teaches leadership skills to prepare young people for employment as play leaders. Classroom work is followed by one week of full day experiential learning on site at various summer or March break camps. LIT 2 takes the youth into a junior leadership role where they execute 9 program activities, 9 self-evaluations and the leader must evaluate each game using the appropriate evaluation form.

Alessandra Santaguida – “As the LIT coordinator, Alessandra carefully selects team builders and icebreakers that help facilitate friendships for participants in the LIT program. She created and executed the most amazing LIT High Five Recognition program with nominations and awards for both LIT's and Leaders to be recognized when executing their programming and demonstrating the HIGH FIVE® Principles. She motivates

LIT's to reach new limits of leadership and encourages them to push through any challenges. "

Mississauga Youth Action Committee (MYAC) monthly Connects that attract 65+ teens to engage with invited guest mentors, industry leaders and elected officials to inspire positive change, develop competencies such as budgeting, volunteer opportunities, social justice initiatives, physical literacy engaging youth from different backgrounds and schools as engaged citizens.

Peel Youth Leaders Conference third year of engaging young leaders in the community. In 2015, 60 youth that took part in a conference tailored to Mental Health (see attached video #8 PCYI Peel Youth Leaders Conference Video).

Unity Charity Leadership Retreat full weekend training in 2014 for 10 hand selected youth from high risk backgrounds. Unique training develops artist/educator/mentor leaders who attract hard to reach youth to their youth programs, In this instance leaders created The Hub free drop-in program for teens using dance, EMCEE, graffiti art, spoken word, D.J,beat boxing to develop the 5 C's of positive youth development, 2 Mississauga locations operate weekly, year round, attracting 20-30 teens each week creating consistent mentorship, volunteer and employment opportunities. Peer leader Marcel DaCosta presented this model at MBA symposium in 2012.

Studio 89 a non-profit, social enterprise originated by two grade 9 students in 2014 who have engaged over 1360 teens in workshops, seminars and events in their fair trade café Studio 89 hosting an astonishing 29,000 community members to the space, employed 14 youth and over 215 youth volunteer placements.

Mayor Bonnie Crombie and Council

Mayor's Youth Employment Expo, 1,300 youth attended, 70 businesses offered a variety of employment opportunities. Mayor's Youth Speaker Series annual event , over 200 youth attended in 2016 developing confidence and character through inspirational award winning journalist, Amanda Lang, Member of Parliament for Mississauga-Malton and Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Hon. Navdeep Bains.

Re:Action4Inclusion a full weekend training for youth leaders developing competency, caring, confidence, connection and character to work with all populations. 2 City youth staff was trained in 2015 and highly recommend the

training, budget is being sought to send more youth engagement staff to the 2017 training.

ONfernce 4 City youth engagement staff attended in 2016, they did not recommend it.

Leader at Play (LAP) trains former youth participants in Sauga At Play to become volunteer leaders who will eventually qualify for employment. LAP is free, includes First Aid Certification, High Five, Inclusion, Respectful Workplace and experiential placements in the field. Delivered twice a year 60-80 youth complete the training.

Parks and Recreation Ontario City sends 20 recreation staff each year.

CRITERIA #9

THE COMMUNITY SUPPORTS YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Mississauga has numerous systems in place to connect youth to volunteer opportunities. Many of these systems were created as a result of the 40 hour volunteer requirement in schools however there systems also serve youth who volunteer for work experience, co-op placements or experiential learning, fun, altruistic and social reasons. Most systems have the ability to screen the reasons why the youth are volunteering, their interests and their skill set in order to match the youth with volunteering that is meaningful. Our research showed that employers in Mississauga understand the value of experiential learning to create a stronger work force and capable young residents.

Municipal Structures:

- Leader in Training (LIT) program provides training and experiential learning for youth 100% participants between 14-19 yrs. old. 65-75% of our total(1,243 volunteer base in recreation is between 14-19 yrs.old).
- Volunteer web page
<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/volunteer>
- Youth web page
<http://www.mississauga.ca/portal/residents/youth#involve>
- Front line staff scout volunteer talent/potential in their programs
- Dedicated Volunteer coordinator staff in Recreation, Libraries, Living Arts
- Human Resources does a Career Bridge Internship for approximately 8 students each year in various city departments
- Human Resources partners with Region of Peel Summer Job Challenge placing 7-10 youth at risk in City divisions on paid co-op to gain experiential learning and employment
- Human Resources matches college/university paid co-op students to different departments. 79 students were placed in 2015 in 6 different departments.
- Community Development & Volunteer Coordinator partner with Community Living, Peel Board, Children's Aid, Volunteer Inclusion Program to match participants with support volunteers so they can go in recreation programs
- Summer Work Experience Program matches teens with intellectual disabilities with paid and unpaid placements in parks programs/community centres <http://www.clmiss.ca/programs-and-services/child-and-youth-programs/summer-work-experience-program/>
- Aquatics Advanced Leadership Courses (Lifesaving Society: Assistant

Instructors, Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross, NLS, etc.) provide aquatic based leadership opportunities.

- Customer Service staff are trained to receive and support youth volunteers
- Over 206 community groups are affiliated with the City and receive support and services for their volunteers through Volunteer MBC's workshops , Sports workshops, facility space, reduced rental rates, insurance etc. which help to create stronger organizations that have the capacity to continue as a volunteer operated organization

Volunteering Peel

- Not for profit volunteer matching service youth led by BOD high school students; 11 out of 13 are Mississauga residents and they come from 5 different high schools in Mississauga
<http://volunteeringpeel.org/>

Volunteer MBC

- Regional volunteer service that youth 13 yrs. and up can access for career development, experiential learning, etc.
<http://www.volunteermbc.org/youth-volunteering>

Faith Groups

- Most faith groups support volunteerism/leadership development to grow socially in their community and contribute to their community through volunteering for example; Hindu Heritage Centre and the Meadowvale Islamic Centre (MIC) during Ramadan and Zil-Hij educate and hold events to create awareness of the significance of the two Eid's celebrated by all Muslims and encourage high school student to volunteer earning rewards, learning and staying active with their religious and social community.

Sport Groups

- Offer a tremendous variety of volunteer/leadership opportunities from assistant coaching, fundraising, referee/scorekeeper, giving back to the community and holiday food drives; by engaging youth early in volunteerism with the sport organization they create future adult volunteer leaders in the organization.

Not For Profit Groups

- Girls Guides, Scouts, Air Cadets, YMCA, Newcomer Center of Peel, Unity Charity are just some of the over 200 youth serving agencies in Mississauga that use volunteerism/leadership as a means to socially engage youth and the competencies of positive youth development.
- YMCA Future Leaders Program 14-16 yr. olds developing skills in resume writing, job skills, cooking, First Aid, group facilitation and

leadership. Crusaders 15-18 yr. olds provides advanced first aid and emphasis on individual leadership qualities plus doing community service. Youth Leadership Program 15-17 yr. olds match youth with educators and professionals through weekly community networking activities, active volunteerism, medical first aid responder certification, leadership, life skills, fellowship and learning.

Schools

- Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program is a school work program that opens door for grade 11-12 students to work in co-op apprenticeship placements
- Peel school board conveniently posts organizations looking for volunteers
<http://www.peelschools.org/students/40hours/volunteerjobboard/Pages/default.aspx> whether you need hours or not, this board is provides easy access

Peel Police

- Youth in Policing program hires summer students (14-17 years) to become familiar with rules, roles & responsibilities of policing. Funded by Ontario's Ministry of Child and Youth Services and concludes with a formal presentation for participants.

CRITERIA #10

THE COMMUNITY HAS EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT YOUTH PLAY

Mississauga has many valuable partnerships between different levels of government, community groups and corporations that serve teens; from land use agreements, shared facility and space agreements, maintenance agreements, multi-year funding agreements, collaborative grants, programming agreements that all lend themselves to more opportunities for affordable, inclusive play by more teens from all backgrounds.

The City's Youth Plan has 13 recommendations specific to partnerships that are being implemented based on the key principle that Youth friendly communities are built on respectful youth and adult partnerships. In addition the City's Our Future strategic plan is built on pillars that relate to connecting people, groups and services and ensuring that youth feel they Belong.

- Funding from various sources other than municipal such as United Way, Ontario Trillium, Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Ministry of Citizen and Immigration are ways that **governments partner with not for profits** to fund play opportunities on a large scale such as Pan Am Games and Inclusion or smaller grass roots play such as The Hub after school drop in and Ridgeway multi-use court project. **Local government departments work with one another** in partnership to ensure youth have convenient, affordable transportation to get to play, parks, community centres, libraries, events and programs through recreation, culture, parks beautification, employment, leadership on councils. **Municipal and not for profits partner** to provide hubs of mixed services for youth in the same building such as Burnhamthorpe Library/Dixie Bloor Neighborhood Services, Malton community centre/library/Malton Neighborhood Services, Central library/Nexus Youth Centre. **School Boards partner with municipal** to combine buildings that contain a high school, community centre, pool, library and sport fields which provide convenient access for students during the day and community after school and on weekends sharing resources that all tax payers have a stake in. There are maintenance agreements whereby the school sport fields are built and maintained by municipal allowing student's access to quality play facilities during the day and community access after school and on weekends. Youth sport

groups have priority booking privileges and reduced rates. School Boards partner with municipal and community groups allowing reduced rentals for youth programming, and in many instances free use for after school programs, lunch programs or fitness. Aquatic staff provides emergency response training to teachers, coaches and volunteers responsible for groups that use the pool such as; Mississauga Swim Club, Synchronized Swimming Club, Scuba Diving Club and large user groups such as the Federation of Muslim women.

Land use agreements such as Vic Johnston Arena is a not for profit arena that is on City owned land, this partnership allows grass roots, affordable hockey programming and other ice sports. **Community centres and libraries** partner extensively with local business, not for profits, services clubs to deliver free teen programs/events, last year over 60 partnerships just at the centres and libraries alone reached over 100,000 visits by youth. Almost all of the 250 not for profit sport organizations in Mississauga are affiliated partners with the municipality who deliver teen play on City owned fields, arenas, pools and buildings at special youth rates, receive liability insurance coverage which is critical for not for profit groups these days. **Higher caliber teen play** is evident through partnerships with places like Hershey Centre, for example: Sigma FC soccer academy national level athletes hoping to play professionally, Mississauga Steelheads hockey produce national and eventually professional hockey players and Mississauga 905 Raptors a farm team for the NBA Raptors to draw from. Crusaders and Ontario Wheelchair basketball call Hershey their home.

