



# **NORTH BAY POLICE SERVICE**

## **2009 Annual Report Youth Office**

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## **A. Mandate of the Unit**

1. Investigate and conduct follow-up inquiries into offences and incidents involving young persons.
2. Support the investigative efforts of Patrol personnel and provide support in an advisory and/or active role.
3. Interview young offenders on referral of field personnel.
4. Liaise with local agencies on matters relating to young persons.
5. Refer young offenders to any pre-charge diversion or extrajudicial measures pursuant to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and service policies.

## **B. Executive Summary**

The Youth Office is comprised of one Detective Constable who reports to a Detective in the Investigative Support Section. The two major responsibilities of the Youth Section are to investigate criminal offences against children and to conduct Youth Referrals where young offenders are alleged to have committed a criminal offence.

The Youth Office continues to play a vital role within our service, while offering a valued resource to the community by assisting our youth and their families. In 2009 the Youth Office continued to provide assistance to parents and/or guardians who were having difficulty dealing with troubled youths residing within their residence. In 2009 there were 10 incidents recorded with this type of assistance being offered. During these sessions, the Youth Officer conducted interviews similar to that of a Youth Referral in an attempt to identify areas of concern, provide advice and provide information regarding appropriate resources available in our community. These early interventions were done in an attempt to assist youths prior to them reaching the age of criminal responsibility (12 years) and/or prior to them being dealt with by the police for criminal behaviour.

## **C. Activities**

The Youth Officer remained involved in the Youth Justice Committee (YJC) as a steering committee member. The YJC continued to be a valued resource in dealing with youth crime. Section 18 of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)* gives the Committee of Citizens the authority to assist in any aspect of the administration of the *YCJA* regarding any programs or services for young persons. This committee has proven to be invaluable to the North Bay Police Service in dealing with young offenders. The relationship between YES

Employment, the Crown Attorney's Office and the North Bay Police Service continued to be strong throughout 2009. This program accesses a variety of other community-based programs geared to youths and youth crime with referrals being made to these programs when appropriate.

The Youth Officer provided two lectures to students enrolled in the Police Foundations Program at Canadore College on the topics of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and the North Bay Police Service Youth Referral Process. These lectures were well received and provided a forum to bring forward information about the Youth Justice Committee Program and the functions of the North Bay Police Service's Youth Office.

The Youth Officer also spoke to groups of youths at the Near North Detention Centre, Nipissing Attendance Centre and members of Club Richelieu on various topics. Finally, the Youth Officer was invited to assist Lisa Clowater of the Children's Aid Society for the Districts of Nipissing and Parry Sound in delivering a presentation on reporting child abuse and neglect during a "Lunch and Learn" for community agencies that was held at CAS office.

It is anticipated that these types of speaking engagements will continue in the future as these community partnerships have been built around the focus of youth in our community.

#### **D. Performance Indicators**

For the reporting year of 2009, the Youth Office was involved in 16 occurrences dealing with investigations of sexual offences against young persons. Of these 16 occurrences a total of 27 criminal charges were laid. The charges included sexual assault, sexual interference, sexual exploitation and invitation to sexual touching under the *Criminal Code*.

Another mandate of the Youth Office is to interview young offenders on referrals of officers. This is in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure on Youth Crime as it relates to extrajudicial measures and more specifically, Youth Referrals. For the reporting year of 2009, there were a total of 80 Youth Referral interviews conducted.

During 2009 the Youth Officer was required to assist the Criminal Investigation Section on several occasions with interviewing young persons and adults, as well as being assigned investigations outside of the mandate. This resulted in the Youth Office being involved in an additional 31 investigations with 22 of these being directly assigned to the Youth Officer and an additional 2 criminal charges being laid. These assignments and investigations were in relation to offences such as missing persons, sexual assault with adult victims, assaults with youth victims, robbery, surveillance on high-risk offenders resulting in breach of

conditions and drug offences. These assigned investigations also included background investigations of candidates for the position of police constable and assisting the RCMP regarding a National Child Exploitation Coordination Center request.

A comparison of performance indicators from 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 is attached in Appendix A – Youth Referral Chart and Youth Investigations Chart.

## **E. Anticipated Issues for the Future**

In the fall of 2009 the Youth Officer conducted in-service training regarding an information refresher of the Youth Referral Process as well as reinforcing the importance of a complete background check on CPIC and RMS as there was an increase in the amount of referrals sent back to patrol officers. The upcoming year will provide a gauge of the effectiveness of this training.

The Youth Office continued to benefit from a very positive working relationship with the School Liaison Section. This is extremely helpful when it comes to information sharing regarding youths being referred to the Youth Office, intelligence gathering and investigations conducted by both the Youth Office and the School Liaison Office. It is strongly recommended that this be taken into consideration if/when personnel changes are required in either section as this type of relationship has been and continues to be very beneficial.