Walmart and Pepsi have donated funding towards the City's Youth Plan for the last 10 years to support free after school drop in unstructured gym activities that are appealing to teens who need to blow off steam, do not want to be structured and just want to hang out where they can go consistently and where there are caring, young adults who mentor and are engaging. At Play targets 10-18 yrs. Old but no youth is ever turned away. In the last 3 years the program has expanded to all 11 community centres, 4 satellite locations and in most cases operate 5 days a week with over 45,000 visits yearly.

Formal partnership agreements for instructional sports programs, camps and specialty workshops between City and not for profit organizations ensures youth have choice and a diverse menu of play opportunities for example: Tennis Everyone, Don Rowing Club, Mississauga Canoe Club, Mississauga Cycling Committee.

Litter Bug Campaign is initiated by Parks and ties into a Peel wide 20 Minute Clean Up with schools across Mississauga to create awareness and encourage reduction of litter in our community. Ecosource, Peel Environmental Youth Alliance and Peel Board work together to run events and recognition for waste reduction as well as hosting an annual Environmental Youth-Adult Partnership Program Symposium to share environmental actions.

Peel Children and Youth Initiative is an organization that is a collaborative of Peel groups looking at reducing duplication of services, identifying gaps and advocating for new or needed services, for example in 2013 PCYI released its study on Recreation and After School Strategy which identified the need for service providers to have play opportunities in critical “after school” hours. At Play responded by increasing its locations and delivering after school drop ins for teens every day after school. Other organizations such as Boys&Girls Club, Nexus, Newcomer Centre and The Dam, Merge 180, Studio 89 all focus on these key hours as well. In Fall 2016 PCYI in collaborated with Nexus, The Dam, Our Place Peel and City to successfully apply for Ontario Trillium Fund to deliver Self-Regulation Training for key youth serving agencies in order to create champions and influencers in Mississauga and Peel to spread the Self-Regulation model and philosophy to become our culture and the way we interact and work with

CRITERIA #11

YOUTH ACTIVISM AND ADVOCACY FOR PLAY IS NURTURED

Much has changed in the last 5 years in part due to social media and in part as a result of strategies such as the City's Youth Plan which is now referred to as a Youth Movement and recognition by all levels of government that engaged youth make better cities and towns in which we live, work and play. Youth in Mississauga readily access their elected officials, media, school officials thanks to email, twitter, Facebook. Mississauga's Mayor and Council have publicly committed to meeting youth where they are at rather than expecting youth to come to them at Civic Centre. Councilors and Mayor regularly pop by community centres talking to youth who are hanging out in the lobby or in the after school drop in program or at the youth advisory group meetings, Councilors are very supportive at youth events such as Rebel Youth Week where they BBQ, lend their popcorn machines, make speeches, present awards. Mississauga Youth Action Committee regularly invite Mayor, Councilors or other adult leaders and influencers to their monthly Connect gatherings where students have access to these leaders on topics such as voting, how the budget works, input MiWay transit, park developments. Mayor, councilors and community leaders seem very open and genuinely interested in what the youth have to say. The City has had a dedicated Youth Coordinator position for 5 years that has become well known to youth, community groups, elected officials and other departments which makes youth feel supported in their efforts and they know who to go to for guidance on any issue they may have. For example over 100 youth held a protest at one of Mississauga's largest skate parks with media present to rally for bike access to the park, The Youth coordinator met with them on site, arranged for a meeting with 13 of the youth and the recreation commissioner, came up with an agreed on pilot shared use agreement which since then became a permanent arrangement where bikes were allowed access on the park, signage was changed from skate board park to Multi use Ramp Park and has been problem free ever since.

Mississauga has many youth advisory committee's/ groups that have peers youth can seek out to address issues, find support and guidance, such as the Mississauga City Youth Councilors who are students who represent youth in their ward just as the adult City Councilors do for their residents. These youth councilors are known to the adult councilors and engage with them.

<http://mississauga.thecyc.ca/>

Each community centre and library has a youth advisory committee. In one instance youth in the Huron Park neighborhood were unsatisfied with a dilapidated basketball court in the park. Word got to the youth advisory committee at Huron Park community centre who then organized a petition, arranged a meeting with their local councilor to advocate for improvements. The councilor listened and agreed with their concerns and sourced a community fund to not only resurface the court but the youth were engaged in the design, color and park furniture selection for the court. When the court opened 2 years later the youth, Mayor, councilor and neighborhood youth had a celebration BBQ and pick up game. The City has an online Petition form now this shows that elected officials are open and receptive to advocacy.

<http://www7.mississauga.ca/documents/CityHall/2016/Petition%20Form.pdf>

Youth can take to twitter and various media to act on issues such as the Facebook petition in 2015 regarding the need for more outdoor exercise equipment in parks, this issue was put on the radar with parks department and thanks to Canada 150 grant 6 new outdoor exercise equipment stations will be installed in 2017.

Youth reporter Ryan Rocca who is 18 yrs. Old and writes monthly youth focused column for Mississauga News and reports on Rogers TV weekly on variety of topics. Ryan's YouTube videos show how supportive adults and media are.

<http://www.mississauga.com/blogs/6263834/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRwge-jhG5uLbA2tcLpSaVA>

Voice K is a Mississauga based magazine that develops youth journalists exposes them to many issues, local and world events. The web page has a variety of video interview by youth with celebrities like Michael Moore at TIFF, renowned authors like Margaret Atwood at Central Library, teachers during the 2015 strike even astronaut Chris Hatfield. Youth cartoonist make comment through their drawings, youth story writers can express their views through written word. <http://www.voicek.ca/> Voice K is an excellent example that fits into several youth friendly criteria however we felt that these youth through their journalism have created an effective means to advocate for youth play.

Youth in Action grants are awarded by United way's Young Leaders Council to youth who lead a project aimed at combating a social issue in the community. 6 out of 8 grant recipients were Mississauga based; Ink Movement who showcase written and visual work of youth exploring self-expression and social issues. Mississauga Youth Film Festival is a platform to showcase Mississauga youth film making talents, yWe Talk youth for youth

group who stimulate conversation/events/activities to encourage youth to take care of their mental health

<http://www.mississauga.com/blogs/post/6813776--youth-in-action-grants-prove-to-be-useful-for-another-year/>

CRITERIA #12

YOUTH FEEL COMFORTABLE IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY

Young people are valued in Mississauga and this has been evident through the interviews we did with over 150 community members and by charters and strategies that exist related to youth well-being. The Peel Youth Charter is a collaborative commitment by Mayor's, Region Chair, School directors, Police, United Way and Safe City that youth deserve, dignity and human rights as all members of the community. The first line of the charter states that we believe Peel youth have the right to: "Safe and supportive environments at home, in school, in workplaces and throughout the community. All of the key survey respondents indicated that they have some sort of code of conduct for example Girl Guides Code of Conduct affirms commitment to ensuring a fun, safe and respectful space for all. It reinforces what Guiding is all about- fairness, responsibility, accountability and treating each other with respect in all interactions, whether personal or electronic. All members must review and agree to the Code of Conduct.

Mississauga dedicates spaces and places to all youth including, but not limited to; diverse populations, cultural groups, all abilities, LGBTQ community, aboriginal youth, vulnerable youth, girls only and boys only and many more. All City employees both full time, part time and volunteers are trained on the Human Rights Code, Inclusion and Respectful Workplace which includes working with the public. Community groups in Mississauga are sensitive to the diverse population that exists in Mississauga and strive for harmony and understanding between each other. Groups such as BIPOC (Black Indigenous, People of Color) meet in and around Square One and community centres where accommodations are made for them. The schools both high school and post-secondary in Mississauga are open and sensitive to youth regardless of their ethnic or sexual orientation and ensure that the Human Rights Code is adhered and understood by their teachers and fellow students. Solel Synagogue and Unitarian Church both have LGBTQ groups and safe spaces for them to meet. Nexus Youth Centre is located in the public library and various rooms and spaces are made available for Guys Code where boys have a chance to talk openly in safe space, their weight room program is very relaxed where the kids do not have to wear gym attire and the trainer is trusted and relates well to youth with mental health issues.

To Mississauga's commitment to being a Youth Friendly both the Mississauga recreation and Peel Board of Education display the Youth

Friendly logo prominently in the entry way of every community centre, arena and high school. Community centre lobbies have been transforming into lounge areas with games tables, comfy furniture, charging stations to encourage youth to hang out. Libraries all have youth chill zones with comfy furniture and youth reading materials, this has been tremendously popular with teens. The Hub arts/mentorship drop in ensures that healthy snacks are available and bikes can be brought indoors. MiWay busses have cell phone chargers to accommodate youth with devices; cell phone, lap tops, iPad's, tablets. Celebration Square is much like an outdoor community centre that teens enjoy because it is not programmed rather all amenities are unstructured, youth can kick a ball around, play basketball on the closed off street, skate board, ice skate to youth oriented music, splash around in the fountain, watch sports or celebrity news on the big screens, lay on the grass and do homework, chat with friends, grab something to eat from a vendor. Square One and Erin Mills Town Centre are very popular places because youth can hang out, sit on comfy furniture, food court, gaming areas, coffee shops. Movie theatres really encourage youth through their lobby spaces that have food, games and hang out space. Sheridan Mall has Merge 180 Youth Centre upstairs with the other retail stores, this demonstrate the mall managements openness to being youth friendly.



Businesses are very youth friendly, coffee shops allow youth to hang out, we found that the Second Cup downtown displays youth artwork, the Tim Horton's downtown allows vulnerable youth to rest if they wish, Raba in the downtown is very popular with youth because they have healthy, inexpensive sub sandwiches. Boston Pizza and a number of other restaurants host open mic nights which youth tell us are very popular. Boston pizza also has a Celebrity server night in partnership with CACD that supports positive youth development. Mississauga Civic Centre is not only used by Nexus but Mississauga Youth Action Committee has over 65 youth every month that take over various spaces in the building for their activities whether it be "fitness sampler night in the Great Hall" or guest speakers from businesses in the Hearing Room.

In addition, Mississauga hip hop artist John River explains when he started making music. Three places that represent the true meaning of "community" for him in Mississauga: his neighborhood The Woodlands, Lazar Deli & Bakery and Majestic Barber & Salon. The 21-year-old describes his tight-knit neighborhood as "beautiful and fantastic." It's also home to many immigrant families. "The further I go in life and the more places I go, I realize how much of my success is attributed to the things I really learned right here," River said.



CRITERIA #13

YOUTH CAN GET TO THE PLAY PROGRAMS THAT ARE OFFERED

Mississauga has the 3rd largest municipal transit system in Ontario with 468 fully accessible buses outfitted with bike racks that are cleaned daily. MiWay operates 85 routes of which 7 are MiExpress, 64 MiLocal and 15 dedicated high school routes. There are over 3,644 MiWay bus stops, 981 solar lit bus shelters and over 52 million customer boardings per year. Weekday passenger boardings increased 15% in 2015. MiWay service growth increased 28,000 hours in 2016. During peak periods 369 buses are on street. Every community centre and most libraries have bus stops near the entrance and terminals are located conveniently in mall locations. Student fares have been frozen since 2011 recognizing youth have limited income and transit is important way means for youth to get around their city. Residents who are low income regardless of age can ride MiWay for 50% off the monthly pass rate.

Freedom Pass was introduced in 2014 offering 12-14 yr olds free rides and public swims every July and August with the goal of developing confidence, trust and independence in this age group to get where they want to go, create future transit customers as they transition to high school and get youth active. In 2016 over 6,000 youth had Freedom Passes, 80% were 13-14yrs old, over 16,500 swims were scanned using the Freedom Pass at City operated indoor/outdoor pools. Youth feedback indicates that they enjoy the freedom and independence of transit and prefer swimming over sitting at home playing video games. Youth also said they used their pass to get to libraries, hang out with friends and go to the mall.

MiWay launched new mobile site with alerts and trip planner and in future will show real-time schedules. Higher order transit along the Hwy 403 is almost complete with 3 stations making critical east/west connections for GO Bus and MiWay. In future Dundas will also have high order east/west transit. Funding is approved and construction will commence in 2017 for light rail transit on Hurontario Street between Lakeshore Road and Brampton allowing quicker, easier movement for our youth population. 12% of the population living along the Hurontario corridor mostly in condominium apartments are 13-19 yrs old according to 2011 Census. Several high schools along the Hurontario corridor will be well served by the LRT such as: Port Credit SS, TL Kennedy SS, Father Michael Goetz SS, Britannia Adult Learning Centre, St Francis of Xavier SS. Social services along Hurontario will also be more accessible with the LRT such as The

Dam, Newcomer Centre of Peel, PCYI, Centre For Education and Training, YMCA employment services, Peel Childrens Centre

Active Transportation

- A 10 year master plan for bike lane infrastructure is approved and funded; over 50% is built so far (over 229 km) creating an integrated system of bike lanes, separated bike lanes and multi-use paths that connect to amenities, schools, shopping, downtown.
- All current bike lanes and multi-use paths are have way finding signs and new LED lighting which is brighter and more concentrated on the surface you are cycling or walking on.
- Bikes can be transported on all buses and Go Trains when there is room

MiWay Transit Ambassador

- 22 high schools have student MiWay Ambassadors who promote and educate their peers about how to ride transit
- Incentives for ambassadors are chances to win free ridership for a year, volunteer hours , points towards Ecoschools certification
- Ambassadors received training to gain leadership skills, project management skills, team building skills and communication skills.
- 14 post- secondary students are employed to do outreach to the high schools and youth in the communities, including out reach at over 60 events in 2016

University of Toronto Mississauga

- U-Pass is included in the UTM tuition allowing students to travel free on MiWay with their student ID
- UTM also has a bike share program that is available for free and generous bike rack parking, pedestrian crossings and speed bumps to ensure safety on campus for active transportation

Sheridan College

- free shuttle for students between Oakville, Skilled Trades College, Mississauga and Brampton campus

Creative support

- Most not for profit youth serving agencies provide bus tickets for their youth such as The Dam, Associated Youth Services of Peel , Nexus, BIPOC, Boys&Girls Club
- Merge 180 and The Dam are conveniently located in malls that are walking distance from the high schools.
- City of Mississauga Youth Plan pays for rental of a school bus once a week to bring youth from Newcomer Centre of Peel over to

Mississauga Valley Community Centres free Sauga At Play drop in basketball.

- MiWay is free for special events such as New Year's Eve which has high number of youth riders, Carrasauga pass holders, Pan Am and Para pan Games ticket holders, Mississauga Marathon participants
- Support workers travel free on MiWay, this may include a sibling who is accompanying a sister/brother who has a disability
- Peel Alternative Schools provide transportation or bus tickets for students to attend experiential learning opportunities
- City of Mississauga full and part time staff are eligible for 50% discount on the monthly MiWay pass, more than 800 employee's are ages 14-19)
- Some agencies have their own vans such as Peel Youth Village, Erin Oak, St Marcellenus SS, St Martin SS, St Francis of Xavier and St Aloysius Gonzaga have their own team bus
- Auto Share has a number of vehicles throughout the City including 2 in the downtown core

Uber is a fast, convenient choice popular with young people use in Mississauga.

CRITERIA #14

SCHOOLS SUPPORT THE YOUTH FRIENDLY APPROACH

Schools play a vital role in a youth's life as this is where most of their day is spent. Schools provide a safe and supportive environment and the Peel Youth Charter outlines, "youth have access to relevant education and training and, the availability of recreational and leisure activities in the form of play, creative expression and skill development opportunities.

There are 35 high schools in Mississauga Peel, Dufferin Peel Catholic, French, Private and Alternative providing school options for youth 13-19 years old. Many of these schools are recognized among the top performing schools in Ontario that include 46 Specialist High Skills Major programs, 3 regional Arts programs, 1 regional Sports program, 2 International Baccalaureate programs, 1 pre-international business program, 2 regional Advanced Placement programs, Extended French and Career Path programs, and the only publically funded all girls secondary school in the region. The City has a number of shared facility agreements with high schools and post secondary schools in Mississauga that include major land agreements, contributions towards campus complexes, sport field shared use and maintenance agreements, combined high school, community centre, library building agreements, internal courier arrangements, fitness and physical education partnerships using City fitness leaders and school use of community centre fitness/gym facilities.

There are several free, after school drop in programs operated in the school by City's Sauga At Play program. Unity Charity a not for profit youth serving organization also offers its after school "share our spirit" program in several high schools with the latest location being Father Goetz SS. The artistic/educator/mentors of the Share our Spirit program tend to attract students who are vulnerable and not engaged in the main stream activities. Community use of schools is available at reasonable rates and some schools such as TL Kennedy SS have free lunch time gym programs available to Newcomer Centre of Peel youth as well as their own students. These shared agreements demonstrate that the schools, community groups and City recognize that they can be more effective by sharing the resources that the tax base supports. Mississauga has an ISNA high school that provides challenging academic programs in an Islamic environment in a state of the art facility located in Dixie neighborhood zoned for school use with certified teachers operating in full compliance with the Ontario

Ministry of Education. Peel Aboriginal Network also provides alternative education in partnership with the Peel Alternative School to assist youth in achieving their high school diploma and provide diverse, ethnically sensitive programming. Representatives from Boards sit on various community boards such as United Way, Peel Children and Youth Initiative which has brought important research forward such as Recreation After School Strategy.

Events, options of play, dedicated facilities, activism and community use of schools are all important to Mississauga schools and information is readily shared to students through many different channels that include: school websites, social media channels, newsletters, parent/teach nights, reader boards, student P.A announcements, student councils, clubs and assemblies. For example the we RISE together action plan to support black male students was shared on twitter @peel, web <http://peelschools.org/media/newsreleases/Pages/Article.aspx?articleid=1657> Schools support the youth friendly approach through various sports teams, science clubs, arts clubs, environmental clubs, youth rotary clubs, LGBTQ clubs, social justices clubs, gay-straight alliance and extracurricular activities.

Ms. Donaldson @LynxCoachMsD Got the opportunity to reconnect with my old volleyball teammate and high school coach today! #fullcircle #peel #rhssalum @PeelSchools



Events: Parent Engagement Evening: Next Generation Learning, Campion Community Christmas, St. Francis Xavier S.S. Spirit Awards Breakfast,

Nutrition 101 Family Engagement, Funny Money at d'Youville, Jump Rope for Heart, Terry Fox Run

Dedicated Facilities: Co-operative Education, Dual Credit Programs, Explore High Skills, Extended French, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, Regional Learning Choices Programs, Specialist High Skills Major Programs

Activism: Mississauga South Youth Faith Rally, The Model UN program is a hands-on learning experience the board runs that offers approximately 250 students a chance to be a diplomat for a day, The Development and Peace Annual Student Day is an annual conference.

CRITERIA #15

ADULTS CHAMPION THE CAUSE FOR YOUTH PLAY

Mississauga is fortunate to have many caring adults from an incredible variety of backgrounds and positions that recognize and advocate for youth play.

Sport

- Most youth sport in Mississauga is run by not for profit groups with caring, passionate volunteer adults many of whom played sports as a kid themselves growing up in Mississauga and now they coach, fundraise, administer, and develop skills and sport ethics of fair play. These adult mentors have helped shape youth into outstanding young adults and in many cases professional sport athletes such as Paul Coffey NHL who grew up in Malton and recently had the local arena named after him give back to minor sport. Mississauga Power Basketball athletes used to visit Sauga At Play after school and play basketball with the youth and hang out. Silken Laumen gold medalist rower and many other Olympic and National rowers/paddlers out of the Don Rowing or Mississauga Canoe Club have inspired and visited Mississauga youth, created campaigns related to mental health awareness and play in the park initiatives.