In late 2008, there appeared to be a new program being implemented by some schools in North Bay and area to deal with behavioural problems amongst its student body. These programs were in the form of Restorative Justice that was similar to what the Youth Justice Committee Program offered. These programs are suitable for issues that are not of a criminal nature or for those that are deemed not to be a “police matter”.

Although these “quasi” Restorative Justice Programs have been applied to school discipline issues since 2008, there still exists a problem whereby some schools are not reporting criminal offences that are occurring within the school setting.

In January 2009, the Youth Officer, Lynn Racicot of YES Employment and John Holland of the Crown’s Office met with the directors from the Nipissing District School Board regarding this issue. Unfortunately there has not been an opportunity to facilitate a presentation to the principals who have been implementing Restorative Justice Programs in their schools.

This matter is of great concern as some of the students committing criminal offences may have a history of similar or more serious types of offences and the schools are dealing with them outside the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. As well,

these occurrences are not being documented by the police, which may account for the number of Youth Referrals being lower in 2009 than in 2008. There were only 4 referrals from the School Liaison Officer in 2009 as compared to 23 in 2008.

With the continued implementation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, combined with social issues that every community faces, our service continues to receive requests for assistance in dealing with youth related crime. Throughout 2009, support agencies in North Bay and area continued to experience waiting lists to accommodate youths and families in crisis. As indicated in the 2008 Annual Report, this trend was expected to continue and it has. Therefore, it is important that the North Bay Police Service adjust and prepare to meet the community's needs in dealing with this increase without disrupting the quality of service. This may eventually require a division of responsibilities within the Youth Office to allow for two members to share the workload.

#### **F. Performance Objectives for the Next Year**

The Youth Office is looking forward to maintaining community partnerships that have been built over the past several years, as well as being eager to take on new challenges in 2009.

It is anticipated that the number of Youth Referrals will continue to remain relatively consistent. It appears as though one of the biggest factors may be the implementation of Restorative Justice Programs being utilized in local schools, as mentioned above.

In 2008 the Youth Office saw a spike in its caseload of assigned and involved investigations and this did not subside in 2009. Therefore, there continues to be little or no improvement in the amount of time spent on proactive policing and/or programs in relation to youth diversions and youths at risk.

#### **G. Other**

The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* continues to provide a variety of methods to deal with youth related crime. For the 2009 calendar year, the Youth Office conducted 22 Youth Referral interviews. These are instances where the *Act* allowed for the diversion of a youth from the court process while at the same time holding them accountable for their actions. This process also allowed the Youth Officer some form of discretion. The results of such diversions and consequences issued can be examined on the attached charts (Appendix B – Distribution of Referrals), listing the action taken. The charts provide a contrast between the calendar years of 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009. The referral process for the TAPP-C program (arson prevention program for children) and Community

Service Hours continued to be facilitated through the Youth Justice Committee Program.

For the first time the number of females who were given Youth Referrals was greater than the number of males. This was due in large part to the number boys being referred to the office in 2009, which was almost half the amount of those referred to the office in 2008 and 2007. However, the number of females referred has remained relatively consistent over the past three years.

## **H. Appendices**

Appendix A – Youth Referral Chart and Youth Investigations Chart  
Appendix B – Distribution of Referrals

## APPENDIX A

	2009	2008	2007	2006
<b>Sexual Offence Investigations</b> (Child victims)	16	19	15	26 (all invest.)
<b>Other Investigations</b>	21	15	5	
<b>Charges</b>	29	32	12	27
<b>Ass't other Dep't/Officers</b>	11	16	1	N/A
<b>Trouble with Youth Interviews</b>	10	12	N/A	N/A
<b>Youth Referrals</b>	80	119	106	68

**Note:** N/A = Not Available

## APPENDIX B

### Distribution of Referrals

	2009	2008	2007	2006
<b>Youth Justice Committee Program</b>	54	55	76	11
<b>Written Apology</b>	20	52	8	13
<b>Returned to Patrol</b>	5	8	5	N/A
<b>Verbal Caution</b>	1	1	11	31
<b>Verbal Apology</b>	0	6	N/A	N/A
<b>Community Service Hours</b>	0	0	1	1
<b>TAPP-C</b>	0	1	2	1
<b>Other</b>	0	5	3	2
<b>Total Youth Referrals</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Males</b>	35	75	60	N/A
<b>Females</b>	45	44	46	N/A

**Note:**

- In 2009, all referrals requiring Community Service Hours, and TAPP-C continued to be forwarded to the Youth Justice Committee Program due to insurance issues and a new referral system for the TAPP-C program.
- N/A = Not Available