Elected Officials

- Local politicians have been youth champions over the years including former Mayor Hazel McCallion who started the first every Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee 34 years ago which is still going strong today as an affiliated group with Recreation division that has 2 staff liaisons who provide support, guidance, recognition and opportunities for youth to lead, volunteer, network with other youth, community groups, elected officials, media and private business such as their sponsor TD Bank. Mayor Bonnie Crombie is passionate about youth and hosted Youth Speakers series, Mayor's Youth Employment expo and regularly attends MYAC events, she is well known and likes through her Twitter account and she follows youth groups, agencies and individuals.

Media

- Local media such as Mississauga News, SNAP magazine, inSauga web news all regularly feature youth events, youth achievements, youth sport, promote events that appeal to teens. InSauga's CEO is a young father himself and has created a "cool" media presence that youth access; he also supports and promotes youth events, youth input with his top ten list and employees 20 youth journalists.

The City of Mississauga's communications department promotes all youth events, sports and happenings through its own social media channels and media releases.

Community Groups

- Mississauga has over 200 diverse youth serving agencies who are run by caring, passionate volunteer adults who provide advocate play often as a preventative measure for mental health , healing , stress relief and sometimes just for happiness. Newcomer Centre of Peel's youth worker Terrence Velox brings his newcomer youth to the local high school at lunch time for basketball and buses them over to Mississauga Valley CC on Fridays to join in the Sauga At Play free drop in basketball, volleyball and just to hang out. Citizens for the Advancement of Community Development high lights their youth at the AGM which is attended by judges, police, elected officials, city staff and other caring adults in the community. Youth entertain, youth make speeches, and youth cook at the AGM.

Service Clubs

- Boys and Girls Clubs, Girl Guides, Scouts, Rotary Clubs programs and youth events are popular venues with police, elected officials, celebrities, private business and are well promoted by local media

Former youth

- There are many examples of youth who grew up in Mississauga, participated in recreation, went to after school programs who are now adult champions in Mississauga "paying it forward" and who often mention a teacher, a coach, and a staff person who influenced them. Wali Shah a well-known poet often refers to his high school teacher who influenced a positive turn in his life. Marcelino "frost" DaCosta bboy dancer since a young age mentors youth through hip hop art/education/mentorship for 15 years now in Mississauga, most youth know "frost". Louroz Mecredes grew up in Mississauga and started Mississauga Youth Games a fun, noncompetitive after school program that culminated in a year end event attended by elected officials, media and school principals and teachers. Peter Talias a successful business man in Mississauga passionate about youth hosted a pre-All Star basketball event in Mississauga with Snoop Dog, Mark Cubin, Hazel McCallion, the Raptor DJ where high schools attended and youth from all over Mississauga.

Programs

- Sauga At Play is after school, hassle free drop in programming for teens led by a full array of Drop in Leaders at every community centre, some schools, civic centre and some outdoor spaces. Many leaders were once participants. Youth often come to the program

not because of the activity but rather the leader who is positive and caring.

- Most organizations have a youth advisory group such as HYPE(Huron Youth Programs and Events Committee), Peel Youth Round Table, Museums Youth Task Force, Limelight Youth Arts Committee, Peel Children and Youth Initiative Youth Committee who all have adult champions that guide, support their ideas, events, activities, promote a youth voice, mentor. All the local MP's have youth committee's now as a result of the youthful prime ministers formation of a national youth committee, the local MP's will champion their youth committees to flush out the concerns, changes youth express

Schools

- Schools teachers, principals are often mentioned by youth as people who influenced their lives or their success in a sport, art form, award, or academic achievement. Leslie Fountain visual arts teach is well known for showcasing her student's artwork in public settings and mural projects in parks.

CRITERIA #16

PLAY IS INCLUSIVE

City of Mississauga's Corporate Accessibility Policy and Procedure from June 2013 applies to all staff, volunteers and third party service providers to the public.

Policy Statement – Statement of Commitment

The City of Mississauga is committed to implementing, maintaining and enhancing accessibility with respect to employment and the use of all City goods, services, programs and facilities in a timely manner for all persons with disabilities in a manner that:

- Respects their dignity and independence
- Ensures reasonable efforts are made to provide an opportunity equal to that given to others, and
- Allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way to others, to the greatest extent possible

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, specifically Ontario Regulation 429/07, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Ontario Regulation 191/11, the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR), which establishes the accessibility standards pertaining to information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment (design of public spaces), as well as additional general requirements that the City must comply with:

Accessibility Coordinator steers a city wide Accessibility Committee and ensures compliance with the policy such as; accessible buildings, pools, transit, pedestrian crossing signals, parking, fitness equipment, libraries, public spaces and participates on Regional Diversity Round Table.

Inclusion Coordinator since 2012 has inclusion resource staff team who work with 513 camp registrants (5xmore than 2011) and Community Living Mississauga to provide 1:1 support for individuals with physical or developmental challenges in recreation programs.

- Community & Social Services grant of \$30,849.00 support inclusion staff team
- 12 inclusion staff supported 29 youth up to age 14 in summer 2016
- Inclusion training for all summer camp staff

- Inclusion resource team supported 52 individuals with intellectual disabilities who were still in school or transitioning out of school to register and attend recreation programs
- Trained 1230 full & part time staff in inclusion
- 3 outreach school fairs & promo to 1300 Community Living Mississauga clients
- Created 100 recreation plans for participants in camps and after school
- 27 CL clients being supported in recreation Fall 2016
- 23 inclusion staff supported 90 inclusive programs at 11 community centres and off sites serving 157 families
- \$47,100.00 purchased, 12 sport wheel chairs, 24 sledges, sitting volleyball net, goal ball, bocce ball/apparatus used 81 times in summer 2016 at various centres

Recreation therapeutic team since 2012 created Kid Fit; a new 2 year program in partnership with Trillium Hospital that targets youth 13-19 yr. old with BMI over 95% includes physical activity/education for 25 youth to date. Therapeutic also launched a "Snoezelen Multi-Sensory Environment" program at Malton warm water therapeutic pool benefiting on average 8 youth with autism and other conditions that can pre-register or drop in with their caregiver (14 yr.+) who attends free. All City operated fitness is available to 14 yrs. +, there are a variety of girls only yoga and fitness options plus fitness samplers for girls who are new to fitness.

Community Development Coordinator for Community Safety Model; collaboration of community partners, mental health services, shelters, housing, police, security, health, Region services pool resources and knowledge to support individuals in navigating and getting access to housing, food, medical, mental health services, domestic violence services and services for minors who are victims of sexual exploitation

Para Sport Mississauga hosted the 2015 Para Sport Games whose legacy resulted in an ongoing initiative to expose youth to para sport equipment at all City. Fall 2016 partnered with 8 high schools, Ontario Wheelchair, Para Sport, Hershey Centre to give 92 students chance to try sport chair basketball, sledge floor hockey, seated volleyball lead by para sport athletes. In May 2017 each high school will run their own para event building on the exposure of para sport to teens

Museums Mississauga forged series of education/learning projects with Peel Aboriginal Network for high school students to learn traditions/history/equity/diversity/inclusion.

Mississauga Library issued 2,500 cultural access passes to new Canadians.

Not For Profit Groups;

- **Mississauga Cruisers** sports and recreation for persons with disabilities
- **Mississauga Crusaders** hockey for youth with developmental disability
- **East Mississauga Health Centre** serves LGBTQ through events/programs/youth councils/advocacy
- **Queer/Trans/BIPOC Sauga** host informal meet ups, food, hanging out, build trust
- **TransActivate** drop in programs and safe space for transsexual, LGBTQ and other gender diverse
- **Work Readiness For Youth** coalition for youth (13-19yrs) with barriers to employment, not in school are eligible for program that teaches work ethics and daily skills to prep for paid work placement where the employer is reimbursed.
- **YMCA** Y-Knot Abilities Program for youth with disabilities and their sibling in pool, gym to develop confidence, independence and strength
- **Faith Groups** were found in Mississauga who welcome and embrace LGBTQ
- **DCPSB** has youth workers at every high school
- **Peel Board** conducted survey with recommendations for racialized black males
- **UTM/Sheridan** safe spaces and councilors, events, programs for LGBTQ2SA
- **Sport Organizations** offer opportunities for special needs participation in soccer, synchronized swimming, trampoline, fitness, hockey, basketball, and gymnastics.
- **New Immigrant Organizations** offer targeted youth programs that focus on integration, cultural conflicts with parents, homework, sports, and arts/dance.

PART C

Courting controversy: Push for public basketball courts runs up against misguided fears

This is the final part of a four-part series examining support programs and services for lower-income residents in Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon – the cities and towns of Peel Region more known for their affluent middle and upper classes than a growing population who live in poverty.



(Photos by Mark Blinch for The Globe and Mail)

Supporters see urban courts as safe spaces for youth to play – and grow. Opponents fear drugs and violence. Dakshana Bascaramurty reports on the standoff over basketball and community

Tristen Mason, all bent knees, dangling arms and furrowed brow, takes several decisive steps backwards as he guards an opponent who is dribbling up the court. The 19-year-old's gaze darts around, checking other players in his periphery. The intensity of his movements breaks for a moment – as does game play – when a woman in a salwar kameez obliviously, comically, pushes a stroller right through the middle of the court, her two young children, faces buried in snow cones, shuffling alongside.

Such are the perils of playing pick-up basketball on a “court” that is really just two portable nets set up for a community barbecue in the parking lot of a suburban plaza beside a bouncy castle and shaved ice stand.

On a recent scorching August day, this was one of the few places the basketball-crazed teens in the neighbourhood of Colonial Terrace in south Mississauga could play five-on-five, practice alley-oops and even throw down a handful of dunks on nets that were mercifully lower than NBA regulation height.

But by next summer, Mr. Mason and his crew should have a brand new court to call their own – one where the nets are actually planted into the ground – thanks to a \$225,000 grant from the MLSE Foundation.

It took local youth six years to get it. The reasons for the extended delay include a reported lack of available funds and an excess of bureaucratic red tape. The length of the process also highlighted the sometimes racial tensions that surround the sport and the role it plays in the community.

In the GTA, no public park facilities are more fraught than basketball courts – which, despite their popularity, are fewer in number than other recreational facilities. At a public meeting held to discuss the proposed Colonial Terrace basketball court before it was approved, many residents listed off the things they thought a court would attract: drugs, violence, disrespect of older people.



Tristen Mason fixes the chain mesh on a temporary rim.

“We know that the first thing that goes wrong in the court, people are going to be up in arms,” says Darcy MacCallum, executive director of the Erin Mills Youth Centre, who had advocated for the court.

“Any time this community has been in the news it’s been because of violence,” Mr. McCallum says. “It overshadows all the resilience and good things around here.”

At that meeting, advocates had to reassure residents there would be a fence around the court, it would be locked at certain hours, it would be supervised at all times. It was a hard-won battle, just for a court.

Black youth in Peel Region (composed of Mississauga, Brampton and Caledon) feel that recreational facilities in their communities don’t reflect their interests, according to a May report by United Way Peel. Some specifically noted that hockey rinks and baseball diamonds are plentiful, but basketball courts, the preference of many, are not. The ones that do exist sometimes suffer from the city’s neglect. As a result, some kids use hard-

earned cash from part-time jobs to play basketball at the private gyms nearby. Others will bike or take a bus to shoot hoops at public courts across town, where playing every weeknight could mean \$30 each week in transit fare.

“Programming, for the most part, does not take into consideration the context and the lived experiences of black youth and black families in the region,” says Sharon Douglas, the director of community investment at United Way Peel.

From Mississauga to Brampton, Etobicoke to North York, opponents have decried courts as magnets for drug dealers and violence. Community organizers and non-profits, meanwhile, insist courts have the opposite effect on neighbourhoods: free courts provide a space for black youth to safely gather, United Way Peel’s president Shelley White says.

Mr. Mason, the son of Grenadian immigrants, interprets opposition to the court as veiled racism.

“Some people saying that building a basketball court is just gonna bring drug dealers and all that? That’s just people who don’t like us,” he says. He says he’s been hassled by police many times before and made to feel unwelcome by neighbours when hanging out with friends.

“I’ll give one of my friends a high five – they think I’m selling drugs,” he says.

While a group of white teens gathering at a park or in a mall are “hanging out,” if they’re black, they are often seen as “loitering,” Ms. White says.

At a public court in Mississauga that 16-year-old Shayla Parkinson plays at, unprovoked and unwarranted visits by police became a regular occurrence.

“When they first had the net out, and people started playing later into the night, [cops] would drive by and be asking questions,” she says.

Peel Regional Police did not make the force’s chief or deputy chiefs available for an interview. A spokesperson said the force does not have data on policing basketball courts.



To some, the patrolling of courts seems necessary. Opponents point to the gun violence that has sprung up around them in the past decade: between 2008 and 2010, at least four serious shootings happened on basketball courts in the GTA, three of them fatal.

One occurred near Dixon and Islington, a neighbourhood made infamous in 2013 after police conducted a major drugs and weapons raid of six towers – the culmination of a year-long investigation called Project Traveller, which involved the video of former Toronto mayor Rob Ford allegedly smoking crack.

What has happened to the Dixon basketball court suggests that it may not be the sport or the players that are the problem, but rather public spaces that aren't maintained.

A decade before the Project Traveller raids, that same stretch of Dixon was in the papers for another reason: former Toronto Raptors legend Vince Carter, perhaps the most beloved athlete in the city at the time, donated \$130,000 through his foundation to open a public basketball court. At the time, The Globe and Mail described it as the “Rolls-Royce’ of outdoor

basketball courts” and more than 1,000 residents showed up for its unveiling.

Community organizer Munira Abukar says when she and her brother would attend Sunday morning Islamic classes in the towers a decade ago, she’d go home right after, but her brother wouldn’t return until late in the afternoon. Like dozens of other youth in the area, he was content waiting hours for a chance to play a pick-up game on the famous neighbourhood court.

These days, the backboards are rusted. One rim has no net; the other is torn-up and ratty: like a once-voluminous coif thinned to a comb-over. Empty water bottles, McDonald’s cups and even an old 3.8-litre bleach container are scattered over the grass around the court. For a stretch, even the rims were taken down, effectively rendering the city-owned court useless.

Some parents are leery of sending their kids to the court at night, since some of the lights installed there often don’t work and its location, right on Dixon, makes it “perfect for a drive-by.” When the nets are cut down or rims go missing, youth also avoid the court. Ms. Abukar can remember at least two shootings that have happened here.





In 1982, George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson popularized the “broken windows theory” in the *Atlantic Monthly*, arguing that swift repairs to

broken windows or cleaning up litter before it accumulated were necessary to prevent damage from escalating and eventually turning a neighbourhood into a hotbed for delinquency.

“There’s so many small things that if management took care to, if the city took care to, it would make the space really different,” Ms. Abukar says. All of the city’s 133 outdoor courts are maintained and cleaned on a weekly basis, according to the parks department, but Ms. Abukar believes the Dixon one is far more neglected than its downtown counterparts.

Richard Ubbens, the director of parks for the City of Toronto, said maintenance priorities are dictated by use.

“I’d rather fix a light on a tennis court that’s in use every day than send a staff person to hang a backboard when I know that there’s a small group that’s there every other week,” he said.

This underscores the need for well-maintained courts. When they’re in good shape, they attract exactly what they’re supposed to: basketball. Northeast of Etobicoke, in Humberlea, was a court that received even less love than the Dixon one. In 2008, local Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti famously removed the nets, claiming the use of the court had transitioned from basketball to drug dealing.

“We don’t welcome the concept, at all, of gang bangers ... selling drugs on outdoor basketball courts,” he said in a recent interview.

Loitering at night was a problem on the court in Strathburn Park, too, he explained, and there was, “a lot of yelling, a lot of screaming, a lot of fights, a lot of guns.”

Mr. Mammoliti said he was told by police in 31 Division about the crime happening on the courts. Following public consultation, the courts were eventually removed and replaced with ball hockey facilities. Crime has dropped dramatically both in the park and across his ward since then, he says.

Constable Victor Kwong, a spokesperson for the Toronto Police Service, said in an e-mail, “I would not be able to verify that. Corporately, that is not a stat we keep.”



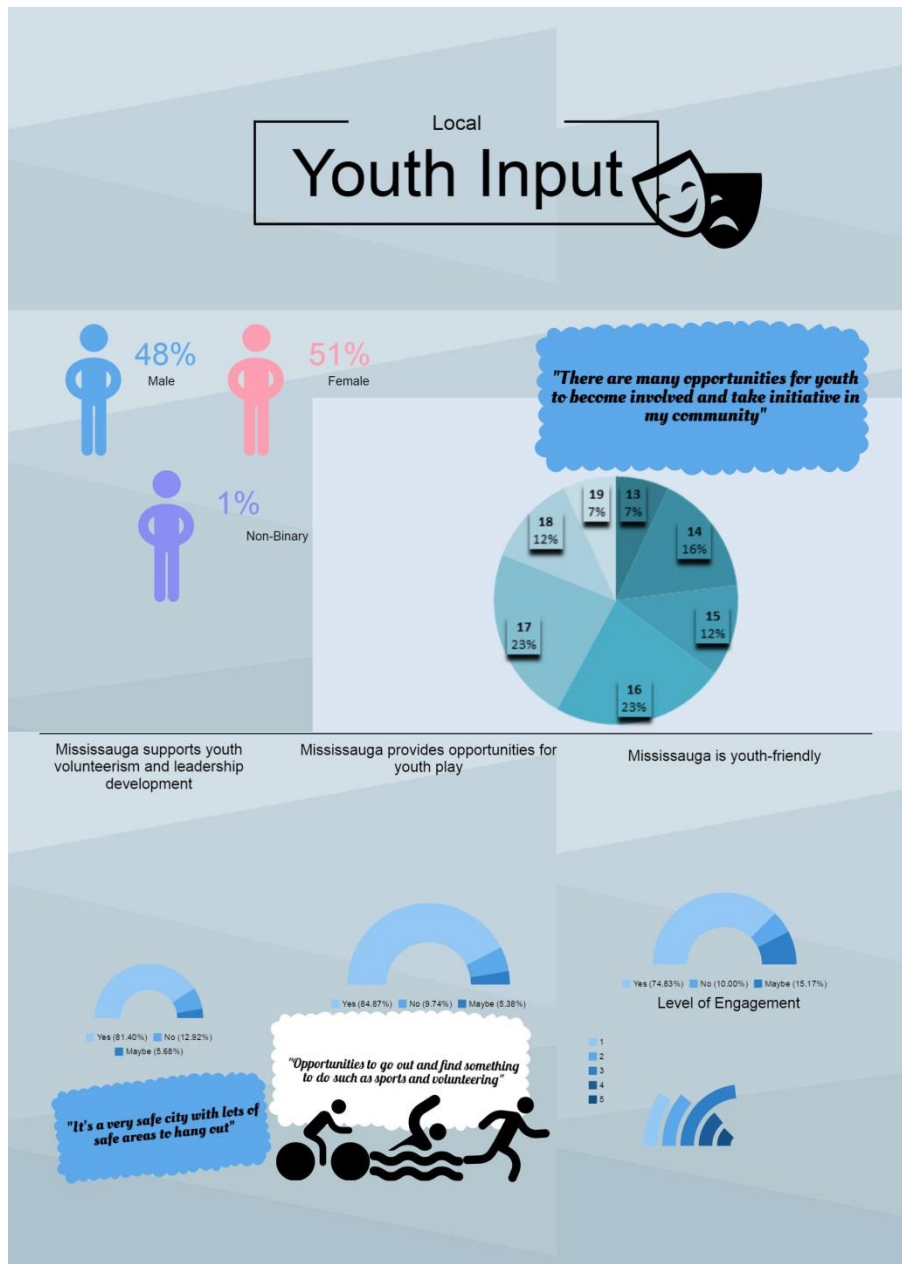
Tristen Mason goes for the dunk.

In her community, Ms. Abukar says basketball serves a greater purpose than pure leisure. “There’s actually a real psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical benefit of playing basketball together with your friends. It saves a lot of young lives,” she says.

Back in Mississauga, Mr. Mason, who has been playing ball since Grade 1, says his neighbourhood has its share of roughness – there was a stabbing by the townhouses in June; three years earlier, a double shooting – but he doesn’t expect that a new court will make those occurrences more common. If anything, it may help to calm tempers, he says.

“People can have problems, but if you get basketball involved, it’s like, whatever problem you have outside, it gets dropped when we’re on the court,” he says, glancing over at the temporary nets where the group he just played with is practising their free throws and layups. “Everyone’s gonna leave their drama at home.”

PART D



Demographics

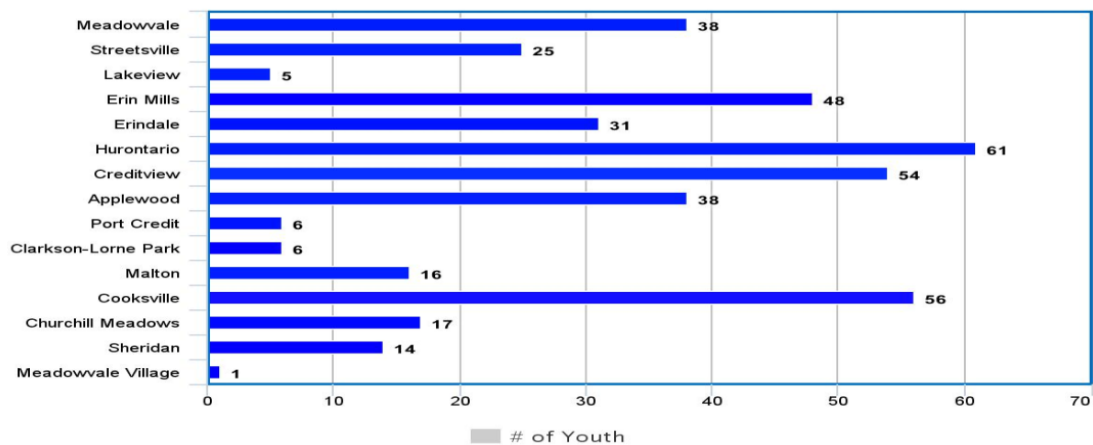
Local youth input was gathered primarily through a survey that was accessible to youth in an online format as well as through focus groups and quick interviews. The purpose of the survey was to engage youth to reflect as to why they feel Mississauga is youth friendly. The survey was able to analyze and categorize responses in regards to gender, age, and neighborhood location. The key question was the level of engagement youth felt they were engaged in Mississauga and to later analyze and infer if level of engagement related to gender, age, and/or neighborhood location.

Referring to the above infographic, 416 youth were surveyed. These youth participated in the survey by either filling out the survey online, coming out to a focus group or agreeing to participate in quick interviews when approached at schools, community centers, parks, and local business and youth events. Of the 416 youth, 201 people identified themselves as male, 214 people identified themselves as female and 1 person identified themselves as non-binary. 32 responses were recorded through an online survey and 384 responses were recorded face-to-face. The breakdown of age category is as follows:

- Age 13: 29 youth
- Age 14: 67 youth
- Age 15: 51 youth
- Age 16: 97 youth
- Age 17: 94 youth
- Age 18: 51 youth
- Age 19: 30 youth

Area of Residence

Mississauga is a diverse and spacious city, being the sixth largest city in Canada. A key importance in capturing survey results was to showcase the diversity of neighborhoods throughout the city and reflect if neighborhood location impacts as to why youth feel Mississauga is youth-friendly. Overall, most youth did refer to their specific community when providing answers for this question. Below is a chart describing the neighborhoods youth participated in the survey came from.



Survey Locations

Survey results were gathered by going to both public areas and private businesses across the city. Below is a breakdown of all places visited to capture survey results from youth.

Retail Strips	# of Youth
Meadowvale Town Centre	25
Sandalwood Square- McDonald's	22
Streetsville	18
Square One	12
Fieldgate Plaza	10
Erin Mills Town Centre	10
Westdale Mall	8
South Common Mall	6
Applewood Hills Plaza- Tim Horton's	6
Applewood Village	6
Dixie Outlet Mall	3
Entertainment Centres	
Cineplex	5
Youth Centres and Events	
The Hub	18
Mayor's Employment Youth Expo	14
The Mississauga Youth Action Committee	12
Newcomer Centre of Peel	11
Impact Tomorrow Conference	10
180 Merge	6
Erin Mills Youth Centre	5
Sauga Block Party	3
Nexus Youth Services	3
YMCA	2

School	#of Youth
St. Marcellinus Catholic Secondary School	12
Port Credit Secondary School	8
University of Toronto Mississauga	8
The Woodlands Secondary School	5
West Credit Secondary School	5
St. Joseph Secondary School	4
Phillip Pocock Catholic Secondary School	4
St. Joseph Secondary School	4
St. Martin Catholic Secondary School	3
Cawthra Park Secondary School	2
Clarkson Secondary School	2
Rick Hansen Secondary School	2
Father Michael Gaetz Catholic Secondary School	5
Community Centres	
Malton Community Centre	18
Mississauga Valley Community Centre	18
Churchill Meadows Library	13
Courtneypark Library	11
Erin Meadows Community Centre	11
Frank McKechnie Community Centre	8
Huron Park Community Centre	7
Carmen Corbassan Community Centre	7
Burnhamthorpe Community Centre	6
Clarkson Community Centre	5
Online Surveys	
Online Responses	32

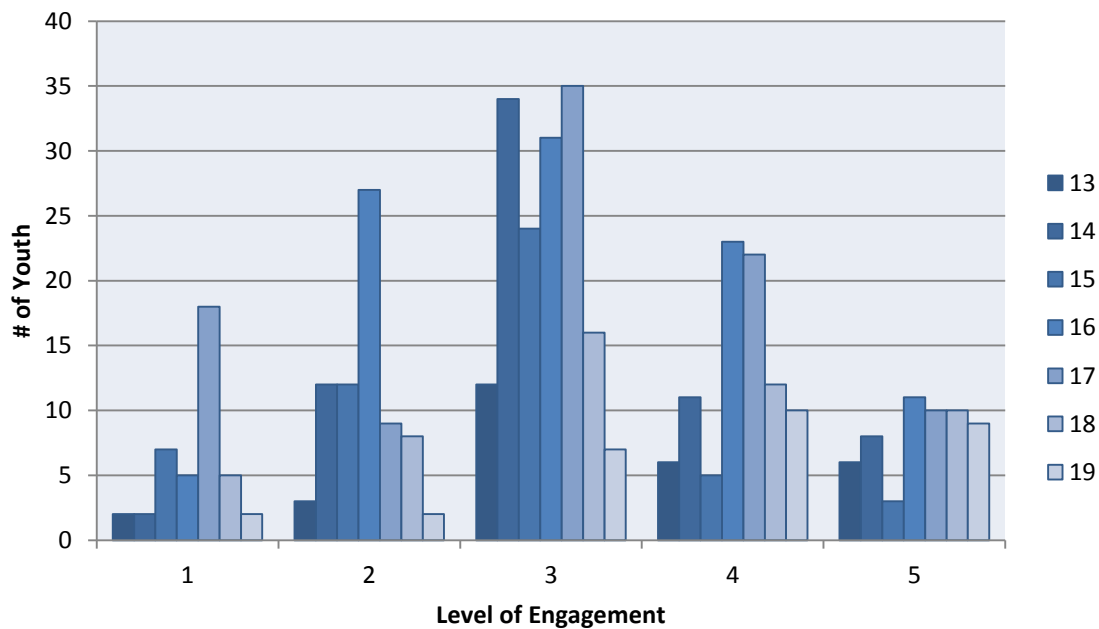
Most face-to-face surveys were done within the lunch hour at respective schools or after school hours. Face-to-face surveys were also done at youth events and conferences. The most ideal way of surveying youth turned out to be while they were waiting in line during lunch at local food restaurants, going out to pre-programmed youth drop-in events, as well as going around to youth who were hanging out on a bench around a local school or community centre.

Level of Engagement

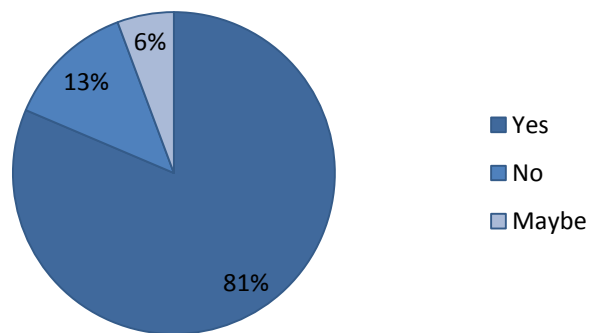
The level of engagement scale had a median of 3, indicating most youth feel they are engaged in the community to a certain extent but definitely feel there is potential for their engagement. Survey results came from youth who feel they are pretty much disengaged from the community as well as from youth who act as youth leaders for the community. A full breakdown of how youth identified how engaged they feel in the community is as follows:

- 52 youth identified themselves as minimally engaged
- 66 youth identified themselves as somewhat engaged
- 143 youth identified themselves are engaged
- 91 youth identified themselves very engaged
- 41 youth identified themselves are extremely engaged

Level of Youth Engagement by Age



Does Mississauga support youth volunteerism and leadership development?



As a whole, youth in Mississauga are widely engaged in volunteerism and do feel Mississauga supports leadership development. Most youth pointed out to community centers, libraries and youth-serving organizations as centers that have programs for personal and professional development.

REBEL16, a week-long of free events for youth by youth held the first week of May promotes youth leadership development and recognizes National Youth Week and National Youth Arts Week. This year, youth were able to come out to a REBEL Networking Session, months prior before REBEL to learn about the process of event planning, principles of marketing and the effective use of social media to help them prepare for creating events. The session was held by The Mississauga Youth Action Committee.

The Hub is a workshop held every Thursday at Mississauga Civic Centre as part of Unity Charity that provides an opportunity for youth to come together and express their ideas in the form of arts such as hip-hop, spoken word, rap and poetry. Many youth who come out to participate have experienced mental illness, isolation or come from non-privileged backgrounds. The session provides a safe and inclusive space for any youth to learn about different forms of the arts and meet other youth.

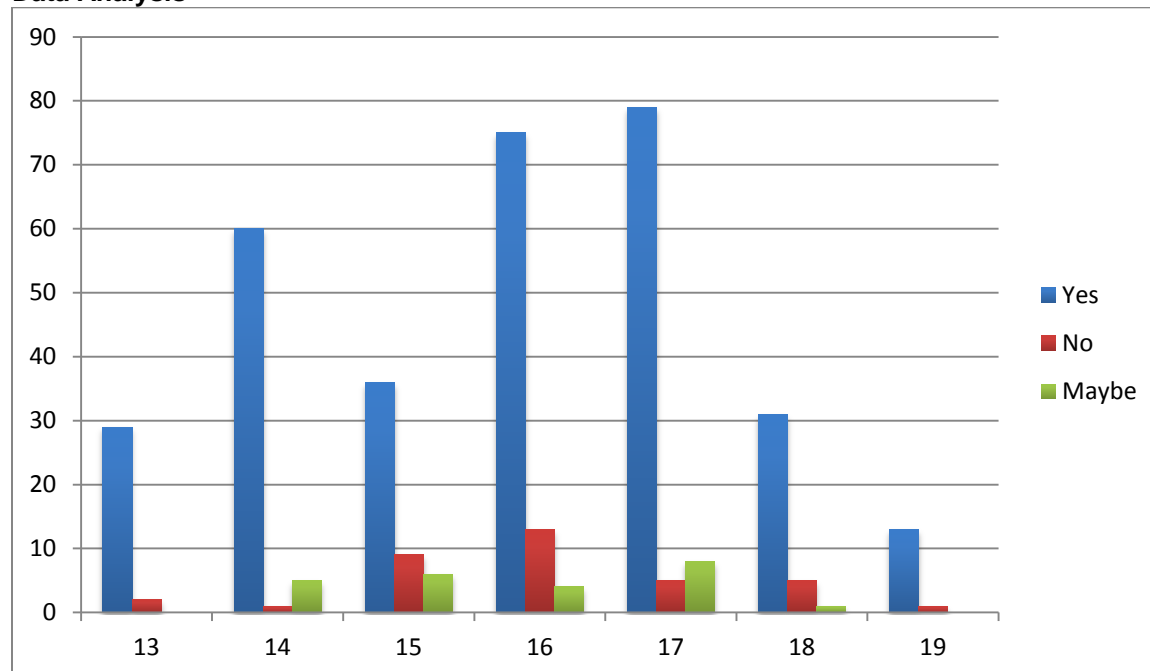
The Mississauga Youth Action Committee (MYAC) is a youth-run organization that hosts monthly connects for youth every month throughout September to May. They strive to represent the youth voice in Mississauga and do so by planning events to engage youth to develop essential interpersonal skills as well as impact the community through giving back and providing youth input when needed. Youth engaged in MYAC are able to network with other youth and community organizations when they come out to participate at events. Youth are also able to develop skills outside the classroom that are important for everyday life such as budgeting through being on the Finance Sub-Committee. The Board of Directors who are in charge of running the entire term are able to explore their leadership styles and work as a team to host meetings, plan events and work on building relationships with community organizations.

The Erin Mills Youth Centre, a local youth-serving organization for youth in the Erin Mills community hosts a leadership program each year for low-income youth to gain training on being a leader in the community. These youth go through workshops to build their leadership skills, facilitate youth programs that run in their community and get training in CPR. The goal of the leadership program at the centre is to provide more opportunities for youth in the community to be prepared to gain employment opportunities.

Youth also mentioned youth-serving organizations such as the Peel Students President Council (PSPC), Newcomer Centre of Peel and Nexus Youth Centre as places where youth were welcomed to take part in workshops and activities to develop leadership skills and network amongst youth around the city.

Youth who feel Mississauga does not support youth volunteerism and leadership development mentioned the difficulty of finding opportunities and not seeing opportunities at school. Youth mentioned they did know opportunities were available but were missing communication about when opportunities were available and how to get involved.

Data Analysis



Youth Testimonials

"There's so many opportunities available for students through PSPC, MYAC and other organizations. There's events like opportunities fairs and events advertised all over social media"

"There are many opportunities for youth to become involved and take initiative in their community"

"Plenty of opportunities such as MYAC and similar councils that offer chances for youth to meet others, take on leadership positions and help the community"

"Many opportunities to get involved. There are numerous clubs and organizations for youth to develop leadership from business ideas to politic"

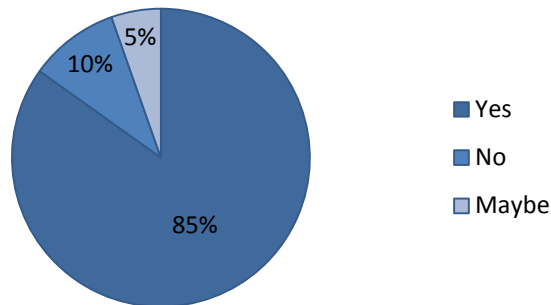
"Vibrant city with great opportunities to be found everywhere"



The Mississauga Youth Action Committee at the Mayor's Youth Employment Expo talking to other youth about leadership opportunities in the community.



Does Mississauga provide opportunities for youth play?



Most youth were able to mention a variety of different areas around the city where they hang out with friends and participate in sports and activities. Community centers and drop-in programs at youth-serving organizations were the primary response. Students also mentioned the variety of youth play opportunities provided through schools such as intramurals and sport teams.

At Play Mississauga was the most widely spoken activity youth talked about for what they did during after-school hours. At Play Mississauga provides youth a variety of drop-in sports and activities at no cost. While surveying youth from schools that were close to community centers, majority of youth mentioned they spent most of their after school hours either playing sports at the centers or just hanging out in the lobby.

The setup of community centers were also very similar, having a gym that could be used for drop-in sports and having couches and tables in the lobby for students to either hang out as a big group of friends or small group of friends. Community centers that also had libraries were noticeably full during the after-school hours with youth being able to do homework or group projects together or do independent reading.

Youth drop-in centers served a similar purpose for areas of schools that didn't have a community center within 3km from them. Newcomer Centre of Peel is a youth drop-in centre that captures students from three main schools around the area (2 high schools, 1 middle school). Youth are able to play video games, hang out on couches, play pool or participate in facilitated activities lead by staff. While at the centre, youth also mentioned of particular days where staff arrange transportation for youth to be able to go to community centres and participate in activities there as well.

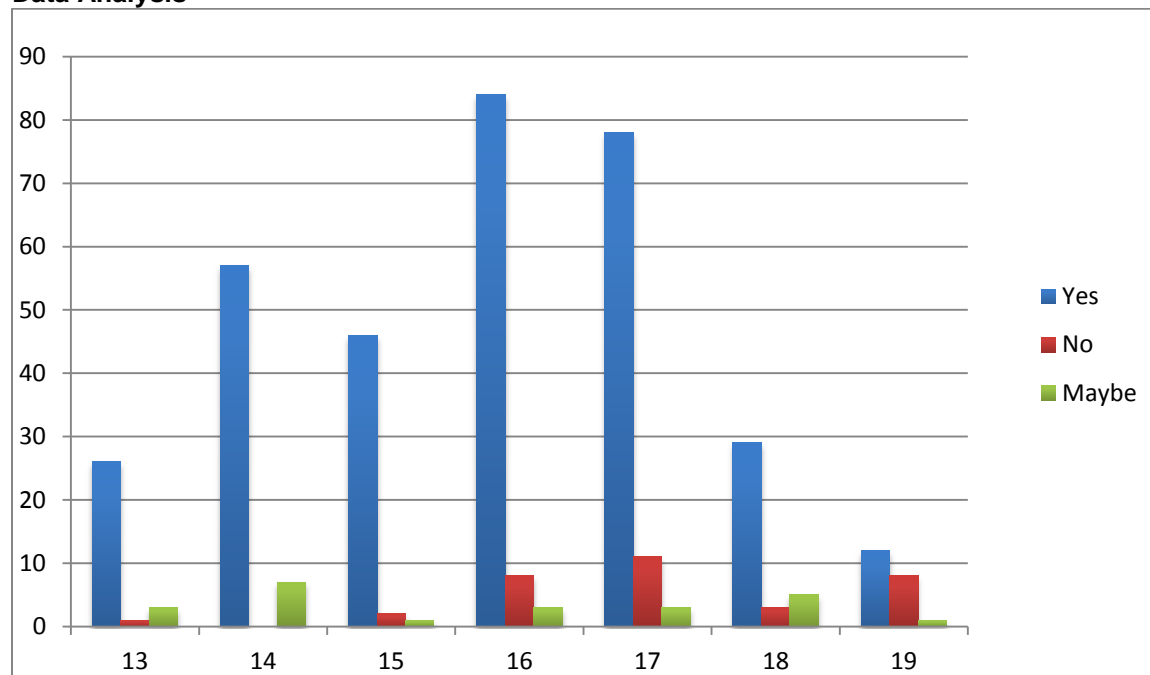
180 Merge is youth drop-in centre in Sheridan Mall that was started by a group of youth as they just finished up their post-secondary education. The centre caters to all youth but mostly brings in youth from the nearby highschool. While talking to youth at the centre, most of them let me know how they made more friends through the drop-in centre than they did at school. The drop-in centre also provides amenities for youth to play games together, take pictures at the photobooth or hangout on couches.

Downtown Mississauga is the primary place youth go to hangout on evenings and the weekend. Downtown Mississauga is home to Square One, Central Library, YMCA, Celebration Square and Cineplex theatres. While talking to youth at Square One, they mentioned their entire evening usually sprawled around the city centre area mostly because of the direct buses from high schools to Square One. A group of youth mentioned they spend three times a week heading from school to square one to grab a bite, then go to the library to get homework done and end off their day by either going to the gym at YMCA or hanging around at Celebration Square. Downtown Mississauga also successfully engages youth

using the design of water to create opportunities for play. The fountain at Celebration Square attracts a number of youth who go out to walk around the fountain or play through the fountain sprays. Square One recently developed a similar fountain idea in front of the bus terminal that has been attracting a lot of youth as well to hang out around the fountain. The accessibility of the Square One area is one of the main reasons youth love to travel there because there are a number of things to do in one place.

Youth who mentioned Mississauga did not provide opportunities for play mentioned the focus on only a certain number of sports and hoping a variety of sports could be introduced during drop-in times. Youth also mentioned improvements on basketball courts and soccer fields. Awareness of opportunities for youth play was the most widely mentioned with youth indicating there are many beautiful parks and libraries but events aren't advertised enough suggesting a blog as a great way to get the word out to youth. There were also a number of youth who mentioned the obstacle of play from not having a community centre in the north end of Mississauga as it is undergoing renovations. They mentioned with the community centre around their school, it created a safe place for youth to hang out, however without the community centre right now, many youth have no other place close enough to hang out to play other than private gyms and retail strips.

Data Analysis



Youth Testimonials

“At community centres and fitness centres such as YMCA, there are often teen nights or youth activities. These events help bring the community together and promote physical activity such as swimming, basketball, volleyball etc”

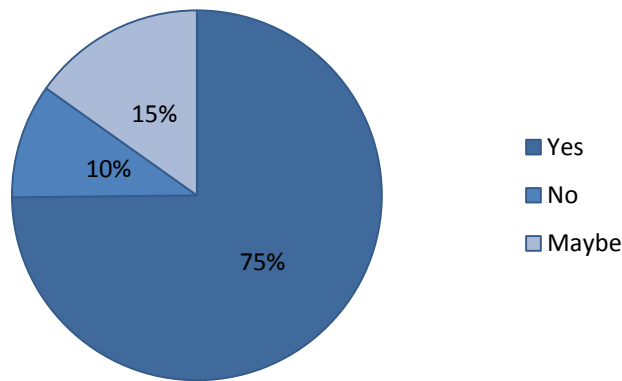
“Activities like Rebel and Sauga Block party really provide students with great opportunities to network and expand on interests”

“There are many beautiful parks and libraries that I love and as a youth, greatly appreciate.”



Youth playing a life-size game of chess and ping pong at Celebration Square for Sauga Block party.

Is Mississauga youth-friendly?



Majority of youth agree to the statement that Mississauga is a youth-friendly community by clearing indicating resources and opportunities that support their reasoning. Opportunities to get involved, stay active and engage in events were the most popular responses from youth. Youth feel they have “supportive coaches” to reach their goals and aspirations whether it is their parents, teachers or staff from community centres and local youth organizations.

Youth also mentioned that the community is safe and they often feel they are able to hang out with friends without having to worry. Being a part of an inclusive community allows youth to be able to make friends easily, not be worried in neighborhoods and engage in community events. Diversity and multi-culturalism was also mentioned by youth agreeing that youth are friendly to each other.

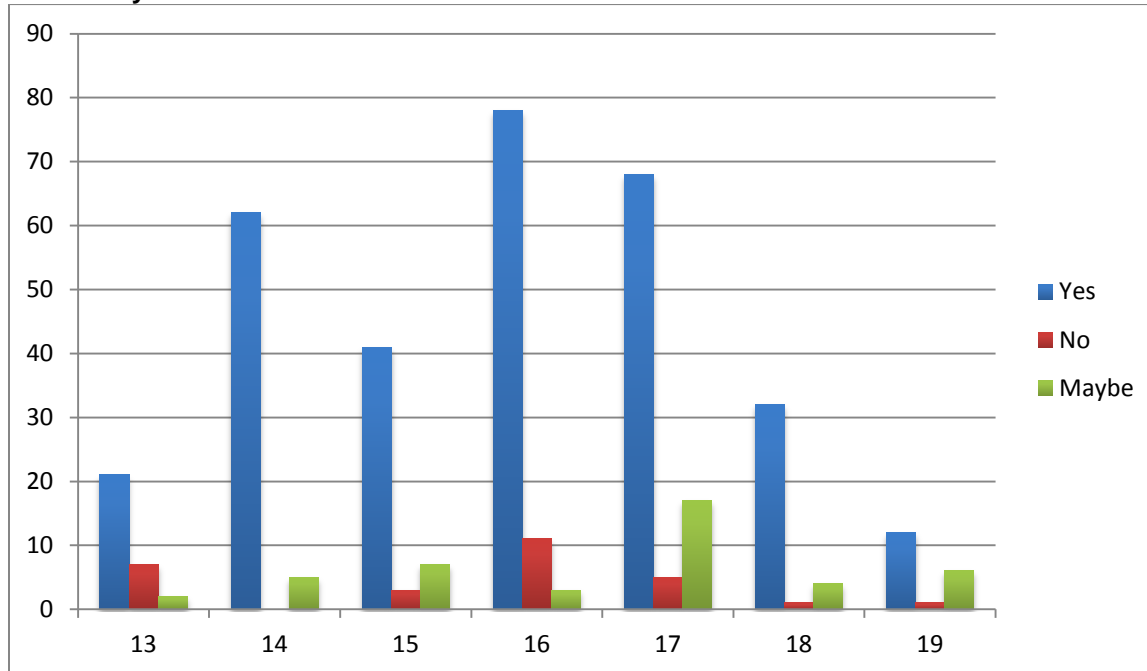
Youth feel a youth friendly community should enrich the development of children and teenagers by providing opportunities for youth to explore and having lots of resources. Events for youth to network and meet one another was the most widely mentioned with youth enjoying going out to after-school programs where they are able to meet like-minded youth and explore resources and opportunities to get involved.

Accessibility was widely mentioned amongst youth as most youth do not drive and rely on public transportation to get around the city. They mentioned it is essential for youth programs to be located in areas that are quick with easy access. Youth feel community centres and libraries in Mississauga are safe places to hang out and they are accessible to go to mainly because they are walking distance or one bus ride away from their houses. Central Mississauga was also a favorite spot mentioned by youth because of the easy access to get there by public transit and there being an abundant amount of activities to do once there.

Youth that disagree or had mixed thoughts on if the community was youth-friendly mostly referred to neighborhood concerns and public transportation. There were a couple youth who mentioned unsafe neighborhoods due to drugs and knowing it existed around them even if they didn't engage in it themselves. Youth also commented on public places around the city, especially bus stations that have no smoking signs but seeing people smoke anyway. The public bus system was mentioned as a barrier for some youth, especially for youth who didn't live within 5 km from central Mississauga. One youth mentioned, “There are great youth spaces like celebration square and the libraries but when it takes half the day to get there because you don't have a car or can't afford a bus fare there is really no point. There are great things happening in the city but it's hard to get involved/connect with other youth when the city is so inaccessible.” As most youth under the age of nineteen do not drive or own a

vehicle, their reliability in transportation does impact their experience and involvement around the city.

Data Analysis



Youth Testimonials

"A community where there are opportunities for people of all ages with a welcoming environment"

"A place that offers a plethora of opportunities for youth at a low or no cost"

"Space for youth to connect and learn from adults"

"Somewhere kids can hangout freely without worrying"

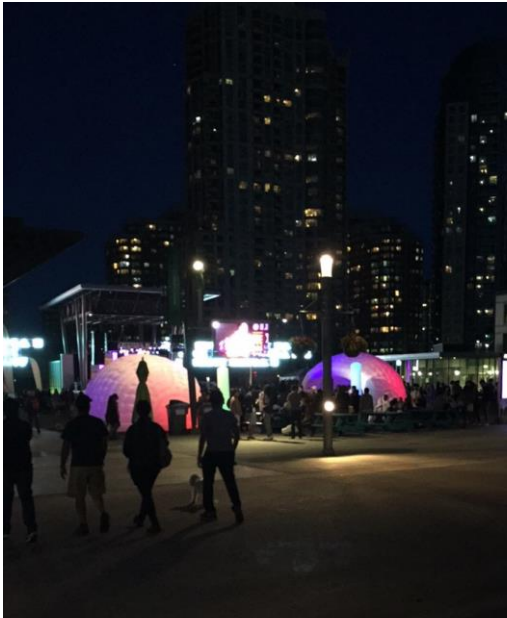
"Keep busy in good things such as sports and recreation"

"Mississauga is very safe compared to other cities"

"The HUB- openness, awareness, environment to do it, supportive, communication, guidance, empowerment, mentors, inspiring"

"One that has equal opportunities for youth and one that involved youth in discussions about the community and plans for the future"

“Mississauga provides services which promote healthy and active childhoods by supplying activities, festivals and sports for youth involvement.”



The HUB, a local youth drop in program took away the night at Sauga Block Party with hip hop sessions allowing youth of all ages to participate.

Understanding what youth want to make their city more youth-friendly is essential to be able to continuously provide services to youth. Increased awareness of opportunities and resources to explore, events targeted towards youth and more places to hang out are some ways to continue supporting the youth community. Increased publicity of events through schools and better access to health and counselling resources including a place to be able to drop-in and talk were the type of resources youth mentioned they would like to see more of. Youth also mentioned affordability of bus fares and food, wanting more affordable food places in neighborhood areas as well as better student fares. More events targeted towards youth such as music festivals and parades that are minimal to low cost is also a great way to continue engaging youth in the community. Youth also did mention they would like be able to concern their voices and be provided with opportunities where they are able to feel comfortable and empowered mentioning they wanted stronger youth councils. A majority of youth feel community centres and youth groups are the most youth-friendly aspects of Mississauga while transportation fares and accessibility continue to be the least youth-friendly and is an aspect to work on.

Surveyor's Observations

Gathering survey results predominately occurred in public places such as parks and community centers. While trying to gather survey results at schools, security acted as a barrier as I was unable to be on school property without a valid pass. This did significantly impact survey results as a lot of youth spend most of their lunches inside school cafeterias or other school-run programs during the lunch hour. I was able to capture youth responses where there was a retail strip or a community center near the school, but this did impact the certain type of youth that I surveyed. For example, youth with disposable income are more likely to eat at food restaurants. I feel there is a disconnect with schools and the public as walking into a school made me feel I was an immediate threat with signs saying to go straight to the office, without showing me where an office was.

I also observed that youth were more adamant to talk to me depending on different neighborhood areas I went out to. In one scenario, I was approaching thirteen and fourteen year old youth at a community center right across their middle school and most youth either ignored my request to take part in a survey or said no. The neighborhood surrounding the area consisted mainly of houses and townhomes. In another scenario, I was also approaching thirteen and fourteen year old youth at a community center also right across their middle school. In this scenario, almost every youth I went up to participated in the survey. I even had youth approach me to participate in the survey and join in as they saw me talking to a large group of peers. The neighborhood surrounding this residential community mainly consisted of apartments. I found it very interesting to see how different residential areas influences the way youth speak to others.